

SOCRATIC SEMINAR^{11 H+CP}

WHAT IS A SOCRATIC SEMINAR?

The Socratic seminar is a formal discussion based on a text, in which the leader asks open-ended questions. Students listen closely to the comments of others and articulate their own thoughts and their responses to the thoughts of others. They learn to work cooperatively and to question intelligently. (Elfie Israel, "Examining Multiple Perspectives in Literature")

PURPOSE

The purpose of a Socratic Seminar is to achieve a deeper understanding of the texts and themes. Students question and examine issues and principles related to the book and articulate different points-of-view. The purpose is not to debate or prove a point. Good discussions occur when participants study the text closely in advance. Students listen actively and share their ideas using evidence from the text as support.

SEMINAR FORMAT

The seminar will be broken into 5 segments. Each house will take turns leading a segment.

Each house will prepare 2-3 questions pertaining to the topic and texts, which will be emailed to Mrs. Lee before the seminar. The houses should collaborate ahead of time to make sure that questions are in order and not repeated.

When your house is leading, not everyone in your house needs to speak. You may designate a few people to lead the questions. When you are a participant, you **MUST** speak at least 2 times.

GRADE

1 Quiz Grade

Points deducted for not speaking during the seminar. Points also deducted for speaking too much.

GRADING RUBRIC

%	Your Role	Expectations
40	Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Questions are high-level, open-ended, and encourage discussion. ▪ Questions address significant aspects of the topic/texts. ▪ Questions are well-thought out and planned ahead of time. ▪ Moves the discussion to a deeper level. ▪ Responds to the comments of the participants. ▪ Asks secondary/leading questions to maintain the discussion. ▪ Speaks loudly and clearly. ▪ Brings the discussion back on topic when necessary. ▪ Invites non-talkers into the discussion. ▪ Uses time wisely (approximately 8 minutes allotted per house).
60	Participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Comes to the seminar prepared with the material read ahead of time. ▪ Provides at least one relevant and insightful comment every seminar. ▪ Uses evidence from the book to support comments. ▪ Does not interrupt others; shows respect. ▪ Does not stay silent during most or all of the seminar. ▪ Does not talk too long, or too often. ▪ BRINGS TEXTS TO SEMINAR

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Open-ended questions to get the seminar started:

- Why do you think (event, reaction) happened?
- What are some reasons (character) (action)?
- How are (character) and (character) alike? Different?
- How does this (incident) remind you of (current event)?
- How does (character) feel about (character/event, etc.)?
- What do you think of (character)'s approach to (problem, situation)?
- How does (character's action or trait) contribute to the conflict?
- The author states "_____." Do you agree with this statement?
- What would you do in that situation?
- Has anything like that ever happened to you?
- In what way are you alike or different from . . .?

Secondary/Leading questions to move the discussion along:

- Who has a different perspective?
- That's a good point. What about . . .?
- Who has not yet had a chance to speak?
- Where do you find evidence for that in the text?
- Can you clarify what you mean by that?
- How does that relate to what (someone else) said?

- Is there something in the text that is unclear to you?