

Discussion Process and Principles

Thank you for taking the time to check out the DPP Teacher Support Materials. Let's start with a quick tour of your materials. They include the suggested syllabi (don't you just love that word?); the CD script; and the Teacher's Notes; and us, the authors. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions we would love to hear from you at charles@languagesolutionsinc.com and davidh@languagesolutionsinc.com. Drop us a line!

Overview of Teacher's Book

The Teacher's Notes themselves are divided into 8 sections. Why? Each unit or "Loop" in the student text is divided into 8 sections. The Teacher's Notes below will guide you through the 8 sections in the loop. We have also included a bonus section, "And Now A Word (or 12) About Discussion."

Each section in the Teacher's Notes is divided into 2 parts. First, the "rationale" explains the "what" and "why" of that section in the student text: what it is and why it is important in the larger scheme of the text. (If you read the rationale, there is a better chance that you will be able to follow the authors' twisted thinking!) The second part of each section is the "procedure" that answers the "how" question: How in the world do you expect me to do this in my class? We give you several options.

We wish you luck (not that you will need it!) and hope that you enjoy *Discussion Process and Principles* as much as we enjoyed writing it for you!

Welcome to a whole new world of discussion!

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Metaphor and Title Pages

Three Stages; Three Metaphors

Discussion Process and Principles follows discussion through three stages: Discussion as Sharing; Discussion as Exploring; and Discussion as Decision Making. To capture the spirit of each stage, we employed a different metaphor for each one. For example, we used “what do you bring to the table” as the metaphor for Discussion as Sharing, For Discussion as Exploring, we used the image of a map for “mapping” our “positions”. And, for Discussion as Decision Making, we exploited the metaphor of the box to represent thinking “inside the box” and “outside the box.” To make these metaphors as explicit as possible (without hitting you over the head!) we graphically represented each metaphor on a title page at the start of each stage.

Title Pages Guide You

In addition to a title page at the start of each stage, there is another one at the start of each of the book’s seven units or discussion “loops.” The loop title page describes the nature of this particular discussion loop, the principle governing it, and the topic featured in the discussion. (We put these title pages in here so that when we use the book we would be one step ahead of our students!)

0.1 Metaphor Pages

Metaphor makes the abstract familiar, friendly and concrete!

0.2 Loop Pages

Doing the Discussion Labs

Learners Experiment with Discussion

Remember those boring lab activities you hated in high school chemistry class? The ones where you did something with test tubes and Bunsen burners? And then you had to explain what happened, what principle you had observed or experienced? Well, these Discussion Labs are just like that—except for the boring part. (We hope!) Each unit or discussion loop begins with two or three lab activities. We thought it would be really neat if rather than just *telling* the students what was important for discussion, we could somehow create a very controlled, safe environment where the class would *experience* the principle. For example, we figured that just telling the students that they should “reach for synergy” would not cut it. We could imagine the blank looks on the student faces: What is “synergy”? How do you do it? I don’t understand. Will it be on the test? Etc. To avoid those puzzled looks, we built a lab where the students would have the opportunity to experience synergy firsthand. Other labs include, Discussion Dynamics, Diversity, Brainstorming, Thinking Outside The Box, and Multi-Dimensional Thinking.

1.1 Rationale: The What and Why

*A safe environment
where learners
experience the
principles of discussion.*

Doing the Discussion Labs (con't.)

The Facilitator's Role

A typical discussion lab starts with a few sentences of background. This is meant primarily for you, the teacher, to give you an idea of how we thought this lab fits within the overall DPP model of discussion. We hope that you will expand on this explanation using your own experience.

Next is the “command line” that gives the instructions for the lab. Sometimes the lab begins with individual prep work, but the lab itself is usually done in discussion groups of 3 or 4 “discussants.” During the lab stage it is important for the facilitator to monitor the lab groups carefully to clarify and augment instructions.

Each lab concludes with a **Discussion Lab Analysis** where focused questions help learners reflect on what they just experienced. When possible we have encouraged students to compare their lab experience to their own communicative style when using English. The Discussion Lab Analysis also serves as a bridge to the following **Discussion Principle** pages.

1.2 Procedure: The How

During the lab stage the facilitator monitors the lab groups carefully.

Doing the Discussion Principles

Why Discussions Fail

In our research on discussion, we identified seven distinct types of discussion, each characterized by a different task or outcome. We also found that each of these seven discussion types was linked to a different approach or principle. The success of each discussion seemed to depend on how well the participants practice the principle governing that type of discussion. We also found that the discussion could be derailed by participants not practicing the principle. Or, in other cases, confusion and frustration could surface when the participants practice a principle that is incongruent with the type of discussion.

For example, Soccer Mom has a bad day. The kids behave like demons, the credit card company makes a mistake on the monthly bill, the car breaks down, the cell phone doesn't work, and the tow truck guy talks to her like an 8 year old—and that is just the morning!

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2.1 Rationale: The What and Why

The bestselling book Getting To Yes is about principled negotiation; the bestseller Seven Habits of Successful People is about principles for success; Discussion Process and Principles is about principled discussion.

Doing the Discussion Principles (con't.)

