

Reading Circles

The Reading Circles activity will provide you with opportunities to critically read and analyze scholarly texts, to share and discuss your ideas orally with your peers, and to practice collaborative note-taking and collaborative writing on an online platform.

In groups of four-five students, you will have an oral discussion about required readings #2 and #3 in which group members will take on different roles. At the end, each group will collaboratively write a paragraph with the key takeaways of the oral discussion.

The oral discussions will take place on **two Mondays during class time**. As a preparation for the discussions, **each group member will post their contribution on the collaborative writing document (Etherpad) by 2 pm of the Sunday before the corresponding Monday**. Following the deadline for this preparation will be considered for the final grade.

Since there are four different roles and the groups might be composed of five members, two members will take on the role of Commentator (each member will write and post their own comment/critique).

In the Reading Circles, students will take turns in the roles of:

- **Role 1 - Questioner: One member** of your group will propose one question for further discussion related to the reading and post on the group's collaborative writing document in advance (by 2 pm of the Sunday before the corresponding Monday) for everyone to discuss orally. This member should have possible answers to the question prepared in advanced to be able to engage once the other members engage in the discussion. (Maximum of 150 words)
- **Role 2 - Person who identifies key idea: One member** of your group will identify the key idea from the reading and write on the group's collaborative writing document in advance (by 2 pm of the Sunday before the corresponding Monday) for everyone to further explore these ideas orally. This member will use at least one example to start exploring this idea with everyone (examples from the article and from 'life' are useful). (Maximum of 150 words)
- **Role 3 - Linker of ideas: One member** of your group will take on this role. This member will link at least one idea from the reading with other references and ideas and write on the group's collaborative writing document in advance (by 2 pm of the Sunday before the

corresponding Monday) for everyone to discuss orally. (Maximum of 150 words per member)

- **Role 4 - Commentator:** One member of your group will propose one critique or comment about the article and write on the group's collaborative writing document in advance (by 2 pm of the Sunday before the corresponding Monday) for everyone to discuss orally. *(The critique/comment can include different aspects of the article, such as the research methodology, the method used for analysis, the discussion of the results, the theoretical framework chosen by the authors, the language features used in the article, etc.)* (Maximum of 150 words)

Note: If a group has five members, two members will take on the role of Commentator.

Tasks to be completed by group members collaboratively:

1) Taking notes: Group members will “share the load” to take notes during the oral discussion. These notes will be written in the group's collaborative writing document.

2) Writing the key takeaways of the oral discussion: All group members will work together to write a 250-300 words paragraph (10% more or less) with the key takeaways of the oral discussion. This paragraph will be written at the end of the group's collaborative writing document and will also be posted by one member on behalf of the entire group on the corresponding assignment on Canvas.

Notes:

- Examples of each role's contribution and the final paragraph with the key takeaways of the oral discussion are posted on Canvas and will be discussed during class before the start of the Reading Circles.
- Before engaging in the two graded Reading Circles, the groups will complete a “practice” ungraded Reading Circle about required reading #1 and will receive feedback on that.
- The members of the Reading Circles will decide how the rotation of roles will be organized, as long members do not play the same role more than once.
- To have a successful discussion, all members in the group should read the article in advance, plan their contribution according to their roles, and follow the deadlines.

- Each member will use a different color on the Etherpad document when writing their contributions.
- You must ensure that all members have equal opportunities to engage in the oral discussion and in the writing of the notes and the key takeaways of the discussion.
- All work must be done in your group's collaborative writing document.
- For each Reading Circle, **90% of your grade** will come from the group submission of the discussion key takeaways and will be given by your instructor. **10% of your grade** will come from the **peer and self-assessment** of your individual contributions to the Reading Circle. This assessment will be done through **peerScholar**.
- For the submission of the key takeaways, each group will receive a shared grade. The default grade for the completion of substantial work is 70% (Meets expectations). The group will receive a grade and feedback in one of the following descriptions: Fails to Meet Expectations; Below Expectations, Meets Expectations (substantial work), Exceeds expectations.
- For more detailed information about assessment, check the rubric posted on Canvas.
- If you encounter any individual challenges or within your group, please contact me as soon as possible. You will not be able to change groups after the Reading Circles have started.
- To identify your group, see on Canvas: "People" – Reading Circles.

Suggested Timing of the Reading Circle Session:

Total of 50 minutes:

- **7-8 minutes** for discussion of each student's contribution and note-taking (**32-35 minutes**).
- **15 minutes** for writing the key takeaways of the oral discussion (paragraph format).

This activity adapts materials from Dr. Laila Ferreira's worksheet "Small Group Facilitation" and from Dr. Jackie Rea's "Buzz Sessions: Group Activity".