NPR Listening Party Kit: May 2016

Pick a story, gather friends and spark thoughtful conversation through a shared listening experience.
As this election season heats up, NPR Morning Edition has been traveling to regions usually overlooked on the campaign trail to understand what Americans are thinking about slightly off the beaten political path.

In this month’s stories, hosts David Greene and Steve Inskeep explore how where people live impacts what they need from the government. Their reporting culminated in live broadcasts of Morning Edition from local venues, where we welcomed listeners from the area to join the conversation. **Now we hope to bring you in, too.**

As you listen to this month’s stories, we invite you to consider this question:

*What political, economic, or environmental challenges are people in your town grappling with and how does that inform their understanding of what government can and should do for them?*

In other words: **What is The View From... You?**
We traveled with NPR Morning Edition to listen, connect and learn about how what people need from government varies across the country.
1. **The View From: Peoria, IL**

Host David Greene travels around Illinois, which is the most representative state of the country in terms of race, income, religion. We broadcast live from I Know You Like A Book in Peoria, IL.

2. **The View From: Knoxville, TN**

Host Steve Inskeep travels to Appalachia, the mountain region that stretches from New York to the Deep South. We broadcast live from Holly’s Gourmet’s Market in Knoxville, TN.

3. **The View From: Bozeman, MT**

Host David Greene travels around the state of Montana to explore perspectives from the Northwest. We broadcast live from Feed Cafe in Bozeman, MT.

4. **Guide To Hosting A Listening Party**

If you’re new to this, our guide materials help you bring your listening party to life.
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Midwest // Peoria, Illinois

- Thomson, Illinois, And Its Maximum Security Prison
- Englewood, Illinois, A Community In Crisis
- Washington, Illinois, Remembers 2013 Tornado
The View From Thomson, Ill. And Its Maximum Security Prison

Host: David Greene on Morning Edition
Time: 7 min 13 sec

What in the story resonated with you? Do you feel or see much anger in your community towards the government? What do you think is the cause?

The View From Englewood, Ill.: A Community In Crisis

Host: David Greene on Morning Edition
Time: 7 min 16 sec

Did anything surprise you in this story? Which character did you most relate to? What kind of role do you think the government should play in trying to solve the kinds of frustrations highlighted?

The View From Washington, Ill.: Remembering The 2013 Tornado

Host: David Greene on Morning Edition
Time: 6 min 31 sec

Have you or someone close to you experienced a natural disaster? What was the recovery process like? What role do you think government should play when something tragic like this happens?
• Appalachia Looks To Improve Its Future; Looks For Helpful Leaders
• Living Below The Poverty Line
• For Tennessee Governor Weighing Religious Objection Bill, It’s All About Values
• For Voters In Appalachian Region, Medical Care Is A Big Issue
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<th>Title</th>
<th>Host</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appalachia Looks To Improve Its Future; Looks For Helpful Leaders</td>
<td>Steve Inskeep on Morning Edition</td>
<td>6 min 42 sec</td>
<td>Try this: think of your job, what you do every day. Now imagine that entire industry vanishes from your hometown. What would you do?</td>
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<tr>
<td>A View From Appalachia: Living Below The Poverty Line</td>
<td>Steve Inskeep on Morning Edition</td>
<td>7 min 15 sec</td>
<td>What struck you most in this story? Does the idea of being drawn back to where you are from resonate? Have you lived in a place with terrible internet?</td>
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For Tennessee Governor
Weighing Religious Objection Bill, It’s All About Values

Host: Steve Inskeep on Morning Edition
Time: 6 min 36 sec

What’s your take on the question: can therapists truly leave their values out of their work? Do you think any professionals should be allowed to refuse service based on religious objections?

For Voters In Appalachian Region, Medical Care Is A Big Issue

Host: Steve Inskeep on Morning Edition
Time: 7 min 14 sec

Do you have health insurance? Have ever not had it? Who do you think should be responsible for ensuring coverage for individuals?
Northwest //
Bozeman, Montana

• In Big Sky Country, Land Rights Are A Major Issue For Montana Ranchers
• Glacier National Park Gives Montanans A Close View Of Climate Change
• Montana’s Oil Boom Fades Ahead Of The 2016 Presidential Election
• The View From Montana, Where Guns Are An Important Election Issue
In Big Sky Country, Land Rights Are A Major Issue For Montana Ranchers

Did this view of ranchers - as small business owners - surprise you? What role should government play in helping to preserve ways of life outside of major modern cities?

Glacier National Park Gives Montanans A Close View Of Climate Change

Which voice in the story resonates most with you? Why do you think climate change is so difficult for people to talk about? Any ideas for how to move the conversation forward?
Montana’s Oil Boom Fades Ahead Of The 2016 Presidential Election

What struck you about this story? Did you know about Montana’s love/hate relationship with the Federal Government? Does it make sense to you? What is the take in your own community?

