

MASTERPOINT CURRICULUM

# TRAIL GUIDE TREK SUPPORT

# WEEK \_\_\_\_\_ PLANNING SHEET

| MATHEMATICS | LANGUAGE   | SCIENCE |
|-------------|------------|---------|
|             |            |         |
| PHILOSOPHY  | LITERATURE | HISTORY |
|             |            |         |

# DISCUSSION TOOLS

## Leading Discussions

During Socratic questioning, the Guide is a model of critical thinking who respects students' viewpoints, probes their understanding, and shows genuine interest in their thinking.

- Plan significant questions that provide structure and direction to the lesson
- Phrase the questions clearly and specifically
- Keep the discussion focused
- Follow up on student responses and invite elaboration
- Stimulate the discussion with probing questions
- Periodically summarize (e.g. on board) what has been discussed
- Draw as many students as possible into the discussion
- Do not pose yes/no questions as they do little to promote thinking or encourage discussion
- Do not pose questions that are vague, ambiguous, or beyond the level of the student

## Question Preparation

Different types of questions can be prepared for class discussions.

- World Connection Question: Connects text to the real world. *Example: If you were given only 24-hours to pack your most precious belongings in a back pack and get ready to leave your hometown, what might you pack?*
- Close-Ended Question :Allows everyone in the class to come to a shared definition. This is usually about the "correct" answer. *Example: What happened to Hester Prynne's husband that she was left alone in Boston without family?*
- Open-Ended Question: An insightful question that will require proof, group discussion and logic to discover or explore the answer. *Example: Why did Gene hesitate to reveal the truth about the accident to Finny the first day in the infirmary?*
- Universal Theme / Core Question: Deals with the themes of the text/topic that will encourage group discussion about the universality of the text. *Example: After reading John Gardner's Grendel, can you pick out its essential elements?*
- Literary Analysis Question: Explores the HOW of a specific piece. How did the author choose to compose the piece? How did they manipulate point of view, characterization, poetic form, archetypes, etc.? *Example: In Mama Flora's Family, why is it important that the story is told through flashback?*

# COMMON TOPICS

Definition ♦ Comparison ♦ Relationship ♦ Circumstance ♦ Testimony

## DEFINITION

What is \_\_\_\_\_?  
What is \_\_\_\_\_ not?  
Is this \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_?  
To what group does \_\_\_\_\_ belong?  
How can \_\_\_\_\_ be broken down into parts?  
What are the essential qualities \_\_\_\_\_?  
What are the characteristics of \_\_\_\_\_?  
What are the stages of \_\_\_\_\_?

## COMPARISON

How is \_\_\_\_\_ similar to \_\_\_\_\_?  
How is \_\_\_\_\_ different from \_\_\_\_\_? (Term A from B?)  
How is \_\_\_\_\_ different from \_\_\_\_\_? (Term A from B?)  
To what degree is \_\_\_\_\_ similar to/different from \_\_\_\_\_?  
Is \_\_\_\_\_ better/worse than \_\_\_\_\_?  
Is a \_\_\_\_\_ more or less \_\_\_\_\_ than \_\_\_\_\_?

## RELATIONSHIP

Did \_\_\_\_\_ cause \_\_\_\_\_?  
What will happen if \_\_\_\_\_?  
If \_\_\_\_\_ is true, what cannot be true?  
Are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ mutually exclusive, or can they coexist?

## CIRCUMSTANCE

Is it possible or impossible to \_\_\_\_\_?  
What might prevent us from \_\_\_\_\_?  
Do we know for sure that \_\_\_\_\_?  
If we \_\_, can we be certain that \_\_\_\_\_?  
What else is going on at the same time?

