

# Research Based Discussion Methods

February 4, 2013

Angela Orr

Katie Anderson

Kate Ferro

# Administrivia

- Sign-in and sign-out
- Nametags
- Leave forms
- Bathrooms
- Lunch break
- Discussion packet organization and items of note

# Introductions

---

Please take one minute to think about an answer to this question:

If you could enjoy a conversation with any historical figure, who would you choose? What are two questions you would ask?

Time	Facilitator	Agenda Focus
8:00	Katie	Welcome & Introductions
8:20	Angela	Introduction to Classroom Discussion
8:50	Kate	Fish Bowl
10:05		Break
10:15	Angela	Evidence & Reasoning for Discussion
10:40	Katie	Structured Academic Controversy
11:45		Lunch
12:45	Angela and Katie	Philosophical Chairs
1:00	Kate	Introduction to Socratic Seminar
1:25	Angela	Jigsaw Seminar
2:50	Kate & Katie	Planning & Assessment Considerations
3:20	Katie	Evaluations & Reflections

# Objectives

- Review the research and theory on classroom discussion;
- Introduce five research based discussion strategies;
- Practice each strategy in a “snapshot experience”;
- Engage in reflection of each strategy

# Definitions of Classroom Discussion

“competent and focused exchange of ideas and view rooted in knowledge”  
(Hess, 2004)

“a kind of shared inquiry, the desired outcomes of which rely on the expression and consideration of diverse view points” (Parker, 2003, p. 129)

*“Instead of seeing discussion as a stumbling block in the way of action, we think it an indispensable preliminary to any wise action at all.”*

*Pericles, Ancient Athenian Leader*

# Purposes of Education



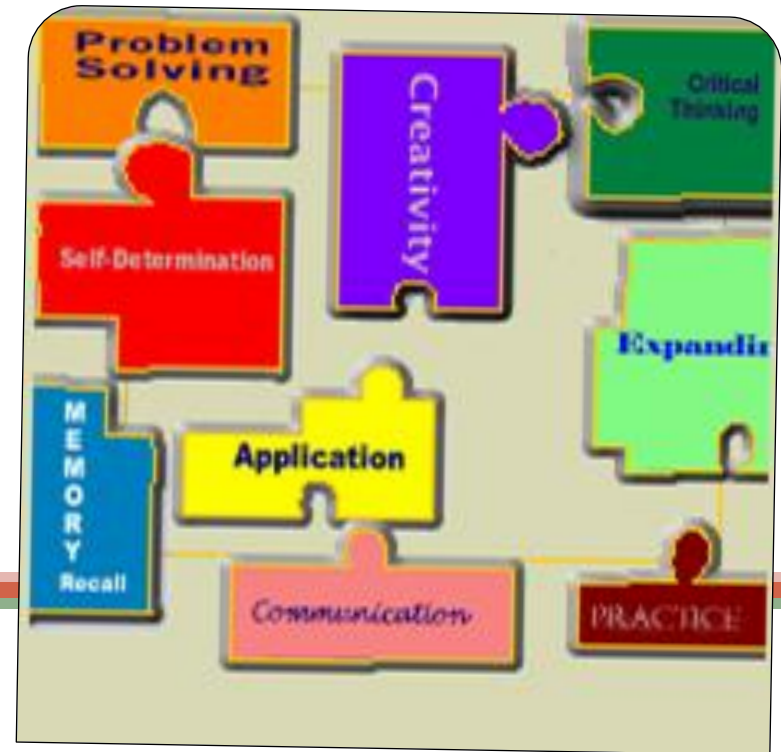
# Benefits of Discussion

- **Maintaining Democracy**
- Engagement
- Democratizing the classroom
- Citizenship (not idiocy)
- Clear articulation of complicated ideas
- Listening carefully and intentionally
- Better content knowledge
- Dialoguing across differences
- True rigor – everyone works hard for understanding
- Civic knowledge, skills, democratic values, participation



# But what about testing?

Nystrand (1997) and his colleagues measured the relationship between the amount of classroom discussion and student performance on knowledge exams and found a positive correlation. The “bottom line” for learning, they write, is “the extent to which instruction requires students to think, not just report someone else’s [the teacher’s] thinking. (Hess, 2011)



## SHIFTING INSTRUCTION...

## ...WITH THE STANDARDS

**Shift 1:** PreK-5 Balancing Informational and Literary Text

Students read a true balance of informational and literary texts. Elementary school classrooms are, therefore, places where students access the world – science, social studies, the arts and literature – through text. At least 50% of what students read is informational. (CCSS, p. 5)

**Shift 2:** 6-12 Knowledge in the Disciplines

Content area teachers outside of the ELA classroom emphasize literacy experiences in their planning and instruction. Students learn through domain specific texts in science and social studies classrooms – in referring to the text, they are expected to learn from what they read.

**Shift 3:** Staircase of Complexity

In order to prepare students for the complexity of college and career ready texts, each grade level requires a “step” of growth on the “staircase”. Students read the central, grade appropriate text around which instruction is centered. Teachers are patient, create more time and space in the curriculum for this close and careful reading, and provide appropriate and necessary scaffolding and supports so that it is possible for students reading below grade level. (Anchor Standard 10 and Appendix A)

