

FACILITATOR GUIDE

People who feel safe, encouraged, respected and challenged are likely to share openly and thoughtfully. Here's how you can encourage that kind of participation as a facilitator.

Prepare yourself

Identify your own hot-button issues. View the media before your event and give yourself time to reflect so you aren't dealing with raw emotions at the same time that you are trying to facilitate a discussion.

Preview it. Watch the media ahead of time to assess age-appropriateness and conversation starters. Think about the key points you would like your audience to take away.

Activate prior knowledge. Help your audience determine what they already know about the video's content.

Be knowledgeable. You don't need to be an expert on a certain culture or history to lead an event, but knowing the basics can help you keep a discussion on track and gently correct misstatements of fact. Prior to your event, take time to check the out background information and local resources or partners.

Make it meaningful. Across multiple platforms and virtually every setting, most of your audiences are constantly consuming media. So why is this particular video important, unique or special? Share why you are showing *this* video. Ask them to think about questions or ideas that relate to their own lives or communities for a post-viewing discussion.

Be clear about your role. Being a facilitator is not the same as being a content expert. For instance, an expert's job is to convey specific information. In contrast, a facilitator remains neutral, helping move the discussion along without imposing his or her views on the dialogue.

Know who might be present. It isn't always possible to know exactly who will attend a screening, but you may be able to predict who might be represented. You can also keep in mind that issues can play out very differently for different groups of people. Factors like geography, age, race, religion and socioeconomic class can all have an impact on comfort levels, speaking styles and prior knowledge. Take care not to assume that all members of a particular group share the same point of view.



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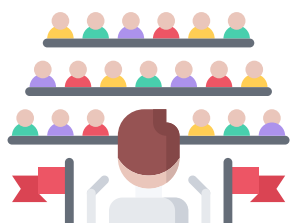
Preparing the group



Agree to norms around language. Prior to starting a discussion or panel Q&A, remind the audience of basic ground rules to ensure respect and aid clarity. Typically such rules include no yelling or use of slurs and asking people to speak in the first person ("I think...") rather than generalizing for others ("Everyone knows that..."). If a speaker breaks a ground rule, gently interrupt, remind them of the norms and ask them to rephrase.

Ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard. Be clear about how people will take turns or indicate that they want to speak. Plan a strategy for preventing people from dominating the discussion.

Talk about the difference between dialogue and debate. In a debate, participants try to convince others that they are right. In a dialogue, participants try to understand each other and expand their thinking by sharing viewpoints and listening to each other actively. Remind people that they are engaged in a dialogue.



Remind participants that everyone sees through the lens of their own experience. Everyone in the audience may have a different view about the content and meaning of the film they have just seen, and all of them may be accurate. Inviting speakers to identify the evidence on which they base their opinion can help people to understand one another's perspectives.

Watch-Think-Share: After viewing, use this method to spark lively discussion. Begin by fostering first reactions with general, open-ended questions. What did you like? What didn't you like? What was the best part? Why do you feel that way? Then break into small groups to explore the questions provided for each clip, with members jotting notes on the discussion. These notes help each group talk about their impressions and ideas with the full cohort.

Write On!: Another way to encourage active viewing and prompt discussion is to have audiences write down a question they have during and after watching the video. Then they can share their questions individually or in groups, generating answers and insight from their peers.



Take care of yourself and group members. If the intensity level rises, pause to let everyone take a deep breath. Think carefully about what you ask people to share publicly so that you are not asking people to reveal things that could place them in legal or physical danger. Let the audience and invited speakers know whether or not the press will be present.

Resources adapted from Indie Lens Facilitator Guides, KQED's Tips for Using Videos, and Common Sense Media's Watching Videos article.