

3.6 Group discussion

ICE BREAKERS

You must have discussed many things with your friends, classmates in a group. It might be about going on a picnic or selecting a gift for your teacher:

(i) What do you think are the benefits of a group discussion?

Ans.

(a) A Group Discussion allows the participants to share their views and opinions.

(b) It allows each participant to analyse the topic or case.

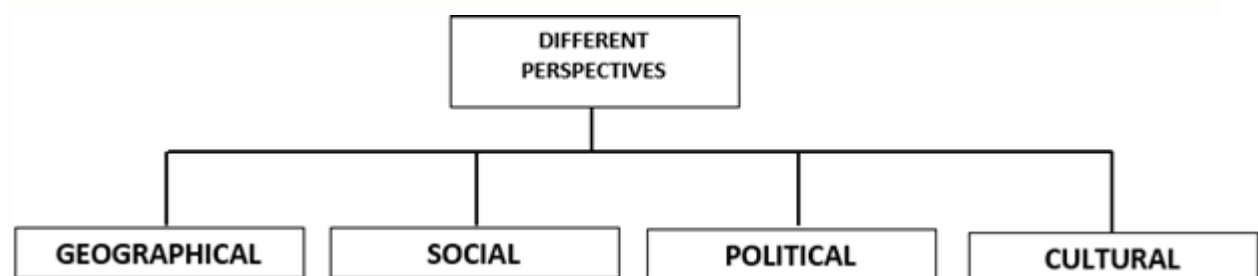
(C) A Group Discussion allows the participants to reach a general consensus.

(ii) Do you think some people are right and some are wrong in a group discussion? Why?

Ans. Yes, I do think so. Generally, we hold a view on a topic or a situation. This view is either strengthened or weakened by the ongoing arguments in a Group Discussion. Due to confirmation bias, we tend to think that the participants who strengthen our views are right. Similarly, we think of those who go against our views are wrong. (The ideal situation is that we keep an open mind and assess each argument on its own merit; but this is easier said than done.)

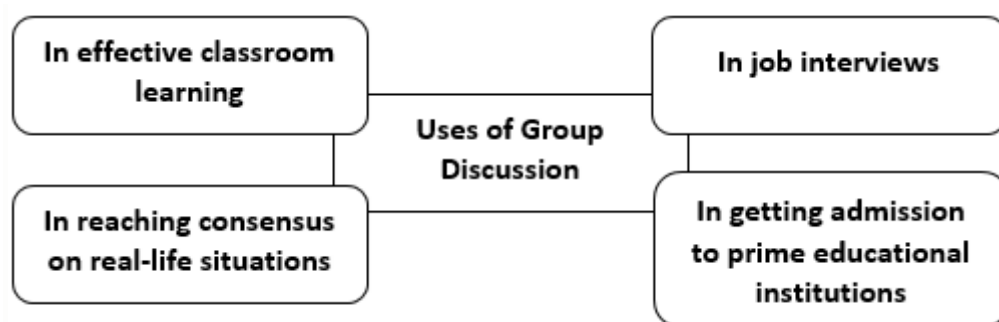
(iii) People have different views and opinions because:

(The answer is given directly and underlined.)



Complete the web highlighting the uses of 'Group Discussion.' One is done for you.

(The answers are given directly and underlined.)



BRAINSTORMING

(A1) Rama, Asif, Rachana and Aarav are participating in a group discussion. The evaluator has given them a topic. 'Teenagers are more inclined towards junk food nowadays'. Write suitable dialogues for each participant giving his/her opinion on the topic.

Evaluator : You've all been given a few minutes to think on your topic for today's group discussion, which is 'Teenagers are more inclined towards junk food'. You may now begin the discussion. Who would like to start?

Rama :

Asif :

Aarav :

Rachana :

Evaluator : Please conclude.

Aarav :

Ans.

Rama : I think I will. In my opinion it is very true. Junk food leads to obesity and we find more obese teenagers around nowadays.

Asif : I am afraid I can't agree with that statement. Most of the teenagers in our college look quite fit and active.

Aarav : I think we must see the issue in a wider perspective. The inclination towards junk food among teenagers is a worldwide phenomenon. One can't jump to a conclusion by just looking around and citing a few examples in our college.