**Shift 4:** Text-Based Questions and Answers

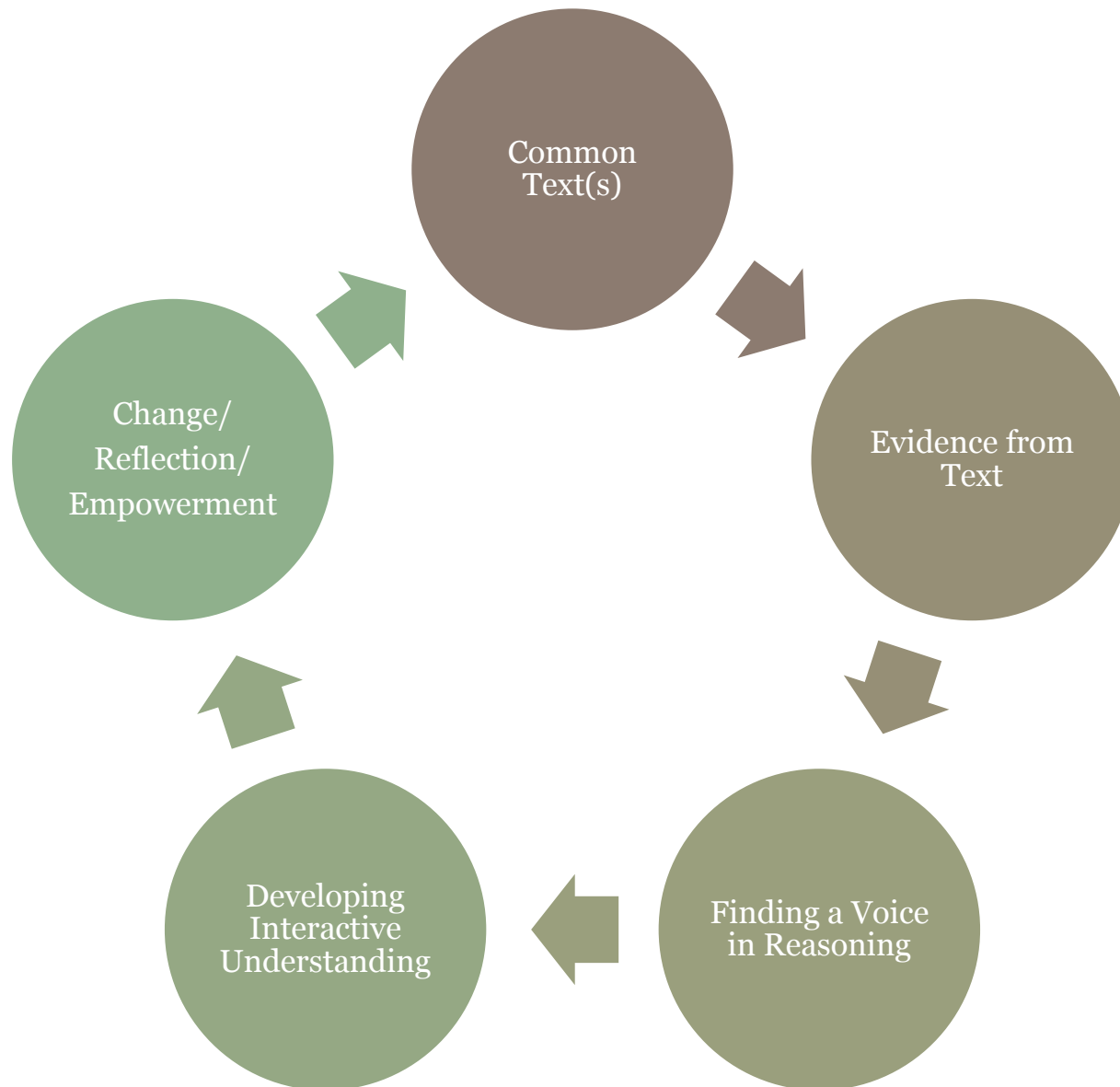
Students have rich and rigorous conversations which are dependent on a common text. Teachers insist that classroom experiences stay deeply connected to the text on the page and that students develop habits for making evidentiary arguments both in conversation, as well as in writing to assess comprehension of a text. (Anchor Standards 1 in Reading)

**Shift 5:** Writing from Sources

Writing needs to emphasize the use of evidence to inform or make an argument. The narrative still has an important role. Students develop skills through written arguments that respond to the ideas, events, facts, and arguments presented in the texts they read. (Anchor Standard 1, 2 and 3 in writing)

**Shift 6:** Academic Vocabulary

Students constantly build the vocabulary they need to access grade level complex texts. By focusing strategically on comprehension of pivotal and commonly found words (such as “discourse,” “generation,” “theory,” and “principled”) and less on esoteric literary terms (such as “onomatopoeia” or “homonym”), teachers constantly build students’ ability to access more complex texts across the content areas. (Anchor Standard 6 in Language)



# Characteristics of Effective Discussion: The Non-Negotiables

1. Focus on an interpretable text, issue, idea, etc.
2. The facilitator and the participants have prepared thoroughly.
3. Most of the talk comes from the participants, not the facilitator.
4. There is enough time spent on an idea to explore it thoroughly before going to another point.
5. Participants feel comfortable, but there is still meaningful argument.
6. Most, if not all, people talk.
7. Participants and facilitator ask authentic questions and refer to previous points made in the discussion.

# We all talk, so we can all learn.

- Setting expectations and norms that highlight the necessity of vast involvement is paramount;
- Open, inviting, worthwhile, respectful of diverse ideas and people;
- 78% of students surveyed in a study indicated that encouragement from classmates would make them more likely to speak during discussions.

Building capacity for discussion requires the use of multiple methods.

# Ping Pong v. Pinball

How can this analogy help us to realize the potential of discussion in our classes?



# Using Wait Time

In most classrooms, teacher and student exchanges take place at an “astonishing speed” according to Mary Budd Rowe (1986). When she studied classroom conversations, she discovered that teachers typically wait less than a second for a student response. Increased wait time of at least 2.7, and preferably at least 3, seconds can have these effects on students:

- 1) The length of student responses increases between 300% and 700%.
- 2) More inferences are supported by evidence and logical argument.
- 3) The incidence of speculative thinking increases.
- 4) The number of questions asked by students increases.
- 5) Student-student exchanges increase; teacher-centered “show and tell” behavior decreases.
- 6) Failures to respond decrease.
- 7) Disciplinary moves decrease.
- 8) The variety of students participating voluntarily increases. Also the number of unsolicited, but appropriate contributions by students increases.
- 9) Student confidence, as reflected in fewer inflected responses, increases.
- 10) Achievement improves on written measures where the items are cognitively complex.

