Socratic Seminar Observation Checklist

Your Name: ________________________  Partner’s Name: ________________________

Directions: Each time your partner does one of the following put a check in the box.

Speaks in the discussion  

Makes eye contact with other speakers or as she/he speaks

Refers to the text

Asks a new or follow-up question

Responds to another speaker

Paraphrases and adds to another speaker’s ideas

Encourages another participant to speak

Interrupts another speaker

Engages in side conversation

Dominates the conversation

AFTER the discussion: What is the most interesting thing your partner said?

AFTER the discussion: What would you like to have said in the discussion?
# Socratic Seminar Observation Notes

Name: ________________________________

**Directions:** Choose three participants in the seminar to observe. Write examples of the behaviors listed below as you see or hear them occur.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Name</th>
<th>Offers New Idea</th>
<th>Asks a Question</th>
<th>Refers to Text</th>
<th>Builds on Other’s Idea</th>
<th>Distracting Behavior</th>
<th>Other Notes/Observations</th>
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Socratic Seminar Self-Assessment

Participant

Name:________________________________ Seminar Text:___________________________

Directions: Score your performance in today’s seminar using the following criteria:
4 = Excellent  3 = Good  2 = Showing Progress  1 = Needs Improvement

_____ I read the text closely, marked the text, and took notes in advance.
_____ I came prepared with higher level questions related to the text.
_____ I contributed several relevant comments.
_____ I cited specific evidence from the text to support an idea.
_____ I asked at least one thoughtful, probing question.
_____ I questioned or asked someone to clarify their comment.
_____ I built on another person’s idea by restating, paraphrasing, or synthesizing.
_____ I encouraged other participants to enter the conversation.
_____ I treated all other participants with dignity and respect.

Overall Score (circle one):  1    1.5   2   2.5   3    3.5  4

Two goals I have for our next seminar are:
1.
2.

An area where I would like help:
Socratic Seminar Self-Assessment
Leader

Name: ___________________________ Seminar Text: ___________________________
Group Members: ____________________________________________________________

Directions: Score your performance in today’s seminar using the following criteria:
4 = Excellent    3 = Good    2 = Showing Progress    1 = Needs Improvement

_____ I listened carefully and helped clear up confusion.
_____ I asked questions to clarify or probe for higher-level thinking.
_____ I helped the group get back on track if they strayed from the text or moved to
   debate.
_____ I helped participants work together cooperatively.
_____ I did not dominate the conversation.
_____ I encouraged other participants to enter the conversation.
_____ I treated all other participants with dignity and respect.
_____ The group used the text as a reference throughout the Socratic Seminar.
_____ Group members shared in the discussion of the topic.
_____ The group asked in-depth questions.
_____ Everyone in the group was respectful of other ideas.
_____ The group was able to take the Socratic Seminar to a high level of understanding.

Overall Score (circle one): 1   1.5   2   2.5   3   3.5   4

Two goals I have for my leadership development:
1. 
2. 

An area where I would like help:
Socratic Seminar Rubric for Individual Participants

Name: ___________________________  Seminar Text: _______________________

Exemplary
- reads closely, takes notes, and develops high-level questions before the seminar
- uses prepared text, notes, and questions to contribute to the dialogue
- moves the conversation forward
- asks for clarification when needed
- asks probing questions for higher level thinking
- speaks to all participants and is heard clearly
- thinks before answering
- refers directly to the text
- makes connections to other speakers
- builds on others’ comments
- considers all opinions
- writes down thoughts and questions
- listens actively
- demonstrates patience and respect toward others’ opinions/ideas

Competent
- comes prepared with marked text, notes, and questions
- contributes to the dialogue
- responds to questions
- refers to text
- offers interesting ideas
- asks questions
- takes notes
- pays attention
- is respectful of others’ ideas

Developing
- comes with some text preparation
- emphasizes own ideas; may lean toward debate rather than dialogue
- ideas not always connected
- refers to text
- repeats some ideas
- asks a few questions and/or questions are lower level
- takes some notes
- loses track of conversation
- judges others’ ideas

Needs Improvement
- does not participate or participation is inappropriate
- repeats same ideas
- few or no notes taken
- no questions asked
- seems lost/overwhelmed with the seminar
Evaluating a Socratic Seminar as a Whole

Consider the following questions as you prepare to talk about the strengths of a seminar and the areas for growth.

Did the participants . . .

☐ seem prepared?
☐ speak loudly and clearly?
☐ cite reasons and evidence for their statements?
☐ use the text to find support?
☐ build on each other’s ideas?
☐ paraphrase accurately?
☐ ask for help to clear up confusion?
☐ ask higher level questions to move the dialogue forward?
☐ stick with the subject?
☐ listen to others respectfully?
☐ talk to each other, not just the leader?
☐ encourage everyone’s involvement and avoid dominating the conversation?
☐ avoid hostile exchanges and debate?
☐ question each other in a civil manner?

Did the leader . . .

☐ get participants engaged early? How?
☐ make sure that questions were understood?
☐ ask questions that led to further questions?
☐ draw out reasons and implications?
☐ keep attention on ideas in the text being discussed?
☐ question misreadings of the text?
☐ allow time (pauses) for thinking?
☐ draw in all participants?
☐ listen carefully to participants’ statements?
☐ accept participants’ answers without judgment?
☐ allow for discussion of disagreements?

Our class/seminar group demonstrated these major strengths:

Our class/seminar group can grow in the following ways: