**Session Description:** The Socratic Seminar technique will be modeled, explained, and applied in this presentation. The main goal of Socratic Seminar is to build a deeper understanding of texts and ideas through collaborative dialogue in the classroom. Teachers become facilitators while the students take an active lead in constructing meaning and understanding. Students will build on one another's ideas, cite the text, ask questions, and voice their own opinions. “As a result, the school fulfills its primary purpose: preparing thoughtful citizens for active involvement in a democratic society” (Tredway 1995).

**English Language Arts Standards College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards:**

**Speaking and Listening:** Comprehension and Collaboration
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1
Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1.A
  Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1.B
  Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1.C
  Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1.D
  Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.6
Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

**Reading:** Key Ideas and Details
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1
Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text. **Writing:** Production and Distribution of Writing: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. W.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

I CANNOT TEACH ANYBODY ANYTHING.
I CAN ONLY MAKE THEM THINK. - Socrates
Rationale: “Seminars using Socratic dialogue are probably the best approach available for teaching all of the Language Arts skills described in the Common Core State Standards: reading, speaking and listening, and writing” (National Paideia Center). Socratic Seminars incorporate best practices in reading and writing that include inquiry based reading and writing, higher order thinking skills, collaboration, student ownership, diverse reading materials, respect for ideas, and the development of a community of readers, writers, and thinkers in the classroom.

Procedures:
1. **Text:** Students prepare for the seminar by closely reading and annotating the copy of the text the teacher has provided. Students will interact with the text by numbering the paragraphs, circling key terms, underlining important parts that are connected to the purpose for reading, writing their thoughts and questions.
2. **Questions:** Students can respond to open-ended questions to prepare and/or be assigned to write additional open-ended, higher-level questions.
3. **Leader:** Facilitates the discussion among participants (may start with a “whip around”), involves reluctant participants (“Academic Language Scripts”), encourages participants to use the text to support their responses, and asks questions to give direction to the seminar.
4. **Participants:** Guidelines for seminar behavior-
   - Speak clearly without raising hands
   - Listen carefully
   - Refer to the text to support ideas
   - Address comments to the group respectfully
   - Consider all viewpoints and ideas
   - Be responsible for your own learning
5. **Environment:** Arrange desks with an inner circle with about eight desks. Use name cards to encourage students to include others specifically by name/build on the ideas of other students.

   ➢ **Variations:** Fishbowl, Triad, or Simultaneous Seminars.
6. **Writing Assignments:** Students can further develop ideas they explored during the seminar with more thorough analysis, sophistication, and depth.

Resources: