Group Activity: Exploring the Rhetorical Situation: Using Sources to Respond to Questions

**Purpose:**
The following exercise is designed for two reasons: (1) to further your understanding of the rhetorical situation; and (2) to prepare you to respond critically to readings.

**Directions:**
You will have ______ minutes to complete each exercise. Each round offers key terms, a question, and some direct quotations. The key terms are associated with a rhetorical situation. Please work together to discuss and answer the question. In the course of answering the question, please draw upon one or more quotations in some way, either through paraphrase, summary, or direct quotation. You are encouraged to use the templates provided in They Say/ I Say to help you include what others say. Don’t forget to add what you say as well. After discussion, record your group’s response to the question on a piece of paper. Put all members’ names on the sheet of paper as well.

**Round Four: Rhetorical Situation**
**Key Terms: Audience, Pathos**

**Q: How might a writer connect to his/her audience?**

“This ability to enter complex, many-sided conversations has taken on a special urgency in today’s diverse, post-9/11 world, where the future for all of us may depend on our ability to put ourselves in the shoes of those who think very differently from us. The central piece of advice in this book – that we listen carefully to others, including those who disagree with us, and then engage with them thoughtfully and respectfully – can help us see beyond our own pet beliefs, which may not be shared by everyone” (Graff & Birkenstein, 2006, p. 13).

“You’ll never know your audiences completely, and you most often will have to imagine them during those moments when it is just you and the keyboard or pen trying to make words—but it is those acts of imagination informed by discussion, listening, and respecting that will best help you make decisions about what words to use” (Wysocki & Lynch, 2007, p. 189).

“To write successfully in these complex rhetorical situations, you might find it helpful to create an extended reader profile that goes beyond answering the Who, What, Where, When, Whey, and How questions. An extended reader profile will help you to better anticipate what your readers expect, what they value and what their attitudes are toward you and your topic” (Johnson-Sheehan & Paine, 2013, p. 29).

“When it comes to taking action, those who think rhetorically are in a very strong position. They have listened attentively and through carefully and methodically; viewed their topic from many alternate perspectives; done their homework; and engaged with the words and thoughts of others. This kind of rhetorical thinking will help you to get in on conversations...(Lunsford et al, 2013, p. 16).