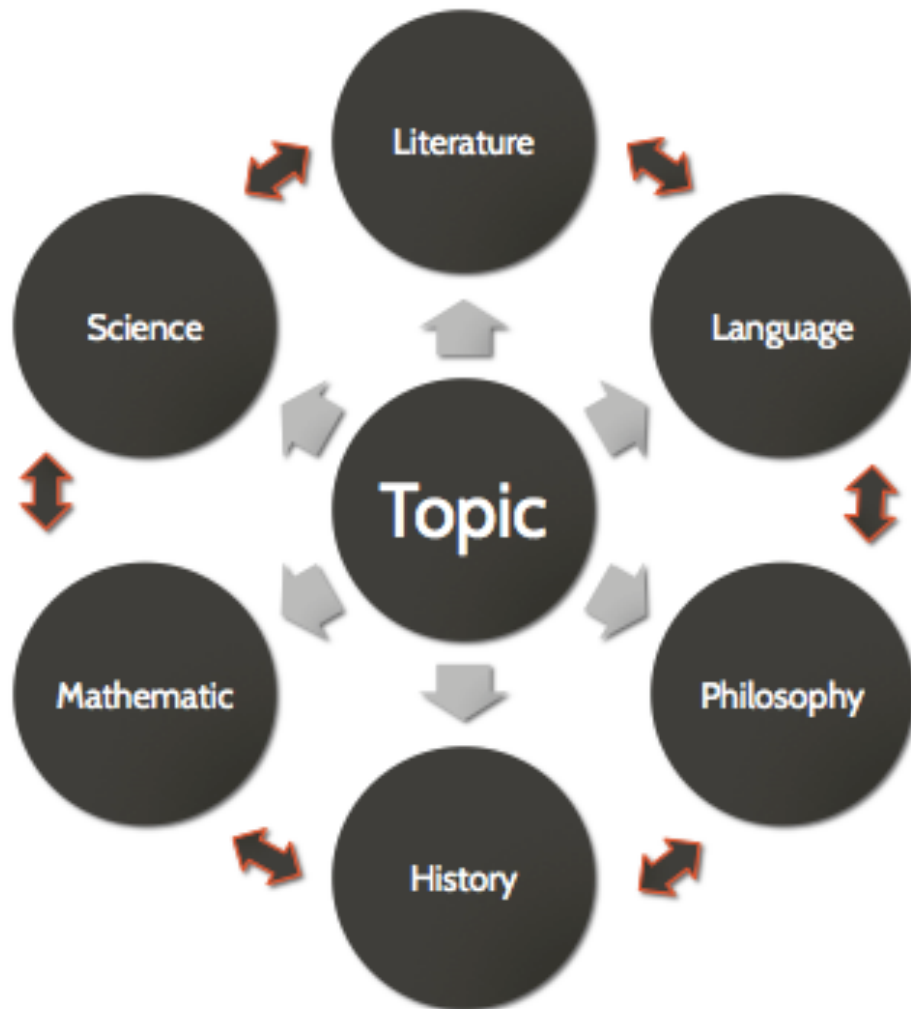
## TESTIMONY

On what type of testimony does this argument rely?  
What types of testimony are available on this topic? What are they?  
Should a \_\_\_\_\_ be considered an authority?  
What are this authority's biases? Do they invalidate this testimony?  
What does this testimony assume about the world? Is the assumption valid?  
How were the statistics gathered? Who gathered them?  
How recent are the statistics? How many cases were included?  
Should we trust majority opinion about \_\_\_\_\_?  
Do we know for sure that \_\_\_\_\_ is true?  
Is this example universally true or are there counter-examples?

# TOPIC WHEEL

The Topic Wheel is a tool to help students explore the interconnectedness of the subjects they study. It is simply one circle in the center with six more circles surrounding it. The idea is to provoke thought by having the group brainstorm about what different subjects have in common with the central item.

To use: Place a topic in the center of the wheel and then identify the ways that topic appears in the outer circle subjects.



# SOCRATIC CIRCLES

## 5 Steps in Using Socratic Circles

1. Choose a Text from the Coursework.
2. Let Students Prepare. Giving students time to prepare allows them to avoid spending the time searching for “that one spot” in the novel rather than actually discussing. The best discussions are when students feel confident and allowing them to prepare enhances their participation.
3. Give Students Questions. Offer the students 4 – 6 questions to prepare and plan for 2 – 3 questions to discuss in class. The additional questions can be used as a group discussion to warm the waters.
4. Set up Inner and Outer Circles. Divide students into two groups and create an inner and outer circle. The inner circle will be the speakers who discuss the questions. The outer circle will be the recorders who silently record notes on the inner circle discussion. After a certain amount of time, the outer circle provides feedback and then the participants switch roles.
5. Don't Jump In. Even if the students miss an important detail or come to an illogical conclusion, let it happen. The Guide is merely a facilitator in this discussion. Don't be scared of silence. Your role is to introduce the questions and let students know when to wrap up the discussion. Your role is NOT to add your own thoughts – it is a student-led learning method.

## Role Expectations

### Inner Circle Participants

Is the comment supported by the text? Where in the text does it show \_\_\_\_?

Is this what you meant when you said \_\_\_\_?

What do you think the author was trying to say with \_\_\_\_?

How does your comment relate to the question?