In the evening, when her partner comes home she tries to share her day's trials (Discussion as Sharing) with someone she expects to listen non-judgmentally (Discussion Principle #1: Respect Every Voice: Be a Good Listener). However, her partner, The Engineer, listens and thinks these are problems he needs to help her solve (Discussion as Problem Solving) and that the purpose of the discussion is to find out why these things happened (Discussion Principle #6: Uncover Your Assumptions). Both parties end up frustrated. Most of us have had similar experiences. Although we enter into a discussion in good faith, we end up at odds with our discussion partners. The mismatch of discussion type and purpose soon descends into a conflict of personalities.

Language competency notwithstanding, we found in our research that discussions often fail for one of two reasons. In some cases, the participants are not aware of the discussion principles and therefore do not make a conscious effort to practice them. Or, as in the example above, the type of discussion we are trying to have is different from the type of discussion other participants are trying to have. Identifying what kind of discussion we are entering into, and knowing which principle to practice, is the key to success. Good discussion is driven by principles, not personalities.

2.1 Rationale: The What and Why

“Identifying what kind of discussion we are entering into, and knowing which principle to practice is the key to success.”

Doing the Discussion Principles (con't.)

CD Demonstrates Principles

In writing this textbook, we have sought to show rather than tell, to place experience over explanation. As the reader will remember, the **Discussion Labs** put learners in a controlled setting where they could experience a key element of discussion firsthand. Similarly, learners can experience the **Discussion Principles** through a study of contrasts on the CD. The first of two listenings features a dismal but comic discussion that fails. Listeners can laugh at the participants and possibly see themselves practicing similar communication faux pas. The second listening shows the participants practicing the target principle and getting better results. In simpler terms, the first listening is the “bad” example; the second listening is the “good” example. The first listening is the problem; the second is the solution. The following pages present options for covering the Principle Pages. Enjoy!

2.2 Procedure: The How

“Listeners can laugh at the participants and possibly see themselves practicing similar communication faux pas.”

Options for The Principle Pages

Listening 1: The Left Hand Page

(Example of Discussants Not Practicing the Target Principle)

STEP 1: Pre-listening

Questions might include:

1. What is the topic of the discussion?
2. How many participants are there? (This is a backhanded way of focusing listener attention on the illustration.)

STEP 2: Listening

Play and enjoy! Students can compare responses to the pre-listening questions in pairs and groups. (As an option they can write their answers on the board.)

STEP 3: Comprehension Questions

Preview the Comprehension Questions and replay the CD. (The Comprehension Questions check listeners' understanding of the situation, the type of discussion, the topic of the discussion, the purpose of the discussion, etc.)

STEP 4: Comprehension Question Review

Students discuss Comprehension Questions in pairs or groups. The teacher can monitor groups and see if another listening is necessary. (Again, as an option, students can put their answers on the board.)

STEP 5: Discussion Principle Questions

Preview the Discussion Principle Questions, and students discuss in pairs or groups. Whereas The Comprehension Questions above focus on understanding, The Discussion Principle Questions ask students to venture beyond understanding and analyze the discussion. This activity invites students to place themselves in the discussion by asking each other a variety of questions including:

a. How would you feel if...?

Example: "How would you feel if you were a member of this group?"

This line of questioning invites learners to explicitly identify with the group on the CD.

b. What would you do differently if...?

Options for The Principle Pages (continued)

Example: “What would you do differently if you were Miki?”

This line of questioning calls for analysis of what went wrong in the discussion.

c. Have you ever...?

Example: “Have you ever reacted to a question like Miki did? When?”

This line of questioning asks students to look at their own communication style and consider the behavior they practice in discussions with family, friends, or co-workers.

STEP 6: Principle Questions Review

Share answers with another group or in class as a whole.

Listening 2: The Right Hand Page

(Example of Discussants Practicing the Target Principle)

Same discussion, same participants, different attitude and different result.

A. Pre-listening Activities:

OPTION 1: (Pair, group, or class activity)

The second listening highlights the benefits of practicing the target principle. Preparing a table as below in pairs, groups, or as a class helps to set the stage:

Problems in first discussion	Our Possible solutions/changes

Such a table can be the basis of a fruitful comparison between the first and second listenings on the CD.

OPTION 2: (Can be done in class or as homework.)

STEP 1: Hand out the script to the first listening.

Options for The Principle Pages (continued)

STEP 2: Put students in groups the same size as the discussion group in the first listening.

STEP 3: Students rewrite the script to improve (or, for extra fun, worsen!) the discussion.

STEP 4: Each group acts out the new and improved discussion in front of the class. Lots of fun!

B. Listening Activities

Play and enjoy the second listening. Students can compare and amend the contents of the table above with a new column as below:

Problems in first discussion	Our Possible solutions/changes	Solutions/changes on the CD

The solutions/changes on the CD are not meant to exclude other possible improvements. You and the students will be able to spot problems that the second listening does not address, or only partially addresses.

C. Comprehension Questions

Preview the Comprehension Questions. Often students can answer these without a second listening. Whereas the Comprehension Questions in the first listening focused on a general understanding of what happened and why, the Comprehension Questions in the second listening usually focus on the specific language used to implement the Principle. This serves to foreshadow the language on the following page, **The Discussion Phrase Bank**.

D. Discussion Principle Questions

Preview the Discussion Principle Questions, and students discuss in pairs or groups. Here the focus is on a final review of the target principle before moving on to the language in the **Discussion Phrase Bank**.

