

# Socratic Seminar – Shared Inquiry Grades K-5; Pre-K

## Reading and Comprehending the Text

Students each have a copy of the text, or see the text, for the initial reading. If possible, they can write responding notes in the columns (not essential). In Pre-K, K and 1<sup>st</sup>, when leading the Socratic Seminar several copies (2-4) is best to use when having students finding evidence. Evidence can be in pictures as much as the words. There is not an 'exact' number or method, but it is important to think of the 'why' in knowing the 'how'.

Use methods for involving all students to develop and surface interest and background knowledge (Priming); comprehend and process the text (Processing) and connect with their knowledge, cultural background and experiences (Frame of Reference / Situating Learning in the Lives of Students). The Socratic Seminar (dialogue) is the Demonstrating for Understanding.

## Possible Methods in Potential Sequence

Powerful Questions of image from the text

- in pairs: Teacher-Student; Student-Student; All Paired; Whole Group; Extension – Quartets
- Key Vocabulary Prediction
- Read-Talk-(Map) progressively
- Sentence Transformation – key sentence for vocabulary development
- Map – Thinking Map (ultimately students select which one)
- to Frame of Reference with the Thinking Map (evidences, student schema making connections with experiences, readings, culturally)
- Types of Questions: Factual, Evaluative, Interpretive
- Students develop questions they have to learn more about the text

## Socratic Seminar (Shared Inquiry)

Goals include:

- Sharing space dialoguing with each other is best in a circle.
- No hands raised — talking and sharing respectfully
- Each student has a goal each time (e.g. talk once) – and reflect on goals after
- Facilitators have no opinion on the text — they guide the discussion with the questions. One or two facilitators is good. Teacher can be the facilitator. Best is having a student or students as co-facilitators
- Map of all participants in a circle to track the speakers.



## Situating Learning In The Lives Of Students:

**The Technical:** Students perform most effectively when they can connect new learnings to what is relevant and meaningful to them. These connections validate their lived experiences activating the focusing of the brain through its Reticular Activating System (RAS). Without such personal connections, the new learnings are not likely to be retained and used effectively.

**The Adaptive:** “Working from the personal cultural context of students engages and heightens their attention because the engagements are seen as meaningful” (Jackson, 2011, p. 98)