



SOCRATIC SEMINAR

What is a socratic seminar?

Socratic Seminar is a teaching technique that encourages students to be more accountable and engaged in their learning. It facilitates a closer reading, deeper meaning and better understanding of reading material be it fiction or non-fiction. Socratic seminar also improves the speaking and listening skills of students along with their argumentation skills and evidence finding. Ultimately, the socratic seminar is a “collaborative, intellectual dialogue facilitated with open-ended questions about a text.”(Socratic Seminar, pg. 106)

What is the purpose of a socratic seminar?

- ❖ **To achieve a deeper understanding about the ideas and values in a text.**
- ❖ **Participants systematically question and examine issues and principles related to a particular content**
- ❖ **Participants articulate different points of view**
- ❖ **Participants construct meaning through disciplined analysis, interpretation, listening and participation**

What does a Socratic Seminar look like?



The Socratic Seminar from Hall

What does a Socratic Seminar look like?

- ❖ Students sit in a circle ~ this allows for eye-contact and personal interaction ~ students talk to each other
- ❖ There is one seat left open ~ the hot seat
 - hot seat: allows observer to participate when he/she has a burning comment, point or question to ask
 - observer may only stay in hot-seat for a minimal time
- ❖ Surrounding the circle are the observers
 - their job is to watch an assigned participant to evaluate their performance and provide feedback and suggestions to improve both the participant and the discussion

Sometimes referred to as a fishbowl

Inner Fishbowl

- Listen while others are talking.
- Do not speak when someone else is talking.
- Raise your hand when you have an idea to share.
- Answer questions in complete sentences.



Outer Fishbowl

- Listen quietly while students in the Inner Fishbowl are talking.
- Keep your eyes on both the teacher and the student who is talking.
- Take written notes on what you hear or observe.
- Be prepared to share your observations with the class

How is a Socratic Seminar Graded?

- ❖ **The center circle participants are graded by both the outer circle observers and the teacher**
- ❖ **The teacher and the observers have rubrics or grading sheets to complete while the seminar participants are in discussion ~ we will review these as a class**

How will everyone have a chance?

- ❖ **There are established rules/goals that the circle must abide by so everyone is civil and gets to participate**
- **we will go over these as well**

<p>Accountable to the Learning Community</p>	<p>Listen</p>  <p>Pay attention to the statements of others.</p>	<p>Summarize</p>  <p>Restate the ideas of a previous speaker in new language.</p>	<p>Build</p>  <p>Add to the statement of a previous speaker.</p>	<p>Mark</p>  <p>Direct attention to the importance of another's statement.</p>
<p>Accountable to the Knowledge</p>	<p>Verify</p>  <p>Check your understanding of previous statements & knowledge.</p>	<p>Unpack</p>  <p>Explain how you arrived at your answer.</p>	<p>Support</p>  <p>Give examples & evidence to support your answer.</p>	<p>Link</p>  <p>Point out the relationships among previous statements & knowledge.</p>
<p>Accountable to Rigorous Thinking</p>	<p>Defend</p>  <p>Defend your reasoning</p>	<p>Challenge</p>  <p>Ask a previous speaker to explain & provide</p>	<p>Combine</p>  <p>Incorporate knowledge from multiple</p>	<p>Predict</p>  <p>Draw conclusions about what might</p>

Can I see an example of a socratic seminar?

ABSOLUTELY!

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Can I see an example of a socratic seminar?

