

Small Groups: Trimble Chapters 3, 4, & 5

Group One

Chapter Three: Compare the student examples of the back-door approach to openers (page 25) to the front-door approach (bottom of page 24). Summarize Trimble's argument that the front-door approach is superior. Why does he prefer it? How does the front-door satisfy the reader's needs more effectively than the back-door?

Group Two

Chapter Four: Analyze Trimble's analogy of the writer as prosecuting attorney in a court case. Consider each figure in the comparison—the jury/readers, the case/thesis, the witnesses/evidence, the closing appeal/conclusion. How might this approach help us to compose a good paper? What important attitudes and techniques are the analogy designed to instill in the writer as he/she develops a thesis?

Group Three

Chapter Four: Explore Trimble's five-point checklist for good papers (page 31). Demonstrate how each point is achieved in the student example he provides on pages 36-38. Read aloud for us relevant passages that illustrate these goals. How does the student writer satisfy Trimble's five "essentials"?

Group Four

Chapter Four: Examine Trimble's teaching on the topic of continuity. Consider his advice on signposting, one-sentence paragraphs, and bridge sentences, as well as the boxed list of transitional words and phrases (41). Find a few examples of these strategies in the sample student paper on pages 36-38.

Group Five

Chapter Five: Explain each of Trimble's "three imperatives" for an effective closer. What is the logic behind each imperative? What effect is he aiming at? What rhetorical goal will a conclusion reach if it contains all three of these imperatives? Consider the final student example on page 47 as your illustration.