Options for The Principle Pages (continued)

A final note: In general, understanding and analysis of the first discussion is the key to success for the Principle pages. Therefore, more time should be spent on the first listening than on the second listening. Students easily grasp the solution/changes of the second listening once they understand the discussion failure in the first listening.

Doing the Discussion Phrase Banks

What's my line?

The **Discussion Phrase Banks** provide language for implementing the **Discussion Principles**. The Discussion Principle is what to do; the Discussion Phrase Bank is how to do it. Simply knowing the principles is not enough. Students need the language necessary to carry out the principles in a discussion context.

The Discussion Phrase Banks provide an additional service. A discussion, unlike a presentation or a debate, is very fluid with unscripted turn taking. In both presentation and debate, the format is predictable. The content itself may contain surprises, but the form does not. A presentation usually follows the format of Introduction, Body, and Conclusion. A debate usually follows the format of 1st Affirmative Constructive, 1st Negative Constructive, etc. Roles are clearly prescribed. In presentation, there is the speaker role and there is the audience role. In debate, there is the affirmative role and the negative role. However, in discussion, roles are not so clearly defined. Of course, the teacher can choose to create and assign roles (chairperson, note taker, questioner, etc.) and this has merit, but it is imposed and not inherent to discussion. We can and do have discussions without a chairperson or a note taker. In fact, the best
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3.1 Rationale: The What and Why

*The Discussion Principle
is what to do;
The Discussion Phrase
Bank is how to do it.*

Doing the Discussion Phrase Banks (con't)

discussions often happen when there is no chair or its role is minimal. In addition, these roles all seem much more natural under the label of “meeting skills” rather than under the heading of “discussion skills.” So, are there roles in the context of discussion?

Our answer in DPP is an emphatic “Yes.” The roles are in fact the “functions” in the Discussion Phrase Banks. These are roles that students pick up and put down as needed much like hats. For example, in the Discussion Phrase Bank of Loop 2, a discussant could start out wearing the hat, Encourage Ideas, and then soon replace it with Contribute Ideas, and later replace that hat with Expand on Ideas. To put it idiomatically, a good discussant wears many hats. DPP gives language learners the opportunity to become familiar and comfortable with a wide variety of discussion hats or functions.

To encourage students to try on all hats, we devised a self-checking technique for students to mark in their discussions. Next to each expression in the Phrase Bank there is a space for each student to check off what expressions were used and which expressions were not used. At the end of the discussion, the students can assess their use of the functions and decide which ones they want to focus on in future discussions.

3.1 Rationale: The What and Why

“A good discussant wears many hats.”

3.2 Procedure: The How

The Discussion Phrase Banks are laid out as lists for easy access during discussions. The trick for the teacher is to introduce these lists in an interesting and meaningful way. The following pages present options for covering the Principle Pages. Enjoy!

Options for The Phrase Banks

OPTION 1: Relating the Phrases to the Target Principle

STEP 1: Students focus on the Discussion Phrase Bank.

STEP 2: Replay the second listening from the principle pages (the “good example”) Have students check off the expressions that they hear.

STEP 3: In pairs, have students compare their answers.

STEP 4: Ask students which expressions were on the CD and which were not.

OPTION 2: Brainstorming Phrases

STEP 1: Ask students to close their books and focus on the board. Write the “functions” of the Discussion Phrase Bank on the board.

(The functions are located in boxes in the left hand margin.)

STEP 2: Explain each function and write one phrase from the Phrase Bank on the board as an example.

STEP 3: Put students into groups. Give them 4 minutes to brainstorm other phrases for each function. (For best results, have students, brainstorm on the blackboard.)

STEP 4: After 4 minutes, each group counts how many phrases they brainstormed. The group with the most phrases wins.

OPTION 3: Rotating Phrase Banks

STEP 1: Group students into “stations” so that the number of groups/stations is equal to the number of functions.

STEP 2: Give each station a large sheet of paper with the name of a function at the top, and an example phrase from the discussion bank.

STEP 3: Students have 2 minutes to brainstorm other example phrases.

STEP 4: At the end of 2 minutes, each group stands up, leaves their station and function sheet behind, and rotates to the next station and function sheet.

STEP 5: Give students a few minutes to read and correct the previous group’s phrases. Some groups may have questions about the English.

STEP 6: Continue with steps 3, 4, and 5 until each group has visited all stations.

Options for The Phrase Banks (continued)

STEP 7: When groups have returned to their first station, have them open their books to the Discussion Phrase Bank. What expressions are contained in the Discussion Phrase Bank? Which are not?

OPTION 4: Matching Functions and Phrases

STEP 1: Before class, photocopy the Discussion Phrase Bank (You have our permission!). Make enough copies so that each group of 3 or 4 students can have one copy.

STEP 2: Cut up the pages so that each phrase is on a separate strip.

STEP 3: In class, ask students to close their books. Write the “functions” of the Discussion Phrase Bank on the board. (The functions are located in boxes in the left hand margin.)

STEP 4: Explain each function and write one phrase from the Phrase Bank on the board as an example.

STEP 5: In groups, turn the strips upside down. The first student picks up a strip and holds it so that other students can't see it. The student reads it to the group and the group matches it to one of the functions. The student places it in a space reserved for that function. The second student picks up a strip and continues.

STEP 6: The first group to associate all the phrases under appropriate functions wins.

