Pushing the Limits of Knowledge
Suggested Reading and Discussion Questions

This theme explores the concept of knowledge, and how it overlaps and diverges with information and learning. In your discussions consider what makes different types of knowledge important over time.

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy

Douglas Adams, Fiction. Seconds before Earth is demolished to make way for a galactic freeway, Arthur Dent is plucked off the planet by his friend Ford Prefect, a researcher for the revised edition of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* who, for the last fifteen years, has been posing as an out-of-work actor.

Together, this dynamic pair begin a journey through space aided by a galaxyful of fellow travelers: Zaphod Beeblebrox--the two-headed, three-armed ex-hippie and totally out-to-lunch president of the galaxy; Trillian (formerly Tricia McMillan), Zaphod's girlfriend, whom Arthur tried to pick up at a cocktail party once upon a time zone; Marvin, a paranoid, brilliant, and chronically depressed robot; and Veet Voojagig, a former graduate student obsessed with the disappearance of all the ballpoint pens he's bought over the years. - *amazon.com*

- *Hitchhiker's Guide* makes fun of a lot of things, but are there any things that this book takes seriously?
- How is the idea of knowledge explored in this book?
- If you were writing this book today, what changes would you make? Would you want to add in modern technology? Like what? Would you want the book to take some sort of side on important issues of the day?
- How does Hitchhiker parody government, politics and big business?
- Arthur stumbles through the book getting lectured by a variety of sources—Ford, the *Guide*, Slartibartfast, Slartibartfast's Sens-O-Tape documentary. Do these sources of info tell us things we need to know? Are they primarily used for comic relief? What would the book be like if Arthur didn't have any guide at all?