

FACILITATOR SESSION STARTER

USE THIS FIRST

This sheet starts a single 45-minute discussion. Use the full facilitator guide for the eight-session course, answer summary, reproducible handouts, and improvement log.

NEUTRAL OPENING SCRIPT

READ ALOUD

'We are here to examine what the available record can support. We can take an experience seriously without deciding its cause in advance. We will challenge claims and reasoning, not people. It is acceptable to end with insufficient data or an unresolved question.'

GROUP AGREEMENTS

Invite the group to add one more

- ☐ Describe before explaining.
- ☐ Ask neutral questions.
- ☐ Label uncertainty and missing information.
- ☐ Apply the same standard to every explanation.
- ☐ Separate the person, report, case, and conclusion.
- ☐ Challenge ideas without ridiculing people.
- ☐ Protect private or identifying details.
- ☐ Do not force agreement or a verdict.

OUR ADDITIONAL AGREEMENT

Add one rule the group needs in order to think and speak honestly.

45-MINUTE STARTER AGENDA

TIME	ACTIVITY	FACILITATOR PURPOSE
0-5 min	Opening and agreements	Set purpose, boundaries, and terms.
5-12 min	Read the record	Use one short case without an origin label.
12-22 min	Separate the layers	Mark observation, inference, and measurement needs.
22-34 min	Test alternatives	Name supports, contradictions, and missing checks.
34-41 min	Bound the conclusion	Write the strongest shared statement the record permits.
41-45 min	Reflect and close	Name one uncertainty and one useful next step.

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MINI-EXERCISE: CLASSIFY EACH STATEMENT

Mark O = observation, I = inference, M = measurement needed

STATEMENT	O / I / M
A bright white point appeared above the tree line.	
It was larger than an airplane.	
The light crossed about two hand-widths of sky.	
It accelerated instantly.	
No sound was heard during the observation.	
It was intelligently controlled.	

NEUTRAL QUESTION STEMS

Use these when the room starts arguing about origin

- ☐ What in the record supports that statement?
- ☐ Which part is directly observed?
- ☐ What would we need to measure?
- ☐ What ordinary cause could produce the same appearance?
- ☐ What would contradict this explanation?
- ☐ Are these sources independent?
- ☐ What information is missing?
- ☐ How far does this evidence actually reach?

CLOSING REFLECTION: KEEP THREE LAYERS SEPARATE

THE EXPERIENCE

What did the event mean to the person who reported it?

THE RECORD

What can the preserved information establish and what remains missing?

THE EXPLANATION

What conclusion is supportable now? What would justify reopening the case?