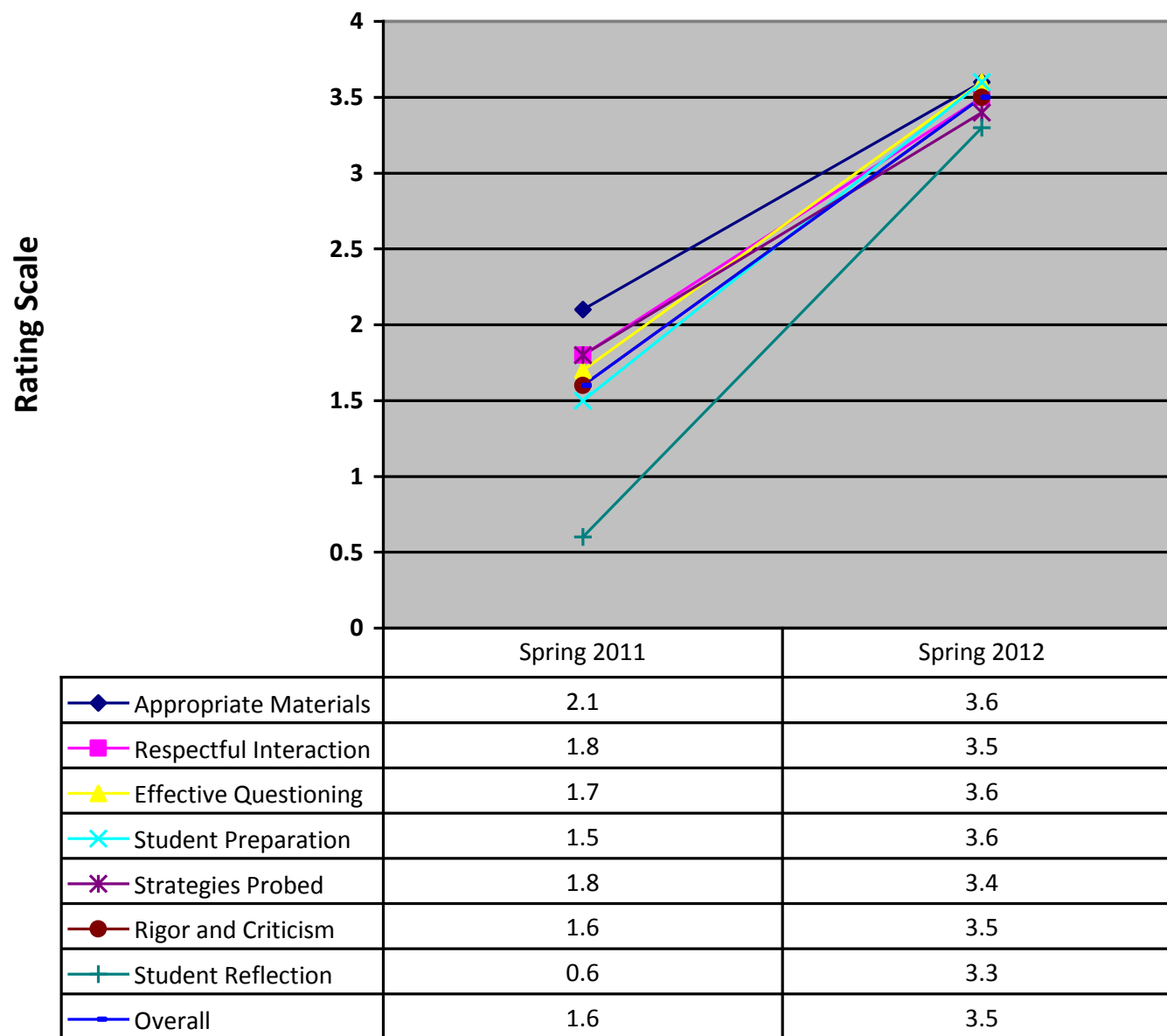


# Our Own Research

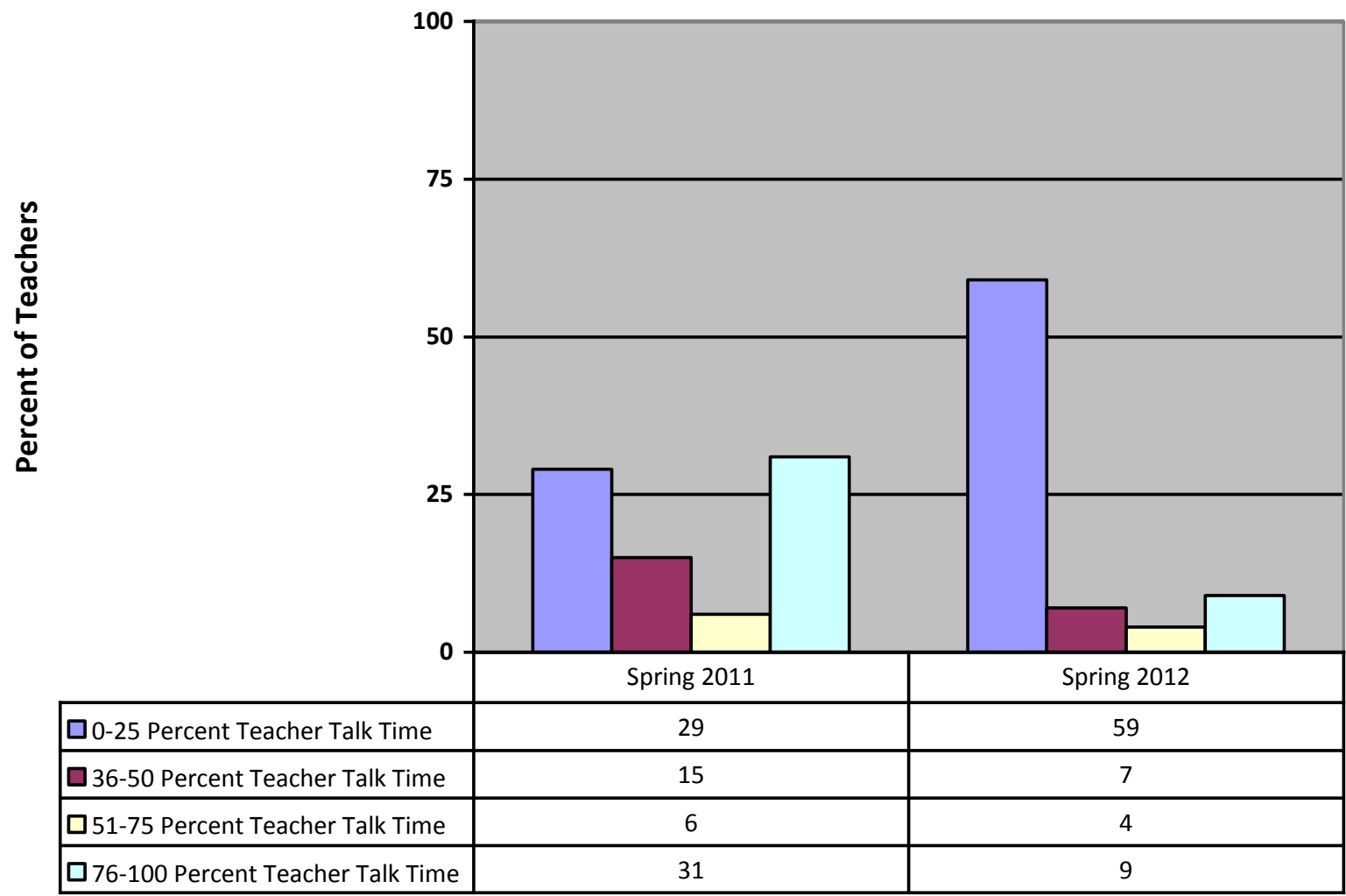
- 30 teachers in grades 4-12
- 2 years of learning about CCSS with an emphasis on discussion
- Pre-observation of a discussion lesson
- 1 year later post-observation
- 2 years later post-observation
- Take a moment to review the Observation Protocol.



**Figure 4.** Classroom Observation Protocol Results, Spring 2011 and Spring 2012



**Figure 5.** Percent of Teacher Talk-Time During Classroom Discussions, Spring 2011 and Spring 2012



# Why these methods?

Fish Bowl – *8<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade example*

Philosophical Chairs – *10<sup>th</sup> grade example*

Structured Academic Controversy –  
*6<sup>th</sup> grade example (with ideas for other grades)*

Socratic Seminar & Jigsaw Seminar –  
*Multi-interest (with 12<sup>th</sup> grade example added)*

# Learning by Doing

- Constructivist approach to student learning must begin with a constructivist approach to teacher learning
- “We had to do it ourselves to see what it could be.”

# Fish Bowl

---



# Fishbowl Strategy

- Provide a common reading(s) and background on an unresolved or controversial issue to the class. Have students write down their interesting facts and quotes on post-it notes or small pieces of paper.
- 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.
  - The inner circle is very talkative, intelligent and scholarly fish.
  - The outer circle are learners and provide the inner circle with “fish food for thought.”
- 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.

