

Teacher Resource 5B: Seminar Discussion Norms

1. Do not raise your hand. The seminar is a conversation rather than a question and answer session.
2. Only one person speaks at a time. Do not interrupt.
3. Address each other, not the teacher.
4. Refer to the text when you make a comment or give an interpretation.
5. Speak up so that all can hear you.
6. Listen to and respect each other's opinions.
7. Remember there is no wrong answer.

Seminar Discussion Phrases

Use these helpful phrases to help you connect with other's comments in a mature way.

When you disagree:

1. "I have a different idea/interpretations..."
2. "I disagree. Let me explain why..."

When you want clarification of something you don't understand:

1. "I think I understand, but let me be sure..." (Then rephrase what you heard.)
2. "What do you mean by....?"
3. When you agree:
4. "I agree with his/her point and this is why..."
5. "I think he/she is correct because..."

Teacher Resource 5B: Tips for Socratic Seminar Discussion

Adapted from "Leading Socratic Discussion in the Classroom", Walter Parker, Ph. D. College of Education, University of Washington, Seattle. 2005.

Basic Teacher Follow-Up Questions

(as needed, after the discussion has been launched with the Opening Question)

1. Verification

- How do you know that's true?
- Where does it say that in the text?

2. Clarification

- What do you mean by _____?

3. Elaboration

- Say more about that.
- Tell us more.

4. Participation

- What do some of you others think?
- Let's hear from those of you who haven't spoken yet.

5. Variety

- What's another idea (reason; cause; interpretation, etc.)?

6. Summarizing

- Let's see what progress we've made.

7. Re-focus

- Let's return to the question (restate).