STEP 7: Students open their texts to the Discussion Phrase Banks and compare.

Note: in some cases a phrase may fit under more than one function. The point to be made then is that a phrase derives its meaning from the context/function within which it is used.

And Now A Word (or 12) About Discussion

Same Horse, Different Rider

The classroom discussion texts that we (Charles and David) have used over the years have been with few exceptions “topic based”. In other words, each lesson centers on a different topic, but the approach to the topic in each lesson remains basically unchanged. (Usually, a variation of “read this lesson’s topic and discuss.”) Same horse, different rider. (Or would it be same rider, different horse?) Although the topics might be of high interest, we found the similarity of approach to the discussion gets old week after week, lesson after lesson. To have the same kind of discussion--even with a different topic--becomes monotonous. To misquote Led Zeppelin, the discussion remains the same.

Not Just What to Discuss but How to Discuss

*In Discussion Process and Principles, we have sought to make each discussion a unique experience. Not only **what** to discuss (the topic), but **how** to discuss (the approach) changes in each discussion. A carpenter with only a hammer in the toolbox approaches every task the same way. In a similar way, students with only one discussion strategy, approach every discussion the same way. However, each unit or “loop” of DPP identifies a different approach to discussion with a topic that invites use of that loop’s Discussion Principle and Discussion Phrases. Every unit features both a new topic and a new approach. As students fill their discussion toolbox with more and more strategies, they enjoy discussion all the more! The effect is cumulative as they work through the text.*

Discussion as Part of a Larger Context

*There is more to discussion than just talking. The activities in the **Discussion** section place discussion into a larger context that extends before the talking and after the talking. From these activities, we hope students will take away an understanding that successful discussion is the outcome of a systematic three- step process:*

And Now A Word (or 12) About Discussion (continued)

Step I: Pre-Discussion Preparation

a. Understand the Background. *What is the situation? What is the goal or purpose of the discussion? What kind of discussion is it? Different discussions have different roles. As a speaker, what do you think your role will be? As a listener, what do you think your role will be?*

b. Prepare. *If you are going to be an asset to your discussion group you need to prepare. Sometimes you need to read, sometimes you need to research, and sometimes you need to think. The more you prepare, the more you can bring to the discussion table.*

Step II: Discussion Participation

a. Be an Active Participant. *Follow the discussion closely. Ask questions when the discussion is not clear. Ask for repetition. Ask for confirmation of numbers, names, and places. Agree or disagree with other participants. Don't be silent and wait for a special invitation to speak. In this sense, everyone is the discussion leader.*

b. Record. *Discussions are more than just entertainment. Take notes so that you can refer to the information later. Taking notes can also help you be a more active listener.*

Step III: Post-Discussion Debriefing

a. Assess. *Discussion is a learned skill. At the end of every discussion, spend a few minutes thinking about your performance. How can you continue to improve? Check the Discussion Phrase Bank. Which phrases were used? Which were not used?*

b. Share. *Discussions usually have a result, an outcome. Often this outcome is reported or shared with others. Your discussion increases in value if you can share the results with others.*

Now let's look specifically at how the text guides students through this three-step process of I. Pre-Discussion Preparation, II. Discussion Participation, and III. Post-Discussion Debriefing.

And Now A Word (or 12) About Discussion (continued)

Step I: Pre-Discussion Preparation

Why do some classroom discussions flounder and die a silent death? Why do other discussions flourish and bring out the best in our students? Of course there are several factors (many not related to a textbook!) but we have identified three necessary conditions for good student discussions:

A. Topic: *A topic must be lofty enough to inspire students, yet mundane enough to touch their everyday lives. In DPP, **The Discussion** page (the topic introduction) contextualizes the topic within the world of the students and attempts to make it meaningful and understandable.*

B. Task: *A classroom discussion must have a challenging yet attainable task. Discussions without a task tend to drift, lack a sense of completion, and are difficult for student and teacher to assess. In DPP, **The Model Discussion** listening demonstrates exactly how to do the discussion task.*

C. Preparation: *Students must be given sufficient time and support to prepare what they want to say about the topic, and how they can contribute to the task. EFL discussants cannot share “off the cuff” and need sufficient scaffolding to organize their experience and ideas. The **Preparation** page gives the students the time (and a place in the text!) to organize their thoughts prior to discussing them.*

Doing the Discussion Topic Introduction

Scenario and Background Set the Stage

The Discussion pages feature empty seats around a table—a discussion waiting to happen. On the table lie photos, brochures, magazine covers or other visual material pointing to the topic. There are two text blocks on the page. One is a short blurb at the top of the page announcing the “**scenario**” (the topic and the task of the discussion). The other text block, the “**background**,” in the lower right, anchors the scenario to real life events. Thus, all the discussions in *DPP* are in a sense, simulations, re-enactments, or extrapolations from real life situations and events.

The following pages present options for introducing the Scenario and Background. Enjoy!

4.1 Rationale: The What and Why

All the discussions in DPP are simulations, re-enactments, or extrapolations from real life situations and events.

Discussion Scenarios

First Discussion--*Introducing our global village to the cosmos.*

Does life exist on other planets? A satellite will be launched into deep space to find out. What would you place on board to communicate the diversity of Earth's culture? In this discussion, you will make a list of the items your group would send.

