

OUTLINE DISCUSSION GUIDE
FOCUS GROUP STUDY
RESIDENTS OF ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

Good (morning, afternoon, evening). My name is _____.

The New Jersey State Library has launched an ambitious project to gain a better understanding of the programs and services the residents of our community want to have available at their public library.

The Library is very pleased you have agreed to join us today.

We are here to talk about how your experiences have been using your local public library. The discussion we are going to have is called a focus group. For those of you who have never participated in one of these sessions before, I would like to explain about this type of research.

Focus groups are used to gather qualitative information from a small group of individuals who have a common interest in a particular subject—in this instance, your interest in adult programs and services available at your public library.

These informal discussions will provide the Library with valuable information about how the Library can better serve residents of the _____ community in the future.

In focus groups, there are no right or wrong answers. We want to hear from everyone in the room. You were invited here because we believed you would have important ideas regarding the subjects pertaining to public library services that we want to explore. Don't hesitate to speak up when you have a point you would like to make.

I will be moderating the session and trying to move us along so that we touch on all of the key subjects on our agenda. I would like to avoid getting bogged down on issues that are not relevant to everyone in our group discussion. If I sense we are spending too much time on one subject, I will jump in and try to move the discussion along.

I will tape record this discussion so that I don't have to take notes. I like to follow what is being said and then carefully listen to the tapes later so I can accurately convey the ideas and opinions that you have shared.

My role as moderator is to summarize the group's feelings. I will not refer to any participant by name in the report I prepare. The information will be kept confidential and used only by the Library to develop new services and programs that will better address your needs and those of the _____ community in the future.

QUESTION ONE: I would like to begin by going around the table and asking each of you to tell us a little about yourself and your family. PROBE FOR:

- General composition of household
- Length of time living in the community
- Occupation
- Language spoken at home, etc.

QUESTION ONE A: Which members of your household use the library?

QUESTION TWO: What are the programs and services that you and your family use at the Library? PROBE FOR:

- Books for entertainment
- Materials for personal interests

Magazines and newspapers
Reference services
Business career and job information
Computers and online services
Non- print collections such as audio books, DVDs
Special free programs for people of all ages
Online databases
Interlibrary loan
Other?

QUESTION THREE: What are some of the library programs and services specially tailored to _____ residents of the community that you and your family use?

Conversation groups for people learning to speak English
ESOL classes
Collections of _____ books for children
Collections of _____ books for adults
Programs for residents of the _____ community
Foreign language newspapers including _____ newspapers and magazines
Exhibitions of _____ art and culture
Computer and Internet training classes

QUESTION FOUR: How easy or difficult do you think it is for customers who speak _____ to get information about library programs and services? PROBE FOR:

Translation of materials
Signage
Collection
Bi-lingual staff

QUESTION FIVE: In general, how satisfied are you with the materials, programs, services, and technology that residents of the _____ community can find at the Library?

QUESTION SIX: What are some of the things that prevent some members of your community from using the public library?

QUESTION SEVEN: Do you have access to the Internet in your home? Have you visited the Library's website? Have you ever used the Library databases? If so, which ones?

QUESTION EIGHT: In the future, what do you think will be the most pressing needs of _____ residents? Do you have ideas for other programs and services that the Library might expand to assist them?

QUESTION NINE: What do you think are the best strategies for informing the _____ community about the programs and services that the Library has for them?

QUESTION TEN: Is there anything else you would recommend the Library should do to get more _____ residents to use the Library?