

GOAL: To practice writing paragraphs with clear connective thinking while simultaneously applying and testing Gladwell's ideas—skills needed for Paper Five.

TASK: Groups will be assigned one of the forum threads below. Your group should start by reading the posts and any web materials linked from the posts, to get a sense of the topic of the thread. Then, as a group, discuss how Gladwell's ideas can inform the discussion: How can you apply what Gladwell says to the case at hand? How can the topic confirm / extend / challenge Gladwell?

As a group, write a paragraph that reflects the connection / application / complication your group discussed between Gladwell's text and the text of the thread. The paragraph should have a topic sentence with a clear idea focus (ex: "The Power of Context plays a significant role not only in social change but in the political process as well, as illustrated by the race for governor in California."). The paragraph must also include quotations from Gladwell AND the thread or the thread's linked materials.

When you're done with your paragraph, let me know. I'll be saving them all to disk and then uploading them to the class website soon.

THREADS: For each, I've identified *one* possible approach, but don't feel limited by my suggestion. Your group can focus on any connection it sees between the thread/web materials and Gladwell.

1. Talking Point: HIV/AIDS:
<http://www.classguide.net/rutgers/forums/showthread.php?s=&threadid=5365>
Possible approach: Gladwell's ideas come from studying epidemics. How can they rebound and be used to *stop* an epidemic?
2. Go Beyond Thinking: Take the Next Step:
<http://www.classguide.net/rutgers/forums/showthread.php?s=&threadid=5300>
Possible approach: This thread is trying to create action and social change, but a strategy based on Stille ("let's worship the Raritan!") clearly failed and the thread was, generally, met with a great deal of student apathy. How might Gladwell's ideas be used to prompt the intended action/change, through either student action or government regulation or an altered business climate?
3. Talking Point: Gay Pride(s) + Straight Pride (?):
<http://www.classguide.net/rutgers/forums/showthread.php?s=&threadid=5011>
Possible approach: You might use Gladwell to consider the proliferation of different *kinds* of Pride Flags—is there a Tipping Point here? You might also consider how context determines the reception/function of pride.

FOR ASSIGNMENT FIVE: If you're thinking of working on the third option for Paper Five, you can use any of the threads above or (see also assignment page):

- Thought provoking: Debate/Case on "under God"...
- Thought Provoking: SPAM—not limited to the "peddlers of pornography"...
- Talking Point: Iraq
- Talking Point: Phelps Protest
- Talking Point: Kazaa!
- Talking Point: The Terminator for Governor