Rachana : It seems to me that Rama made valid point. Teenagers world over are inclined towards junk food and it poses a great threat. I suggest the teenagers change their food habit and resort more to healthy snacks. Our tradition offers a wide variety of such snacks.

Evaluator : Please conclude.

Aarav : We can conclude by saying that our teenagers are inclined to junk food. They must change their food habit. It is high time they switched to healthy snacks. We need healthy citizens to take our country forward.

(A2) Read the following statements, if you agree say 'Yes' and if you don't agree, say 'No'. State the reason for your opinion.

Sr. No.	Statement	Yes/No	Reason
1.	It is not possible to guess the topic for group discussion. Then there is no need to prepare.		
2.	Always have a discussion with your family and friends on different topics.		
3.	You must aim to get noticed by the evaluators.		
4.	Forget the evaluator and look at the participants while discussion		
5.	You should raise your voice to be heard by everyone and speak for a long time to show your knowledge.		
6.	You should always take the opportunity to begin the discussion		
7.	Take a strong position/view and defend it till the end.		
8.	Do not keep waiting for your turn to speak. You have to be alert and quick.		
9.	Listening to others also plays an important role in a group discussion.		
10.	You must interrupt a person if you do not agree to his opinion.		
11.	Show your leadership skills by being assertive, not aggressive.		
12.	Participating in a group discussion also means helping everyone to reach a consensus in spite of difference of opinion		

Ans.

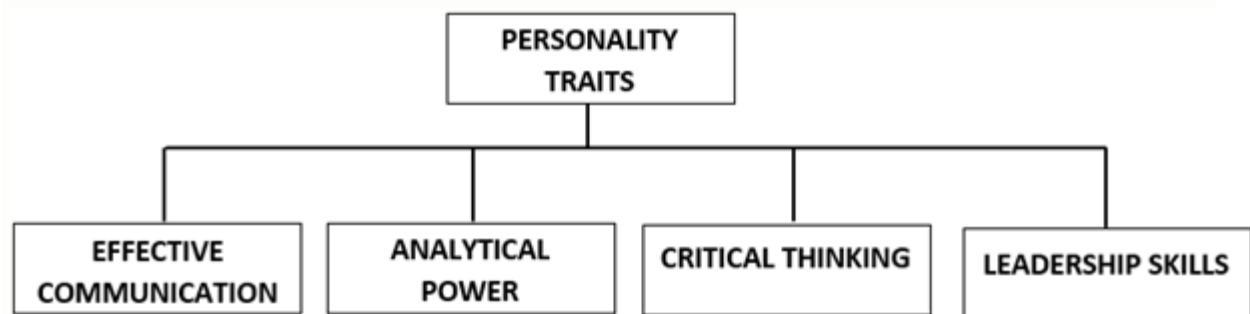
Sr. No.	Statement	Yes/No	Reason
1.	It is not possible to guess the topic for group discussion. Then there is no need to prepare.	No	Knowledge is strength. Since a group discussion is a test of one's knowledge and ability to clearly express one's thoughts, one can always prepare for it by reading up on diverse topics. Reading newspapers, watching documentaries and indulging in stimulating discussions are a few ways to enhance knowledge. A candidate with sound knowledge of different topics has a higher chance of success.
2.	Always have a discussion with your family and friends on different topics.	Yes	Having meaningful discussions on diverse topics will not only help you gain a better understanding of the topic and a broader perspective, but also help you develop a deeper bond with your family and friends. Such discussions will also help you understand your weaknesses and give you a good idea about how well you can express your thoughts.
3.	You must aim to get noticed by the evaluators.	No	The aim of the discussion is not to impress the evaluator but to contribute meaningfully to the topic while listening and learning from other participants.
4.	Forget the evaluator and look at the participants while discussion	Yes	The group discussion is between you and the other members, not the evaluator. It is considered good practice to avoid interaction and any kind of eye contact with the evaluator while the discussion is in progress.
5.	You should raise your voice to be heard by everyone and speak for a long time to show your knowledge.	No	It is very important for a participant to remain calm and logical in a group discussion. Reacting emotionally in a discussion causes one to lose control and this may affect your evaluation because the participant is judged not only on his communication skills but also on his ability to work in a team. In addition, evaluation focuses on the quality of your argument and not on its quantity. The participant must focus on making relevant points and not take up too much time. This reflects negatively on his ability to accept other people's opinions and makes him look self-centered.
6.	You should always take the	No	You should only initiate the discussion if you have a very valid point to make. If you are doubtful, do not initiate the discussion. Simply starting,

