

Activity: Reading Discussion



TIME ESTIMATE
45 minutes



OPTIONAL MATERIALS
Whiteboard, whiteboard markers, markers, paper

PURPOSE

To encourages participants to comprehend the reading material, engage in peer discussions and build oral communication and critical thinking skills.

DESCRIPTION

In groups of 3-6 depending on class size, participants will debrief the reading and background material.

FACILITATOR NOTE

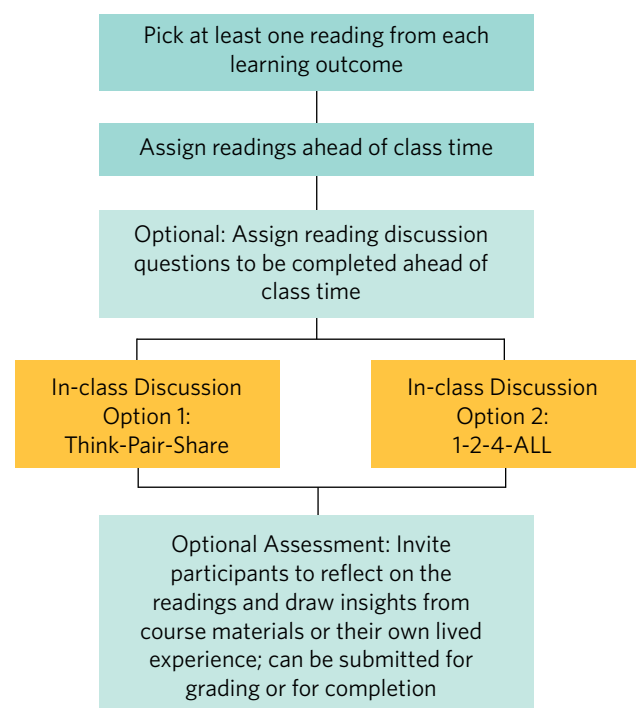
Readings are linked to the module's Learning Outcomes (LOs) with a minimum three readings listed per learning outcome. Pick and choose readings based on what LOs work best in your classroom and which readings are most relevant to your discipline. Feel free to modify the questions to suit your own contexts. These questions can be distributed beforehand or during the activity.

HOW-TO GUIDE FOR FACILITATORS/ EDUCATORS

Each learning module has three learning outcomes. Each learning outcome is accompanied with a set of readings and discussion questions for each reading. The readings are meant to complement the Background material. This guide provides instructions on how these discussion questions can be incorporated into the classroom. These serve as sample guidelines, so feel free to adapt this activity to your classroom and teaching style! Facilitators are encouraged to review the Facilitator Guide before class time.

STEPS

- 1 From the reading list, pick at least one reading from each learning outcome that would fit best with your learning goals. Some areas of consideration include discussion questions you hope to engage in, length of reading and author(s).
- 2 Assign readings ahead of class time so learners come prepared to engage in discussion.
- 3 Break the class up into groups, group size depends on which option is selected below. Groups can be broken up by the reading (ie have one group discuss the reading connected to Learning Outcome #1) and then each group would share their discussion so that the entire group would hear about each reading even if they only discuss one reading.
- 4 Present discussion questions during class either on a whiteboard, presentation or printed on a piece of paper.



- 4 Provide participants with the following options to conduct the discussions:

Option 1: Think-Pair-Share

1. Break the participants into smaller groups of ideally 5-6 people depending on how many learners are in your class. Assign each group to discuss a reading by reviewing the discussion questions together.
2. Participants will individually reflect on the discussion questions and share their responses within the small groups.
3. Once participants have finished their discussion in the small group (~20-25 mins), have them report back the key points of their discussion to the larger group.

Option 2 for smaller class sizes of ~12-15 participants or less: : 1-2-4-ALL¹

1. (1, individually) Learners will reflect on the discussion questions individually in silence for 1 minute.
2. (2, pairs) Learners will pair up with another student and generate ideas for the 2 minutes.
3. (4, small group) Learners will form groups of 4 to share and develop ideas for 4 minutes.
4. (ALL) Learners will return to the larger group to report insights and takeaways for 5 minutes before proceeding onto the next question.
5. During 'ALL', limit the number of shared ideas to 2 to 4, especially in large groups, and maintain the rule of one conversation at a time.
6. You are encouraged to use a visual or auditory cue (e.g. a bell) to announce transitions since this format is time-sensitive.
7. Ensure that every group and individual has an opportunity to share and be heard so that no one individual or a few groups are dominating the group sharing. We suggest reviewing community agreements with the class before the start of the activity.

