Socratic Seminar

Directions: There will be a total of three seminar discussion sessions. Your will rotate through the following roles: a discussion participant in the inside circle, a coach in the outside circle, and a discussion tracker in the outside circle.

Discussion Participant - You will organize a minimum of 3 well-supported claims that support your side of the debate. Be prepared to work these into the discussion – no one will ask you directly about your arguments. You must also be prepared with additional notes that will help you be an active participant in the discussion beyond simply stating your claims.

Coach - Your job is to evaluate your partner’s participation and provide feedback to help with his/her growth. See coaching protocol on page 5 for information regarding your role.

Discussion Tracker - You will bullet point major ideas from the discussion. Be prepared to summarize for the class the major topics of discussion after each half of the seminar.

Prompt: The organic molecules in living things fall into four major groups: carbohydrates, lipids, proteins, and nucleic acids. All four of these biomolecules are essential to life. But which biomolecule is the most important for life?

Choose a discussion side:
1. Carbohydrates
2. Lipids
3. Proteins
4. Nucleic acids

Grading: Your grade will be an individual grade based on your participation and completion of the tasks for all three roles.

You will submit the required completed documents on the final day of the seminar:
1. Socratic Seminar Arguments Graphic Organizer
2. Socratic Seminar Coaching Form
3. Discussion Tracker Notes
4. Socratic Seminar Self-assessment
Socratic Seminar Sentence Frames

Directions: During a Socratic Seminar in science class, you are expected to use academic language when you speak. In turn, you are also expected to apply good listening skills during the activity.

Please utilize the following sentence frames while you speak. They will help you incorporate strong academic language structures into your natural vocabulary and deepen the level of intelligence discussion in an academic setting.

Sentence Frames for Clarification:
- __________, could you please rephrase that?
- I did not understand _________. Could you please repeat that?
- I did not understand _________. Do you mean _________? [Rephrase what you think the group member said and wait for clarification.]
- It’s not quite clear. Can you explain what you said about _________?
- Can you say more about that?
- In other words, are you saying _________?
- I have a question about _________ [State your question.]

Sentence Frames for Changing the Subject:
- I think we’ve exhausted the topic of _________. Can we move on to _________?
- Moving on to _________.
- Does anyone have any final comments to add about _________, or shall we move on to a new subject?

Sentence Frames for Affirming an Idea and Adding to It:
- My idea is related to ________‘s idea _________.
- I really like ________‘s idea about _________.
- I agree with _________. Also, _________.
- My idea builds on ________‘s idea. I _________.

Sentence Frames for Presenting a Different Angle on a Subject:
- While I can see why you believe this, I see this differently. In my opinion, _________.
- I understand where you are coming from, but I see it a bit differently. From my perspective, _________.
- That’s a valid point, but I feel _________.
- On the other hand, _________.
- I do agree with the part about _________. but _________.

Sentence Frames for Expressing Your Opinion:
- I believe that _________.
- In my opinion, _________.
- I feel that _________.
- I think that _________. because _________.
- To me, it seems obvious that _________.

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## Socratic Seminar Arguments Graphic Organizer

**Directions:** Use this graphic organizer to outline your main arguments and evidence for the Socratic Seminar. A source must be included for EVERY detail/evidence. Websites must end in .edu or .gov or .org or be from a reputable news organization (e.g. New York Times, NewsWeek).

**Argument #1:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Claim:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence 1 that supports the claim:</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source for Evidence 1:</th>
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<th>Evidence 2 that supports the claim:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Source for Evidence 2:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Evidence 3 that supports the claim:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Source for Evidence 3:</th>
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**Argument #2:**

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<th>Claim:</th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Evidence 1 that supports the claim:</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source for Evidence 1:</th>
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</table>
### Argument #3:

**Claim:**

**Evidence 1 that supports the claim:**

**Source for Evidence 1:**

**Evidence 2 that supports the claim:**

**Source for Evidence 2:**

**Evidence 3 that supports the claim:**

**Source for Evidence 3:**
**Socratic Seminar Coaching Form**

I am coaching ________________________________.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coaching Observations During Seminar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comments and Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
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**Coaching Protocol at Half Time**

1. Open with sharing what your peer’s best comment has been so far and explain why it was so good.
2. Talk through the rubric and tell you peer which criteria he/she has met so far. **Check off each task.**
   - Identify strengths and areas of growth.
   - Share how many times you have heard your peer speak. Give feedback on participation - dominating, withdrawing, striking a good balance?
   - Share discussion starters you have heard. Pick a new one to try in the second half.
   - Share whether you hear your peer actually explaining the evidence that they used.
   - Brainstorm strategies to help your peer offer stronger commentary.
   - Ask what your peer needs help on and brainstorm strategies for growing in the second half.
3. Give your peer a high five for a job well done so far!
Post-Coaching Assessment: After your peer completes his/her speaking role in a Socratic Seminar, please check all criteria he/she met during the discussion.