	opportunity to begin the discussion		without careful consideration or sufficient knowledge, can result in a wrong interpretation of the topic and cast a bad impression.
7.	Take a strong position/view and defend it till the end.	No	Blindly taking a stand throughout the discussion may land a participant in trouble. During the course of the group discussion, it is possible that a participant's viewpoint changes because he is successfully convinced by another participant. In such a case, the participant may change his position, giving the impression that he is open to accepting others' viewpoints. As the aim is to reach a conclusion, it is natural for some participants to change their views to make sure the team reaches a common conclusion.
8.	Do not keep waiting for your turn to speak. You have to be alert and quick.	Yes	In a group discussion, it is not likely that one will be specifically asked to speak. In order to express his opinion, the participant must be alert and seek out an appropriate time, such as, after another participant has finished speaking and present his views. If one feels like they must interrupt another person, they should do so, politely.
9.	Listening to others also plays an important role in a group discussion.	Yes	Not only does listening to others indicate a willingness to accommodate others' views, it also offers the participant a chance to respond meaningfully, which increases his chance of making a good impression on the evaluator. In addition, it allows the participant to broaden his perspective by understanding various viewpoints. Listening intently, nodding while appreciating another's viewpoint can also reflect positively on the participant.
10.	You must interrupt a person if you do not agree to his opinion.	No	Interrupting a person while they are speaking, just because you don't agree with their opinion, indicates an emotional response and creates the impression that you are not a team player. In a team, one often has to work with people who they do not agree with, but one must always listen patiently to what each person has to say. Thus, one must wait for the person to finish before expressing disagreement.
11.	Show your leadership skills by being	Yes	While it is important to be assertive, that is, to be determined in one's arguments, it is important to not cross the line into aggression. Being aggressive creates a bad impression because it indicates that

	assertive, not aggressive.		you are not approaching the discussion logically and cannot work well in a team.
12.	Participating in a group discussion also means helping everyone to reach a consensus in spite of difference of opinion	Yes	The aim of the group discussion is to reach a logical conclusion through teamwork. Thus, it is essential that the differences of opinion are resolved and the participants direct the discussion to reach an outcome that is agreed upon by all. This may mean that one may have to support or discourage another participant's views so that the group reaches a consensus.

(A3) (i) Group discussion helps to unravel the following personality traits in a person.

(Answers are given directly.)



(ii) Match the following.

Discuss	Give special importance or value to something in speaking or writing
Argue	Say something again, a number of times
Deliberate	Express opposite views in a heated or angry way
Reiterate	Engage in long and careful consideration
Emphasize	To talk about a subject with someone and tell each other your ideas and opinions

Ans.

Discuss	To talk about a subject with someone and tell each other your ideas and opinions
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Argue	Express opposite views in a heated or angry way
Deliberate	Engage in long and careful consideration
Reiterate	Say something again, a number of times
Emphasize	Give special importance or value to something in speaking or writing

(A4) (i) Write the following sentences in reported/indirect speech.

(a) He said, "If you find my answers satisfactory, will you give me five rupees?"

Ans. He asked me whether I would give him five rupees if I found his answers satisfactory.

(b) The astrologer said, "You were left for dead. Am I right?"

Ans. The astrologer asked whether he was right in saying that I has been left for dead.

(c) "I should have been dead if some passerby had not chanced to peep into the well," exclaimed Guru Nayak.

Ans. Guru Nayak exclaimed that he would have been dead unless some passerby had chanced to peep into the well.

(d) He told her, "Do you know a great load is gone from me today."

Ans. He asked her whether she knew that a great load was gone from him that day.

(ii) Read a part of a conversation between Neha and Nidhi.

Neha: Where are you going, Nidhi?

Nidhi: I am going for my music lessons.

The above conversation is written in exact words spoken. If this conversation was to be reported by a third person then it would be written as:

Neha asked Nidhi where she was going. Nidhi replied that she was going for her music lessons.

Notice the changes in the reported sentence. Note the changes in pronouns, tenses, reporting, and reported verbs and other changes. Now find sentences from the text in the direct speech and convert them into the reported speech.

Ans. Some examples of direct speech from the text are:

1. **Evaluator:** You may now begin the discussion. Who would like to start?

