



Conducting Literacy Focus Groups

Use this guide to plan your literacy focus groups. It includes an overall framework and questions for school-day staff, students and families. Think carefully about how you'll design the groups (large vs. small) and how you'll conduct the conversation. Many respondents may feel comfortable sharing their thoughts in a larger group, while others may prefer to write down their responses. If you accept written responses to any questions, be sure to review them with the whole group. Use the questions in this guide to initiate conversation, but let the respondents develop the discussion within the parameters of your goals.

Opening

Thank you for participating in this focus group on literacy and reading for our 21st CCLC program. You've been selected to participate in this discussion because of the valuable insight you'll be able to provide. This discussion is scheduled to last about 30 minutes. I'll be the group facilitator, helping to guide our discussion. I encourage each and every one of you to share your ideas with the other members of the group.

I'll start by asking some general questions; however, it's your voice that I'm interested in hearing today. I will not participate in the discussion and will listen fully to what you have to say.

One last point before we begin: While we'll be using the information you provide to strengthen our ability to meet students' literacy needs, your identities and opinions will be kept confidential. We want this to be a safe space where everyone can speak openly and honestly.

That said, are there any questions before we begin?

School-Day Staff

Icebreaker: Let's take turns going around the room. Introduce yourself to the group and tell us what you had for lunch yesterday.

Questions:

1. How do your students react when asked to read in class?
 - a. How do your students react when asked to read *aloud* in class?
 - b. How do your students react when asked to read *quietly* in class?
 - c. How does (student) react when asked to read in class?
2. Do your students generally appear confident in their ability to read?
 - a. Does (student) appear confident in his or her reading ability?
3. In what specific areas of literacy do your students tend to struggle?
 - a. In what specific areas of literacy does (student) struggle the most?



Conducting Literacy Focus Groups

Students

Icebreaker: Let's take turns going around the room. Tell us your name and your favorite food.

Questions:

1. Do you enjoy reading?
 - a. Why or why not?
2. When you think about how much time you spend reading, what percent of that time is on a screen?
 - a. What are some of your favorite kinds of sites to read online? This could be subject-based websites, social media feeds or blogs, for example.
3. What kinds of books (paper or electronic) do you like to read?
4. Are there any other kinds of paper materials that you like to read, such as magazines, graphic novels or newspapers? Which ones?
5. When choosing something to read for yourself, what do you look for?
 - a. Do you read the cover? Look for certain authors? Choose based on the cover art?

Families

Icebreaker: Let's take turns going around the room. Introduce yourself to the group and tell us how you would describe yourself in just three words.

Questions:

1. Do you have a lot of books or reading materials at home?
 - a. What kinds of materials do you have at home?
2. Does anyone in your family have a library card?
 - a. Would you be interested in getting a library card?
3. Do you enjoy reading?
 - a. Why or why not?
 - b. What kinds of books do you like to read?
 - c. What other kinds of materials do you like to read?

Closing

Final Question: Before we conclude this discussion, is there anything you'd like to add?

I'd like to thank everyone for participating in this focus group today. If you have any questions or concerns about what we've discussed during our time together, please reach out to our program coordinator, (PROVIDE NAME AND CONTACT INFORMATION). Also, please be on the lookout for future 21st CCLC events and activities, and information on how you can continue your involvement in our literacy programming. Thank you, and enjoy the rest of your day!