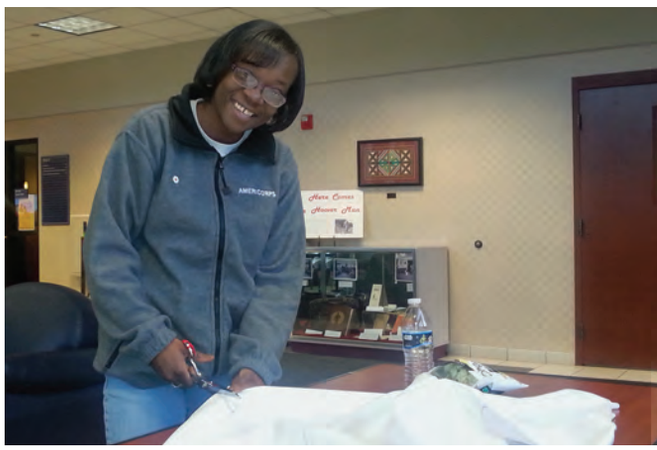
Justice Talking

The Meaning of Service

Manual



Ohio HUMANITIES
REAL ISSUES. REAL CONVERSATIONS.

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Ohio Commission on Service and Volunteerism

Justice Talking: *The Meaning of Service*

Facilitation Manual

Welcome to the *Justice Talking* program. Here you will find all the information you will need to facilitate *Justice Talking* sessions throughout the service year. The manual is designed to complement the daylong training.

Created by the Illinois Humanities Council in 2001, *Justice Talking* began as a program designed for volunteers in the Chicago area. Through support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, it has spread to AmeriCorps programs in multiple states. In its current form, *Justice Talking* is a collaboration between Ohio Humanities and ServeOhio: The Ohio Commission on Service and Volunteerism.

The manual is comprised of:

Facilitator's Handbook that outlines the facilitation method and includes a wealth of tips and suggestions for planning and hosting a successful *Justice Talking* session.

Content and Facilitation Notes for the material on which to base your *Justice Talking* sessions.

Planning Outlines to use for each *Justice Talking* session.

Facilitation Logs to record the sessions you facilitated.

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Ohio Commission on Service and Volunteerism

The manual and related training materials are courtesy of ServeOhio: The Ohio Commission on Service and Volunteerism

Justice Talking

The Meaning of Service

Facilitator's Handbook

Ohio HUMANITIES
REAL ISSUES. REAL CONVERSATIONS.

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Justice Talking: *The Meaning of Service*

Doing service puts people into high-need areas, such as schools, relief agencies, and hospitals—wherever a set of hands can make a difference. Yet few organizations afford their members the opportunity to reflect on what service means and the nature of the difference they are making.

Justice Talking encourages people to do just that. The program brings people together to engage content that prompts thoughtful dialogue about service, justice, and civic engagement. The practice of reflection can result in a deeper understanding of the values inherent in public service activities, and a more comprehensive consideration of our own service experiences.

If thoughtfully presented and successfully managed, *Justice Talking* can be personally rewarding and professionally fulfilling. Participants in the *Justice Talking* program will:

- Value more the service work that they do.
- Learn to think critically about what it means to serve, with perspectives derived from compelling content.
- Be intellectually stimulated.
- Be emotionally nourished by the collegial atmosphere of the facilitated discussion.
- Be more likely to sustain a commitment to service.
- Appreciate the humanities as a guide for understanding important life experiences.

This Facilitation Handbook was formulated by Robert Colby, PhD, Ohio Humanities program officer, based in part on an earlier version by Georgina Dodge, PhD, Bucknell University associate provost. The facilitation method described herein includes methods outlined by the Center for Civic Reflection (civicreflection.org) and Visual Thinking Strategies (vtshome.org).

What ***Justice Talking*** IS

Justice Talking is a **professional development** opportunity where professional decorum should be observed at all times.

What ***Justice Talking*** is NOT

Justice Talking is not a **lecture**, where one person possesses the information and dispenses it to others. Everyone participates as equals, including the facilitator.

Justice Talking is not a **classroom seminar**. No prior information about the content is required to join the conversation and participate fully. The facilitator can provide all relevant information about the content by using the Facilitation Notes.

Justice Talking is not a **debate** or an exchange of mere opinions about political or religious matters. Sharing personal experiences inspired by the content is important. Trying to convince others of one's opinions is not conducive to a successful *Justice Talking* session.

Justice Talking is not **group therapy** or a clinical environment. *Justice Talking* facilitators are not trained or licensed as clinicians.

Before You Begin

Essential to the success of a *Justice Talking* series is the atmosphere in which the discussions are held. Many people are not used to discussing readings in a group, exploring different opinions about complicated ideas, or talking with colleagues about the motives behind their work. The prospect of participating in a *Justice Talking* discussion might make some people uncomfortable, so it is important that the conditions surrounding the discussions put people at ease.

Location

Choose a room that is comfortable and conducive to conversation. A cramped, uncomfortable space, or one dominated by a massive table that makes it difficult for people to see or hear one another, will not set the ideal tone for discussion. Envision a coffee house atmosphere. Arrange the chairs in a circle.

Snacks

Food adds an informal tone and sets the stage for sharing. It helps people relax and signals a transition from action to reflection.

Time

Another way to put participants at ease is by scheduling discussions at a convenient time of day or night, in an accessible and comfortable space. We suggest a 60-90 minute session.

Frequency

The number and frequency of discussions differs from group to group. Ideally, scheduling a *Justice Talking* session every four weeks helps sustain energy and makes it easier for members to refer to previous reflections. However, if your group's service work does not permit such frequent discussions, at least three *Justice Talking* sessions over the course of the year can have a significant impact.

Group Size

The size of the group will enhance the quality of the discussion. Successful *Justice Talking* series have been conducted with as few as four members and as many as 30. However, the bigger the group, the more likely it is that some people will be reluctant to speak. An ideal size would be between 10 and 15 members. Larger groups can be divided into two parallel groups as long as enough trained facilitators are available.

What is Facilitation?

Justice Talking is based on great facilitation. Here are some guiding concepts to become a practiced facilitator.

As a facilitator, your job is to lead conversations about the content and guide participants to reflect in a thoughtful way. The right kinds of questions provoke participants to think deeply, clarify or re-evaluate their own assumptions, and then to reflect upon their experience in light of those assumptions.

Facilitation is different from an academic class in which there is often a separate body of knowledge (critical theory, historical context, a set of political implications) that participants must seek out in order to interpret the content.

The key to good facilitation is a combination of **open-ended questions, follow-up questions,** and **active listening**. Here's a closer look at these components.

Open-ended questions suggest a genuine openness to what participants have to contribute, what they observe, what they think, what they feel, and how they make sense of service experiences. They are a great way to start a conversation. A question such as "What do you see going on in the text?" is a helpful way to invite participants to begin sharing their initial observations after having read a poem.

FACILITATION

Is: Asking and Listening

Not: Telling and Convincing

Let the participants and the content do the work.

