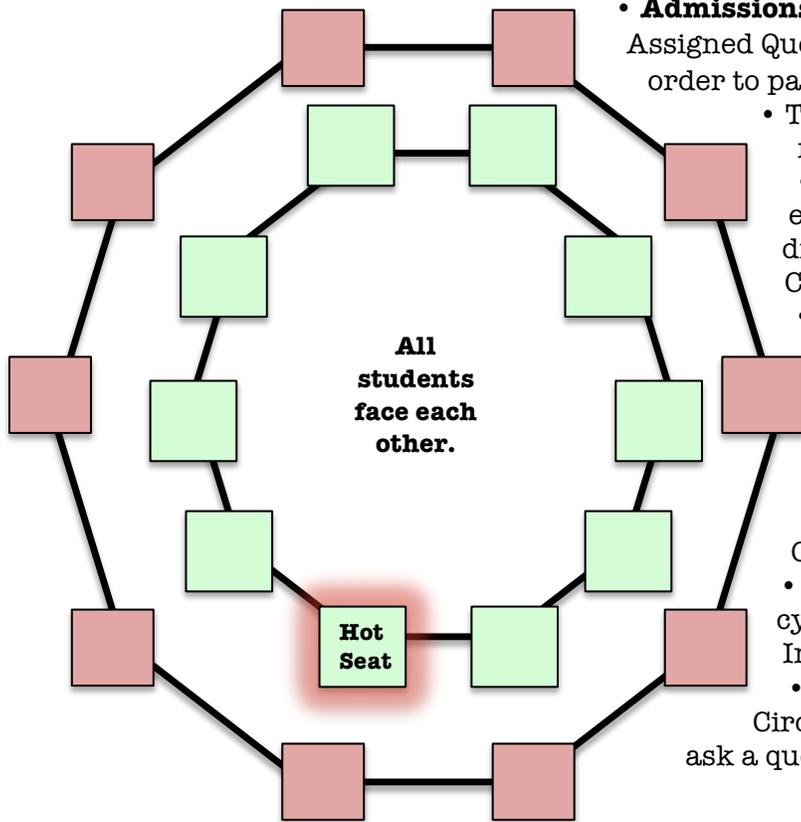


# Seating Tips for Inner / Outer Circle

(Teacher may assign circles).



• **Admissions Ticket:** Annotated Text and Assigned Questions. Students must bring **both** in order to participate in **either** circle.

- Teacher sits outside the circle, separate from class.
- Students seat themselves as they enter, each Outer Circle student directly behind and observing an Inner Circle student.
- Students in Inner Circle discuss their questions, with explicit textual reference.
  - Students in Outer Circle observe and take general notes, specifically targeting one Inner Circle student.
- No direct interaction between Inner Circle and Outer Circle.
- A major circle event goes through 2 cycles, so students participate in both Inner and Outer Circles.

• **Hot Seats:** Students from Outer Circle *may* move into to make a comment, ask a question, or settle a heated debate.

## Inner Circle:

- Serves as the discussion panel for student-generated questions
- May take notes, but not required
- Each member should provide at least **two (2) quality responses fully supported by textual evidence**
- No moderator, no hands raised – listen and “jump in” respectfully
- Follows rules of courteous discussion
- May ask questions of each other only
- No “yes” or “no” questions allowed
- No interactions with Outer Circle or teacher

## Outer Circle

- Listen/take notes
- Write down everything your Target (person you are responsible for documenting) says
- No interaction with Inner Circle or teacher
- May not respond to the Inner Circle discussion
- Ways to engage the Outer Circle –
  - Write down your favorite question from the discussion and explain what you liked about it?
  - Describe the answer that you thought was most balanced between evidence and commentary.
  - Write an answer that you would have liked to discuss if you had been part of the Inner Circle.
  - Write a better answer to one of the discussion questions that you felt was not discussed enough.

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_  
Subject of Discussion \_\_\_\_\_

## Admission Ticket + Annotated Text

**Grading:** This graded seminar will be worth \_\_\_\_\_ points: one-third for your written questions and answers, one-third for your discussion in the Inner Circle, and one-third for your notes in the Outer Circle.

