

# Discussion Model

## Basic Description

## Outcome

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|--|---|---|
| Socratic Seminar & Small Group Seminar | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Round table discussion (small or whole group) that digs deep into a text to get to the heart of an important issue or enduring understanding.</li> <li>• Must be around a very worthy text and a interpretative question (based on judgment with not all answers having equal quality depending on the evidence used).</li> <li>• All students required to speak using evidence from the text.</li> <li>• Teachers only clarify, ask for elaboration, verify, or summarize.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students gain a broad and nuanced understanding of a complex issue or topic.</li> <li>• Know which textual evidence is stronger and more compelling than other evidence.</li> <li>• Students likely have a well-informed opinion.</li> <li>• (From multiple documents), students can articulate multiple perspectives.</li> </ul>  |
| Jigsaw Seminar                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same as above, but with multiple texts.</li> <li>• Choose multiple rich texts on the same issue.</li> <li>• Have expert groups annotate a single reading and discuss it in a meaningful manner.</li> <li>• Have one or two people from each expert group meet with one-two people from all other expert groups to engage in a small group seminar around a few open-ended questions that can be answered in part with evidence from each of the texts.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students come together to make broad meaning from more specific texts upon which they are experts.</li> <li>• Listening skills critical questioning of others are essential skills practiced.</li> <li>• The discussion is a synthesis activity.</li> <li>• Student experts learn additional information from others to enhance their understanding of the topic.</li> </ul>                         |
| Structured Academic Controversy        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Used with a two sided controversy to gain deeper understanding, to find common ground, and to make a decision with evidence about a topic.</li> <li>• Place students in groups of four, and then split each group into two groups of two, assigning each group of two one side of the issue to read about.</li> <li>• Groups of two work together to develop their argument.</li> <li>• Groups of four then go through a highly structured and timed discussion, taking turns sharing evidence.</li> <li>• Groups of four try to reach consensus on a part of the issue, and then the whole class debriefs.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The primary and end objective is to agree upon some piece of common ground between polarized positions.</li> <li>• Students articulate a side of an argument with claims, reasoning, and evidence, and rebut against counterclaims in preparation for writing about the subject.</li> <li>• Listening and note taking (of the opposite side's positions) is an essential skill practiced.</li> </ul> |

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| <p style="text-align: center;">Town Hall Meeting/<br/>Legislative Hearing</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliberation (What should be done? What are the solutions? What do the experts have to say about a question?)</li> <li>• Multiple groups in a class represent different aspects of an issue, so each group is working on a different set of questions.</li> <li>• Each group gives a formal presentation of their viewpoints and takes questions from the decision-makers.</li> <li>• Typically, there is a group representing the decision makers as well.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small groups with interest in the issue (usually an assigned position) must clearly articulate the group's ideas on a contentious issue.</li> <li>• A principal outcome is that students recognize how and why different interest groups view the same issue differently.</li> <li>• Students learn about the complexities of the decision making process and the role of compromise.</li> </ul> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Philosophical Chairs</p>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange chairs in a "U" formation.</li> <li>• Each side of the "U" represents a side in a debate with the bottom of the "U" representing a neutral zone.</li> <li>• Students use evidence to try to convince their peers to move to their side of the room. When an alternate person speaks, they must rephrase the last person's comments before launching into their own.</li> <li>• At the end, students must produce their opinion (in writing) with evidence provided during the discussion. If a neutral zone person doesn't choose a side, they must explain why neither side changed their opinion.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students come to a final decision about an issue (one side or neutral) by hearing evidence from both sides and evaluating which evidence is most convincing.</li> <li>• Students learn that new information presented by others can change opinions.</li> <li>• Provides a platform to learn specific manners of counterclaims and multiple perspectives.</li> </ul>                             |
| <p style="text-align: center;">Fish Bowl</p>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a common reading on an unresolved or controversial issue to the class. Have students write down interesting facts and quotes on small pieces of paper.</li> <li>• Make two to three circles in your classroom with +/- 5 chairs in each. The chairs will face inwards. Outside of each circle, make another circle of chairs.             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Inner circle talks about issue.</li> <li>b. Outer circle can hand in a sheet of paper to provide food for thought but cannot speak.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Once a student in the circle has spoken twice, a student from outside the circle may tap that student on the shoulder and switch places with the student. The student on the outside MUST TAP IN after their inside partner has spoken four times.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This activity encourages talking as well as listening in equal doses.</li> <li>• Students who are outside the bowl simultaneously search for new evidence while they listen to their classmate's positions to assist the inside speaking participants.</li> <li>• This activity can prepare students for evidenced based writing that is argumentative or informational.</li> </ul>              |