Open-ended questions can also be specific in nature, but they do not suggest a single answer or require specialist knowledge. Here are some examples of open- vs. closed-ended questions:

What do you think the author is trying to tell us in this text? (Open) vs. *What is this text about?* (Closed)

What aspects of the text appear to reflect the society of the time? (Open) vs. *What is the historical context for this text?* (Closed)

What about this text resonates with you? (Open) vs. *What is the author telling us about the human condition?* (Closed)

Active listening ensures clarity about each person's point of view and makes participants feel their contribution is valued. Active listening happens when the facilitator:

- Looks at the participant in a receptive manner when they speak.
- Mirrors back what the participant has just said, beginning with something like, "So what I am hearing you say is...."

Follow-up questions invite the participant to clarify their observation and ask them to go further by explaining how they arrived at their initial observation. Follow-up questions reveal the diverse perspectives in the group. Everyone interprets content differently. Follow-up questions convert initial observations to interpretations and direct attention back to the content. For example:

Participant observation: *"The main character is ambivalent."*

Facilitator follow-up question: *"What do you see in the text that suggests the main character is ambivalent?"*

The *Justice Talking* Facilitation Method: Questions and Context

Justice Talking is a specific form of facilitation that uses a combination of open-ended questions, follow-up questions, and active listening to elicit three general categories of information:

Observation

Observation questions are great ways to get the conversation going and keep it flowing naturally. They give participants an opportunity to share openly.

Here are some examples:

- *What's going on in the text?*
- *What do you notice?*

Interpretation

Interpretation questions deepen understanding by directing attention to specific aspects of the content.

Here is an example:

- *How would you describe the role of the "sign-changer" in the film?*

Implication

Implication questions get to the heart of the *Justice Talking* program, which is the meaning of service.

Here are some examples:

- *What message about service does the text hold for you?*
- *How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?*

Context?

Justice Talking sessions are always based on compelling content. However, most participants will need some context about the author for the content to be most meaningful, as well as cues about specialized and foreign language vocabulary. In order to ensure everyone can participate fully, each content selection has Facilitation Notes that includes a short biography, relevant information, and a glossary.

The Facilitation Notes also include pre-scripted observation, interpretation, and implication questions. Be sure to adapt the Facilitation Notes as needed for your group. Only you as facilitator know what resources they will need to engage effectively with the content.

Now that you've been introduced to the *Justice Talking* facilitation method, the following sections provide a step-by-step guide to planning, hosting, leading, and evaluating your *Justice Talking* program.

Step One: Planning the Discussion

One of the biggest components of preparing for each discussion is selecting the content. Content options can be found in the Contents and Facilitation Notes section. When making your selection, consider the following:

Think of the many definitions of service. How do you want your members to engage with this important topic in an informed manner?

What are the needs of your group? If you are hosting a session in the beginning of the year, consider a text that speaks to definitions of service. Browse through the list of content for selections that address relevant issues for your group.

Consider the length and level of difficulty of each text.

Most content selections are short texts and can be read in the group session. If you select a longer text, estimate the amount of time your group will actually have to read the text in advance. If you know your group is overwhelmed with work and cannot read ahead, choose a short text, or an image, video, or audio recording the group can engage with together during the session itself.

Plan well.

Be sure to honor your members' preparation by not assigning a reading you are not going to talk about. If you plan to spend only an hour on *Justice Talking*, do not assign four readings! Similarly, do not ask people to come prepared to discuss a selection and then neglect to discuss it during your session.

Select provocative content.

A good *Justice Talking* discussion is meant to be stimulating. Some content selections were included because they are provocative. Embrace the challenge of hosting a challenging conversation. However, some selections might elicit strong responses. This can be an exciting aspect of facilitation, and signals that participants derive meaning from the content. Throughout the discussion, you will need to respect the different values and cultures that may be present in your group. If someone is offended by a reading or a topic, and decides they do not wish to participate, consider alternatives to group participation. You might have a one-on-one session with that person or determine together if they should be excused from the discussion entirely. They might wish to write a short reflection of 150 words or free-form journal response instead.

Read and reread.

As part of your preparation for hosting, read, reread, and reread again the content selection—at least three times. By rereading, you will become comfortable with the material. Review the corresponding Facilitation Notes for that selection.

Decide how you will use the content selection during the session.

Text: If it's a short text and no prior reading is required, will you ask participants to access it on their smart phone or tablet, or will you print out copies for everyone?

If a text is long, be sure to inform participants about reading it well in advance. For the session itself, decide how you will use the text to anchor the discussion. Will you ask participants to reflect on the content from memory, or will you identify key excerpts to read out loud as a group, or ask participants to share key passages?

Image: If you are using an image, decide if you will print high-quality copies or arrange to project the image. In general, all image selections are high resolution, but be advised that projecting them often reduces quality. In addition, you will require more set-up time to arrange for computer, projector, and screen.

Video: If you select a video, you will need access to the internet to stream online content, in addition to projection and good sound quality.

Audio Recording: If you select an audio recording, you will need access to the internet to stream online content and good sound quality.

Step Two: Opening the Discussion

There's no doubt about it. Sometimes opening the discussion can be difficult—especially during the first session. But little things can help participants feel comfortable enough to make the first comment.

Welcome everyone with a friendly greeting.

Make sure you and everyone else knows one another's names.

At least in the beginning, provide name tags or table tents for everyone, including yourself. Start the first session with introductions. Although you might expect everyone to already know one another, the group's schedule may prevent individuals from spending much time together. Including introductions at the beginning of the series gives everyone an easy way to contribute at least once the very first day.

Be clear about what the participants should expect.

At least for the first few sessions, review what *Justice Talking* is, so everyone knows what to expect. You can read this paragraph:

"Justice Talking is a program for AmeriCorps Members in this state that encourages reflection on service. We use content to invite multiple perspectives and shape frank conversations on values, justice, and civic engagement. The practice of reflection is designed to help us better appreciate our work together."

Consider opening the session with an icebreaker.

Some facilitators like to use icebreakers while others do not. As facilitator, the choice is up to you and how you perceive the group responding. Search online for appropriate icebreakers for your group. If time is short, you may decide to skip this step.

Framing.

Framing will help prepare the participants for the conversation by shifting to focus on the topic. You can read this paragraph:

"Today I'd like to have a conversation about [leadership], and I've chosen a text that I think will help us have that conversation. I'm really interested to know how this can help us reflect on some of the work we do here."

Use the tags beneath each selection in the Contents and Facilitation Notes to determine the framing topic.

Step Three: Facilitating the Discussion

Leading the discussion and keeping it going for 60 to 90 minutes may seem like a daunting task, but you might be surprised how eager your group is to share their thoughts about the content and how it relates to their work. Use the Facilitation Notes to guide the conversation. You can use them as a script or as a general guide.

Content and Facilitation Notes

T

Franz Kafka, *The Helmsman* (ca. 1915–1920)

Introduction: Franz Kafka (1883–1924) was a Czech Jewish writer whose stories use dark humor to explore themes of absurdity and social alienation. Although widely regarded as one of the major figures of twentieth-century literature, Kafka's work went largely unnoticed during his lifetime. After studying law, Kafka entered professional life as an insurance company clerk. Kafka's most famous works, such as *The Trial* and *The Metamorphosis*, explore what Kafka saw as the surreal and sometimes nightmarish qualities of modern life.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Content and Facilitation Notes

V

Thai Life Insurance, *Happiness is Helping Others* (2014)

Introduction: Thai Life Insurance was founded in 1942 and is headquartered in Bangkok, Thailand. It is an insurance and financial services group. The company is known for commissioning a number of emotional television commercials that have garnered global attention.

