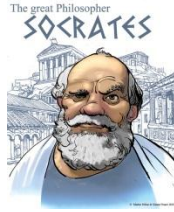


Socratic Seminar Guidelines



What is a Socratic Seminar?

A Socratic Seminar is a way of teaching founded by the Greek philosopher Socrates. Socrates believed that students learn best by asking questions. It is the teacher's job to moderate the discussion instead of to lead the discussion.

Why do we have Socratic Seminar?

Socratic Seminars help us engage a text in class. When we work together to understand a text, it will help everyone's understanding.

What do we do to prepare for the seminar?

The day prior to the seminar, you will be given a Socratic Seminar prep sheet to complete. *It is essential you complete this assignment and read the text in order to prepare yourself with important questions and quotations.* Your grade depends on it.

What type of questions should I ask during the seminar?

There are three levels of questions:

Level One – *Reading On the Line* – As you read, you should be mentally asking questions that can be answered by explicit information you can physically point out in the passage. You “recall” or “remember” facts and details that answer questions such as *who, what, where, and when.*

Level Two – *Reading Between the Lines* – Proficient readers make interpretations based upon details in the text. As you read, you should be asking questions that can be answered by making inferences and assumptions based upon evidence in the text, such as “*What does a detail or image represent, suggest, or personify?*” These questions are interpretative.

Level Three – *Reading Beyond the Lines* – As you read, you should move beyond the text to connect to universal meaning. Ask mental questions like, “*How does this text connect to my life, with life in a larger sense of all human beings, with my ideas about morality and values?*” These questions are open-ended and go beyond the text. They are intended to provoke a discussion of abstract issues and thematic concerns.

What will the seminar look like?

The classroom will be arranged in two concentric circles. We will be having TWO seminars. When you are in the inner circle, you will be participating in the discussion. If you are in the outer circle, you will be taking notes on a partner assigned to you. Then, after time has elapsed, we will switch circles.

How does the discussion work in a seminar, and what are my expectations? *Seminar is a discussion, a conversation—not a lecture.*

- Listen and look at each other when you speak.
- One person speaks at a time.
- Respond to the person who asks the question.
- Use evidence from the text to support yourself.
- Be prepared. Have a copy of the reading and be familiar with it. You should be reference the material during the seminar.
- Be respectful. Disagree without being disagreeable, don't monopolize the conversation, and don't interrupt others.
- Be relevant. Stay on topic, and don't be repetitive. Avoid the obvious.
- Do not stay confused; ask for clarification.
- Write notes.
- Be open. Seminar is not about being right; it is about fully exploring the topic.

What are my requirements?

You will not be allowed to participate in the discussion without the Seminar Prep Sheet; you will receive a zero without it. It is your ticket to “get in” to the discussion. You should contribute to the conversation a minimum of three times by asking a question, responding, commenting, or citing the text. You should meet all expectations outlined above.

Socratic Seminar Observation Form

Participant you are observing: _____ Your name: _____

This person has his/her prep sheet on his/her desk (YES/NO).

The person has his/her text on his/her desk (YES/NO).

<p style="text-align: center;">DURING THE DISCUSSION</p> <p><i>Put a check in the box each time your partner...</i></p> <p>Asks a QUESTION:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 30px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> </tr> </table> <p>RESPONDS to or COMMENTS on a question:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 30px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> </tr> </table> <p><i>There will be a deduction of points if the following boxes are checked...</i></p> <p>Interrupts a speaker:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 30px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> </tr> </table> <p>Engages in side conversation or uses cell phone:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; height: 30px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> </tr> </table>																	<p style="text-align: center;">AFTER THE DISCUSSION</p> <p>What is the most interesting thing your partner said?</p> <p>What do you wish you had been able to say or ask during the discussion?</p>

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