2. **Manisha:** I think the topic of this discussion is very relevant to all of us here.

3. **Anamika:** I also agree with Manisha.

4. **John:** Yes, I would like to add to it. I don't think students use mobile phones only for seeking useful information. They use it for entertainment too.

5. **Anamika:** Yes John, you are absolutely right.

6. **Ananya:** Yes, all this is true but don't you all agree that they do see unwanted things and waste their time in things not suitable for their age group.

7. **John:** I agree with what Ananya says. It is a sheer wastage of time, money, and energy.

8. **Evaluator:** Could someone conclude, please?

These can be converted into reported speech as follows:

1. The evaluator instructed the group to start the discussion and asked them who would like to go first.

2. Manisha thought the topic of the discussion was very relevant to all those who were present there.

3. Anamika said that she, too, agreed with Manisha.

4. John added to the discussion by saying that students not only used the mobile phone for seeking useful information but also for entertainment.

5. Anamika affirmed that John was absolutely right.

6. Ananya accepted that everything that had been saying was true and asked the group if they agreed that the students did see unwanted things and waste their time in things that were not suitable for their age group.

7. John agreed with Ananya about mobile phones being a sheer wastage of time, money, and energy.

8. The evaluator asked whether someone from the group could conclude the discussion.

(iii) Now find sentences from the text in the direct speech and convert them into the reported speech.

Read the following sentence given in indirect speech and convert them into direct speech.

(a) Shirish said that he would not be able to solve the problem.

Ans. Shirish said, "I won't be able to solve the problem."

(b) Lata told me to give her a glass of water.

Ans. Lata said, "Give me a glass of water."

(c) Ananya exclaimed with joy that she had received the Ph.D. degree.

Ans. Ananya exclaimed, "I have received the Ph.D. degree!"

(d) Shilpa asked us if there was any other document to be typed.

Ans. Shilpa said to us, "Is there any other document to be typed?"

(e) Swati said that she would not get the money.

Ans. Swati said, "I won't get the money."

(A5) (i) An economically deprived girl student in your class who has received admission in a reputed college abroad needs monetary help to pursue further studies there. Have a group discussion amongst your friends to seek solutions to help her. Write four/five views in the form of dialogues.

Ans.

Rian:	Well, folks! We need to do something urgently in Tejaswini's case. Money shouldn't come in her way to pursue a course abroad. My parents offered 50,000/- right away!
Eugene:	I managed to get a loan of rupees one lakh from my parents. I should take up some part-time job and repay it within three years. I hope I will be able to do it. Anyway, I am quite happy to be of some help to our dear friend.
Kanika:	Only way before me was to ask for an advance from my music troupe. We don't get much programmes of late. Still they agreed to pay me 75,000. Will that be okay?
Tabu:	We thought you would raise a hefty sum, being 'a great singer' and all. Okay, jokes apart, I will present my case. My brother offered a donation of rupees two lakh right away. No conditions! No strings attached!!
Rian:	Okay, folks! Now we have pooled 4.25 lakhs. That will bank roll Tejaswini's fee, travel, and initial expenses, etc. She can very well take up a summer job and the like to meet her further expenses. Let's now congratulate ourselves for being such thick friends!

(ii) There is an inter-school cricket match and your school is losing. As you are the captain, have a group discussion with your teammates in the tea-break about

the strategy to be followed to save your school from losing the match. Give at least four /five suggestions.

Ans.

Captain:	See, we must break this partnership anyhow. Both the batsmen appear very much settled and they are hitting all over the place.
Spinner:	The pitch doesn't support much turn. I suggest we bring back the fast bowlers.
Captain:	You have a point there. What we need most now is a wicket. Right now. Otherwise, the game is as good as lost.
Fast bowler (1):	I agree that we resume pace bowling. But remember: it's a gamble. I think I will need a slip in position. I will attack, outside the off stump. Hope I get the right line.
Captain:	What do you think, Sonu?
Sonu (Fast bowler) (2):	Okay then. I will take up from the pavilion end. Think the wind is in favour.
Captain:	Attempt Yorkers.
Sonu:	Sure. I suggest you keep a deep third man.
Captain:	Done. Now, guys-no sloppy fielding-no dropped catches. And nothing short of a win. (All go into a huddle.)

