

## Questioning Quick Reference Guide

**Factual (What is the author saying?):** Questions that only have one answer. It must be supported by the text. This is the lowest form of questioning but is important to understand key plot points. It does not necessarily need to be a simple answer.

Examples:

- *What is the name of Esperanza's sister?*
- *How does Esperanza meet Rachel and Lucy?*

**Interpretive (What does the author mean?):** Questions that have more than one answer that can be supported with evidence from the text. Interpretive questions keep discussions going and require the reader to refer back to the text.

- Character motivation (why a character does something). Use questions to discover reasons behind a character's statements, actions and/or thoughts.
  - *Example: Why does Esperanza compare herself and her friends to four skinny trees.*
- Interesting use of language. Develops discussions on how an author expresses an idea or creates a description.
  - *Example: Why does the author use vignettes to tell Esperanza's story*
- Key words to use in interpretive questions: how, where, why, and when.

**Evaluative (What do you think of the author's ideas?):** Questions that ask the reader to decide if s/he agrees with the writer's ideas or point of view of a character. The answer to an evaluative question depends on a reader's prior knowledge, experience, values, or opinions as well as his or her interpretation of the text.

- Do you think that it is realistic for Esperanza to achieve her dreams?
- How did the chapter Born Bad make you feel?

## GUIDELINES FOR SOCRATIC SEMINAR:

1. Only those in the circle should be speaking. Period.
2. Speak so all can hear you.
3. Listen closely.
4. Discuss with your peers, not with the teacher.
5. REFER TO THE TEXT
6. Ask for clarification. Don't stay confused.
7. Invite and allow others to speak.
8. Consider and respect all viewpoints and ideas.
9. Know that you are responsible for the quality of the seminar.

## WHAT DO I DO WHEN I'M...

### Speaking (inside the circle):

- Main goal: **meaningfully contribute** at least three times to the seminar. Here's a list of ways to meaningfully contribute.
  - o *Larry King*: Ask a question that generates sustained discussion.
  - o *Explorer*: Begin a new path or perspective (Everyone's been saying x, but have you considered y? OR That is one way to see it, but have your thought about...).
  - o *Sherlock Holmes*: We've overlooked something really **important clue** when discussing this issue (then point out and explain the clue/evidence).
  - o *Librarian*: Here's **another passage** that supports what you are saying (Read and connect the key passage).
  - o *Matchmaker*: What you are saying is a lot like what Sue said earlier... This **ties in** with the point Tim was making because...
  - o *Judge Judy*: Let's **pin down the argument** you guys are having and try to settle it...
  - o *Abraham Lincoln*: I **respectfully disagree** with what you are saying. Here's the way I see it...Let's talk it out.

### Listening (outside the circle):

- Main goal: **Reflect silently** on the conversation you are witnessing, pulling out as many insights as you can to strengthen and challenge your own viewpoint. As you witness the discussion, fill your journal for today up with insights, quotes, and questions.
  - o *Journalist*: **Summarize** important points briefly.
  - o *Map Maker*: Make a **visual chart** of discussion paths covered in the conversation, noting major "landmarks" and "twists and turns".
  - o *Shadow*: Listen and **observe** one (involved) person for a **fixed period** of time, noting their comments and behavior.
  - o *Referee*: **Judge** which "moves" in the discussion seem fair or foul (in terms of following the basic discussion guidelines) and what is said that seems out of bounds or that does not match with the discussion at hand (in terms of the discussion content).