

Teachers Support Document

Exploring Our Perceptions

Topic: Qualities of a Leader and Follower

Introduction

This support document is designed to help teachers foster critical thinking related to leadership and followership. The document is structured around central questions, each crafted to guide the students in critically evaluating their perception of “leaders” and “followers.”

Teachers are encouraged to review the steps outlined in this resource and determine the time they wish to allocate to each. To maximize the impact of these exercises, avoid completing all steps in a single session. Allow students the time to reflect on the discussions, and encourage them to observe how others around them talk about leadership and followership. Often, profound insights can emerge simply by listening to different perspectives.

Usage Policy

This document and its contents are free to use and share for educational purposes. It is designed to support teachers in facilitating classroom discussions and helping students broaden their perspectives on leadership and followership.

Please note that this document may not be sold, distributed for profit, or used for commercial purposes.

Qualities of a Leader and Follower

Total Time: 90–120 minutes

Objective:

To help students reflect on their conscious and subconscious perceptions of leadership and followership.

About the Exercise:

This exercise encourages students to critically reflect on their own—and others’—conscious and subconscious views of leaders and followers. It also prompts them to consider how these perspectives shape their understanding of the world.

Instructions

1. Present the Table

Share the table below ([available for download here](#)), which includes a variety of descriptive words.


NATURAL
 FOLLOWERSHIP

<u>Bold</u>	Reliable	Confident	<u>Helpful</u>	<u>Risk-Taker</u>
<u>Planner</u>	<u>Hard-Worker</u>	Energetic	Patient	Listener
Decisive	<u>Trusting</u>	Bossy	Quiet	Focused
Motivator	<u>Team Player</u>	Creative Thinker	Ambitious	Respectful
Positive	Obedient	<u>Cheerful</u>	Charismatic	Encourager
Commanding	Quiet Worker	Flexible	<u>Listens Well</u>	Trustworthy
Inspiring	Caring	Innovative	<u>Loyal</u>	<u>Strategic</u>
Resourceful	Team-Oriented	Dependable	Observant	<u>Creative</u>
Determined	Supportive	Responsible	Follows Directions	<u>Proactive</u>
Takes Charge	Creative	Visionary	Focused	<u>Energetic</u>

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2. Individual Reflection

Ask each student to:

- Choose three words that they instinctively associate with a leader and write them down.
- Choose three words that they feel best describe a follower and write those down as well.

3. Pair Discussion

In pairs, have the students discuss their views on leaders and followers using the following questions:

- Why did you choose the words you did for “leader” and “follower?”
 - *Do you see leaders as individuals directing or managing others?*
 - *Do you see followers as subordinates?*
- Would you say your view of “leaders” is more positive or negative than your view of “followers?”

4. Class Word Lists

Together with the class, create a list of all the words chosen for “leader,” noting how many times each word was selected. For example:

- Visionary (10)
- Responsible (7)
- Strategic (3)

Repeat this process for “follower.”

5. Group Discussion on Leaders

Have the students discuss the following questions as a group:

- *Are the words chosen for “leader” positive or negative?*
- *Do the words convey strength or weakness?*
- *Do they suggest that leaders are individuals who direct or manage others? If so, is that what you believe?*
- *Would people want to be associated with these words? Why or why not?*

7. Group Discussion on Followers

Present the list of words for “follower.” Give the students a minute to review, then discuss:

- *Are the words chosen for “follower” positive or negative?*
- *Do the words convey strength or weakness?*
- *Would people want to be associated with these words? Why or why not?*
- *Do you believe followers are subordinates?*
- *Can a person exhibit qualities of both a leader and a follower?*
- *Do you believe people must have someone to lead them?*
- *Are people born to either lead or follow?*

8. Understanding Perspectives

Inform the students that their views on leaders and followers are socially constructed, meaning these perspectives are shaped by cultural, societal, and personal influences, rather than being innate or biological.

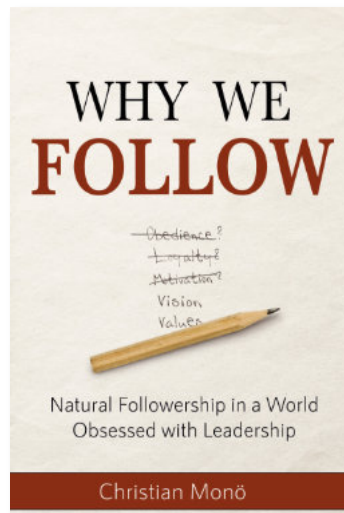
9. Reflection in Pairs

In pairs, have the students reflect on the origins of their perspectives:

- *Where do your views on leadership and followership come from?*

This document draws inspiration from the book:

Why We Follow: Natural Followership in a World Obsessed with Leadership by Christian Monö.



For more information, visit www.naturalfollowership.com