How to Create a One-Sheet for SOPHIA Meetings

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I. The Goal of a One-Sheet

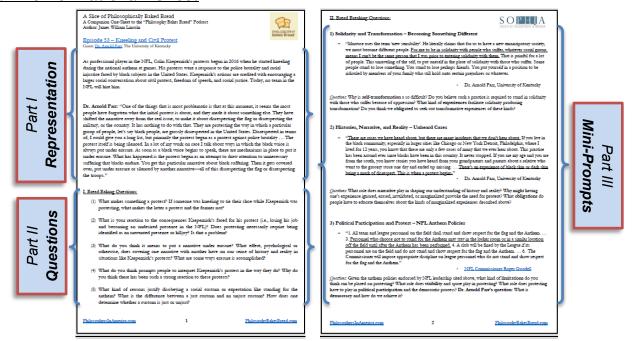
SOPHIA One-Sheets are intended to serve as tools for inspiring and anchoring group dialogue regarding a philosophical topic, argument, theme, thought experiment, or perspective. Limited to one piece of paper, a one-sheet should, above all else, be accessible and thought provoking.

II. The Structure of a One-Sheet

In most cases, a one-sheet will have three parts:

- 1) <u>Part I, Representation of a Philosophical Topic</u>: This part introduces a group to a philosophical topic. The content could present as a picture, poem, paragraph, quotation, or argument outline. Consider and obtain copyright permission as needed. *Part I* is used to introduce and anchor the group's discussion and should generally be about half a page long.
- 2) Part II. Questions for Interrogating the Topic: This part provides the group with a short list of discussion questions related to the topic introduced in Part I. Part II is used to suggest avenues for analyzing and interrogating philosophically the content and consequences of the topic at hand and should generally be about half a page long.
- 3) Part III, Mini-Prompts for Divergent Thinking about the Topic: This part lists two to three short prompts related to the topic introduced in Part I or inspired by the questions raised in Part II. Each mini-topic is accompanied by two or three probing questions. This section is used to further inspire group dialogue and is usually one full page in length. Groups should not feel required to draw on it, but may if they wish.

III. The Format of a 1-Sheet



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IV. Tips for Making Effective One-Sheets

- 1) When everyday language can convey the relevant philosophical matters, it is ideal to use it instead of technical terms or jargon.
- 2) If any technical words do come up, define them immediately, clearly, succinctly, and simply.
- 3) Strive for the topic chosen, style and manner of expression used, and questions raised to be accessible and easy to relate to the interests and experiences of general audiences, wherever possible.
- 4) Whenever addressing historical matters, concepts, or figures, aim to connect the subject matters or questions to continuing or contemporary themes.
- 5) When matters are particularly timely, consider how the relevant principles at issue might be of continuing interest for future applications, conflicts, or questions.
- 6) Succinctness of expression should be a goal and ideal, while offering enough substance to enable conversation. White space on a page is not a bad thing at all, and can be used to direct the eye to what is key. In other words, make the document easy to read and inviting. Bullets or numbered questions make referencing the same passage easier and more accessible.
- 7) In general, keep references to a minimum, so that the document is as self-sufficient as is feasible. When necessary, instead of including long references, note a source with a name, title, or organization that could easily be searched for online to find the story, fact, or source quickly without much work. When links can make that easier, include them in the text of abbreviated references so that digital users of the one-sheets could click the link to see the source and origin for themselves.
- 8) Avoid "yes" or "no" questions or other question forms that merely involve the assent or denial of a particular position, in favor of probing questions that seek understanding and analysis of reasoning, beliefs, or motivations for thinking in different ways about the subject matter.
- 9) Consider audiences from kids and teenagers to scholars, adults beyond the academy, or retired community members. The aim of such documents should not be merely to convey information to these community members, but instead to enable and empower people to think together about questions rendered live, accessible, and digestible for the sake of offering one's thoughts about the relevant subject matter.
- 10) Keep in mind the aim of making these documents gripping, touching on people's interests, as well as enjoyable. Be sure to show how philosophy can be about deeply practical matters and often a lot of fun.