

Tips for Joining the Discussion

The goal of the Socratic Seminar is to have a discussion about ideas in the text. To do this you and your classmates will need to ask questions of each other. You may agree or disagree with what someone else has to say. That's ok! Listening to other's ideas and then responding with your own is part of a good discussion. It is important that you give others a chance to speak without interrupting or talking over them. Wait for a break in the conversation, make eye-contact with whomever is speaking, or give another non-verbal signal (such as a nod) that you have something to say. If you are the one speaking and it looks like one of your classmates has something to say, you can help keep the discussion going, by calling on them. Here are some tips and transition phrases you can use:

When you agree and want to make a comment:

1. I agree because ...
2. That's true, I also think that ...
3. _____ made a good point, this is similar to ...

When you disagree and want to make a comment:

1. I disagree because ...
2. That is not how I see it, I think that ...

When you have a question about the text:

1. What did you think about the part of the article that talked about _____? (This is when it is GREAT to have the page number and paragraph written down!)
2. I did not understand _____, can anyone explain it?

When you have a question about what others think:

1. I liked/ didn't like _____ (cite the text), what did you think about it?
2. I think _____ (state opinion supported by the text), does anyone have a different opinion?

Building on ideas

1. I would like to add that ...
2. If that is the case, then ...

Returning to a previous topic

1. Let's go back to ...
2. We talked about _____ earlier, what _____ said made me think about it again.