

ELA

Socratic Circles

Socratic Circles may be used to assist discussion. These are effective in facilitating authentic, student-centred learning because the teacher acts only as a monitor to keep the discussion moving forward. Students direct the focus of the discussion to activate prior knowledge, make connections, and synthesize information. A discussion elicits reasons and explanations in order to connect peoples' ideas. The purpose of a good discussion is not for everyone to agree, but rather to feel a sense of forward movement in thinking and a sense of achievement.

Good discussions can be facilitated by:

- asking participants "how they know" something
- challenging assumptions that may be in evidence
- providing alternatives for consideration
- requesting definitions for a particular word
- seeking consistencies in participants' responses over time

During a discussion facilitators:

- can group ideas after a period of time
- move the discussion to higher levels of generality
- suggest possible lines of thinking (e.g., consequences or effects, similarities or differences)

ROLES (all group members are contributors)	Student Name	Peer Score
Taskmaster - Keep everyone on topic and everyone doing their role + peer score (at finish)		/5
Notetaker - Take jot notes of points raised by all members (that help to answer the key question)		/5
General Contributor - Add as many ideas to answering the key question as possible		/5
Presentor - Share the group's findings with the whole class		/5
Critic - Try to find flaws in ideas; make ideas practical		/5