Loop 1--*Sharing our good times and bad times.* What do all of us have in common? We all have had good times. We all have had bad times. In this discussion, you will share one of your best experiences and one of your worst experiences with your classmates.

Loop 2--*Thinking globally, acting locally.* A killer tsunami wrecks havoc through parts of Asia. When a disaster strikes, how can your class help? In this discussion, you will brainstorm ideas to help tsunami victims.

Loop 3—*Who are your heroes?* Who has inspired you to believe, or to do, more than you thought possible? A new magazine wants your input. In this discussion, you will nominate people for the cover of *Hero Magazine*.

Loop 4—*The Entertainment Hall of Fame.* What movie, song, book, and TV programs deserve special recognition? The EHF wants your recommendations! In this discussion, you will select three movies to go into the Hall of Fame.

Loop 5—*Finding the Right Person for the right Job.* What are your values? What are your needs? Can you find a company that is your match? In this discussion, you will identify criteria from two points of view, the employer and the employee.

Loop 6--*Designing a menu for the International Palate.*

What would you serve to a multi-national, multi-cultural group of students? The planning committee for the International Student Welcoming Party must come up with a single menu for students from 5 continents. In this discussion, you will need to design a menu that satisfies everyone.

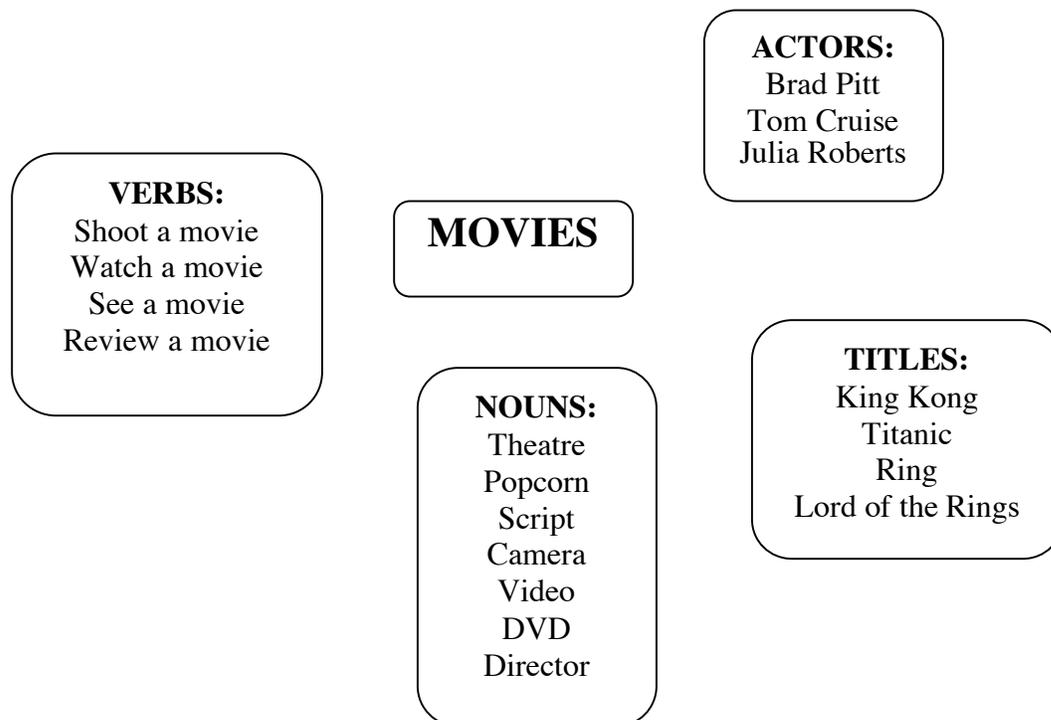
Loop 7—*Studying Abroad--Where to Go and Why.* A year of study abroad is a once in a lifetime opportunity but in which country do you spend it? A rich country? A developing country? An Asian country? An English-speaking country? How do you decide? In this discussion, your group will choose where it should go for its year abroad.

Final Discussion—*Introducing ourselves to future generations.* Every generation is special and so is yours. What can you place in a time capsule to best represent your generation's values, likes, and beliefs? In this final discussion, you will make a list of items to put into such a time capsule.

Options for Introducing the Scenario

OPTION 1: Pre-Reading Exercise (Mind-mapping)

Summarize the discussion topic in one word on the board (See “**Suggested Key Words for Mind-Mapping**” below.) For example for Loop 4, the key word might be “movies”. Divide the class into small groups. Each group spends 3 minutes mind-mapping on the board (or poster paper, etc.) all the vocabulary they can think of stemming from the key word. For example:



At the end of 3 minutes, each group counts its words and categories. The group with the most words are “Speedy Mind-Mappers”; the group with most categories are “Genius Mind Mappers”; the group with the most beautiful map are “Creative Mappers”; the group with the most verbs are “Action Mappers”; etc.

Note: This activity works best after Lab 2.2 where mapping is introduced.

Options for Introducing the Scenario (continued)

Suggested Key Words for Mind-Mapping

First Discussion: “Space” or “Spacecraft”

Loop 1: “Good Times,” “Bad Times,” or “Good Times and Bad Times”

Loop 2: “Disaster”

Loop 3: “Heroes”

Loop 4: “Movies”

Loop 5: “Job”

Loop 6: “Food”

Loop 7: “Travel” or “Home Stay”

Final Discussion: “My Generation”

OPTION 2: Listening for the task

Have students close their books. Read the title and the task blurb at the top of the page. Students listen for the task and write it down. Students can compare answers in pairs and groups.

OPTION 3: Mission Impossible

The idea here is to imitate the Mission Impossible intro.

1. Students have books closed.
2. Beg, borrow, download, or steal the Mission Impossible theme music and play it in the background.
3. Read the title and task blurb in a dramatic way but change the words slightly: For example: “~~In this discussion~~, Your mission, should you decide to accept it, is to design a menu that satisfies everyone. Good Luck!”
4. For a real adventure, play the Mission Impossible theme music again and get one of the students to read the introduction!

OPTION 4: Reading to a Partner

Get students to read the title and task blurb together in pairs and underline the task in red. Also works well after option 2 or 3 above.

Options for Introducing the Background

OPTION 1: Quiz

STEP1: Students read background information.

STEP2: Students prepare quiz questions for their classmate (or teacher!)

For lower groups needing question formation practice, a different type of quiz could be done with each Discussion page throughout the book. For example, here is a list of progressively more difficult quizzes:

Quiz 1: True/False

Quiz 2: Sentence Completion

Quiz 3: Yes/No Questions

Quiz 4: Sentence Completion (Multiple Choice)

Quiz 5: Information Questions (Who, What, Why, When, Where, How, etc.)

Quiz 6: TOEFL-style Multiple Choice questions

Quiz 7: Review of all types of questions

For more fun, encourage students to come up with wacky, off-the-wall questions. For example:

1. A “tsunami” is _____.
 - a. a kind of sushi.
 - b. a station on the Yamanote train line.
 - c. a kind off tuna.
 - d. a tidal wave.

STEP 3: Students quiz a partner. Change partners 2 or three times.

STEP 4: Get a couple of students to ask you one of their questions.

OPTION 2: Quiz Contest (A variation on option 1 above.)

STEP 1: Students read background information.

STEP 2: Give students 3 minutes to write as many questions as they can on strips of paper for you to collect. Can be done individually, in pairs, or groups.

STEP 3: Collect the strips, and divide the students into teams.

STEP 4: Read a question. The first group that answers correctly receives one point.

Options for Introducing the Background (continued)

OPTION 3: Interviews

STEP1: Select the key nouns from the “background” reading and write them on the board. For example, the words from the background reading, *Our Greatest Heroes*, on page 51 might be:

Time
People
Forbes
Hero

STEP2: Tell students that rather than asking them questions you are giving them answers. They must come up with questions to match the answers,

STEP3: After students have written their questions, invite one of the students up to model an interview with you. For example:

Interviewer: Good afternoon. I’m taking an opinion poll. Do you mind if I ask you a few questions?

Interviewee: No, go ahead.

Interviewer: Do you know what magazine selects The Person of The Year?

Interviewee: Yes, that would be *Time* magazine.

Interviewer: OK. And do you know what magazine features People of the Year?

Interviewee: Isn’t that *People* magazine?

Interviewer: Yes, that’s right again! And which magazine does Most Important Business People of the Year?

Interviewee: That’s *Forbes* magazine, isn’t it?

Interviewer: Yes, it is. OK, the final question is what is Hero magazine seeking?

Interviewee: I think they are looking for nominees for their Greatest Heroes of All Time issue.

Interviewer: Yes! Correct again. Well, thank you very much, and have a good day.

Interviewee: Hey, wait a minute! Don’t I win something?

STEP4: Divide the class up into Interviewers and Interviewees. Pair them up and the fun begins! For more practice, students switch partners two or three times and then switch roles.

Doing the Model Discussion Pages

Models Show the Way

By this time, learners should have acquired a framework for the topic of discussion. Now, prior to the student group discussions, the CD models the discussion in which the students are about to engage. The model demonstrates the task of the discussion while reinforcing the language found in the Discussion Phrase Bank.

Listen and Complete the Task

This was meant to be a simple, straightforward demo of what to do and how to do it. Students listen to the CD and complete the task in their texts. The following page suggests options for covering the Model Discussion. Enjoy!

5.1 Rationale: The What and Why

5.2 Procedure: The How

The Model demonstrates the interplay between topic, task, and language.

Options for The Model Discussions

OPTION 1:

Step 1: Relax! Just listen to the wacky discussants on the CD! Students can even listen with their books closed.

Step 2: Preview the discussion task with the students.

Step 3: Replay the CD and complete the task.

Step 4: Students compare their answers, and share their answers with the class.

OPTION 2: (For low level groups)

Follow Steps 1-4 above. Then, divide students into groups the same size as on the CD. Pass out the script. Students read the script and rotate roles until each member of the group has read all the roles. Even low-level learners will have a clear idea of what to do in the coming discussion!

Doing Preparation

Students Prepare to Do Their Best

This is the last phase of our Pre-Discussion Preparation. At this stage, students should have an understanding of the topic from the **Scenario** and **Background** page. The **Model Discussion**, demonstrated the task. Now discussants need time to gather their thoughts. The **Preparation** page features simple tasks to aid students in organizing their experiences and ideas.

The following pages present options for covering the Preparation Pages. Enjoy!