Advanced: Student meets all of the proficient criteria plus two or more of the following:
- Actively incorporates others into the discussion
- Challenges ideas and conclusions in thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas
- Summarizes points of agreement/disagreement made by others during the discussion
- Makes new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented
- Using language of recognition and appreciation to promote collaborative, collegial discussions that establish a respectful and formal environment.

Proficient: Clearly meets 4-6 criteria throughout the course of the discussion
- Student comes to discussion prepared with completed arguments and notes
- Thoughtfully contributes to the discussion by sharing at least 1 argument.
- Uses body language and eye contact to indicate active listening for the duration of the seminar
- Qualifies or justifies own views and understanding with evidence and source
- Poses and/or responds to questions
- Building on the thoughts of others by using appropriate transition words and phrases

Basic: Student meets 3 of the proficient criteria
Below Basic: Student meets only 2 of the proficient criteria

Post-Coaching Questions
1. What specific coaching did you give your peer at half-time?

2. Compare and contrast your peer’s discussion skill levels in the first versus second half. What improved? What stayed the same?

3. What specific skill do you recommend to your peer to work on next time?
Discussion Tracker Notes

List bullets of information on the major points of discussion within each half of the seminar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socratic Seminar - First Half</th>
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</table>
Discussion Tracker Notes

List bullets of information on the major points of discussion within each half of the seminar.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socratic Seminar - Second Half</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
</table>
Socratic Seminar Self-Assessment

My Speaking Goals:
Today I want to work on... (pick 2 specific skills you want to work on in today’s Socratic Seminar)
1. 

2. 

Self-Assessment: After you complete your speaking role in a Socratic Seminar, please check all criteria you met during the discussion.

Advanced: Student meets all of the proficient criteria plus two or more of the following:
- Actively incorporates others into the discussion
- Challenges ideas and conclusions in thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas
- Summarizes points of agreement/disagreement made by others during the discussion
- Makes new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented
- Using language of recognition and appreciation to promote collaborative, collegial discussions that establish a respectful and formal environment.

Proficient: Clearly meets 4-6 criteria throughout the course of the discussion
- Student comes to discussion prepared with completed arguments and notes
- Thoughtfully contributes to the discussion by sharing at least 1 argument.
- Uses body language and eye contact to indicate active listening for the duration of the seminar
- Qualifies or justifies own views and understanding with evidence and source
- Poses and/or responds to questions
- Building on the thoughts of others by using appropriate transition words and phrases

Basic: Student meets 3 of the proficient criteria

Below Basic: Student meets only 2 of the proficient criteria
Self-Evaluation: Please answer the following in complete sentences.
1. What specific coaching did you receive at half-time?

2. Based on your self-assessment above, what overall skill level do you think you most consistently demonstrated in both halves of the seminar?

3. What was your best contribution and why?

4. Did you meet your two goals? Why or why not?

5. What specific skill do you want to work on next time and why? Explain; be specific.
## Socratic Seminar Rubric

**CCSS.ELA/Literacy.SL.8.1** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
- Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
- Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others’ questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.
- Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.

**CCSS.ELA/Literacy.RST.8.1** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of science and technical texts.

**CCSS.ELA/Literacy.WHST.8.1** Write arguments focused on discipline content.

**CCSS.ELA/Literacy.WHST.8.9** Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

**NGSS.SEP.7** Engaging in Argument from Evidence

- Construct an oral and written argument supported by empirical evidence and scientific reasoning to support or refute an explanation or a model for a phenomenon or a solution to a problem.

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**Advanced:** Student meets *all* of the *proficient* criteria *plus one or more* of the following:

- Actively incorporates others into the discussion
- Challenges ideas and conclusions in thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas
- Summarizes points of agreement/disagreement made by others during the discussion
- Makes new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented
- Using language of recognition and appreciation to promote collaborative, collegial discussions that establish a respectful and formal environment.

**Proficient:** Clearly meets 3-5 of the criteria throughout the course of the discussion

- Student comes to discussion prepared with completed arguments and notes
- Thoughtfully contributes to the discussion by sharing at least 1 argument.
- Uses body language and eye contact to indicate active listening for the duration of the seminar
- Qualifies or justifies own views and understanding with evidence and source
- Poses and/or responds to questions
- Building on the thoughts of others by using appropriate transition words and phrases

**Basic:** Student meets 2 of the *proficient* criteria

**Below Basic:** Student meets only 1 of the *proficient* criteria
Name: __________________________________________________________

**Socratic Seminar Score**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advanced 6+</td>
<td>40/40</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Arguments submitted/no participation = 60% 60% 20/40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficient 3</td>
<td>34/40</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic 2</td>
<td>30/40</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>No arguments submitted/no participation = 0% 0/40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Below Basic 1</td>
<td>26/40</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>-10 for arguments not submitted by the Socratic Seminar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proficient 4</td>
<td>36/40</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Proficient 5</td>
<td>38/40</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

_____/5 Coaching Form

_____/5 Discussion Tracker Form

_____/10 Self-Assessment

**Socratic Seminar Total Score:** _____/60