

Welcome to the Socratic Seminar Intermediate Level 2 Workshop!

I have planned an exciting and challenging day for you. Here are some of the materials for you to review. This notebook includes:

- (1) Workshop Schedule
- (2) Elements of Socratic Seminars
- (3) Daily Seminar Texts:

Main Seminar Texts: *From The Prince by Niccolo Machiavelli*
From The Manual by Epictetus

Micro-Seminar Texts: *Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad* by Ann Petry
The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein
United States. Preamble and First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
"The Evolution of the Grocery Bag." by Henry Petroski
From Fish to Infinity, Chapter 1, By Steven Strogatz
Prologue, Romeo & Juliet, by William Shakespeare
The Statue of Liberty
Aesop's Fables

Seminar Texts: The enclosed readings are the heart of our day of seminars; these texts provide the common ground for our conversations. Please read each text carefully *in advance*. Seminar leaders often suggest reading the text *as if it were a love letter*. Extensive familiarity with the text is your “ticket” to join the Socratic dialogue.

Micro Seminars: You will have the opportunity in the afternoon to practice leading seminars in a small group.

Writing and Reflection: Although the Socratic Seminar is essentially a discourse approach to learning, the workshop also emphasizes the use of writing and reflection as additional tools for encouraging thoughtfulness in school programs.

SOCRATIC SEMINARS INTERNATIONAL

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Socratic Seminar Leadership Training Workshop

Today's Schedule

Time	Activities
8:00 a.m.	Main Seminar: From <i>The Prince</i> by Niccolo Machiavelli & From <i>The Manual</i> by Epictetus
10:00 a.m.	Seminar Critique/Reflection
10:30 a.m.	Break
10:45 a.m.	Assessment
11:45 p.m.	Lunch
12:45 p.m.	Leading Seminars
1:30 p.m.	Micro-Seminars
2:30 p.m.	Socratic Seminars & Academic Writing
2:50 p.m.	Reflection/Debrief
3:00 p.m.	Adjourn

Notes:

1. Prepare for each seminar by reading the text *as you would read a love letter*.
2. Be ready to start at 8:00 a.m. and again at 12:45 p.m. We keep a tight schedule.
3. Expect few lectures, only learning by doing

Oscar Graybill, M.Ed

Oscar has a wealth of experience and expertise in instructional strategies and professional development. A former San Diego City Schools' EXCEL Outstanding Teacher and former California Mentor Teacher, Oscar's 30 years as a high school English teacher in California and in Washington State taught him well what teachers want and need to improve their practice. Oscar's participation on the Washington State Commission on Student Learning where he helped author the original Essential Learnings in Writing provides him with an understanding of educational standards that few have experienced.

As Director of Socratic Seminars International, Oscar knows how to train and coach teachers well. His trainings receive high marks from teachers. As former Director of Teaching and Learning for Walla Walla Public Schools, he understands the goals of schools and districts in providing outstanding professional development opportunities that address student engagement and critical thinking. Oscar's recent work with Dialogue Facilitation and Professional Learning Communities helps schools and districts create the positive culture needed to transform teaching practices for all students.

ELEMENTS OF A SOCRATIC SEMINAR

Socrates believed that enabling students to think for themselves was more important than filling their heads with "right" answers. In a Socratic Seminar, participants seek deeper understanding of complex ideas through rigorously thoughtful dialogue, rather than by memorizing bits of information or meeting arbitrary demands for 'coverage.'

A Socratic Seminar fosters active learning as participants explore and evaluate the ideas, issues, and values in a particular text. A good seminar consists of four interdependent elements: (1) the text being considered, (2) the questions raised, (3) the seminar leader, and (4) the participants. A closer look at each of these elements helps explain the unique character of a Socratic Seminar.

