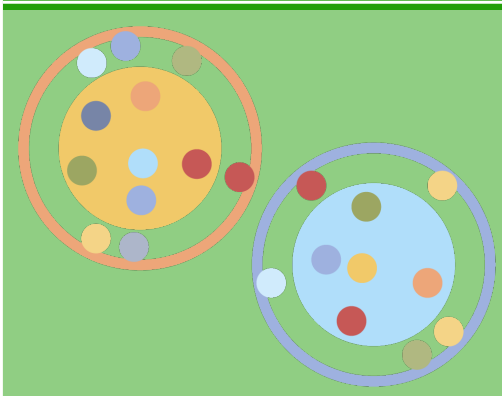
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES



Socratic Seminar

This strategy promotes careful analysis of an issue or a text through the classical rhetorical processes of discussion, observation, interpretation, and consensus seeking. Students engage in a formal discussion process, which enables them to clarify and examine issues, ideas, and values and clearly articulate them to their peers.

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SOCRATIC SEMINAR

Summary

Using classical rhetorical strategies, this strategy guides students through careful analysis and synthesis of complex reading and critical thinking tasks. By identifying their own perceptions and articulating them, then comparing their perceptions objectively with those of classmates, students are able to reflect on their attitudes and values and more intentionally understand their interpretations of a text or prompt.

Procedure

1. Assign an article, book study, or any literary prompt you want students to discuss.
2. Prepare 4–6 open-ended questions that correlate with the text.
3. Inform students that they will have 24 hours to jot down several responses they would give to those questions as they read through the text.
4. The following day, divide the class into two groups: inner and outer circles.
5. Remind students of the norms/rules of class discussion.
6. The inner circle of students will answer one question at a time and discuss the issues. This should take 15–30 minutes.
7. The outer circle of students will quietly record observations of the speakers.
8. After the inner circle has discussed the first question, have the two groups switch roles. The inner circle now becomes the outer circle and vice versa.
9. Continue in this manner until students have discussed each of the questions.
10. As a class, have students take some time to reflect and evaluate the activity and self-reflect on their performance.