6.1 Rationale: The What and Why

The holy trinity of good classroom discussion:

- 1. Topic*
- 2. Task*
- 3. Preparation*

Options for Discussion Preparation

OPTION 1: Individual Preparation

Students do the preparation tasks individually. The merit of this option is that it can be assigned as homework. In some cases, students can be asked to research the topic on the Internet and bring a summary to their discussion group. (Caution!!! It is best that they bring a summary, not the actual print out from site. Otherwise, students will inevitably spend their discussion time reading the pages, rather than discussing their own thoughts. In other words, using someone else's English rather than their own.)

OPTION 2: Pair Preparation

Many of the preparation tasks lend themselves to pair work. This option has the merit of turning a lone cognitive activity into a communicative activity, rehearsing the language that the discussants will later use in their group discussions. (Note: For the actual discussion, make sure each pair partner ends up in a different discussion group. That way everyone will hear each other's opinions for the first time.) As an additional twist, students can return to their preparation pairs after the group discussion and compare the outcome of each other's discussions.

OPTION 3: Individual and Pair Preparation

This is a combination of Option 1 and 2 above. This particular option is sometimes beneficial for low-level groups. First, discussants organize their thoughts alone, and then rehearse with a partner what they will say in their group discussion.

OPTION 4: Team Preparation

Students prepare in small groups of 3 or 4. The merit of this option is that discussants can benefit from each other's experience and ideas and have more to share during the group discussions. Remind students that they only need to review their preparation ideas with the group; this is not yet the discussion! (Again, be sure to put the team members into different discussion groups!) As an additional twist, students can return to their preparation teams after the group discussion and compare the outcome of their respective discussions.

Doing Discussion Time

Language and Task

This double page spread is the main event. The left page features the loop and its language functions. The right page contains the task for discussants to complete. Before turning the students loose, remind them that they have two goals:

1. The Language Goal—discussants should try to practice all the functions featured in the loop on the left page. Prior to the discussion, students can also turn back to the Phrase Bank page and check (✓) individual phrases that they aim to use in the discussion.

2. The Discussion Task—discussants should try to complete the discussion task on the right page. Prior to discussion, preview the task and show students where to write their answers. Emphasize that everyone in the discussion group is responsible for filling in their own page. Remind students that their task is the same as they heard in the Model Discussion.

The following pages suggest options for the actual discussion. There are at least two dimensions to explore here: **Discussion Format** (procedure), and **Discussion Roles**.

7.1 Rationale: The What and Why

Always set a time limit for a discussion. For most discussions 20-25 minutes is the optimum. However, a discussion can then be repeated with a different twist as suggested in the options below.

Options for Discussion Time

1. Discussion Formats:

OPTION 1: Round Table Discussion

Procedure: Discussion proceeds by going around the table with each student sharing in turn.

Merit: Most student groups will naturally gravitate toward this egalitarian format. This is a common discussion format in cultures such as Japan.

Recommended Use: Lends itself particularly well to Loop 1--Sharing Your Experience.

OPTION 2: Free for All Discussion

Procedure: Discussants take turns randomly as the spirit moves them.

Merit: Very common format for native speakers.

Recommended Use: Lends itself particularly well to Loop 2--Sharing Your Ideas

OPTION 3: Hot Seat Discussion

Procedure: Arrange chairs in a semicircle with one chair in the center facing the others. One student sits in the “hot seat” and gives his or her opinion. Other discussants drill the student with clarifying and confirming questions. Rotate until all students have taken a turn in the hot seat.

Merit: Really good practice questioning, confirming, and asking follow-up questions.

Recommended Use: Works really, really well with Loop 3—Exploring Positions

OPTION 4: Report with Q & A Discussion

Procedure: One discussant reports on the topic followed by a brief Q & A. Another student makes a report followed by a Q & A.

After each student reports, discussants hold a general discussion and complete the task.

Merit: Commonly found in business in the form of a “Quarterly Review,” where an employee presents and then is drilled by executives.

Recommended Use: Lends itself particularly well for any loops where research on the topic has been assigned by the teacher as homework. Works particularly well for Loops 3, 4, and 7.

Options for Discussion Time (continued)

2. Discussion Roles:

Of course the ultimate goal of discussion is for discussants to interact spontaneously and share their true opinions. However, in some cases students will be shy and unsure of how to proceed. This might be true particularly at the beginning of the course. The novice discussants' comfort and confidence levels can be raised by giving each student a clear role to execute in the discussion. Within the same discussion, roles can be rotated until all students have a chance to play each part. Here are some ideas:

OPTION 1: Q & A Double Trouble

Roles:

1. The Discussion Leader
2. The Opinion Giver
3. Questioner 1
4. Questioner 2
5. Summarizer

Procedure:

Role 1: Discussion Leader

The discussion leader executes his/her role as follows:

- a. Gets Ready**--Greet the group

Good morning! Welcome to our discussion on (topic).

- b. Gets Set**--Explains the purpose of the meeting (the task), the time to complete the task, explains the format of the discussion, and introduces the roles of the discussants. For example:

Options for Discussion Time (continued)

Our purpose today is to (compete/decide/find/brainstorm/etc.)...

We have _____ minutes.

The format of this discussion is (Round Table/Free for All/Hot Seat/Report with Q & A).

In this round of discussion, Taro will be the opinion giver, Hanako will be Questioner 1, Ken will be Questioner 2, and Mari will be the Summarizer.

c. Starts--Opens the floor for discussion

Taro, would you like to begin now?

Role 2: Opinion Giver—Reports opinion. May use information from his/her previously completed Discussion Preparation page.

Role 3: Questioner 1—Can ask questions at any time. Encourage the questioner to even interrupt to ask a question.

Role 4: Questioner 2—Can ask questions at any time. Encourage the questioner to even interrupt to ask a question.

Role 5: The Summarizer--Takes notes and can summarize what questions were asked and what answers were given. For example:

To sum up, we asked Taro 3 questions.

In my opinion, the most important question was_____.

Taro's answer was_____.

Thank you.

Rotate roles until all discussants have played all roles.

Recommended Use: This option works particularly well in conjunction with the Hot Seat format above. Lends itself well to Loop 3—Exploring Positions.

Options for Discussion Time (continued)

OPTION 2: The Devils Advocate vs. The Yes Man/Woman

Roles:

1. The Discussion Leader
2. Opinion Giver
3. The “Yes Man/Woman”
4. The Devil’s Advocate
5. The Summarizer

Recommended Use: This option works particularly well with in conjunction with the Hot Seat format above. Lends itself well to Loop 3—Exploring Positions.

Procedure:

Role 1: Discussion Leader

(See OPTION 1 above)

Role 2: Opinion Giver

(See OPTION 1 above)

Role 3: The Yes-Man/Woman—The role of this discussant is to agree with and support the Opinion Giver.

“I think that is a good point because...”

“I’d have to agree because...”

Role 4: The Devil’s Advocate—The role of this discussant is to disagree with the Opinion Giver.

“I’m not so sure about that because...”

“That certainly is one possibility but...”

Options for Discussion Time (continued)

Role 5: The Summarizer

(See Option 1 above.)

Rotate roles until all discussants have played all roles.

Recommended Use: This option lends itself well to Loop 4—Searching for the Best Position.

OPTION 3: Fun Function Rotation

Each Participant chooses a function from the Discussion Phrase Bank and exercises that function in the discussion. Rotate until each participant has an opportunity to champion each function.

OPTION 4: Play It Again Sam

After doing one of the Options above, change groups, and have students do the discussion again. This time, instead of playing a role, students give their own opinions and freely use the loop's functions as they feel appropriate.

Let's Continue the Discussion

Discussions Have a Purpose!

This brings us to an essential characteristic of discussion. Unlike the form of communication that is labeled “conversation,” a discussion is teleological. (Oops! Excuse the Aristotle! We promise not to do it again.) In other words, a discussion has a destination, a goal, a task discussants try to complete. The real value of the task lies outside the discussion. A business holds a discussion to come up with a marketing plan, not because it is good in and of itself to have a marketing plan. The real value for the marketing plan lies outside the discussion. In this case, to sell products. The success or failure of a discussion is determined by the fruit of the discussion, the result. What does this mean in the universe we call the classroom? How can we emphasize that discussions must have outcomes and that discussions do not take place in a vacuum? The final activity of every loop, **Let's Continue the Discussion**, emphasizes that the purpose of a discussion is to prepare us for something beyond the discussion.

8.1 Rationale: The What and Why

Discussions bear fruit that increases in value as we share it with others.

Let's Continue the Discussion

A Special Spot in Your Curriculum

If you are using *Discussion Process and Principles* for 2 semesters (or even if you are using it for one semester!) **Let's Continue the Discussion** will fill an important space in the curriculum. In a 2-semester class, each Loop will probably take 3 class periods:

1. One period for **The Discussion Labs**, **The Principle**, and the **Discussion Phrase Bank**.
2. One period for **The Discussion**
3. One period for **Let's Continue the Discussion**

So, **Let's Continue the Discussion** might (or might not—it's up to you!) take up to a third of your curriculum. (Check the DPP Syllabi for suggestions.) However, we would like to offer a word of caution: **Let's Continue the Discussion** will require more forethought than the other activities in the text. Here are some ideas:

8.2 Rationale: The What and Why

How much time should you devote to Let's Continue the Discussion? Be sure to check the DPP Syllabi!

Options for Let's Continue The Discussion

OPTION 1: Preparation as Homework

Each **Let's Continue the Discussion** has several options. Choose one in advance and assign the preparation as homework. The teacher will need to determine if the preparation needs to be done in groups, in pairs, or individually.

OPTION 2: Preparation In Class

Bring materials to class (poster paper, markers, tape, etc.) and have a "Project Session" with each team working on their presentation. This provides a nice alternative to a typical class. (A change is as good as a break!) We sometimes play music in the background and give it a bit of a festive atmosphere. This option is particularly useful at the start of a semester or for low-level classes. The teacher can monitor progress and provide guidance.

A final suggestion for Let's Continue the Discussion:

In the book, *Be our Guest*, by the Disney Institute, they list "The Magic of Setting" as one of Disney's keys to success. The same applies to **Let's Continue the Discussion**. Wherever possible, re-arrange the classroom to make the experience feel different from a normal class. Remove chairs and arrange tables into booths for the conference simulations; remove the tables and place chairs in front of a "stage" for presentations; place a table covered with cloth with name cards for a panel discussion. Make a poster (Welcome to The 1st Annual Travel Abroad Conference!) and tape it to the door so students will immediately feel the magic of setting. Be creative!