

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Pd. \_\_\_\_\_ Seminar #: \_\_\_\_\_

### How to Prepare for Socratic Seminars

A Socratic seminar is a form of scholarly discourse based on “essential” open-ended questions. Essential questions are defined as questions that point to the heart of a topic and its controversies and that generate multiple answers and perspectives. Open-ended questions allow you to think critically, analyze multiple meanings in the text, and express your ideas and opinions with clarity and confidence.

#### In preparation for the seminar,

- Answer the following questions by finding extensive **textual evidence** to support your perspective.
- For each question, offer a brief interpretive claim. List page numbers and portions of quotations from the text that you will use as evidence to support your claim. Offer a brief analysis of how the quotes support your claim. **You do not need to write in full sentences. Bulleted points are fine.**
- Plan several claims with evidence and analysis (CEA’s) for each question because you need to add to discussion and others may come with the same initial idea that you have. All of the questions will be broad enough to engender multiple perspectives that encompass a wide variety of elements from the text. There are not right and wrong answers to these questions, but rather stronger and weaker arguments based upon how you generate, support, and analyze your claims.

#### During the seminar,

- Listen attentively and respond to one another with respect while you are participating in the inner circle.
- Before agreeing or disagreeing with a classmate, acknowledge that classmate’s ideas/opinions, and then express your own with clarity and supporting evidence from the text.
- When you are in the outer circle, take notes on a separate piece of paper that will allow you to reference specific ideas shared by the other group members when we come together at the end of class to discuss all the questions again.
- When you are in either the inner or outer circle, you may add intriguing ideas or quotations that other initiate to your ticket as long as you use another color ink to distinguish your original ticket ideas from those you gather during discussion.
- Socratic Seminar tickets make excellent study tools to prepare for unit tests and exams.

#### After the seminar,

- **Reflect** on your own participation and on the nature of the discussion during both seminars A & B.
- **Synthesize** all the ideas discussed during seminars A & B into your closing thoughts when we gather as a full group at the end of class to review all the questions again to allow students to address any question not assigned to your group.