

Four-Week Reading Plan

When Ignorance Governs | Stephen M. Fry

Week 1 | Chapters 1-4

Focus: the warning, the construction of a political reality, loyalty, and party responsibility.

Discussion prompt: How do these chapters connect rhetoric to institutional behavior?

Week 2 | Chapters 5-9

Focus: the media shield, revenge, the deep state narrative, and political spectacle. Discussion

prompt: Which mechanisms reinforce one another, and which require independent evidence?

Week 3 | Chapters 10-15

Focus: immigration, foreign policy, the Justice Department, the courts, Congress, and the civil service. Discussion prompt: Compare two institutions and the constraints each can still impose.

Week 4 | Chapters 16-19 and Afterword

Focus: the rules of democracy, resistance, choices ahead, and the refusal to normalize.

Discussion prompt: Which responses depend on citizens, and which depend on officials or institutions?

Use flexibly

The chapters vary in length. Groups meeting once can assign chapters by topic instead and use the Discussion Guide to select a shorter set of questions.