

Socratic Seminar Oral Assessment

Small groups of students* (3-5) will facilitate a class discussion based on the entire unit, taking turns posing questions and shaping the contours of the discussion based on the preceding readings and activities. Facilitators are encouraged to utilize the Unit Objectives and Essential Questions for guidance and scaffolding. Each facilitator will have the opportunity to prepare notes in advance, featuring ideas, questions, and quotes from the assigned readings and from their own journals and assignments. Participants will offer their original ideas, build on or challenge others' ideas, and raise questions of their own in response; facilitators will ensure a thorough exploration of ideas from multiple perspectives, making sure all participants contribute. Following the discussion, facilitators and participants will engage in a self-assessment process where they will evaluate their own contributions and facilitation skills based on predefined criteria. This method aims to develop critical thinking, self-reflection, listening skills, and leadership abilities.

**Among the small group facilitating the discussion, it might be helpful to take on a particular role with certain responsibilities so that each facilitator has a focus. The following is based on the Peer Leadership Roles for small group sessions in the Leadership and the Good Life course at West Chester University, part of the Life Worth Living Network:*

1. **Host:** Break the awkward silence at the beginning of the conversation by sharing a related joke, meme, quote, poem or song lyric. (1-2 minutes)
2. **Presenter:** Share the group's top five takeaways from the assigned readings and other materials, including exercises and activities. You may use a Google Slide for this. This should be a synthesis rather than a summary (3-4 minutes)
3. **Discussion Question Generator/Facilitator:** Generate a list of questions based on the objectives and essential questions from the unit and share them with your group in advance. Ensure that everyone in the class has a chance to speak and be encouraging to those who are reticent to do so. (Throughout the discussion)
4. **Perspective Taker:** Bring new and relevant perspectives into the discussion, *e.g.* *According to X, what does it mean for life to go well? What does Y have to say about what it means to be human?* This may require prior research to identify perspectives outside of the readings and materials if necessary. (Throughout the discussion)
5. **Meaning Maker:** In the last 5 minutes or so of the discussion, answer the question, "What will you keep thinking about when this discussion is over?" Then share a relevant closing quote, poem, or song lyric. (4-5 minutes)