Content: Invite participants to view the video.

Observation questions:

Content and Facilitation Notes

I

Alan Fisher, *Lou Ambers Tips His Hat* (1935)

Note: ***After downloading the image, consider whether you will project a digital version or print quality copies for discussion.***

Introduction: Alan Fisher was a staff photographer at the New York *World-Telegram* and Sun Newspapers in the 1930s and '40s. This photograph was taken when he was on assignment for a story about tramps, or "hobos." Not necessarily homeless, hobos were transient men who frequently rode trains, searching for work or adventure. They were a fixture of the Great Depression during the 1930s. The photographer recorded the subject's name, Lou Ambers, though he gave no information about who Ambers was.

Content: Invite participants to look carefully at the image.

Observation questions:

... in the image? What do you notice?

Watch the Clock!

Throughout the discussion, pay attention to time. It can be surprising how quickly time passes during a good conversation, and managing time is very important for putting people at ease. Let the participants know how much time they have for any activities. When the discussion has almost reached the end of the allotted time, you should begin to close the discussion so that you can end on time.

Step Four: Closing the Discussion

Be intentional about how you will end the discussion. Ending on a strong note can help maintain momentum and enthusiasm for the next meeting. You may wish to formulate a conclusion based on one of the three options below. Then clearly signal the end of the session and be sure to thank participants. Feel free to adapt these to your own strengths and the dynamics of your group.

Choose one of the three following options.

1. Summarize key points from the discussion.
   Offer a summary or ask your group what they thought were the most important points.
2. Draw connections between discussions.
   Pose a topic or question that points toward the theme of the next discussion. You could also offer comments about connections with previous discussions.
3. Evaluate the session.
   Prompt the group to express what was useful or interesting about this conversation. This may be done verbally or in writing; either way, you'll have a rich source of data that can inform your future planning.

Clearly signal the end of the session with a closing statement.

"This has been a great conversation. I really appreciate the insights and openness you have all shown. It's great to hear how much you have been thinking about these issues and the ways they impact the work that we do."

Thank participants and preview next session.

Regardless of how you choose to end the session, be sure to thank the group for participating in *Justice Talking*. If the next meeting has already been scheduled, you should remind the group of the date and time before they leave the current session. As much as possible, you should follow-up with people who miss a session. This will help you understand if they are missing because they are not interested, too busy, or are dissatisfied with the program. This also lets people know that their participation is important to the group.

Record the session in the Facilitation Log.

The Facilitation Log can be found in the back of the Manual.

Helpful Tips

Be a strong leader.

Leadership and group dynamics are forces you can harness for a successful *Justice Talking* session. Facilitators should take a leading role in maintaining a healthy group dynamic by not allowing any one person to dominate the discussion (including the facilitator!). The rest of the group will support you in this effort.

Don't allow the discussion to be derailed by one person.

Everyone has something to share. Some will hold back if one or two individuals begin dominating the conversation. As facilitator, your role is to ensure everyone has space to share. If an individual is sharing too much, feel free to politely interject and say something like: "I want to be sure others have a chance to share. What do other people have to say?"

Strike a balance in the pace of the conversation.

Open-ended questions are always good prompts, but sometimes a group is quiet, or a conversation is slow to take off. Allow time for participants to formulate their thoughts and share. Be comfortable with silence. Also be aware when a conversation point has reached its natural conclusion and the group is ready to move on. Sometimes silence means everyone has shared and it may be time to move on to the next question or text.

Be open to new directions.

Any group of people has differences, even if at first it seems like a homogenous group. As participants respond to a complex reading these differences will emerge. Help people perceive and explore them. Recognize pluralities of interpretation. Listen to what your members are saying. If someone introduces a new idea based on the content that might add to the reflection, allow the conversation to flow in that new direction.

Be brave during uncomfortable moments.

If a participant says something inappropriate, such as a racist or sexist remark, take a few breaths and wait. Often your group will respond to the comment on their own. If they don't, you might prompt them to discuss the remark. "What do others think about what was just said?" However, since this is meant to be a safe environment, you don't necessarily want to turn the blame to the individual who made the comment. Instead, remind the group that language occasionally has implications we might not immediately recognize or intend. It is important to think carefully during these discussions and during our service about how our own underlying assumptions can impact others.

Be confident if someone begins to lecture the group.

Occasionally, a participant will have studied a particular content selection in a class setting or have a personal relationship to the material. This can be helpful if you know how to integrate their additional information into the conversation. Thank them for their valuable insights and turn back to the group and ask, "With this additional context, what more do you notice about the text?" It acknowledges the contribution, while maintaining a good group dynamic.

Be attentive if someone becomes overly emotional.

Challenging texts and in-depth conversations can elicit strong emotional responses from participants. Occasionally a participant can become highly emotional based on something found in the content or something another participant has said. If this should happen, be sure to acknowledge the situation by saying something like, "I can see that this is very emotional for you. Can you share with the group what it is that you are feeling/thinking?" If the person can share, allow them a meaningful amount of time to articulate what they are feeling/thinking. If, however, they simply cannot share in a way that is meaningful to the rest of the group (think of their needs here) then invite that person to step out of the conversation accompanied by a co-facilitator or trusted team member who can join them outside to keep them company and consider what steps to take for their proper care and assistance.

Be strong if a conversation becomes heated.

Occasionally, a discussion may become heated. If this happens, acknowledge the concerns while returning the atmosphere to something more inviting: "I hear both of your points. This is a really difficult topic, and that's why it's so important to reflect on these issues." Try to include others in the discussion or steer the conversation back to the reading. Should things continue to be too tense, introduce a new question or call a 5-minute break. Consider inviting the people having the heated discussion to continue their debate later on their own.

Next Time

After each session, you should begin preparing the next session as soon as possible. As you do, keep in mind that facilitating this kind of discussion is really challenging. If you meant to be quiet and talked, forgot to ask that really good question, missed a great opportunity to tie remarks together, or didn't get to interact with each individual participant, forgive yourself. You will be more ready to meet the challenge next time.

Documenting Your *Justice Talking* Experience

Be sure to accurately record your *Justice Talking* facilitation experience. At the end of the *Justice Talking* manual you will find a Facilitation Log. Please keep a running list of all the *Justice Talking* sessions you facilitated. Be sure to fill out the information at the time of the session and record what content you chose, the location with address, any co-facilitators, and the number of members that participated. Please include any comments about what worked well or anything you would do differently. At the end of the 2018–2019 program year, please send Facilitation Logs to Rebeccah Verhoff at rebeccah.verhoff-kiss@serveohio.gov.

