



Arts Center East's mission is to advance the arts for everyone through education, exhibits, events, and performances – All are welcome to join these discussions!

Discussion Groups are supported by ACE staff and moderated by ACE volunteers. ACE is a non-profit, independently-run arts organization not associated with any political or religious party. Any viewpoints voiced in connection with the monthly reading topics are viewpoints of book club members themselves, and are not the viewpoints of Arts Center East.

The following are friendly reminders so all attendees can have an enjoyable experience:

Discussion Participation Guidelines:

- **Share the air:** successful discussions allow each participant ample opportunities to speak.
- **Stay on topic:** keep comments focused, concise, and related to the book.
- **Be open to other ideas and opinions:** there are no “correct” opinions or views. Listen to everyone who wishes to share their thoughts.
- **Stay constructive:** if you disagree, do so in a respectful manner.
- **Raise your hand to speak,** when needed, to ensure an orderly meeting.

Common Courtesies:

(In-person):

- **Silence cell phones;** take phone calls outside if necessary.
- **Speak loudly and slowly;** accommodate participants with hearing challenges.
- **Refrain from side conversations during discussions.**

(Via Zoom):

- **Use “Mute” while listening,** to diminish background noise.
- **Remember to Unmute before speaking.**

Additional ZOOM suggestions:

- A desktop computer or laptop can offer a better “Zoom experience” (compared to smartphones or tablets, which may have increased instances of the meeting “freezing”).
- To limit visual distractions for other members (if you are eating or multitasking during the discussion), use the option to hide your screen when you are engaged in such activities.

Facilitator Role & Responsibility:

- The facilitator is not a teacher or lecturer; the facilitator is the person designated to encourage all attendees to follow the guidelines and courtesies listed above, as well as to keep the meeting moving along so that all the content is covered.
- The facilitator ensures that all attendees who wish to speak have an opportunity to do so.

Special Thanks to the West Hartford New Yorker Discussion Group for sharing their discussion guidelines template