**Earn positive points for:**

- Good thought questions (5)
- Each relevant comment (1)
- Evidence from the reading (2)
- Bringing others into the discussion (2)
- Recognizing contradictions (2)
- Asking clarifying questions (1)

**Avoid negative points for:**

- Not paying attention (-2)
- Distracting others (-2)
- Interrupting (-2)
- Irrelevant comments (-2)
- Monopolizing the conversation (-3)
- Personal attacks (-3)

### Inner Circle

Write three questions **YOU** can ask when you are in the Inner Circle

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Outer Circle

**Target** \_\_\_\_\_

(Full Documentation in space below or on the back of the page)

**Final Analysis:** What question did you want asked that wasn't asked?

## Inner/Outer Circle Discussion

Half the class will discuss (be in the inner circle) in **Round One** — first come, first served; the other half will complete the discussion in **Round Two**. Then switch places. Here are your responsibilities:

### Outer Circle: Note-taking

- Sketch a seating chart of the inner circle so you can record “tick marks” whenever anyone contributes to the discussion.
- You are silent but “talking back” by taking notes.
- When do you think inner circle “sparked”? How did that happen?
- Track the person most directly in front of you. Note precise questions and contributions. Did she contribute well (not dominate nor duck discussion)? Explain.
- To what idea were you dying to respond? What would you have said?
- What was the single most important idea that was discussed? Why?
- What was the single most important idea that didn’t get discussed? Why?
- What could have made the discussion even more constructive?

### Inner Circle: Text-based Support

- You engage in discussion, actively participating but not dominating. (Silence = consent, and, oh yeah, a big red F for feckless, fearful, fatuous.)
- You read aloud excerpts of the text to support or make a point, drawing our attention to the words the author chose to use (diction).
- Listen to each other carefully.
- Look the speaker in the eye (eyes, shoulders, knees, toes!).
- Do not interrupt.
- Use each other’s names. “What John said about ...”
- Paraphrase what the speaker before you has said so that you can respond responsibly. Support or refute the prior speaker’s ideas.
- Stick to the text. Your point or opinion only matters if you can “back your smack.”
- If you are confused about another’s point, question her.
- Attack ideas not people. It is the dialectic, the debate, that makes us all smarter bunnies. Changing your mind means your mind was open: “The mind is like an umbrella. They both work best when open!”

**Rules:** You must have an annotated text to participate. No annotation, no ticket into the circle. You must also come to class with six (or more) deep, perceptive questions; you will show an index card with at least **two** questions at each of the following **three** levels:

#### Level One – Literal – Factual

- Level One questions can be answered explicitly by using facts in the text or easily accessible information in other texts. They are fact-based.
- Good answers lead to an accurate and complete summary of text.

“If it’s a Level One question, you can literally put your finger on the answer in the text.”

#### Level Two – Interpretive - Inferential

- Level Two questions are textually implicit, requiring analyzing or interpreting specific parts of the text. They are inference-based. You must read between the lines for the answers.
- Good answers lead to an identification of the significant patterns.

“If it’s a Level Two question, you can put your finger on the evidence to support your answer.”

#### Level Three – Experiential - Connecting

- Level Three questions are open-ended and go beyond the text. Bring your own personal experience into the discussion in addition to evidence from the text. These questions will provoke discussion of an abstract idea or issue.
- Good answers lead to an appreciation of the text and further discussion.

“You don’t have to have read the piece to answer a Level Three question, but it helps.”

## Inner/Outer Circle Discussion

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Inner:    **Round 1**    **Round 2**

Outer:    **Round 1**    **Round 2**

<b>TASK</b>	<b>Maximum Points</b>	<b>Earned Points</b>
<b>Preparation (Annotated Text &amp; Card with at least 6 questions)</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>Note-taking (jot notes while in outer circle)</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>Participation (which seeks insight beyond the superficial; half inner, half outer)</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>Textual Understanding (quality, text-dependent responses show depth and complexity of thought)</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>Active Listening (connects positively with speakers)</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>Good Thinking (evidence, evidence, evidence)</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>Sensitivity / Good Manners (you know)</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>Serendipity (possible extra credit)</b>		
<b>TOTAL GRADE</b>	<b>50</b>	

### Scoring:

- ⇒ **Preparation: /10 points** (marked text, prepared questions, notes)
- ⇒ **Note-taking: /10 points** (written notes turned in, as taken while observing in outer circle)
- ⇒ **Participation: /10 points** (responds and contributes – verbal for inner, written for outer)
- ⇒ **Textual Understanding: /5** (gets it or at least knows the right questions to ask to get it)
- ⇒ **Active Listening: /5** (accurately paraphrases, questions, supports, disagrees, defends – verbal for inner, written for outer)
- ⇒ **Good Thinking: /5** (makes clear distinctions between *assumptions* and *conclusions* or *evidence* and *arguments*)
- ⇒ **Sensitivity / Good Manners: /5** (attacks ideas not people; graciously accepts criticism)

\_\_\_\_\_ /50 Grade \_\_\_\_\_