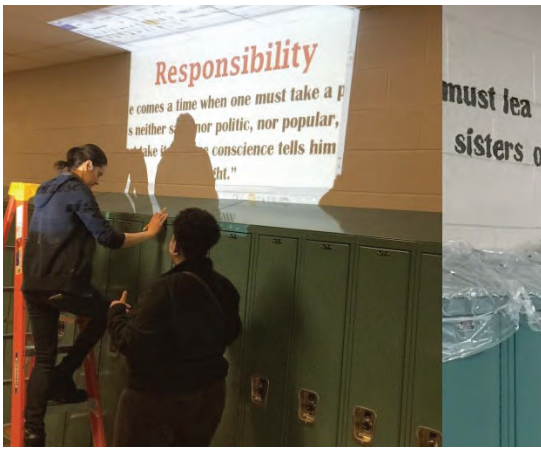
Evaluation

You will receive surveys to help us evaluate the *Justice Talking* training and the program itself. Please fill these out so we can continue to have up-to-date and current information on the effectiveness of this program. Thank you!

Justice Talking

The Meaning of Service

Content and Facilitation Notes



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Here you will find the list of content for the 2018–2019 *Justice Talking* program, with corresponding Facilitation Notes. Content selections include texts, images, videos and audio recordings. Each content selection is marked according to format:

T for text | I for image | V for video | A for audio

Page numbers correspond to the Facilitation Notes for each selection.

Below author and title information you will find topic areas. Use these to help choose content depending on the kind of *Justice Talking* session you would like to have.

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Identity and Society
Leadership
Change
Service and Self
Empathy

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*The **Facilitation Notes** were created by Ohio Humanities program staff: Jim Calder, Robert Colby, David Merkowitz, Missy Ricksecker, and Patricia Williamsen. Selections were drawn from the Great Books Foundation's* The Civically Engaged Reader *(2006) the original* Justice Talking *curriculum (2010) created by the Center for Civic Reflection for ServeOhio, and other sources.*

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Identity and Society

Jane Addams, excerpt from *The Subjective Necessity of Social Settlements* (1892)

Introduction: Jane Addams (1860–1935) was a pioneer of the settlement house movement, which provided social services and education to poor workers. Addams founded Hull House in Chicago in 1889 and was an early leader in the profession that would become social work. In "The Subjective Necessity of Social Settlements," Addams wrote with conviction and humility about the way in which the character of one's life is connected to that of others.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

What kind of relationship does Addams propose between those who serve in settlement houses and those who are served?

How does Addams describe the negative aspects of being a well-educated middle-class young person in 1892? Does this resonate today?

What do you think Addams means by "the race life"?

What does Addams promise the young, idealistic settlement workers?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

William Ayot, *The Contract: A Word from the Led* (2013)

Introduction: William Ayot is a poet, playwright, and teacher. He is a leadership training consultant and frequently uses poetry, symbolic ritual, and theatre to inform his practice.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

Consider the first six lines of the poem. How does this match up with why you follow who you follow?

According to the poet, what qualities does a good leader have?

The poet writes: "What we ask in return is that [leaders] stay true." What do you think the poet means by this? Stay true to what? To whom?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

James Baldwin, *Stranger in the Village* (1953)

Introduction: James Baldwin (1924–1987) was an influential African American writer and cultural critic who explored ideas of race and identity in mid-twentieth century America and Europe. Baldwin grew up in New York City and left the United States for Paris in 1948 as a result of the tensions he experienced due to his race and sexuality in his native country. Though he would make France his home for the rest of his adult life, he was highly active in the United States and became one of the intellectual leaders of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s. *Stranger in the Village* is an account of the author's experience as a Black man in Leukerbad, Switzerland, that allowed him to reflect anew on American race relations.

Content: Given its length, consider carefully how you will use the text to guide the discussion.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

What do you think the author means when he says "people are trapped in history and history is trapped in them"?

Does it matter that the villagers do not mean to be unkind?

What do you think the author means when he says, "there is a great deal of will power involved in . . . naïveté"?

What lessons about race in America does the author seek to reveal in this essay?

How would you describe the author's conclusion to the essay?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Glossary:

Chartres: French town famed for its magnificent medieval cathedral.

E. Franklin Frazier: Edward Franklin Frazier (1894–1962). An American sociologist and author who was the first Black president of the American Sociological Association. His work analyzed the historical forces that influenced the development of the African American family from the time of slavery to the mid-1930s.

Herrenvolk (German): The "master race" as defined by the Nazis. Here used with some irony to refer to the local population of the village.

Joyce: James Joyce (1882–1941). A twentieth-century Irish modernist author.

Glossary, cont'd:

Lent: A religious observance in the Catholic liturgical calendar that begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes with the Easter Sunday celebration.

le sale nègre (French): derogatory term for a Black man

Lourdes: Our Lady of Lourdes, a Roman Catholic shrine in France said to offer miraculous healing to those who visit.

métier (French): A trade, profession, or occupation.

Neger (German): Black man. In parts of Switzerland both German and French are spoken.

saluts* and *bonsoirs (French): Friendly greetings.

James Baldwin, excerpt from *Stranger in the Village* (1953)

Introduction: James Baldwin (1924–1987) was an influential African American writer and cultural critic who explored ideas of race and identity in mid-twentieth century America and Europe. Baldwin grew up in New York City and left the United States for Paris in 1948 as a result of the tensions he experienced due to his race and sexuality in his native country. Though he would make France his home for the rest of his adult life, he was highly active in the United States and became one of the intellectual leaders of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s. *Stranger in the Village* is an account of the author's experience as a Black man in Leukerbad, Switzerland, that allowed him to reflect anew on American race relations.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

According to Baldwin, what is the nature of the relationship between Black and White Americans?

What do you think Baldwin means by the "war...in the American soul?"

What conclusion does Baldwin draw about how White Americans view Black Americans?

Baldwin wrote this essay in 1953, before the culmination of the Civil Rights Movement and the cultural revolutions of the '60s and '70s. Given that much has changed in the sixty years since Baldwin wrote *Stranger in the Village,* what in this passage remains (or no longer seems) relevant?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Glossary:

le sale nègre (French): derogatory term for a Black man

métier (French): A trade, profession, or occupation.

Neger (German): Black man. In parts of Switzerland both German and French are spoken.

Toni Cade Bambara, *The Lesson* (1972)

Note: ***The length of this text will require participants to read it in advance.***

Introduction: Toni Cade Bambara (1939–1995) was an African American author, documentary filmmaker, and college professor. She was a frequent lecturer and political activist who worked to raise Black American consciousness and pride. In the 1970s she was active in the Black Liberation and the Women's Rights movements. Bambara's fiction, which was set in the rural South as well as the urban North, frequently included African American Vernacular English.

Content: Given the length, consider carefully how you will use the text to guide the discussion.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

How would you describe Miss Moore's role in the lives of the neighborhood children? What do you think motivated her to engage with them?

How would you describe the kind of education Miss Moore sought to give the children? How did she deliver her lesson? How might it have been different from the education the children received in school?