THE TEXT Socratic Seminar texts are chosen for their richness in ideas, issues, and values and their ability to stimulate extended, thoughtful dialogue. A seminar text can be drawn from readings in literature, history, science, math, health, and philosophy or from works of art or music. A good text raises important questions in the participants' minds, questions for which there are no right or wrong answers. At the end of a successful Socratic Seminar, participants often leave with more questions than they brought with them.

THE QUESTION A Socratic Seminar opens with a question either posed by the leader or solicited from participants as they acquire more experience in seminars. An opening question has no right answer; instead it reflects a genuine curiosity on the part of the questioner. A good opening question leads participants back to the text as they speculate, evaluate, define, and clarify the issues involved. Responses to the opening question generate new questions from the leader and participants, leading to new responses. In this way, the line of inquiry in a Socratic Seminar evolves on the spot rather than being predetermined by the leader.

THE LEADER In a Socratic Seminar, the leader plays a dual role as leader and participant. The seminar leader consciously demonstrates habits of mind that lead to a thoughtful exploration of the ideas in the text by keeping the discussion focused on the text, asking follow-up questions, helping participants clarify their positions when arguments become confused, and involving reluctant participants while restraining their more vocal peers.

As a seminar participant, the leader actively engages in the group's exploration of the text. To do this effectively, the leader must know the text well enough to anticipate varied interpretations and recognize important possibilities in each. The leader must also be patient enough to allow participants' understandings to evolve and be willing to help participants explore non-traditional insights and unexpected interpretations.

Assuming this dual role of leader and participant is easier if the opening question is one which truly interests the leader as well as the participants.

THE PARTICIPANTS In a Socratic Seminar, participants share with the leader the responsibility for the quality of the seminar. Good seminars occur when participants study the text closely in advance, listen actively, share their ideas and questions in response to the ideas and questions of others, and search for evidence in the text to support their ideas.

Participants acquire good seminar behaviors through participating in seminars and reflecting on them afterward. After each seminar, the leader and participants discuss the experience and identify ways of improving the next seminar. Before each new seminar, the leader also offers coaching and practice in specific habits of mind that improve reading, thinking, and discussing. Eventually, when participants realize that the leader is not looking for right answers, but is encouraging them to think out loud and to exchange ideas openly, they discover the excitement of exploring important issues through shared inquiry. This excitement creates willing participants, eager to examine ideas in a rigorous, thoughtful manner.

CHAPTER XVII — CONCERNING CRUELTY AND CLEMENCY, AND WHETHER IT IS BETTER TO BE LOVED
THAN FEARED

Coming now to the other qualities mentioned above, I say that every prince ought to desire to be considered clement and not cruel. Nevertheless he ought to take care not to misuse this clemency.... Therefore a prince, so long as he keeps his subjects united and loyal, ought not to mind the reproach of cruelty; because with a few examples he will be more merciful than those who, through too much mercy, allow disorders to arise, from which follow murders or robberies; for these are wont to injure the whole people, whilst those executions which originate with a prince offend the individual only.

And of all princes, it is impossible for the new prince to avoid the imputation of cruelty, owing to new states being full of dangers...

Nevertheless he ought to be slow to believe and to act, nor should he himself show fear, but proceed in a temperate manner with prudence and humanity, so that too much confidence may not make him incautious and too much distrust render him intolerable.

Upon this a question arises: whether it be better to be loved than feared or feared than loved? It may be answered that one should wish to be both, but, because it is difficult to unite them in one person, it is much safer to be feared than loved, when, of the two, either must be dispensed with. Because this is to be asserted in general of men, that they are ungrateful, fickle, false, cowardly, covetous, and as long as you succeed they are yours entirely; they will offer you their blood, property, life, and children, as is said above, when the need is far distant; but when it approaches they turn against you. And that prince who, relying entirely on their promises, has neglected other precautions, is ruined; because friendships that are obtained by payments, and not by greatness or nobility of mind, may indeed be earned, but they are not secured, and in time of need cannot be relied upon; and men have less scruple in offending one who is beloved than one who is feared, for love is preserved by the link of obligation which, owing to the baseness of men, is broken at every opportunity for their advantage; but fear preserves you by a dread of punishment which never fails.