# Review Rubric

Discussion Rubric	3	2	1	0
<b>Substantive</b>				
States and identifies issues.	Accurately states and identifies issues.	Accurately states an issue.	States a relevant factual, ethical, or definitional issue as a question.	Does not state any issues.
Uses foundational knowledge.	Accurately and expresses completely relevant foundational knowledge pertaining to the issues raised during the discussion.	Accurately expresses mostly relevant foundational knowledge pertaining to issues raised during the discussion.	Accurately expresses somewhat relevant foundational knowledge pertaining to an issue raised by someone else.	Does not express any relevant foundational knowledge.
Elaborates statements with explanations, reasons, or evidence.	Pursues an issue with more than one elaborated statements.	Pursues an issue with one elaborated statement.	Elaborates a statement with an explanation, reasons, or evidence.	Does not elaborate any issues.
<b>Procedural</b>				
Invites contributions from, and acknowledges statements of, others.	Engages others in the discussion by inviting their contributions and acknowledging their contributions.	Invites comments from others and does not acknowledge their statements.	Does not invite comments from others but allows others to speak. Does not acknowledge contributions from others.	Does not invite comments from others nor acknowledge their statements.
Challenges the accuracy, logic, relevance, or clarity of statements.	Constructively challenges the accuracy, clarity, relevance, or logic of statements made.	Responds in a civil manner to a statement made by someone else by challenging its accuracy, clarity, relevance, or logic.	Responds in a civil manner but does not challenge the accuracy, clarity, relevance, or logic of statements.	Does not respond in a civil manner in all conversations. Does not challenge the accuracy, clarity, relevance, or logic of statements.

# Provide a Common Reading

## Secondary Source:

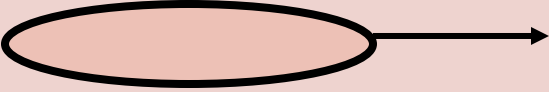

- [www.ourdocuments.gov](http://www.ourdocuments.gov) secondary text: [here](#)

## Primary Sources:

- 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the US Constitution
- US Supreme Court case, *Minor v. Happersett*, 1875 (excerpted)
- The Declaration of Sentiments, Seneca Falls Conference, 1848 (excerpted)
- 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the US Constitution



# Reading Strategy - Super Annotator

Annotation Symbol	Usage
!	To mark the main point or something especially interesting. Highlight or underline text as needed.
??	To mark an area of reading that is unclear for you.
	To mark unknown vocabulary (and, later, the definition you determine through context or a dictionary)
“ ”	To mark relevant evidence. Highlight or underline text as needed.
1, 2, 3 ...	To mark the different points an author makes.
	To mark the connections between different parts of the reading.

# **MODELING DOCUMENT ANALYSIS**

## **Document 1: Background on 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: Women's Right to Vote (1920)**

The 19th amendment guarantees all American women the right to vote. Achieving this milestone required a lengthy and difficult struggle; victory took decades of agitation and protest. Beginning in the mid-19th century, several generations of woman suffrage supporters lectured, wrote, marched, lobbied, and practiced civil disobedience to achieve what many Americans considered a radical change of the Constitution. Few early supporters lived to see final victory in 1920.

## **MODELING DOCUMENT ANALYSIS**

### **Document 3: 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, adopted 1868**

#### *Section 1:*

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

# Common Background & Vocabulary

An equitable discussion always ensures that students begin with an understanding of the most important vocabulary in the texts and the vocabulary they should be applying to the discussion.

- Suffrage
- Federalism
- Privileges and immunities
- ...

# Preparing for the Fish Bowl

## STEP 1: INDIVIDUAL READING AND ANNOTATION

- Number 1s – annotate sources 2 & 3
- Number 2s – annotate sources 4 & 5

## STEP 2: PAIRING FOR INCREASED UNDERSTANDING

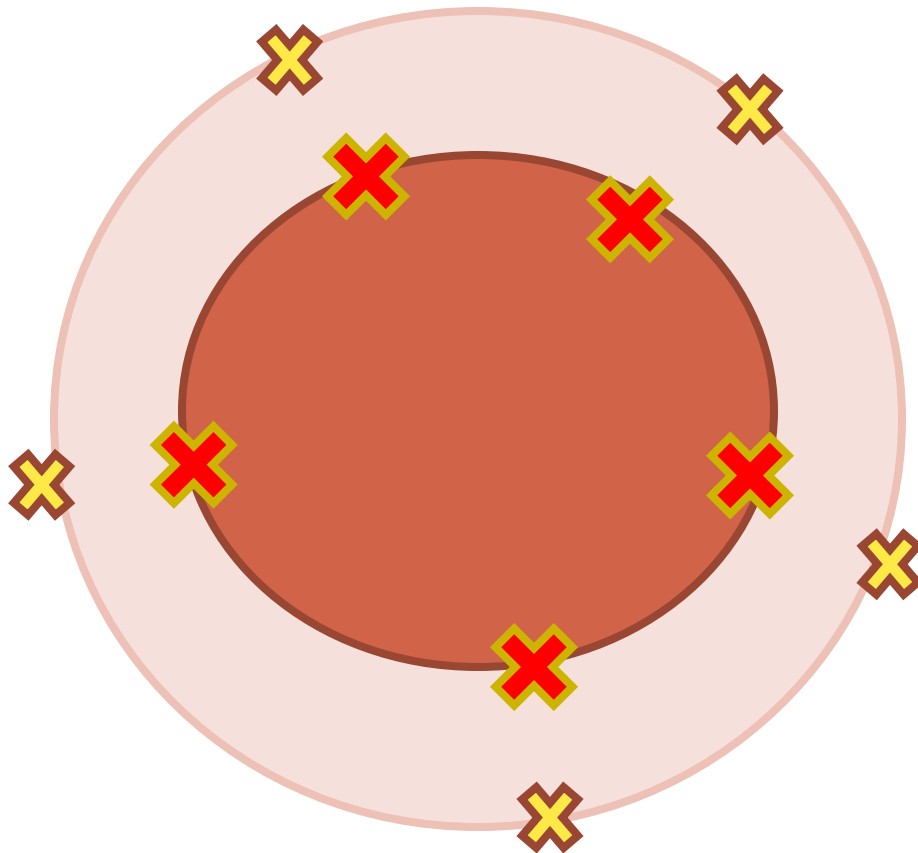
- Number 1s – find a partner (also a number 1) from the opposite side of the class
- Number 2s – find a partner (also a number 2) from the opposite side of the class
- ALL PAIRS – Discuss how your reading helped you to answer the three Fish Bowl questions.

# Students Write Evidence on Post-Its



## Fishbowl Questions

- Describe how arguments for and against women's suffrage rely upon the US Constitution, Bill of Rights and founding documents.
- How was federalism reflected in the fight for women's suffrage?
- In what ways did government support for women's suffrage change over time?

# Scholarly Fish and Fish Feeders



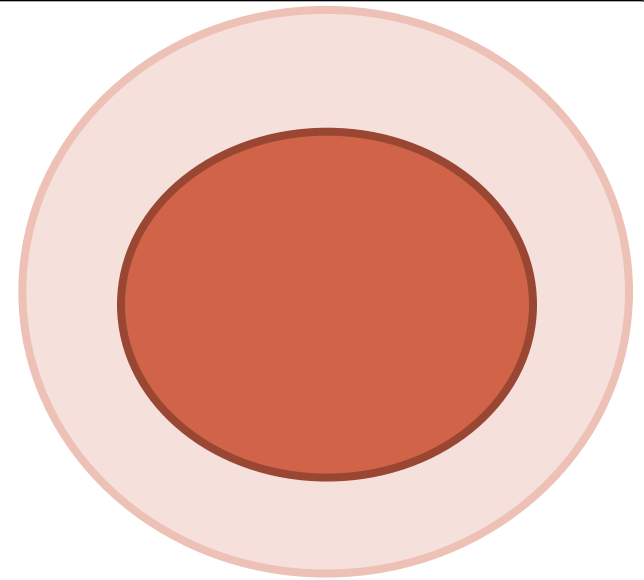
## Structure:

- Inner Circle: Scholarly  fish addressing focus questions.
-  Outer Circle: Learners who provide the inner circle with “fish food for thought.”
- Scholars may participate 2 -4 times before they switch roles with the learner feeders.