At the end of the visit to F.A.O. Schwarz, Miss Moore asks the children to describe their reaction to the toy store. Sugar responds with a conclusion about democracy, the pursuit of happiness, and equity. How do you interpret Sugar's response?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Alonso Alvarez Barreda, *Story of a Sign* (2008)

Note: ***Be sure that online access and video projection are available during the session.***

Introduction: Alonso Alvarez Barreda (b. 1984) is a Mexican filmmaker. His first film, *Story of a Sign*, was made with a budget of only $50. This powerful film launched Barreda's career of making dramatic shorts that challenge viewers to consider and discuss contemporary issues of social justice. *Story of a Sign* has been recognized with numerous awards, including at the Cannes Film Festival.

Content: Invite participants to view the video.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the video? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

With the first sign, what human emotion is the man relying on to elicit donations? Does it work to inspire passers-by to give? Why or why not?

What does the second sign do that the first sign did not?

Why do you think passers-by give to the man once the sign is changed?

How would you describe the role of the "sign-changer?"

Implication questions:

What message about service does the video hold for you? How does the video help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Charles Baudelaire, *Let's Beat Up the Poor!* (1864)

Introduction: Charles Baudelaire (1821–1867) was a French writer whose works frequently addressed the subject of modern life in Paris. Always provocative, he assailed the boundaries of mid-nineteenth-century French society with his revolutionary and often scandalous satire. In this bizarre urban parable, Baudelaire presents a narrator who has a startling revelation about ending poverty. Baudelaire invokes the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates, and two French doctors, Lélut and Baillarger, to rationalize the narrator's alarming action.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

How does the narrator describe the beggar's appearance and attitude toward him, a potential benefactor?

In the context of Paris street culture in the author's era, a beggar would have been considered a "low-life" character. What does the narrator's "Good Angel" say about the beggar?

What do you think the narrator hopes to accomplish with his shocking action?

What are the results of the narrator's intervention? What does he give to the beggar at the end? What does he ask him to do in return?

What is the narrator's definition of authentic charity?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Glossary:

Demon: A supernatural being intermediate between gods and men. From Greek mythology, *daimōn*, rendered in English as 'Demon' for the French equivalent, *Démon*. Socrates described having a personal *daimōn* that was an inner voice that gave him direction, though modern interpretations of this inner voice have equated it with the philosopher's conscience. Christian writers interpreted the word as representing an evil spirit, creating the usage of demon as it currently exists in English. Baudelaire is aware of the diverse nature of the term—mediating force, malevolent spirit, guiding conscience—and qualifies his inner voice as a "Good Angel."

Lélut and Baillarger: Louis François Lélut (1804–1877) and Jules Baillarger (1809–1890). Influential French psychologists and medical professionals who wrote significant works of early psychology rooted in the tradition of Western philosophy. In 1836 Lélut published *On the Demon of Socrates*, which examined Socrates' concept of the *daimōn* from a modern medical perspective, in which he concluded that the Ancient Greek philosopher was insane. This explains Baudelaire's reference to the certificate of insanity signed by the two learned doctors. This rhetorical device sets up the rest of the story, where the narrator explains the shocking manner in which he treated the beggar.

Bertolt Brecht, *A Bed for the Night* (1931)

Introduction: Bertolt Brecht (1898–1956), pronounced 'brekt', was an influential German poet and playwright active in the first half of the twentieth century. He was highly influenced by Marxist thought. He wrote at a time in European history—after the catastrophic disaster of World War I and during the rise of Fascism and Nazism—when left-leaning philosophies were common in intellectual circles on both sides of the Atlantic. "A Bed for the Night" was written in 1931, just two years after the stock market crash of 1929 had inaugurated the Great Depression. In these years, Americans were hard hit by the collapse of the financial system. In New York, bread lines were common and destitute people built makeshift dwellings in Central Park.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

What is the man on the street attempting to do? Could/should somebody today attempt to do the same thing?

Why does the narrator tell us that the bed for the night "won't change the world"? What will it do?

Why do you think the narrator says, "don't put the book down on reading this, man"?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Glossary:

age of exploitation: A phrase Brecht used for capitalism.

Gwendolyn Brooks, *The Lovers of the Poor* (1963)

Introduction: Gwendolyn Brooks (1917–2000) was one of the most highly regarded and widely read poets of the twentieth century. She holds the distinction of being the first Black author to win the Pulitzer Prize. She was also poetry consultant to the Library of Congress and poet laureate of the State of Illinois. Many of Brooks' works displayed a political consciousness, especially those from the 1960s and later, with several of her poems reflecting the civil rights activism of that period.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

The title of the poem continues into the body of poem with the word 'arrive'. Why do you think the poem has a double start?

How would you describe the narrator's tone towards the philanthropic ladies?

What do you think is the purpose of the Ladies' Betterment League? What do they hope to accomplish? Do you think they succeed? Why, or why not?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Glossary:

canter: A term used to describe the running gait of horses.

chitterlings: An economical dish, usually made from the small intestines of a pig. Cuisine using organ meat is historically associated with poor people who could not afford finer cuts of meat.

cross the Water: Cross the Atlantic Ocean in June to visit Great Britain and other European countries during the early summer.

fistic: Having to do with boxing.

hie: Go quickly.

middle passage: The ocean voyage between West Africa and the Caribbean that brought captive Africans to slavery in the Americas.

saunter on Michigan, Easter mornings: Michigan Avenue is one of Chicago's most fashionable boulevards, and a prominent place for the well-to-do to make a public appearance after religious services on Easter.

César Chávez, *The Mexican-American and the Church* (1968)

Note: ***The length of this text will require participants to read it in advance.***

Introduction: César Chávez (1927–1993) was an American labor leader and civil rights activist who, with Dolores Huerta, co-founded the National Farm Workers Association (later the United Farm Workers, UFW) in 1962. Born in Yuma, Arizona, to a family of sharecroppers, Chávez started his working life as a farm laborer. He became the best-known Chicano civil rights activist, and was strongly supported by the American labor movement, which was eager to enroll Hispanic members. His public-relations approach to unionism and aggressive but nonviolent tactics made the farm workers' struggle a moral cause with nationwide support. At the time of this speech, California farm workers—mostly Filipinos, Chicanos, and Mexicans—labored in inhumane conditions for low wages, as employers ignored state laws on working conditions and denied them the lawful right to join unions.

Content: Given the length, consider carefully how you will use the text to guide the discussion.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

How does Chávez conceive of the relationship between the powerful landowners and the workers?

What role does Chávez wish the Church, as a whole, would play in the lives of the farm workers?

What is Chávez advocating for when he laments the fact that "money is spent for food baskets for the needy instead of for effective action to eradicate the causes of poverty"? Is one more important than the other?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Glossary:

California Migrant Ministry: A Protestant ecumenical group, begun in 1920 to address the extreme needs of migrant farmers in the Southwest. The organization soon spread throughout the U.S. Migrant Ministries is now the National Farm Worker Ministry.

Catholic Charities: The consolidated community and social service activities of the Catholic Church.

Community Service Organization: An important California Latino civil rights organization founded in 1947, most famous for training César Chávez and Dolores Huerta.

Delano: A farm town in the San Joaquin valley that became the epicenter of United Farm Workers in the 1960s.

Glossary cont'd:

diocese: The area or territorial jurisdiction that is controlled by a bishop in the Catholic Church, or other denomination, if specified.

ecumenical: Representing a number of different faith traditions. In this instance, refers to activity that promotes unity among the world's Christian churches.

Huelga (Spanish): Strike.

parish: In the Catholic Church, a small administrative district typically having its own church and a priest or pastor, to which local community members belong. Most Catholic parishes designate a specific geographical area or neighborhood.

Adam Davidson, *The Lunch Date* (1990)

Note: ***Be sure that online access and video projection are available during the session.***

Introduction: Adam Davidson (b. 1964) was a graduate student at Columbia University when he made *The Lunch Date*, his third film. *The Lunch Date* earned an Academy Award in 1990 for Best Short Subject and launched Davidson's career as a film director. Since then, Davidson has directed episodes for several acclaimed television series, including *Fear the Walking Dead, Deadwood, Grey's Anatomy,* and *Treme*. Davidson holds a BA from Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, where he wrote an honors thesis on "Racism in American Popular Culture in the Early Twentieth Century."

Content: Invite participants to view the online video.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the video? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

What is your first impression of the woman as she walks through the train station?

What do you make of the woman's reaction upon learning that the salad will cost $3?

Does the woman's interaction with the homeless man ever change? If so, when and why?

What do you notice about the homeless man and how he reacts over time to the woman?

How do you think the woman feels upon making her surprising discovery when she returns for her bag?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the video hold for you? How does the video help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Adam Davis, excerpt from *What We Don't Talk About When We Don't Talk About Service* (2006)

Introduction: Adam Davis (b. 1970) helped launch the *Justice Talking* program in 2006 and is the co-editor of *The Civically Engaged Reader*, a selection of texts that examines public service from diverse points of view. He is currently the executive director of Oregon Humanities, a state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. In "What We Don't Talk About When We Don't Talk About Service," Davis outlines five motivations for why people serve. He begins the essay by noting a recent increase in service activities and suggests that careful reflection on service will benefit those who serve and those who are being served.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

What is the author wrestling with in this passage?

The author makes a distinction between internal goods and external goods resulting from service. What are some examples of internal and external goods?

References to God make several appearances in the text. According to the author, what role might divinity, religion, and piety play in service work?

What conclusion about the nature of service does the author arrive at towards the end of the text?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Alan Fisher, *Lou Ambers Tips His Hat* (1935)

Note: ***After downloading the image, consider whether you will project a digital version or print quality copies for discussion.***

Introduction: Alan Fisher was a staff photographer at the New York *World-Telegram* and Sun Newspapers in the 1930s and '40s. This photograph was taken when he was on assignment for a story about tramps, or "hobos." Not necessarily homeless, hobos were transient men who frequently rode trains, searching for work or adventure. They were a fixture of the Great Depression during the 1930s. The photographer recorded the subject's name, Lou Ambers, though he gave no information about who Ambers was.

Content: Invite participants to look carefully at the image.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the image? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

How do you interpret the expression on Ambers' face?

Why do you think the photographer chose to compose the picture as he did, leaving one person out of the frame?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the image hold for you? How does the image help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Viktor E. Frankl, excerpt from *Man's Search for Meaning* (1959)

Introduction: Viktor E. Frankl (1905–1997) was a Viennese psychotherapist, university professor, and author. His most widely read work, *Man's Search for Meaning* (1959), is an account of his imprisonment in World War II Nazi concentration camps, including Auschwitz and Dachau. In the book, Frankl explores transcendent experience amid extreme suffering, as well as the nature of moral freedom. In this setting he derived his theories about human existence, and the possibility of triumph over the most difficult of circumstances.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

In these passages on suffering, how does the author suggest people can triumph over their circumstances?

Are there circumstances in your life that have led you to find meaning in suffering?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Ailish Hopper, *Did It Ever Occur to You That Maybe You're Falling in Love?* (2016)

Introduction: Ailish Hopper (b. 1969) is a poet, essayist, community-based educator, and performer. She is the author of *Dark~Sky Society* (2014) and the chapbook *Bird in the Head* (2005) among other published works. She currently teaches in the Creative Writing and Peace Studies programs at Goucher College.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

Who is the "we" in Hopper's poem?

Though "the problem" is not identified, based on the actions taken against it, what qualities does the problem have?

What do you think is the main point of Hopper's poem?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Lowell Jaeger, *Okay* (2012)

Introduction: Lowell Jaeger (b. 1951) is the author of six collections of poems. He is founding editor of Many Voices Press and the editor of *New Poets of the American West* (2010), an anthology of poets from western states. He is a graduate of the Iowa Writer's Workshop and the recipient of a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts, among other literary prizes. In 2010, Jaeger was awarded the Montana Governor's Humanities Award for his work in promoting civic discourse. Jaeger has been an outspoken supporter of AmeriCorps in Montana, and has led *Justice Talking* sessions with members of the Montana Conservation Corps and Montana Campus Corps.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

Why does the narrator agree to pick up the man in the road?

What is the man's expressed need? What other needs might he have?

What kind of help does the narrator offer? Is the help he offers useful?

What are the different ways the word 'okay' is used in the poem?

How do you feel about the narrator's decisions?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Franz Kafka, *The Helmsman* (ca. 1915–1920)

Introduction: Franz Kafka (1883–1924) was a Czech Jewish writer whose stories use dark humor to explore themes of absurdity and social alienation. Although widely regarded as one of the major figures of twentieth-century literature, Kafka's work went largely unnoticed during his lifetime. After studying law, Kafka entered professional life as an insurance company clerk. Kafka's most famous works, such as *The Trial* and *The Metamorphosis*, explore what Kafka saw as the surreal and sometimes nightmarish qualities of modern life.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

Why do you think the narrator asks the stranger and then the crew, "Am I the helmsman?" What authority does he have?

What do you think the narrator expects from the crew when he summons them?

What do you think is the meaning of the nod the crew gives the narrator as they look at the tall, dark man?

How is power represented in this story?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

John F. Kennedy Jr., *Inaugural Address* (1961)

Introduction: John F. Kennedy Jr. (1917–1963) was the 35th president of the United States from 1961 until his assassination in 1963. The background for Kennedy's inaugural address was the Cold War with the Soviet Union, and in particular, the threat of all-out nuclear war. The 1950s and 1960s were also a time of important changes around the world. European countries that had controlled much of Africa and Asia for almost a hundred years were retreating from their colonial possessions. Many hoped that national self-determination was now possible for these newly liberated countries. However, Soviet expansion abroad threatened to absorb many of them into the Soviet Bloc. Kennedy's inaugural address laid the groundwork for the Peace Corps that offered thousands of Americans opportunities to serve around the globe. AmeriCorps is frequently referred to as the "domestic Peace Corps."

Content: Consider carefully how you will use the video to guide the discussion.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the video? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

What do you think Kennedy means when he says, "To those peoples in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves"? How does he suggest his listeners do this?

How does the fear of Communism, as Kennedy describes it, relate to the renewed call for public service?

