

# **SOCRATIC SEMINAR**

## **TEXT**

Various short stories, selected readings, poetry, song lyrics, works of art, and film

## **PREREQUISITES**

11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade

## **OBJECTIVES**

- Increase and refine listening skills
- Clear articulation of ideas (written and oral) using evidence to support opinions
- Ability to work collaboratively with others
- Learn how to accept criticism
- Ability to think critically about questions that have uncertain answers
- Learn to consider carefully, respectfully, and critically the opinions of others
- Learn to write objective observations of class discussions

## **CONTENT**

A variety of materials, including but not limited to, short stories, quotes, passages from historical documents, poetry, photographs, movies, song lyrics, sculpture, paintings, myths, religious passages, Eastern and Western philosophical passages, and materials suggested by students are utilized to illuminate and teach skills required for discussions and writing.

## **SKILLS**

- Listening openly and critically
- Communicating clearly
- Critical thinking
- Literature analysis
- Identifying the main idea of a reading
- Dictionary/Thesaurus skills
- Vocabulary development
- Ability to participate in an effective discussion
- Writing using specifics and examples

## **METHODS**

Discussions occur after viewing, reading, or hearing about a topic. The teacher leads the discussion, but not as a source of information or as an authority on the subject. The class explores the material together after the student or the teacher has asked an initial question. There may be no resolve or closure in a specific discussion. As a result of questioning, exploring,

researching, using evidence from the material and building on what others have previously articulated, the group comes to a deeper understanding of the material.

### **HOMEWORK**

All work is done during the daily class period.

### **GRADING/CREDIT**

Grade and credit is based on attendance, active participation, cooperation with, and respect for others, improvement over the length of the course, vocabulary testing, completion of homework reading, and self, peer, and teacher observations/evaluations.

### **INDIVIDUALIZATION**

Students can participate in every discussion at their own individual level.

### **ABSENCES/TARDIES**

Since the work of the class is group oriented, absences and tardies will result in loss of credit.