

Socratic Seminar: A Student-Led Dialogue about a Provocative Text

Central Questions:

What is a Socratic Seminar?

- A dialogue about a text that all students have read.
- A discussion that involves an exchange and sharing of ideas.
- A discussion in which the teacher has little involvement and only facilitates.
- NOT a debate!

What is the Structure?

A timed conversation among the students in your Humanities class in which:

- The teacher sits outside the circle and listens.
- Students discuss a text, using clear summaries, quotations and specific examples.
- Every student participates by expressing his/her viewpoint and by encouraging others to speak.

What Will I be Assessed on?

- **Preparation:** You will need to prepare by writing a thesis, collecting evidence from the text, and writing historical analyses for each piece of evidence.
- **Ideas During Seminar:** You will need to ask the group good questions, make deep reflections based on your reading, and quote from specific parts of the text.
- **Oral Communication Skills:** During the seminar, you will be assessed on how clearly you speak, your volume (loud enough) and your eye contact with the other members of the group.
- **Participation/Group Skills:** During the seminar, you will be graded on how much you contribute, listen, and encourage others to speak.

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Source: <http://teachinghistory.org/teaching-materials/english-language-learners/24617>