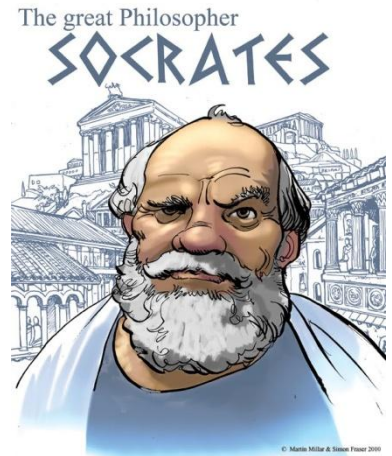


## Class Guidelines for Participants in a Socratic Seminar

1. Refer to the text when needed during the discussion. A seminar is not a test of memory. You are not "learning a subject"; your goal is to understand the ideas, issues, and values reflected in the text.
2. It's OK to "pass" when asked to contribute.
3. Do not participate if you are not prepared.
4. Do not stay confused; ask for clarification.
5. Stick to the point currently under discussion; make notes about ideas you want to come back to.
6. Don't raise hands; take turns speaking.
7. Listen carefully.
8. Speak up so that all can hear you.
9. **TALK TO EACH OTHER**, not just to the leader or teacher.
10. Discuss ideas rather than each other's opinions.
11. You are responsible for the seminar, even if you don't know it or admit it.



## Expectations of Participants in a Socratic Seminar

*When I am evaluating your Socratic Seminar participation, I ask the following questions about participants. Did they....*

- ✓ Speak loudly and clearly?
- ✓ Cite reasons and evidence for their statements?
- ✓ Use the text to find support?
- ✓ Listen to others respectfully?
- ✓ Stick with the subject?
- ✓ Talk to each other, not just to the leader?
- ✓ Paraphrase accurately?
- ✓ Ask for help to clear up confusion?
- ✓ Support each other?
- ✓ Avoid hostile exchanges?
- ✓ Question others in a civil manner?
- ✓ Seem prepared?

## What is the difference between dialogue and debate?

- **Dialogue** is collaborative: multiple sides work toward shared understanding.  
**Debate** is oppositional: two opposing sides try to prove each other wrong.
- **In dialogue**, one listens to understand, to make meaning, and to find common ground.  
**In debate**, one listens to find flaws, to spot differences, and to counter arguments.
- **Dialogue** enlarges and possibly changes a participant's point of view.  
**Debate** defends assumptions as truth.
- **Dialogue** creates an open-minded attitude: openness to being wrong and an openness to change.  
**Debate** creates a close-minded attitude, a determination to be right.
- **In dialogue**, one submits one's best thinking, expecting that other people's reflections will help improve it rather than threaten it.  
**In debate**, one submits one's best thinking and defends it against challenge to show that it is right.
- **Dialogue** calls for temporarily suspending one's beliefs.  
**Debate** calls for investing wholeheartedly in one's beliefs.
- **In dialogue**, one searches for strengths in all positions.  
**In debate**, one searches for weaknesses in the other position.
- **Dialogue** respects all the other participants and seeks not to alienate or offend.  
**Debate** rebuts contrary positions and may belittle or deprecate other participants.
- **Dialogue** assumes that many people have pieces of answers and that cooperation can lead to a greater understanding.  
**Debate** assumes a single right answer that somebody already has.
- **Dialogue** remains open-ended.  
**Debate** demands a conclusion.

### Dialogue is characterized by:

- ✓ suspending judgment
- ✓ examining our own work without defensiveness
- ✓ exposing our reasoning and looking for limits to it
- ✓ communicating our underlying assumptions
- ✓ exploring viewpoints more broadly and deeply
- ✓ being open to disconfirming data
- ✓ approaching someone who sees a problem differently not as an adversary, but as a colleague in common pursuit of better solution.



## Socratic Seminar Grading Rubric

<b>A Level Participant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participant offers enough solid analysis, without prompting, to move the conversation forward</li><li>• Participant, through her comments, demonstrates a deep knowledge of the text and the question</li><li>• Participant has come to the seminar prepared, with notes and a marked/annotated text</li><li>• Participant, through her comments, shows that she is actively listening to other participants</li><li>• Participant offers clarification and/or follow-up that extends the conversation</li><li>• Participant's remarks often refer back to specific parts of the text.</li></ul>
<b>B Level Participant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participant offers solid analysis without prompting</li><li>• Through comments, participant demonstrates a good knowledge of the text and the question</li><li>• Participant has come to the seminar prepared, with notes and a marked/annotated text</li><li>• Participant shows that he/she is actively listening to others and offers clarification and/or follow-up</li></ul>
<b>C Level Participant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participant offers some analysis, but needs prompting from the seminar leader</li><li>• Through comments, participant demonstrates a general knowledge of the text and question</li><li>• Participant is less prepared, with few notes and no marked/annotated text</li><li>• Participant is actively listening to others, but does not offer clarification and/or follow-up to others' comments</li><li>• Participant relies more upon his or her opinion, and less on the text to drive her comments</li></ul>
<b>D or F Level Participant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participant offers little commentary</li><li>• Participant comes to the seminar ill-prepared with little understanding of the text and question</li><li>• Participant does not listen to others, offers no commentary to further the discussion</li><li>• Participant distracts the group by interrupting other speakers or by offering off topic questions and comments.</li><li>• Participant ignores the discussion and its participants</li></ul>