# Fishbowl

## Fishbowl Questions

- Describe how arguments for and against women's suffrage rely upon the US Constitution, , Bill of Rights, and founding documents.
- How was federalism reflected in the fight for women's suffrage?
- In what ways did government support for women's suffrage change over time?



### Structure:

- Inner Circle: Scholarly fish addressing focus questions.
- Outer Circle: Learners who provide the inner circle with “fish food for thought.”
- Scholars may participate 2 -4 times before they switch roles with the learner feeders.



# Reflection Questions

- Describe the importance of both the outside and inside circles.
- With what types of questions or topics would this work best? For what types of questions would this method not be suited?
- How might you use this technique in your classroom?

10 minute break

---

# Definitions in Argument

- **Argument - “*Super Claim*”:** The overarching idea of an argumentative essay that makes more than one claim.
  - In some cases, an argument has a single claim, but in sophisticated writing in 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade, multiple claims are made.
- **Claim:** a simple statement that asserts **a** main point of an argument (a side)
- **Reasoning:** *2 parts* – a) the “because” part of an argument and the explanation for why a claim is made; b) the explicit links between the evidence and the claim; the explanation for why a particular piece of evidence is important to the claim and to the argument
- **Evidence:** support for the reasoning in an argument; the “for example” aspect of an argument; the best evidence is text-based, reasonable, and reliable.

# Evidence & Reasoning

- Evidence is ALWAYS evidence for something!  
Reasoning gives us that answer!
- Example Statistic: 74% of high school students read at a minimum of an 8<sup>th</sup> grade level.

American schools are failing!  
According to a new national study, 26%, or, in other words, 1 in every 4 high school students, cannot read at a 9<sup>th</sup> grade level. If 1 in 4 people in the country had a disease, we would call it an epidemic of mass proportions!

In a recent study of U.S. students' reading, the U.S. was given a B average. 74% of high school students reads at or above an 8<sup>th</sup> grade level, the level necessary to read most newspapers and popular fiction texts. The study factored in the nearly 10% of students who have learning disabilities or are learning a second language to come to the average grade of "B."

# Reasoning Matters

- After you introduce evidence into your writing, you must say why and how this evidence supports your argument. What turns a fact or piece of information into evidence is the connection it has with a larger claim or argument: *evidence is always evidence **for** or **against** something, and you have to make that link clear with reasoning.*
- We should not assume that our readers already know what we are talking about. The audience can't read our minds: although they may be familiar with many of the ideas we are discussing, they don't know what we are trying to do with those ideas unless we indicate it through *reasoning*.

# Parts of an Argument *(super simple version)*

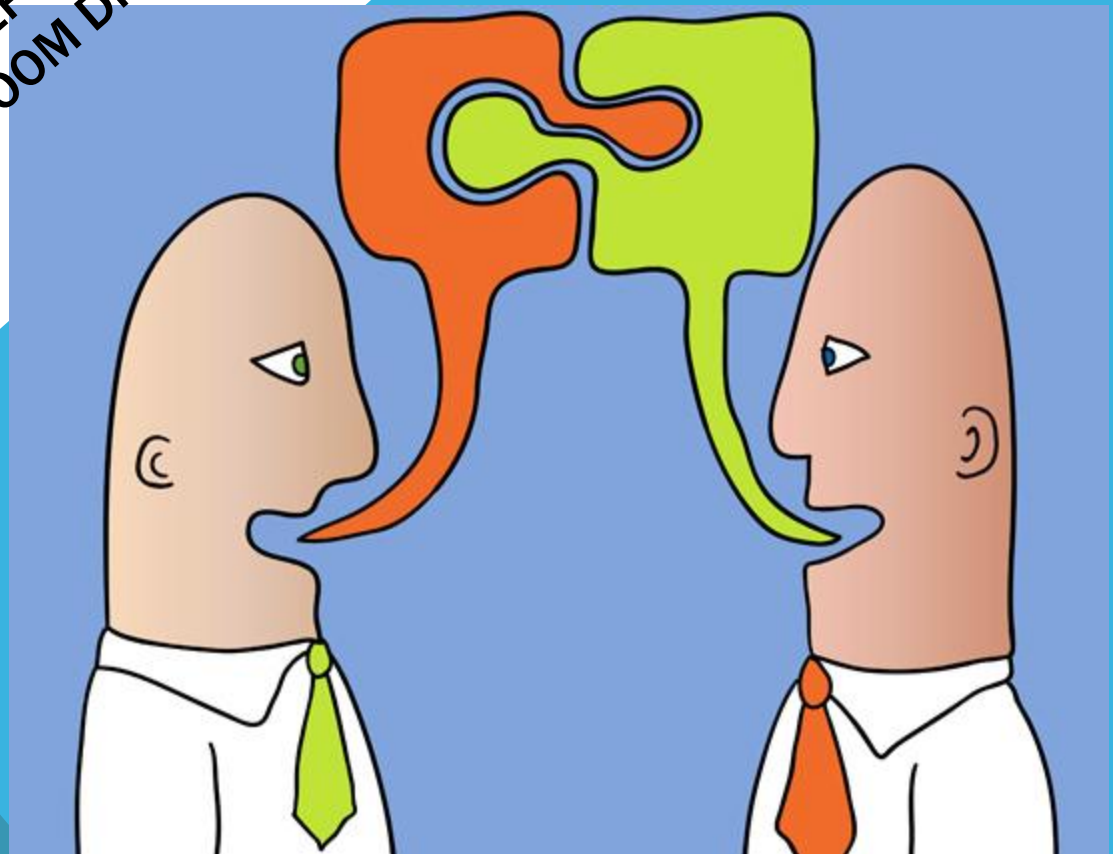
- **Overarching Argument (Super Claim)**
  - I deserve this job.
- **Claims**
  - I am a self-starter.
  - I work hard.
  - I collaborate well with others.
  - I learn new things quickly.
- **Evidence & Reasoning**
  - Last summer, I worked for my uncle for three months, 35 hours a week, doing construction. While my friends were sleeping in, I chose to get up early and earn my keep.
  - Although I had never had used power tools before, within only 2 weeks, I was put in charge of a small job that required me to use three different tools.
- **Counterclaim** (another side that contradicts your claim)

# Another far too simple example

- Claim: Pizza is a healthy alternative to fast food.
- Evidence: Pizza is made with tomato sauce.
- Reasoning: Tomato sauce has many vitamins and minerals as well as antioxidants, so eating pizza with tomato sauce can be a healthy alternative.

