

SEMINAR PROCESS SCRIPT

Before Seminar

Definition and Purpose

A Paideia Seminar is a collaborative, intellectual dialogue about a text, facilitated with open-ended questions.

The main purpose of seminar is to arrive at a fuller understanding of the ideas and values in [*name of text*], of ourselves, and of each other.

Roles and Expectations

As the facilitator, I am primarily responsible for asking challenging, open-ended questions.

- I will take a variety of notes to keep up with the talk turns and flow of ideas.
- I will help move the discussion along in a productive direction by asking follow-up questions based on my notes.

As participants, I am asking you to think, listen, and speak candidly about your thoughts, reactions, and ideas.

- You can help each other do this by using each other's names.
- You do not need to raise your hands in order to speak; rather, the discussion is collaborative in that you try to stay focused on the main speaker and wait your turn to talk.
- You should try to both agree and disagree in a courteous, thoughtful manner. For example, you might say, "I disagree with Joanna because..." focusing on the ideas involved, not the individuals.

Group Process Goal

Now, let's think about how we normally participate in a discussion as a group. What goal can we set for ourselves that will help the flow of the seminar? (*Encourage student input. Discuss and reach consensus. Alternatively, suggest group goal. Display group goal.*)

Common Group Goals

- Focus on ideas and values embedded in text
- Keep an open mind
- Invite everyone to share their ideas
- Use others' names
- Remember that one person speaks at a time

Personal Participation Goal

Please consider the list of personal participation goals that I have listed on the board. (*Display personal goals.*) Is there one that is a particular challenge for you? Please choose one goal from the list and commit to achieving it during the discussion. Write your personal goal at the top of your [notebook paper, copy of the text, or checklist].

Common Personal Goals

Novice

- Look at speaker
- Do not talk while speaker is addressing class
- Speak voluntarily at least twice
- Speak loudly enough that everyone can hear you
- Use others' names
- Share talk time
- Make clear, accurate statements
- Refer to text
- Ask a question

Advanced

- Speak using relevant vocabulary and standard grammar
- Refer to text and other relevant sources
- Take notes on discussion
- Comment on positive/negative implications of topic
- Test assumptions and explore inferences
- Consider multiple points of view
- Acknowledge personal bias
- Acknowledge changes in one's own perspective
- Add global/holistic interpretation to previous statement

After Seminar

Self-Assessment

Thank you for your focused and thoughtful participation in our seminar.

As part of the post-seminar process, I would first like to ask you to take a few minutes to reflect on your relative success in meeting the participation goal you set for yourself prior to the discussion. Please review your goal and write to what extent you met it. In addition, note why you think you performed as you did. (*Pause for reflection.*)

Would several volunteers please share your self-assessment and reflection? (*Listen.*)

Group Assessment

Now I would like us to talk together about how we did in relation to the group process goal we set for ourselves. On a scale of one to ten, ten being perfect, how would you say we did? Why? (*Facilitate discussion.*)

Anticipation

What goal should we work on next seminar? (*Encourage student input. Discuss and reach consensus.*) Let's make a note of that. Thanks again for your participation.