

4.12: Socratic Seminar: Triad Formation (Pilot/Co-Pilot)



Student Objective

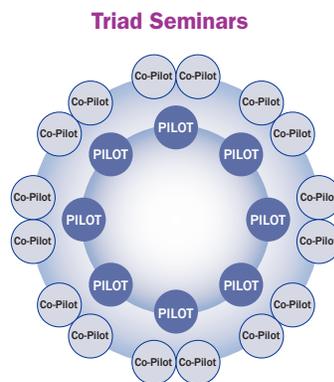
Students will incorporate thoughts from their peer support group and share those thoughts.

Overview

The Triad (Pilot/Co-Pilot) model of Socratic Seminar is one of the most advantageous formats to employ when the goal of the lesson is to maximize both inquiry and collaboration among all classroom students. Similar in structure to the Inner/Outer Circle variation, the Triad model allows for greater interaction and mobility between the outer circle of students and those in the inner circle.

Materials/Set-Up

- Handouts:
 - Socratic Seminar: Classic Style Handouts
- In advance of the activity, complete the following:
 - Set up the classroom to accommodate the following configuration:



Instructional Steps

1. Follow the same text selection, norms, and pre-work steps as Socratic Seminar: Classic Style, including having students write appropriately leveled questions about the text.
2. Divide students into thirds and arrange the seats so that one-third of the students sit in the inner circle (as the “pilots”).
3. Set two chairs behind each pilot’s chair (for the “co-pilots”). If the total number of students does not divide evenly into thirds, arrange the chairs accordingly so that a few pilots only have one co-pilot each, instead of two.



4. Review elements of the text and the prompt with the class.
5. Once students are seated, instruct the pilots to discuss the questions that they created about the text with their co-pilots. If Socratic Seminars are a new experience for the students, consider using a teacher-created prompt to bolster this initial discussion.
6. Allow about one minute for each “flight crew”—pilot and co-pilots working together—to share their thoughts about the questions.
7. Beginning with a volunteer, conduct a Whip-Around, having each pilot in the circle share a question that they had discussed with their flight crew.
8. Once each pilot has shared a question, determine the opening question and allow the Seminar to develop its initial dialogue. The outer ring of co-pilots does not openly contribute to the discussion occurring in the inner circle. However, encourage co-pilots to take notes or write down points that they wish to mention at the first available opportunity.
9. At appropriate times—about every five to seven minutes—announce a “stop-over,” and pause the discussion.
- 10. Allow the pilots to turn to their co-pilots once again to quickly gather input and reactions regarding the inner-circle discussion.** At this point, allow co-pilots the opportunity to relieve their pilots, if they so desire, and assume the inner-circle seat.
11. Continue the Socratic Seminar, allowing for connections so that co-pilots can continue to contribute to the discussion until the dialogue comes to a close.
12. For the final leg of their “journey,” conduct a Whip-Around, allowing each pilot one final statement or rhetorical question that sums up their flight crew’s thinking.

ELL Integration: Provide students with the opportunity to rehearse their responses before sharing with the entire class.

→ Extension

- To increase rigor, increase scaffolding, and integrate technology, see the “Extension” section of Socratic Seminar: Classic Style.
- To increase scaffolding:
 - Allow pilots and co-pilots to switch roles at their own determined times.
 - Allow co-pilots to contribute ideas to the inner circle during the dialogue by writing their ideas on sticky notes and passing them to their pilots.
 - Have the pilots rotate two spots during a stop-over, for a new flight crew and a different perspective.
- To integrate technology, allow co-pilots to text directly to their pilots, using cell phones.