1) Create a realistic timeline for planning your event – at least two weeks to select group members, a facilitator, a location, day, and time for your group’s meeting.
   a. Decide what your goals are for the event
      i. Does it matter to you how many people come? (4-6 people is ideal)
      ii. How long the discussion goes? (1.5-2 hours recommended)
      iii. Does it matter if participants have read the whole book or just part of it? (the whole book is ideal, but each group can decide for themselves)
      iv. Are there specific things you’d like to avoid? (set your own ground rules)
      v. Plan with the end in mind
   b. Reserve space as early as possible, whether that means reserving space on campus or making a reservation for a table in a public space.
   c. Leave yourself enough time for something to go imperfectly.
   d. Divide up the various planning tasks among multiple people and be clear about who’s doing what as well as the communication that will happen.

2) Find a comfortable space that will lend itself to an effective group discussion
   a. Ensure there is ample seating space for participants
   b. Chairs should be set up so that all participants can see each other (rather than lecture style, or in a straight line).
   c. Find a space with limited distractions, such as noise or people passing through.

3) Identify a facilitator, and review participant and facilitator guide
   a. Each member can prepare by reading the tips for participants and facilitators in this toolkit.
   b. Expectations can be shared prior to the meeting, and can also be reviewed at the opening of the discussion.

4) Creating your group
   a. Look for people who may have diverse opinions and perspectives because that often contributes to a richer discussion
   c. Be certain that promotional materials include the location and the start and end time and any other expectations you have of participants (i.e., those who have read the whole book, must live in a certain residence hall, music majors only, etc.)

5) Allow for 60-90 minutes of discussion
a. You want to make sure that participants are aware of the timeline so they can plan to stay for the entire discussion.

6) Provide snacks if appropriate and possible
   a. Food often helps people relax and warm up for discussion.
   b. Be cautious of allergies and other food sensitivities.
   c. You can certainly have a successful discussion without providing food, perhaps by holding a discussion following a meal.