# STRUCTURED ACADEMIC CONTROVERSY:

A STEP BY STEP TO MEANINGFUL  
CLASSROOM DISCUSSION





# DO YOUR CLASSROOM DISCUSSIONS LOOK LIKE THIS? OR THIS?

visualphotos.com



10100008528 [RM] © www.visualphotos.com



# WHY SAC? A CONCISE STRUCTURED STRATEGY

## Includes:


Building capacity for discussion requires the use of multiple methods. Structured Academic Controversy (SAC) is a great entrance model.

- Very structured small group format holds students accountable and helps teachers maintain discussion focus
- Evidence based argument/controversy
- Background information
- Analysis and synthesis of multiple perspectives
- Sharing of information organically
- Requires students to build consensus

# TEACHER PREPARATION OF SAC

1. Choose a historical question or policy issue that lends itself to contrasting viewpoints.
2. Find and select your text:
  1. Background information
  2. A single document or documents establishing both sides of the controversy.
  3. Primary and/or secondary sources.
  4. Consider excerpting a longer text (maintain integrity of argument)
3. Possible Sources:
  1. Check out [procon.org](http://procon.org) and [dda.deliberating.org](http://dda.deliberating.org)
  2. ABC- Clio **Dilemmas** (on district website via staff page/databases)
3. Consider timing, make copies of handouts, and plan grouping strategies. The time you will need for a SAC will depend on the amount of experience your students have with the activity structure and the difficulty and familiarity of the documents. Plan on using about two class periods for your initial SAC.

# SAC STEPS

1. Organize students in groups of four. Split each group into two pairs. Each pair studies one side of the controversy by reading the background material and identifying arguments to support their assigned position. The pair organize a plan for advocating their assigned position.
  2. Pairs take turns defending their positions. The silent pair takes notes on the opposite position and is given time to ask clarifying questions at the end.
  3. Swap sides: Repeat Step #2
  4. Students work together as a group of four to synthesize the ideas and come to consensus on at least one major point.
  5. Whole Class Debrief: Students reflect on individual learning, consensus and unanswered questions concerning the controversy.
  6. Personal Reflection: Students individually reflect on their participation and their concluding position on the issue.
- 

# SAC QUESTION FOR TODAY

**The Code  
of  
Hammurabi**

**Was it just or  
unjust?**



# BREAK INTO GROUPS

Assign sides in your larger group:

A. Hammurabi's Code is Just

B. Hammurabi's Code is Unjust



# TODAY'S SNAPSHOT SAC DISCUSSION LESSON:

-USE A TIMER!!


-PLEASE MODIFY THESE TIMES ALLOTMENTS ACCORDING TO THE NEEDS OF YOUR STUDENTS

-HOWEVER, KEEP TIMES SHORTER RATHER THAN LONGER TO INSURE THAT STUDENTS ARE STAYING ON TASK

5 min	Read silently through the articles.
10 min	With your partner outline the evidence for your position.
1 min	Introduce yourselves in your group of four.
3 min	First pair shares their position (claims, reasons, evidence).
2 min	Second pair demonstrates their knowledge of first pair's positions.
3 min	Second pair shares their positions (claims, reasons, evidence).
2 min	First pair demonstrates their knowledge of second pair's position.
4 min	The group of four openly discusses the issue and tries to find some common ground or consensus on the issue and prepares to share position with the whole class.
4 min	Share out ideas of consensus or sticky points



# REFLECTION

- What do you like about this discussion strategy?
  - Write down two or three different controversial topics within your content that you could implement within this discussion format.
  - How is this related to writing?
  - What type of writing assignment would you add?
  - Describe why the whole group and student reflection is crucial to the SAC process?
- 



# READY AND AVAILABLE SAC RESOURCES

[www.projecttahoe.org](http://www.projecttahoe.org): (Teacher Resources/ Discussion Lessons)

7<sup>th</sup> Grade: Was the Stamp Act Fair?

Did the Constitution include protections for slavery and slaveholders?

8<sup>th</sup> Grade: Were Industrialists Good for America?

Robber Barons or Captains of Industry?

Indian Removal



Enjoy your lunch!

---

**Please be back in one hour.**

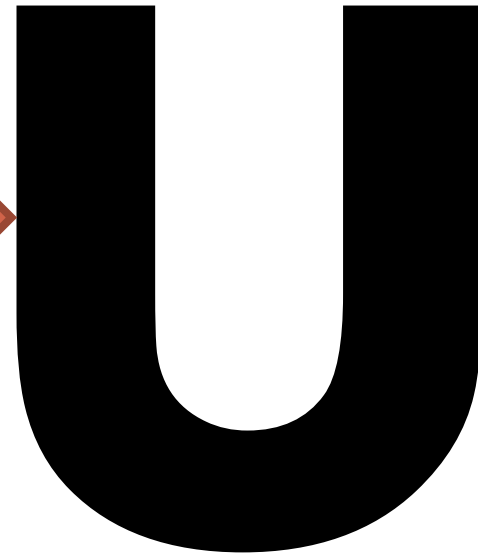
# Philosophical Chairs

---

**Honoring learning and “movement” of ideas in a discussion**

Position 1

Position 2



N  
e  
u  
t  
r  
a  
l



# Philosophical Chairs Guidelines

- Understand the central question or topic before the discussion begins.
- Prepare for the discussion with the text(s) provided. Find evidence and keep track of your reasoning.
- Decide which section you will sit in.
- Listen carefully when others speak and seek to understand their arguments even if you don't agree.
- Wait for the mediator to recognize you before you speak.
- You must first summarize briefly the previous speaker's argument before you make your response.
- If you have spoken for your side, you must wait until three other people on your side speak before you speak again.
- Be sure that when you speak, you address the ideas, not the person stating them. Use evidence from the text(s) to support your points.
- Keep an open mind and move to the other side or the undecided section if you feel that someone made a good argument or your opinion is swayed.
- Support the mediator by maintaining order and helping the discussion to progress.

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/reading-like-a-historian-taking-positions>

## Reading Like a Historian: Philosophical Chairs

Grades 9-12 / History / Discussion

CCSS: ELA.RH.11-12.3 ELA.RH.11-12.7



**Guide** My Notes

### Lesson Objective

Take sides about why people opposed the Vietnam War

### Length

7 min

### Questions to Consider

What are the benefits of having students physically move to different areas of the room?

How does this strategy change the way students read primary source documents?

Ms. Ziegler compares her classroom to a science lab. What does she mean by this?

### Common Core Standards

ELA.RH.11-12.3, ELA.RH.11-12.7



# Philosophical Chairs: Was Napoleon a Friend of Revolutionary France?

- Developed by Kylie Miller, Spanish Springs High School
- Read through the instructions sheet and rubric.
- Look through the documents and the graphic organizer.
  - What do you notice?

# Modeling Document Analysis

- How might you have students tackle these documents?
- What documents might be modeled whole class?  
Which might be best analyzed in small groups?



## Document 10

By late 1799, Napoleon had established a new government, rewritten the [constitution](#), and made himself head of state. He was the most powerful man in [France](#), and he was only 30 years old! His military successes convinced him that he was destined to be a great leader and that the people of France looked to him to end the political chaos. In the course of the next few years, he would demonstrate that in addition to being a great military leader, he was also an enlightened monarch. As emperor of France, he would prove to be a civil [executive](#) of enormous capacity and ability. Determined to promote the growth of a modern state, he began to reorganize France completely.