Kennedy's inaugural address took place exactly half way through the Civil Rights Movement (1954–1968). What does Kennedy say about civil rights and other domestic issues? How do domestic matters such as citizens' rights relate to the vision for global engagement Kennedy proposes?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the video hold for you? How does the video help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Tracey Kidder, excerpt from *Mountains Beyond Mountains* (2003)

Note: ***The length of the text will require participants to read it in advance.***

Introduction: Tracy Kidder (b. 1945) is an American writer of nonfiction books. He received the Pulitzer Prize for *The Soul of a New Machine* (1981), about the creation of a new computer at Data General Corporation. Published in 2003, *Mountains Beyond Mountains* explores Kidder's relationship with doctor and anthropologist Paul Farmer and their shared experiences in Haiti following the American-backed overthrow of the military government.

Content: Given the length, consider carefully how you will use the text to guide the discussion.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in this text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

Why do you think the narrator senses Dr. Farmer knows Haiti "far better" than Captain Carroll?

How does the narrator's opinion of Dr. Farmer change, and why?

In your opinion, what, if anything, is complicated about Dr. Farmer's leadership?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Glossary:

coup (pron. 'kü'): A sudden, violent, and often illegal seizure of power from a government.

Creole: The predominant Haitian language, which is based on a combination of antiquated French and West African, Spanish, Portuguese, and Taíno speech. While the official language of Haiti is French, Creole is spoken by the majority of the population.

junta (pron. 'hůn-tə'): A military or political group that rules a country after taking power by force.

Purgatory (in Roman Catholic doctrine): A place or state of suffering inhabited by the souls of sinners who are purging their sins before going to heaven.

tap-taps: Gaily painted buses or pick-up trucks that serve as taxis in Haiti.

U.S. Army's School of the Americas (S.O.A.): A United States Department of Defense Institute located at Fort Benning near Columbus, Georgia, that has provided military training to government personnel in U.S.-allied Latin American nations.

Etheridge Knight, *A Wasp Woman Visits a Black Junkie in Prison* (1986)

Introduction: Etheridge Knight (1931–1991) was an acclaimed African American poet whose 1968 debut volume, *Poems from Prison*, recalled his eight-year sentence for robbery. His work combined literary traits derived from African American culture and from the American poetic tradition stemming from Walt Whitman. Knight attained recognition as a major poet in his lifetime, earning both Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award nominations for *Belly Song and Other Poems*.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

How would you describe the mindset of the prisoner in the beginning of the poem?

Why is the woman there at the prison? What sense do you have of her?

How would you descibe the impact of the whole encounter?

Does the prisoner's mindset change by the end of the poem?

Who is served by the encounter?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Glossary:

Wasp: White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (W.A.S.P.). An informal, sometimes disparaging term for a group of high-status and influential White Americans of English Protestant ancestry. The term applies to a group who have historically controlled significant financial, political, and social power in the United States.

Anachronistic: A person or a thing that is chronologically out of place; especially one from a former age that is incongruous in the present.

Dorothea Lange, *Migrant Mother* (1936)

Note: ***After downloading the image, consider whether you will project a digital version or print quality copies.***

Introduction: In 1935, the federal government's Farm Security Administration (FSA) sent photographers across the United States to document the effects of the Great Depression. FSA photographer Dorothea Lange (1895–1965) met the so-named "migrant mother" in 1936 in a migrant camp near Nipomo, California, where thousands had gathered to harvest a pea crop.

Content: Invite participants to look carefully at the image.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the image? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

What do you think the photographer is trying to say about the conditions of farm workers?

Where in the image do you see strength? Where do you see weakness?

Why do you think the children are looking away from the camera?

If the children were not in the photograph, would the image's power be lessened?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the image hold for you? How does the image help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Cecilia Muñoz, *Getting Angry Can Be a Good Thing* (2005)

Introduction: Cecilia Muñoz (b. 1962) wrote *Getting Angry Can Be a Good Thing* when she was Senior Vice President at the National Council of La Raza, the largest Latino advocacy organization in the United States. Subsequently, she served in the Obama White House, first as Director of Intergovernmental Affairs and later as Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council. She is the author of, among other works, *Unfinished Business: The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986* (1990).

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

According to Muñoz, what are the benefits of anger as fuel for social justice work? What are its limitations?

What does Muñoz identify as some of the challenges in her line of work? How do you identify with this?

In what ways does Muñoz fill "the hollow places?" Do you identify with this?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Naomi Shihab Nye, *Gate A-4* (2007)

Introduction: Poet and novelist Naomi Shihab Nye (b. 1952) is a contemporary Palestinian American author, songwriter, and poet who was born in St. Louis, Missouri. Known for poetry that lends a fresh perspective to ordinary events, people, and objects, Nye has said that, for her, "the primary source of poetry has always been local life, random characters met on the streets, our own ancestry...." She has been recognized numerous times for her work in poetry and literature. Nye lives in San Antonio, Texas.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in this text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

Why do you think the author says, "Well – one pauses these days"?

What do you think witnesses to the scene at Gate A-4 were thinking before the narrator arrived compared to after?

Why do you think the story concludes with, "Not everything is lost"? What is the "everything" the narrator refers to?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Naomi Shihab Nye, *Trying to Name What Doesn't Change* (1995)

Introduction: Poet and novelist Naomi Shihab Nye (b. 1952) is a contemporary Palestinian American author, songwriter, and poet who was born in St. Louis, Missouri. Known for poetry that lends a fresh perspective to ordinary events, people, and objects, Nye has said that, for her, "the primary source of poetry has always been local life, random characters met on the streets, our own ancestry..." She has been recognized numerous times for her work in poetry and literature. Nye lives in San Antonio, Texas.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in this text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

What does Roselva believe about change compared to Peter?

What examples of change does the poet give, and how do you interpret her understanding of change?

How do you think about change in your life?

How do you think about change in the larger world?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Mary Oliver, *The Buddha's Last Instruction* (1990)

Introduction: Mary Oliver (b. 1935) was born in Maple Heights, Ohio. Her poetry is deeply aware of the natural world, particularly of her adopted state of Massachusetts. Oliver's poetry has won numberous awards, including the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award. The Buddha—also known as Siddhārtha Gautama or Shakyamuni Buddha—was an ascetic sage on whose teachings Buddhism was founded. He is believed to have lived and taught mostly in the eastern part of Ancient India sometime between the sixth and fourth centuries BCE.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

What is the Buddha's last instruction? How can this be seen to relate to the strand of the poem about the speaker's experience of the sunrise?

What response did the crowd show to the Buddha's last instruction? How might this be interpreted?

What is your personal reaction upon reading this poem? Do you identify with the speaker?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Rachel Naomi Remen, excerpt from *Helping, Fixing or Serving?* (1999)

Introduction: Rachel Naomi Remen, M.D., (b. 1938) is associate clinical professor of family and community medicine at the University of California San Francisco Medical School and co-founder and medical director of the Commonweal Cancer Help Program. She is author of the bestseller, *Kitchen Table Wisdom: Stories That Heal*.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

According to the author, what kinds of skills do helping and fixing require? What kinds of traits does serving require?

What different qualities did the healthcare professionals demonstrate to the author when providing medical attention to her?

What do the "servers" gain when they serve? What do the "served" gain?