¹ This method is adapted from [Liberating Structures](#).

- 5 Alternatively, discussion questions can be assigned to be completed ahead of class time.

- Have learners complete a one-page reading reflection to briefly answer the discussion questions ahead of class.
- During class time, learners can go through their answers in small groups and reference their written reflection.
- Depending on instructor capacity, learners can submit their written reflection as an assignment (graded or for completion). This allows instructors to provide constructive feedback and effectively address any misconceptions at the beginning of the next class.

ASSESSMENT

Educators can choose to incorporate reading reflections as graded or non-graded (for completion) assignments. Educators are encouraged to share guiding questions, suggested word count and an evaluation rubric (if graded) for clarity on what is expected from the student. Educators may also choose to invite learners to draw insights from course materials (lectures, readings, other activities if applicable) or from the learners' own lived experience and academic background based on their comfort levels.

NOTES:

READINGS AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Learning Outcome #1: Identify the 'origins' of the local food movement and the institutions that continue to drive the movement.

1. Local Food and the Local Food Movement

DeLind, L. B. (2011). Are local food and the local food movement taking us where we want to go? Or are we hitching our wagons to the wrong stars? *Agriculture and Human Values*, 28(2), 273–283. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-010-9263-0>

- Based on DeLind's summary, what are the goals of the local food movement?
- DeLind criticizes the locavore emphasis, the Walmart emphasis, and the Pollan emphasis - how have these critiques challenged your own conception of the local food movement?
- In what ways can the local food movement contribute to a just, equitable, sustainable food system?

2. Food Movement in Canada

Levkoe, C.Z. (2014). The food movement in Canada: A Social Movement Network perspective. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 41(3), 385–403. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2014.910766>

- Summarize the major strengths of "networks of networks" approach to the food movement
- This paper includes provincial case studies of food networks working to advance the food movement. Do some brief research into your provincial/regional/state network; how does it support local food initiatives and help to advance or consolidate the local food movement?

3. Scale and Food Systems in Planning Research

Born, B., & Purcell, M. (2006). Avoiding the local trap: Scale and food systems in planning research. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 26(2), 195–207. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X06291389>

- Think of when you have heard the term "local" used in marketing, policy documents, etc. What exactly did the term mean in that context? What were the connotations of the word if it was not explicitly defined?
- How do Born & Purcell conceptualize scale? How is that at odds with your answer above?
- What implications does the "local trap" have for planners and others working in the food system?

Learning Outcome #2: Critically evaluate one's own role and privilege as potential participants in the local food movement in relation to barriers that may prevent others from participating.

1. Realizing Justice in Local Food Systems

Allen, P. (2010). Realizing justice in local food systems. *Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy and Society*, 3, 295–308. <https://doi.org/110.1093/cjres/rsq015>

- According to Allen's summary, what are some of the goals of local food efforts?
- How has this paper changed your own perspective on the contributions of local food to food justice?
- What structures does Allen highlight as constraining local food initiatives ability to promote equity and democratic participation?
- Pick one of Allen's headings (Economy, Geography, Demography, Democracy); summarize her analysis and provide a similar example from within your local food system

2. The Unbearable Whiteness of Alternative Food

Guthman, J. (2011). "If They Only Knew": The Unbearable Whiteness of Alternative Food. *A.H. Alkon & J. Agyeman (Eds.) Cultivating Food Justice*, 263–281. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

- Guthman's analysis focuses on the context in the United States; in what way do you think the context is similar or different in Canada based on Canada's history?
- Define "whiteness" in your own words based on Guthman's analysis. In your engagement with the so-called local food system thus far (ie shopping at farmer's markets, attending workshops, shopping at artisan shops, urban agriculture) have you noticed these issues of universalism and colourblindness?