### Government

Napoleon instituted a strong, centralized government and simplified the court system. He also instituted [universal male suffrage](#).

### Legal System

He oversaw the development of a new system of civil laws that became known as the [Napoleonic Code](#). That new set of laws gave permanent form to the great gains of the [French Revolution](#). Most important, the code abolished [feudalism](#) and [serfdom](#), provided for freedom of religion, and established, at least legally, the equality of every man before the law.

### Religion

He signed an agreement called the Concordat with the pope in 1801. By the terms of the agreement, Catholicism was made the official religion of France, thereby ending the quarrel with the [Catholic Church](#) that had arisen during the [revolution](#). Yet the next year, Napoleon limited the power of the pope to intervene in French affairs.

### Infrastructure

He built [canals](#), reservoirs, and roads. He built new parks, bridges, and quays along the Seine River.

### Economy

To bolster the economy, he founded the Bank of France, thereby guaranteeing credit at a reasonable rate to French businesses. He stabilized the franc, and prosperity returned to France.

### Education

All schools were controlled by a centralized system. Free public schools were envisioned. Higher education was opened to all, regardless of class or religion. Incomes were provided for eminent scholars, especially scientists.

Napoleon's empire eventually ruled 70 million Europeans. His goal was to spread his innovations throughout the empire. However, all was not well. His dictatorial rule bred discontent. At home in France, he narrowly escaped two assassination attempts and a kidnapping plot. Eventually, all of [Europe](#) was arrayed against him. In 1815, 15 years after he had begun to rule France, he was defeated by the allied forces of [Great Britain](#), [Russia](#), [Prussia](#), [Austria](#), and others; forced to abdicate; and sent into [exile](#) on an island far out in the Atlantic. He never held the reins of power again.

**Napoleon I's reorganization of France." *World History: The Modern Era*. ABC-CLIO, 2013. Web. 10 Dec. 2013.**

# Accountable Talk in a Discussion

To ensure high levels of academic rigor and equitable participation, teachers establish recurring, predictable routines with specific talk formats. These routines allow students and teacher to focus on academic content because everyone knows what is expected of them.

Recurring, familiar events and activities—ones that take place at consistent times, in consistent ways, for consistent purposes—ensure that all students know how to participate in the conversation. This frees up the students (and the teacher) to think about the content more deeply. Participants are able to spend less time worrying about how to frame their contribution, how to get a turn, or how to follow up on someone else's comment.

# Accountable Talk Prompts (some examples)

- I want to agree with \_\_\_\_\_ because ...
- I would like to disagree with what \_\_\_\_\_ said...
- I need clarification on...
- In other words, what you said was...
- Can you give me an example?
- I can give you an example of that...
- That reminds me of...
- I have made a connection...
- Maybe it means...
- That is really important...
- Aha!... Or Yes!... or I get it...
- What would you say, \_\_\_\_\_, about this conflicting piece of evidence?
- What conclusions can you draw?
- What would you recommend..?
- Based on the evidence, how would you explain...?
- What would happen if...?
- How would you improve...?

# Listening to Learn

- Paraphrasing the last person's main point before speaking is paramount to this method.
- Discuss this with a partner.

# Socratic Seminar / Jigsaw Seminar

---

Getting to the Heart of the Matter with  
Open-Ended Discussions

# Socratic Seminar Purpose

*A Socratic discussion is a text-based discussion in which an individual sets their own interpretations of the text alongside those of other participants. The aim is a mutual search for a clearer, wider and deeper ('enlarged') understanding of the ideas, issues, and values in the text at hand. It is shared inquiry, not debate; there is no opponent save the perplexity all persons face when they try to understand something that is both difficult and important.*

*— Walter Parker, University of Washington*

# Objectives

CONTENT (IDEAS, ISSUES, VALUES)	HIGHER-ORDER REASONING/ INTELLECTUAL WORK	CIVIL DISCOURSE (Democratic Skills/Dispositions)
<p>Depends on what is being read (whether print, film, or artwork). But, generally, the content objective is <i>an enlarged (clearer, deeper, broader) understanding of the <u>ideas</u>, <u>issues</u>, and <u>values</u> in the text.</i></p> <p>e.g., in <i>Letter from Birmingham Jail</i>, Students will understand <u>just and unjust laws</u> and <u>why King believes that civil disobedience should be done only “openly and lovingly.”</u></p>	<p>Students will develop/refine the intellectual skills of <u>textual interpretation</u>, and <u>supporting interpretations (claims) with evidence from the text</u>. [Socratic seminar is a kind of ‘shared inquiry.’]</p>	<p>Students will develop/refine the social skills of participating in an interpretive discussion: <u>listening</u>, <u>expressing opinions</u> and <u>giving reasons</u>, <u>challenging other participants’ interpretations (without <i>ad hominem</i> attack)</u>, and <u>inviting others into the discussion</u>. i.e., students will learn to have productive conversations (discussions about <i>ideas</i>, <i>issues</i>, and <i>values</i>) with “strangers.”</p>

- **SL.CCR.1:** Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on other’s ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. (*along with reading and writing standards*)

# Socratic Seminar Norms

1. Introduce the seminar and its purpose:  
to facilitate a deeper understanding of the ideas and values in  
the text through shared discussion
2. Review the Discussion Norms
  - Listen carefully
  - Don't raise hands
  - Address one another respectfully
  - Base opinions on the text
  - Address comments to the group (no side conversations)
  - Use sensitivity to take turns and not interrupt others
  - Monitor 'air time'
  - Be courageous in presenting your own thoughts and reasoning, but be flexible and willing to change your mind in the face of new and compelling evidence



# Remember...



- The teacher is not “Socrates” in the Socratic Seminar! Don’t be tempted to intervene often. You may occasionally redirect with a new question or clarify misconceptions, but most of your work is done in preparing the seminar and the students.
- Assessment could initiate from a roster wherein you keep track of individual comments and participation, from students tracking one other person, or from students turning in something tangible (e.g. poker chips – blue for questions, red for comments, etc.), or from general self-reflections.
- By beginning with open-ended questions, there is less demand for students to have their own interpretation ready. Make sure that student questions are deemed as important (or more important) than statements.
- It helps to sit with students instead of walking around (less intimidation).

# Background Building

- Review fundamental and/or academic vocabulary in the text. All students should have equal access to the information available in the text.
  - Providing a vocabulary side bar is a good idea.
  - Remember not to define words that can be interpreted based upon context clues.
- Everyone should start with the same basic understanding. The teacher may engage in a short lesson on a complicated topic, for instance, so as not to presuppose background knowledge.

# Three Types of Seminars

- Classic Socratic Seminar (whole group with same topic and readings in a circle)
- Small Group Seminar (whole class on same topic and same readings but in three to five smaller groups)
- Jigsaw Seminar (three to five groups on same topic but different readings, first in expert groups to clarify thinking on a reading and then in jigsaw groups for the discussion)

**NOTE: A SEMINAR WILL NOT WORK IF STUDENTS BRING IN THEIR OWN CHOICES OF READINGS. THERE MUST BE A BASIC SHARED UNDERSTANDING.**

# Classic Seminar Example

## **The Right of Privacy Socratic Seminar**

**The Issue: Does the Constitution protect the right of privacy? If so, what aspects of privacy receive protection?**


- **Materials found at**  
<http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/conlaw/rightofprivacy.html> and
- **WCSD Close Reading Examples Edmodo Site**  
**12<sup>th</sup> grade Folder: Griswold v. Connecticut**  
<https://www.edmodo.com/home#/join/60a0a01b9a81b44dd05be78ec4294f52>



# Jigsaw Seminar

---

Compare, Contrast, Synthesize & Make Meaning...