What do you think the author means by "My pain is the source of my compassion; my woundedness is the key to my empathy." Why and how might pain and woundedness be important?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Rachel Smith, *Hallelujah the Saviors Are Here* (2012)

Note: ***Be sure that online access and good sound quality are available during the session.***

Introduction: Poet Rachel Smith (b. 1994) wrote *Hallelujah the Saviors Are Here* when she was 18 and a high school senior at Kenwood Academy in Chicago. She first presented *Hallelujah* in 2012 at Louder Than a Bomb, a youth poetry festival.

Content: **Invite participants to listen to the piece**.

Observation questions:

What's going on in the piece? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

What aspects of service work do you think Smith was responding to negatively when she wrote her condemnation of teachers who come from outside the community?

How do race and class play roles in the piece?

What is Rachel Smith's definition of a "true educator?"

Implication questions:

What message about service does the piece hold for you? How does the piece help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Anna Swir, *The Same Inside* (1996)

Introduction: Anna Swir (1909–1984) was a Polish poet whose works deal with themes of motherhood and sexuality, as well as her experiences in the Polish Resistance movement during World War II. She also wrote frankly about the female body in various stages of life.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

Where, at the start of the poem, is the speaker headed? What do you think she means by "a love feast?"

How would you describe the encounter between the speaker and the beggar woman?

Who do you think the speaker is referring to when she says, "one needs someone who is close?" Why can't she leave the woman?

Can you imagine doing this with a homeless person on a street in the United States?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Thai Life Insurance, *Happiness is Helping Others* (2014)

Note: ***Be sure that online access and video projection are available during the session.***

Introduction: Thai Life Insurance was founded in 1942 and is headquartered in Bangkok, Thailand. It is an insurance and financial services group. The company is known for commissioning a number of emotional television commercials that have garnered global attention.

Content: Invite participants to view the video.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the video? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

How would you describe the protagonist and his interactions with other people?

In the beginning, how do witnesses respond to the protagonist's acts of kindness?

What does the video suggest is the result of kindness to others?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the video hold for you? How does the video help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Miller Williams, *Of History and Hope* (1997)

Introduction: Poet, editor, critic, and educator, Miller Williams (1930–2015) was born in Hoxie, Arkansas, in 1930. His work is known for its musicality as well as its realism. Williams wrote poems grounded in the material of American life, frequently using dialogue and dramatic monologue to capture the pitch and tone of American voices. Williams wrote *Of History and Hope* for the inaugural celebration of President Bill Clinton's second term.

Content: Invite participants to read the text.

Observation questions:

What do you see going on in the text? What do you notice?

Interpretation questions:

What do you think the poet intends when he says "We mean to be the people we meant to be?"

What hopeful ideal does the poet put forth?

What warning does the poet issue?

Implication questions:

What message about service does the text hold for you? How does the text help you think about the service experiences you've had or about the concept of service?

Justice Talking

The Meaning of Service

Planning Worksheet

Ohio HUMANITIES
REAL ISSUES. REAL CONVERSATIONS.

SERVE OHIO
Ohio Commission on Service and Volunteerism

Planning Outline

After you have chosen your content selection follow these steps to plan your *Justice Talking* session.

Welcome and Introductions:

Welcome the group, do introductions and attend to logistics, such as snacks and restroom locations. Consider how you will describe *Justice Talking*, especially if it is the first time. You may wish to use or adapt this description:

> "*Justice Talking* is a program for AmeriCorps Members in this state, that encourages reflection on service. We use content to invite multiple perspectives and shape frank conversations on values, justice, and civic engagement. The practice of reflection is designed to help us better appreciated our work together."

Icebreaker:

Consider what icebreaker you would like to do (if any).

Ground Rules:

Consider what ground rules you will share with the group, for example: "no right or wrong answers," "listen well to others," or "share from your experience."

Framing the Discussion:

Each *Justice Talking* selection has themes listed in the table of contents. You may wish to say something like:

> "Today I'd like us to have a conversation about [leadership], and I've chosen a text that I think will help us have that conversation well. I'm really interested to know how this can help us reflect on some of the work we do here."

Content and Facilitation Notes

Franz Kafka, *The Helmsman* (ca. 1915–1920)

Introduction: Franz Kafka (1883–1924) was a Czech Jewish writer whose stories use dark humor to explore themes of absurdity and social alienation. Although widely regarded as one of the major figures of twentieth-century literature, Kafka's work went largely unnoticed during his lifetime. After studying law, Kafka entered professional life as an insurance company clerk. Kafka's most famous works, such as *The Trial* and *The Metamorphosis*, explore what Kafka saw as the surreal and sometimes nightmarish qualities of modern life.

ticipants to read the text.

Context and Questions:

Decide if you will follow the Facilitation Notes as a script or adapt it for your group. Either way, be sure to provide relevant context and employ the *Justice Talking* facilitation method: open-ended questions for observation, interpretation, and implication, as well as follow-up questions and active listening.

Closing:

How will you close the discussion?

Planning Worksheet

Content Author/Title:

Date of session:

Location:

Welcome, Introductions and Logistics:

- Welcome and facilitator introductions:
- Group introductions:
- Snacks and restroom locations:
- *Justice Talking* introduction:

Icebreaker:

Ground Rules:

Framing the Discussion:

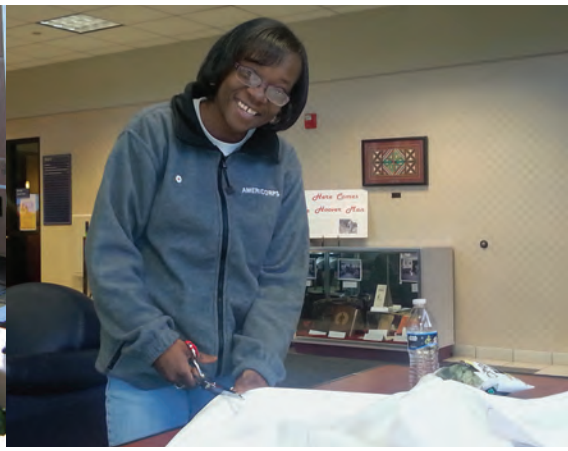
Context and Questions:

Closing:

Justice Talking

The Meaning of Service

Facilitation Log



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Justice Talking: *The Meaning of Service*

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Facilitation Log

Please document your *Justice Talking* sessions here. At the end of your service year, please submit a copy to Rebeccah Verhoff-Kiss at rebeccah.verhoff-kiss@serveohio.gov.

Facilitator:	**Program:**

Date | Time	Co-Facilitator (If any)	Content: Author/Title	Venue and Address with ZIP CODE	Number of Members
Comments:				
Comments:				
Comments:				
Comments:				
Comments:				
Comments:				

Ohio Humanities is the state-based partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Through grants and sponsored programs we help Ohioans interpret the past, imagine the future, and define individual values. We're committed to creating vibrant communities throughout our state. Discover more about Ohio Humanities at www.ohiohumanities.org.

ServeOhio, Ohio's Governor-appointed commission on service and volunteerism, strengthens Ohio communities through AmeriCorps and volunteer engagement. Through programs and initiatives funded and supported by ServeOhio, thousands of Ohioans of all ages engage in and are recognized for their service. Interested participants may learn more about ServeOhio at serveohio.org.