Nevertheless a prince ought to inspire fear in such a way that, if he does not win love, he avoids hatred; because he can endure very well being feared whilst he is not hated, which will always be as long as he abstains from the property of his citizens and subjects and from their women. But when it is necessary for him to proceed against the life of someone, he must do it on proper justification and for manifest cause, but above all things he must keep his hands off the property of others, because men more quickly forget the death of their father than the loss of their patrimony. Besides, pretexts for taking away the property are never wanting; for he who has once begun to live by robbery will always find pretexts for seizing what belongs to others; but reasons for taking life, on the contrary, are more difficult to find and sooner lapse. But when a prince is with his army, and has under control a multitude of soldiers, then it is quite necessary for him to disregard the reputation of cruelty, for without it he would never hold his army united or disposed to its duties....

Returning to the question of being feared or loved, I come to the conclusion that, men loving according to their own will and fearing according to that of the prince, a wise prince should establish himself on that which is in his own control and not in that of others; he must endeavour only to avoid hatred, as is noted.

From The Manual by Epictetus

A lame ex-slave, Epictetus lived from about 50 to 130 A.D. He was a standard bearer of the Stoic tradition, which dates from around 300 B.C. and nominates Socrates and the Cynic Diogenes as its ancestors. Epictetus published nothing himself; fortunately, he had a pupil who took good notes, and we have not only The Manual but also the much longer Moral Discourses. The Manual is the short version of what Epictetus taught, a Cliff's Notes of Stoic principles.

Of all existing things some are in our power, and others are not in our power. In our power are thought, impulse, will to get and will to avoid, and, in a word, everything which is our own doing. Things not in our power include the body, property, reputation, office, and, in a word, everything which is not our own doing. Things in our power are by nature free, unhindered, untrammelled; things not in our power are weak, servile, subject to hindrance, dependent on others. Remember then that if you imagine that what is naturally slavish is free, and what is naturally another's is your own, you will be hampered, you will mourn, you will be put to confusion, you will blame gods and men; but if you think that only your own belongs to you, and that what is another's is indeed another's, no one will ever put compulsion or hindrance on you, you will blame none, you will accuse none, you will do nothing against your will, no one will harm you, you will have no enemy, for no harm can touch you.

Aiming then at these high matters, you must remember that to attain them requires more than ordinary effort; you will have to give up some things entirely, and put off others for the moment. And if you would have these also—office and wealth—it may be that you will fail to get them, just because your desire is set on the former, and you will certainly fail to attain those things which alone bring freedom and happiness.

Make it your study then to confront every harsh impression with the words, 'You are but an impression, and not at all what you seem to be'. Then test it by those rules that you possess; and first by this—the chief test of all—'Is it concerned with what is in our power or with what is not in our power?' And if it is concerned with what is not in our power, be ready with the answer that it is nothing to you.

Petry, Ann. *Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad*. New York: HarperCollins, 1983. (1955)
 From Chapter 3: "Six Years Old"

By the time Harriet Ross was six years old, she had unconsciously absorbed many kinds of knowledge, almost with the air she breathed. She could not, for example, have said how or at what moment she knew that she was a slave.

- 5 She knew that her brothers and sisters, her father and mother, and all the other people who lived in the quarter, men, women and children were slaves.

She had been taught to say, "Yes, Missus," "No, Missus," to white women, "Yes, Mas'r," "No, Mas'r" to white men. Or, "Yes, sah," "No, sah."

10

At the same time someone had taught her where to look for the North Star, the star that stayed constant, not rising in the east and setting in the west as the other stars appeared to do; and told her that anyone walking toward the North could use that star as a guide.

