

ANN SHEFFER: When I reflect on today's Socratic seminar, I feel that the students always amaze me, bringing up new ideas that I had not considered and really working with one another. If it had just been me questioning them, some of those great thoughts would've never come out. Our next steps would be to continue the conversation we had, share out some of their reflections, share out some of their writing that they're doing for tomorrow and to encourage them to continue to make connections to additional readings for the rest of the year. Assessing a Socratic seminar, I will use my map to see that everyone has participated. I will use their written piece as well. Even though we finished a unit, I want them to continue pondering it and seeing how one text connects to another, how it connects to History, Math, Science, and I want that to become a habit for them. Some scaffolds I provide to help students be successful in Socratic seminar are providing background vocabulary that they may be unfamiliar with, background information on the authors that we're studying, the time period in which the literature was written. We may also read some more complex text together. There's not one part of the Socratic discussion that does not align to our PA Common Core. They are reading, they are interacting the text fiction and non-fiction. They're speaking, they're listening and they're always writing at the end of a seminar. Once you realize that their opinions are deep and they're valid and they have a voice and something to say and you're willing to relinquish a little bit of that control, then you find Socratic discussion phenomenal for the students. It prepares them for every class. Socratic seminar.