

Running Your First Meeting

You've called your friends and asked them to join you for Well-Read Mom. Or maybe you've used our "Find A Group" feature on our website to find a group near you.

Your kick-off meeting is scheduled. Now what? The first meeting is your chance to engage all interested women and invite them to accompany one another in reading great books! It's important to make the most of the time you have with these members and potential members.

Before the Meeting

- Check out the "[Kick-Off Meeting for 'Year of the Pilgrim'](#)" for an example of what to do at your first meeting. Review the agenda and amount of time for each item. If you are planning the meeting with someone else, delegate responsibilities for the meeting ahead of time.
- Find a location for the meeting that is open and accessible for as many people as possible, this could be a home, church, coffee shop, community center, restaurant, etc. You can also rotate locations, for example members' homes.
- Arrange the meeting room so members face each other in a circle or semicircle to create an open environment. Make sure the room is equipped with what you'll need (chairs, coffee pot, etc.)

During the Meeting

- Greet everyone and make them feel welcome.
- Ask people to sign-in and provide their e-mail address. (Some groups have their own Facebook page to communicate.)
- Have a simple beverage or maybe a snack if possible, but keep it easy. In our group, we rotate homes and cookies. Others prepare a potluck meal based on the theme. It's totally up to you. If you do want other people to help host, we recommend keeping it simple.
- Start on time. End on time. Stick to the agenda. Often, women stay after the "official" meeting is over to visit.
- Encourage group discussion. Our group starts the meeting by offering each woman the chance to share her general impressions of the book. Then we listen to the audio. Make sure no one is taking over the conversation, including yourself!

- Do play the audios to the whole group. Listening to the audios together when you gather as a group is vitally important to the Well-Read Mom experience. The audios explain why the book was chosen, the theme, and help jog people's memories. We find those who intend to listen on their own before or after the meeting seldom do and are less connected to the mission of Well-Read Mom.
- Use the reflection questions from the "Year of the Pilgrim Companion" as a starting point for your discussion.
- Be sure to leave the group with the next steps of action - like how to register on the website and find the recommended edition of the books on our bookstore, as well as the date and time for the next meeting. We find setting the next meeting date at the current meeting cuts down on a lot of emails and confusion during the month.

After the Meeting

- Add the attendees' e-mail addresses to your e-mail list.
- Follow up! Make sure to thank everyone for their participation.
- Summarize key points and include details about when the next meeting will be held and any steps members can take in the meantime.