GETTING TO THE  OF THE MATTER WITH  
WITH MULTIPLE ARTICLES AND SMALL GROUPS

# JIGSAW SEMINAR INSTRUCTIONS



## EXPERT GROUPS

- Read the same article.
- Discuss article:
  - What is the main idea or claim of the article?
  - How is this supported?
  - What are the most interesting aspects of the article?
- Identify a 35-70 word summary of your article to share with your seminar group.

## SEMINAR GROUPS

- Meet in a group of 4 (representing the 4 articles).
- Everyone share their summary.
- Go through each of the seminar questions.
- Each person must “speak” at LEAST once for each seminar question, noting something from their article that is related to the question.
- People can speak generally (without evidence) about the topic after they have shared evidence.

# Numbered Off Reading Heads: Please Read...

<b>Number 1s</b>	The Land of Leisure: Why Americans Have Plenty of Time to Read This
<b>Number 2s</b>	Inconspicuous Consumption: A New Theory of the Leisure Class
<b>Number 3s</b>	How the 2 Americas Spend Their Time
<b>Number 4s</b>	Lazy in America: An Incomplete Social History

# Summarizing the Text

## Source Summary

Name of Source: \_\_\_\_\_

What are the 3 – 5 most important ideas in the text?

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

What are the 2 – 4 most interesting or telling details of the piece?

- 
- 
- 
- 

Write a paragraph with 5-7 sentences summarizing the text which includes all of the ideas and details recorded above. This is a group effort, and all members of the group should have the SAME summary. Talk about how to form sentences that combine multiple ideas and/or ideas with details. Use at least two academic verbs and at least one transition/telling word in your paragraph. Make sure to use at least one Tier Two word which was identified for the text.



# Jigsaw Seminar

- Compare, Contrast, Synthesize & Make Meaning
- Sharing Points Of View With Multiple Articles
- Open-Ended Questions For Everyone To Answer Regardless of Their Expert Group Document

# Seminar Questions (after sharing summary)

- Is laziness synonymous with leisure?
- Who gets leisure time? Are there differences amongst groups and classifications of people? Why or why not?
- How is consumption related to the leisure class?
- Why is there a debate over leisure time and the leisure class?

Answer questions one at a time in your group.

# Note Taking Organizers for Jigsaw Seminar

- Consider the use of I-Charts to have students take notes at the end of their discussion.
  - Ask students to translate something from their shared annotation for each source and then make meaning of it in a summary.

	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Other Interesting Facts	New Questions
What We Know						
Source 1						
Source 2						
Source 3						
Summaries						

# Assessing Seminars

- Rubrics – make your own with the rubric bank provided
- Roster keeping track of student participation (see next slide)
- Outside student evaluator
- Self-assessment

## **Positive**

- 1. Making a relevant comment (+1)**
- 2. Using a probing question to elicit more information or to get someone involved in the discussion (+1)**
- 3. Using evidence to support a statement (+1)**
- 4. Challenging the relevancy of a person's comment or use of evidence (+2)**
- 5. Using evidence from personally gathered sources to support a statement (+2)**
- 6. Summarizing the discussion (+2)**
- 7. Recognizing a contradiction in someone's position (+2)**
- 8. Making a stipulation (+2)**
- 9. Making a concession (+2)**
- 10. Making a clear transition to a relevant issue (+3)**
- 11. Stating and explaining an appropriate analogy (+3)**

## **Negative**

- 1. Making an irrelevant comment (-1)**
- 2. Not paying attention (-1)**
- 3. Interrupting another discussant to prevent him/her from participating (-2)**
- 4. Lack of or inappropriate use of evidence when making a factual statement (-2)**
- 5. Monopolizing/dominating a discussion so as to prevent others from participating (-3)**
- 6. Making a personal attack (-4)**

## **Notes:**

- Individually, students may not receive more than 18 points per discussion**
- An additional 1-5 points are added to each individual's score on the basis of the overall discussion's quality, for a maximum of 23 points**
- A maximum of 3 points may be earned on #1 (positive), and a maximum of 8 points may be earned between #3 and #5 (positive)**

## PREPARING STUDENTS FOR DISCUSSION

STEP 1: What is the issue or topic? My student friendly question ideas are...

### WRITING QUESTIONS

- Includes multiple perspectives
- No new/unknown vocabulary
- Not too long
- Matches strategy

STEP 2: Identify the Competing Perspectives Inherent in Your Question (at least two, perhaps more, perspectives)

STEP 3: What types of readings will you provide for students? What common understanding do you hope to create? Where can you find great texts?

### EXCERPTING IS YOUR FRIEND!

- Determine main theme and highlight areas of text.
- Cut & paste highlighted areas onto a document and then determine if cuts can be made (repetition, unnecessary info).
- Use ellipses to knock out extraneous information.

STEP 4: How will you get students deeply into the text? What can you do other than assign a text to individuals and have them answer questions?

### STRATEGIES TO FIND EVIDENCE IN TEXT

- Annotation guide
- Text-dependent whole group questioning
- Finding evidence & bucketing in categories
- Claim, Reasoning, Evidence (outlining author's argument)
- Other:  
(Don't forget to use line numbers! Le. WORD: page layout, line numbers, continuous)

STEP 5: Choose to have students a) write to prepare for discussion, or b) write to reflect and demonstrate learning. OR BOTH!

*Consider...how will you know if students have attained the intended knowledge? How much evidence will you require in the writing? What types of writing assessment tools will you employ?*

STEP 6: Which discussion strategy (or hybrid) will help you meet the goals of your discussion? Does your question fit well with this strategy?

STEP 7: Logistics

- How much time will you provide for preparation?
- How much time will you give the discussion?
- What norms will you teach?
- How will you set up your classroom?

# Tips & Hints for Discussion Planning and Instruction

- Labeling documents
- Friendly font and size
- Uniformity
- Folders
- Accountable Talk
- Candy, pennies, poker chips
- Room for note taking or annotation OR a clearly aligned note taker

# Rubric Bank

- Choose appropriate areas of the rubric for your discussion lessons
- Include self-assessments and discussion goals for students



# Discussion Lessons

- Check out our website at [www.projecttahoe.org](http://www.projecttahoe.org)
- DBQs are a great launch pad for discussions.
- Close readings on Edmodo provide great background.

# Evaluations

- We appreciate your insights.
- Please let us know if we can assist you in implementing any of these strategies.

# Thank you!

---

Contact us with any questions:

Angela

[aorr@washoeschools.net](mailto:aorr@washoeschools.net)

Katie

[kmanderson@washoeschools.net](mailto:kmanderson@washoeschools.net)

Kate

[kferro@washoeschools.net](mailto:kferro@washoeschools.net)