

# Socratic Seminar

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## **Purpose:**

To support structured academic conversation and reflective thinking, while integrating writing and revising to clarify and expand student responses.

## **Step-by-Step Protocol:**

### **1. Prepare (5–10 minutes)**

Students review the assigned text or topic in advance. They annotate for key ideas, unfamiliar vocabulary, and discussion-worthy questions.

#### **Optional tools:**

- Text-dependent question stems
- Discussion preparation handout (e.g., “I noticed...,” “This reminds me of...,” “Why do you think...?”)

### **2. Write (5 minutes)**

Students independently respond to a central question or write 1–2 questions they are curious about from the text. Encourage text-based evidence and reasoning.

Prompt example: “What does this text suggest about justice?” or “What’s the author’s main message, and how do you know?”

### **3. Seminar (15–20 minutes)**

Students engage in a structured, student-led discussion. The teacher acts as an observer or occasional facilitator.

#### **Expectations:**

- Use evidence from the text.
- Build on others’ ideas (“I agree with...because...” or “I see it differently...”).
- Listen actively; do not interrupt.
- Ask clarifying or probing questions.

**Roles (optional):** Inner circle (discussants), outer circle (observers), or rotating roles.

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## 4 . Debrief (5 minutes)

Whole class or small groups reflect on the discussion.

Prompts:

- What ideas stood out?
- How did your thinking change?
- What did you notice about how we interacted?

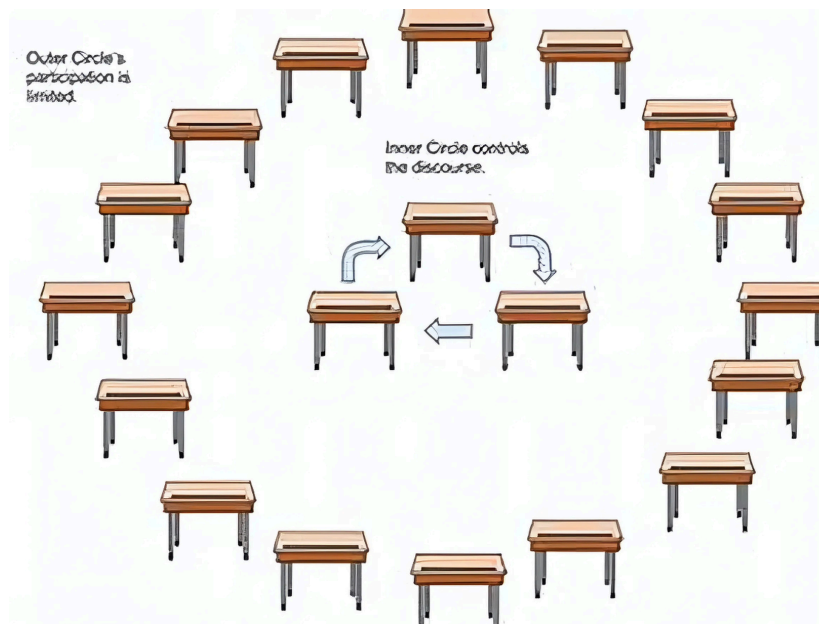
## 5. Revise (5–7 minutes)

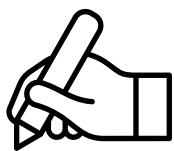
Students return to their written response or notes and revise based on the discussion. They may add:

- A new perspective or insight
- Stronger evidence or explanation
- More precise or academic language

## Optional Extensions:

- Use sentence starters to support discussion:  
 (“Can you clarify...?”, “What’s your evidence for...?”, “How does that connect to...?”)
- Provide a rubric for seminar contributions (e.g., preparation, listening, speaking, responding).
- Collect original and revised writing to show growth in thinking.





# SOCRATIC SEMINAR



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Text/Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Seminar Focus Question: \_\_\_\_\_

## Prepare (Before the Seminar)

Use this space to jot down key ideas, quotes, or questions from the reading.

### • Key points or arguments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### • Powerful quotes or evidence:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### • Questions I have:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Write (Before the Seminar)

Respond to the seminar focus question in a short paragraph. Use evidence from the text.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# SOCRATIC SEMINAR

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## Participation Notes (During the Seminar)

Record your thoughts, reactions, and any key ideas you hear from classmates.

- A point I agreed with and why:

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- A point I disagreed with and why:

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- A question or idea that challenged my thinking:

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## Self-Reflection (After the Seminar)

- One idea I hadn't considered before:

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- One way my thinking changed:

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- How well did I contribute to the discussion? (Circle one):

Not at all      A little      Some      A lot

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

# SOCRATIC SEMINAR

## Revise Your Written Response

Based on today's discussion, revise your original paragraph to include new insights, clearer explanations, or stronger evidence.

[illegible]