(iii) Form four groups in your class and have a group discussion on the following topic.

(a) Role of ICT in education

(b) Clean India

Ans.

(a) Role of ICT in education

Moderator:	You've all been given a few minutes to think on your topic for today's group discussion, which is, 'Role of ICT in education'. You may now begin the discussion. Who would like to start?
Vivek:	Hello, everyone. As we all know, we live in an era of technology. As with everything else, technology has also influenced the education sector. The use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) in education has completely revolutionized the idea of a classroom and optimized the delivery of information. As opposed to an ordinary classroom, computer or internet equipped classrooms offer a large variety of

	tools and material to the student to help improve their understanding.
Nisha:	You're absolutely right Vivek. Not only are classroom lectures enhanced with the use of presentations, videos or interactive tools, but the development of online lectures for students has also become a popular phenomenon, providing accessibility of education to a larger number of students who may not be able to reach their classrooms for myriad reasons.
Nazim:	That is an excellent point, Nisha. I would also like to add that besides the advantage of being able to access the lectures from their homes, children also have the added benefit of flexibility. Because of their ability to access study material and lectures any time they want, they can decide a study schedule best suited for their needs.
Avani:	Absolutely. Let's not forget that even in a physical classroom, a learning management system can help conduct quizzes, grade papers and even give the teacher an analysis of how much the students have learnt, all at the tip of her fingers. In addition, such digital systems can eliminate the need to perform tasks like taking attendance or creating reports and leave more time for the teacher to focus on the content of his course.
Riya:	That's a great point, Avani. Finally, I'd also like to add that in situations when a student is unable to attend his regular lectures for personal reasons, an ICT equipped classroom can help him bridge the divide by revising the material at home and then rejoining his classmates in the physical classroom.
Moderator:	Please conclude.
Nikita:	I think we can all agree that ICT has greatly transformed our outlook on education. To conclude, I'd like to say that technology in education helps facilitate universal access to learning, helps bridge learning gaps, optimizes time management, and improves overall administration, in addition to providing a wide variety of digital tools to aid learning.

(b) Clean India

Moderator:	You've all been given a few minutes to think on your topic for today's group discussion, which is, 'Clean India'. You may now begin the discussion. Who would like to start?
Kalpesh:	Hello, everyone. I would like to begin the discussion by pointing out that a 'Clean India' is the need of the hour. Given our ever-increasing population, it is becoming harder and harder to maintain cleanliness in our public spaces. I think our biggest obstacle is improper waste disposal. Despite the installation of garbage bins in various public spaces, littering is a common sight.
Amit:	You're absolutely right, Kalpesh. Improper waste disposal is a big problem, particularly in overcrowded cities. Besides the obvious problem of ruining the beauty of the public spaces, it also poses a serious threat to public health. Garbage left rotting on the streets or in a public space is often a source of disease as it attracts insects and flies.
Rahul:	Could I make a point, please? Besides the disposal of waste, another major problem we face is the lack of segregation of waste. Unfortunately, very few households take the pains to separate their waste into recyclable, biodegradable, and non-biodegradable items. This leads to a wastage of products that can either be recycled or made into compost and all of these end up in landfills, further contributing to land pollution.
Kaya:	I fully agree with you, Rahul. Cleanliness is often wrongly considered to be a responsibility of the government alone. Thus, I believe we need to work towards raising awareness among individuals about their role in the Clean India Mission. In fact, the recent campaign by our government proved to be a resounding success as it addressed the need for individuals to take responsibility for the cleanliness of their surroundings.

Ronik:	Absolutely, Kaya. Besides, the campaign also focused on the development of sanitary facilities and hand pumps in the rural areas of our country. However, the government alone cannot succeed without the efforts of the populace. Therefore, I believe that students like us, should participate in the youth wing of local civic bodies and adopt the issue of cleanliness. Even as ordinary students, each of us can contribute by not littering, segregating waste at home and by pointing out those that litter on the streets.
Moderator:	Please conclude.
Aarav:	In conclusion, I think we can all agree that a 'Clean India' is only possible through a combined effort of the government and the people. It is the duty of every citizen to practice safe disposal of waste, to undertake separation of waste and to raise awareness in their schools, colleges or societies about the need for maintaining a clean environment. Finally, as the youth of the country, we should also play our part by reaching out to local governing bodies and asking what we can do to help the cause.