MODULE 5: LOCAL FOOD MOVEMENT

3. [Fears of White Supremacy at the Farmers' Market](#)

Healy, J. (2019, August 18). Amid the Kale and Corn, Fears of White Supremacy at the Farmers' Market. *The New York Times*.

- Discuss both perspectives in this story: those who are for banning Schooner Creek Farm from the farmer's market and those who are against. What do these conflicting opinions tell us about different conceptions of food justice and food security in relation to the greater political climate?
- Discuss this quotation: "'They sell organic vegetables,'" Ms. Mackey said. "They're not horrible people."

4. Barriers to widening access for low-income shoppers in alternative food market spaces.

Hodgins, K.J. & Fraser, E.D.G. (2017). "We are a business, not a social service agency": Barriers to widening access for low-income shoppers in alternative food market spaces. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 35, 149-162. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-017-9811-y>

- Of the barriers faced by alternative food businesses to widening access, which surprised you to learn about the most? How are these barriers linked to market solutions?
- How does the ranking of the top concerns by business owners compare to food justice principles? How do these values affect who has access to food from alternative food businesses?
- The article lists several solutions to addressing some of these barriers. Do you know of any organizations in your community which are adopting some of these practices or can you think of any organizations that may benefit from adopting them?

Learning Outcome #3: Compare and contrast the local food movement with at least one other movement (Indigenous Food Sovereignty, sustainability, labour movements).

1. Getting to Food Sovereignty in Canada

Desmarais, A. A., & Wittman, H. (2014). Farmers, foodies and First Nations: getting to food sovereignty in Canada. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 41(6), 1153-1173. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2013.876623>

- How does the indigenous food sovereignty framework differ from the food sovereignty framework that was predominant in the Nyéléni International Forum for Food Sovereignty? How do you think these two conceptions of food sovereignty relate to your own conception of food justice?
- How does each group (farmers, foodies, First Nations) approach the goal of food sovereignty? What do these different groups believe the role of government is in achieving food sovereignty?

2. [Social Movements](#)

Little, W. (N.d.). 21.2 Social Movements. *W. Little (Eds.) Introduction to Sociology - 1st Canadian Edition*. OpenTextBC.

- What are the different types of movements? Which type do you think the local food movement is? Does it have aspects of some of the other types of movements?
- What different frames are utilized in the local food movement?

3. The Local Food Movement

Starr, A. (2010). Local food: A social movement? *Cultural Studies - Critical Methodologies*, 10(6), 479-490. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708610372769>

- [Amory Starr](#) has a background in activism; how do you think that influences her scholarship?
- How does the local food movement formulate a "we"? Is the situation similar in Canada?
- Based on Starr's analysis, what is the most important contribution of the local food movement?

OTHER RESOURCES

Academic Resources

- Alkon, A. H., & Agyeman, J. (Eds.). (2011). Cultivating Food Justice: Race, Class, and Sustainability. *The MIT Press*. <https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/8922.001.0001>
- Grey, S. and Patel, R. (2015). Food sovereignty as decolonization: some contributions from Indigenous movements to food system and development politics. *Agric Hum Values*, 32, 431-444. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10460-014-9548-9>
- Matties, Z. (2016). Unsettling Settler Food Movements: Food Sovereignty and Decolonization in Canada. *Cuizine*, 7(2). <https://doi.org/10.7202/1038478ar>

External Resources

- [Colours of Resistance](#): Resources on anti-racism organizing
- [Small family farms are not the answer](#)
- [Debating the Local Food Movement](#)
- On whiteness in the food movement
 - [The Fruits of Their Labour: The neglected history of Chinese-Canadian farmers in Vancouver](#)
 - [The elephants in Vancouver's sustainable food movement](#)
 - [Food, race and the ethnic aisle](#)
 - [Local talks tackle racism in food system](#)

ASSESSMENT: READING QUIZ

Administer an online or in class quiz on one or several of the readings before the activities.

- Option 1: Refer to the guiding questions listed with the readings
- Option 2: As a pre-reading assignment, have participants submit a question from the readings. Select and compile the most relevant questions to create a reading quiz.

NOTES: