

Guidelines for a Successful Socratic Seminar

A seminar is a dialogue, not a debate. You are not working to prove the other participants wrong; instead, you are collaborating to expand everyone's understanding of the reading and the ideas presented. The more prepared you are, the more effective the seminar will be.

- Read the excerpt carefully and make notes prior to the discussion.
 - Write down your observations and questions.
- For the discussion, suspend your own beliefs and look at all points of view.
 - Show respect for different points of view. Do not insult or belittle another speaker.
- Listen carefully and take notes. This will help you participate more effectively.
- You should refer to the text as needed during the seminar.
- If you need to pass on a question, you may, but remember that you still need to participate for a grade. Be sure to come prepared!
- Make sure that you stay on topic. Discuss the ideas that are brought up.
- Since this is a discussion, listen and respond to each other, take turns, and do not interrupt each other.
- If you have a question, ask. There may be other students with the same question. If another student asks your question, listen to the replies and then add to them to keep the discussion going.