The View From Montana, Where Guns Are An Important Election Issue

What do you make of Senator Jon Tester? Did his stance and answers to David’s questions resonate with you?
Now that you’ve had a chance to listen to a selection of stories from various regions of the country, we come back to the question with which we started:

*What political, economic, or environmental challenges are people in your town grappling with and how does that inform their understanding of what government can and should do for them?*

In other words: *What is The View From... You?*

Discuss with your group - and let us know, too.

Find us on Twitter and Instagram @nprgenlisten or send us a note at genlisten@npr.org.

#nprlisteningparty
Get caught up on politics by NPR’s political reporters.
Now that you have politics on the brain...

The NPR Politics Podcast is where NPR’s political reporters talk to you like they talk to each other. With weekly roundups and quick takes on news of the day, you don’t have to keep up with politics to know what’s happening. You just have to keep up with us.

Choose the most recent - or a past episode about a topic that interests you.
How to Host an #NPRLlisteningParty
WHAT IS A LISTENING PARTY, ANYWAY?

Bring together friends for a fun, refreshing social experience that’s usually solitary: listening to radio stories.

At an NPR Listening Party, great audio storytelling gives you and your crew the chance to take a break from screens, listen together, and go deeper with thoughtful discussion and stories of your own.

It’s easy. All you have to do is:

• Pick a story
• Gather friends in a cozy place
• Hit airplane mode, listen and discuss!

Each month, our themed toolkit offers a section of stories curated to help spark discussion and includes conversation catalysts.

Show us how you #HostYourOwn #NPRListeningParty and together we can spread the mission of public radio for a more informed, engaged, and empathetic world.
**HOW TO GET STARTED**

1. **Pick a day and time.**

   Weekend brunch works great, as do weekday evenings. Consider other events happening in your community already and schedule around them so you don’t have to compete. We recommend carving out about 90 minutes for the whole event.

2. **Pick a venue.**

   We recommend hosting at your house to keep things cozy and casual. But if you have other ideas or access to an intimate space, go for it! Ideally, aim to keep the group no larger than 20 people so that everyone gets a chance to speak.
**3 Send your invite.**

You can use email, Facebook, or whatever you like. Please include the NPR Generation Listen logo or feel free to use our invite graphic. Have fun with it! A day or two before the Listening Party, send your guests a reminder to be on time and include any key information about arriving to / parking at your home, etc.

**4 Choose a story or podcast.**

Think about what will connect with the friends you’ve invited. You can choose one longer piece, or pair a couple of shorter segments. Generally aim for no longer than 45 minutes. Stories with a bit of tension or controversy make for a more lively discussion. Listen ahead of time and prepare some conversation starters to kick off your discussion. Also, consider which friends may have some interesting ideas to contribute based on subject matter expertise.
HOW TO GET STARTED

5 Prep the space.

Coziness is key. You want people to settle in - kind of like watching a movie. Put out lots of pillows and blankets. Keep the lighting soft. If possible, arrange seating into a circle, which will help conversation flow. It’s a good idea to have a focal point for folks to settle their gaze on (it may feel strange at first to not be looking at a screen). We also recommend setting out paper and pens so people can take notes and/or doodle while they listen.

6 Mind the details.

Identify the device you plan to play the story from ahead of time. Make sure it’s fully charged and notifications are off. You may consider downloading the piece if your Internet is spotty. Make sure your speakers are powerful enough for everyone to hear with no problems. Oh, and stock up on some light snacks and drinks for folks to munch on.
- Set date + time
- Send invite
- Pre-listen to story
- Jot down a few discussion-starting questions
- Create a cozy feel where you’re hosting:
  - Arrange seating in a circle if possible
  - Pillows, blankets, comfy chairs
  - Soft lighting
  - Pre-download story or make sure you have solid Internet connection

- Turn off notifications on streaming device
- Set out some notepads and pens / markers
- Stock up on light snacks & beverages
- Know the room: are there some subject matter experts you can pass the ball to during the discussion?
- Snap some pics for the socials
- Be creative! Make your Listening Party uniquely yours
## 5 Tips on How to Moderate A Conversation

**with Guy Raz**

### NPR’s Guy Raz

NPR’s Guy Raz is an award-winning journalist and host of NPR’s TED Radio Hour.

As a host and correspondent, he has interviewed and profiled more than 6,000 people that span the gamut from Jimmy Carter to Mark Zuckerberg to Taylor Swift. Suffice it to say, Guy is a true master of the art of opening people up. He was kind enough to share his top tips for moderating an incredible conversation.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tip</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Empathy. Empathy. Be empathetic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Give something, get something. If you make yourself vulnerable, others will be willing to open up to you.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Be open and curious in your conversation.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Find moments of common experience whenever you can. (i.e. I like jazz! Me too!)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Acknowledge silences and awkward pauses.</td>
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#HostYourOwn

SEND AN INVITE
visit our website for more information
geninationlisten.npr.org/listening-party

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