### Outer Circle Recorders

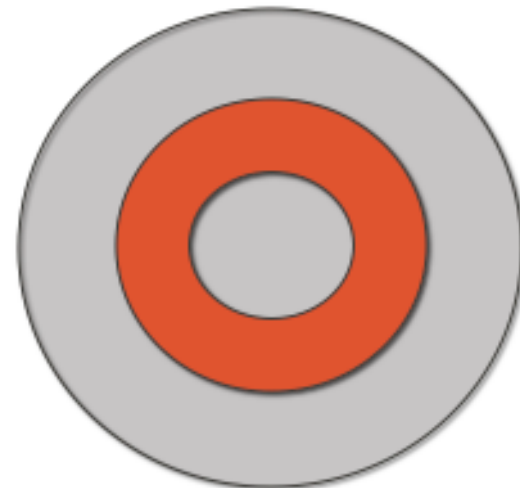
Do the speakers raise positive points?

Do the speakers offer evidence for support?

Do the speakers acknowledge others before raising their own issue?

Do the speakers dare to disagree?

Do the speakers participate evenly?



# WAYS TO EVALUATE SOCRATIC DISCUSSIONS

Did the student....

- Speak loudly and clearly?
- Cite reasons and evidence for their statements?
- Use the text to find support?
- Listen to others respectfully?
- Stick with the subject?
- Talk to each other, not just the Guide?
- Paraphrase accurately?
- Ask for clarification to clear up confusion?
- Support fellow students?
- Avoid hostile exchanges?
- Question others in a civil manner?
- Seem prepared?

# GAME IDEAS

**Casino.** Divide students into groups and give each a budget of, say, \$100 of mythical money. Explain they are going to bet their money to try to win more (establish a minimum bet). Write an incorrect sentence on the board, adapting the gravity of the error for your class's level, and make a bet. The groups who identify the error win, while those who didn't, lose their bet. Repeat several times.

**Draw Swords.** This quick fire game tests students' fine motor skills and promotes quick thinking, as well as generating some healthy competition. Split your class into small groups and choose a student from each group to start. The nominated student then places the dictionary or textbook under their arm. You then say a word or image that the students must then race to find in their book (like drawing a sword from under their arm!). The first student to find the word/image is the winner. The game continues with different words/images until every student has had a turn.

**First to the Front and Have You Ever.** This is a winner with kids and adults alike. Students start in a line at the back of the classroom and take one step forward for each question they answer correctly, sentence finished, or word guessed. The first to the front wins. You can also play a version of "Have you ever?" where students take a step forward for each thing they have done. ("Have you ever been to Africa, seen a dolphin, stayed awake all night, failed an exam, broken something valuable, etc.")

**Hangman.** A traditional but interactive game that improves students' spelling and subject knowledge but is also enjoyable. Divide your class into two teams then select a student to stand at the front of the class and think of a word related to the lesson (or you could give them a suitable word). The student must then draw spaces on the whiteboard to represent each letter in their word. The rest of the class then guesses the word, one letter at a time (allow one student from each team to guess alternately). Incorrect guesses result in a hangman being drawn (one line at a time). The first team to guess the word wins, unless the hangman is completed. The game then repeats with another student thinking of a relevant word.

**Pictionary, Charades, and Celebrity Heads.** Always classic, these games are versatile, let students practice specific vocabulary and expressions, and have the added bonus of encouraging a gleeful sort of atmosphere. Create a stack of words, phrases, concepts, or historical figures that your class has recently studied and try to mix levels amongst teams. You might like to experiment with playing as a whole class (where half competes against the other half) or in smaller groups with time limits.



**Puzzles.** This creative group game encourages students to work together and visualize academic concepts in an abstract way. Separate your class into groups (or simply use table groupings) then hand out a puzzle for each group to piece together. Puzzles could be images, words, calculations or concepts printed or stuck on card/paper and cut into random shapes (puzzle pieces) e.g. maths calculations, chemical equations, subject vocabulary, historical figures etc. *Alternative:* Students can create their own puzzles on the computer or drawn onto card/paper for their peers to complete.

**Taboo.** This is a great way to get students speaking and practice your unit's vocabulary. In Taboo, one student must communicate a concept or word to their partner without using a specific list of related words. For example, they must make their partner say "forest", yet they are not allowed to use the words "tree," "woods," "Sherwood," or "Black". Once their partner says the word, the students switch roles.

**Scategories.** Put up a simple table on the whiteboard with a different category in each column, for example: United States presidents, rivers, fruit, movie titles, boy's names, emotions, animals, cities. (Alter the categories for difficulty according to your class's level.) Randomly select a letter of the alphabet. Now, within a time limit groups or pairs of students must identify one example per category. The first group to correctly do so wins.