- 15 She knew about fear, too. Sometimes at night, or during the day, she heard the furious galloping of horses, not just one horse, several horses, thud of the hoofbeats along the road, jingle of harness. She saw the grown folks freeze into stillness, not moving, scarcely breathing, while they listened. She could not remember who first told her that those furious hoofbeats meant that patrollers were going in pursuit of a runaway. Only the slaves said pateroliers, whispering the
- 20 word.

The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein

Once there was a tree ... and she loved a little boy. And every day the boy would come and he would gather her leaves and make them into crowns and play king of the forest. He would climb up her trunk and swing from her branches and eat apples.

5 And they would play hide-and-go-seek.
And when he was tired, he would sleep in her shade.
And the boy loved the tree ... very much.
And the tree was happy.
But the time went by.

10 And the boy grew older.
And the tree was often alone.

Then one day the boy came to the tree and the tree said,
"Come, Boy, come and climb up my trunk and swing from my branches and eat apples and play
15 in my shade and be happy."

"I am too big to climb and play," said the boy. "I want to buy things and have fun. I want some money. Can you give me some money?"

"I'm sorry," said the tree, "but I have no money. I have only leaves and apples. Take my apples, Boy, and sell them in the city.

20 Then you will have money and you will be happy."
And so the boy climbed up the tree and gathered her apples and carried them away.
And the tree was happy.

But the boy stayed away for a long time ... and the tree was sad.

And then one day the boy came back and the tree shook with joy and she said, "Come, Boy,
25 climb up my trunk and swing from my branches and be happy."

"I am too busy to climb trees," said the boy. "I want a house to keep me warm," he said. "I want a wife and I want children, and so I need a house. Can you give me a house?"

"I have no house," said the tree. "The forest is my house, but you may cut off my branches and build a house. Then you will be happy."

30 And so the boy cut off her branches and carried them away to build his house.

And the tree was happy.

But the boy stayed away for a long time. And when he came back, the tree was so happy she could hardly speak.

"Come, Boy," she whispered, "come and play."

35 "I am too old and sad to play," said the boy. "I want a boat that will take me far away from here.

Can you give me a boat?"

"Cut down my trunk and make a boat," said the tree. "Then you can sail away ... and be happy."

And so the boy cut down her trunk and made a boat and sailed away.

And the tree was happy ... but not really.

40 And after a long time the boy came back again.

"I am sorry, Boy," said the tree, "but I have nothing left to give you -- My apples are gone."

"My teeth are too weak for apples," said the boy.

"My branches are gone," said the tree. "You cannot swing on them."

"I am too old to swing on branches," said the boy.

45 "My trunk is gone," said the tree. "You cannot climb—"

"I am too tired to climb," said the boy.

"I am sorry, sighed the tree. "I wish that I could give you

Something...but I have nothing left. I am just an old stump. I am sorry...."

"I don't need very much now," said the boy, "just a quiet place to sit and rest. I am very tired."

50 "Well," said the tree, straightening herself up as much as

she could, "well, an old stump is good for sitting and resting.

Come, Boy, sit down. Sit down and rest." And the boy did. And the tree was happy.

**United States. Preamble and First Amendment to the United States Constitution.
(1787, 1791)**

Preamble

We, the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution of the United States of America.

Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

*Petroski, Henry. "The Evolution of the Grocery Bag."
American Scholar 72.4 (Autumn 2003). (2003)*

That much-reviled bottleneck known as the American supermarket checkout lane would be an even greater exercise in frustration were it not for several technological advances. The Universal Product Code and the decoding laser scanner, introduced in 1974, tally a shopper's groceries far more quickly and accurately than the old method of inputting each purchase manually into a cash register. But beeping a
5 large order past the scanner would have led only to a faster pileup of cans and boxes down the line, where the bagger works, had it not been for the introduction, more than a century earlier, of an even greater technological masterpiece: the square-bottomed paper bag.

The geometry of paper bags continues to hold a magical appeal for those of us who are fascinated by how ordinary things are designed and made. Originally, grocery bags were created on demand by storekeepers,
10 who cut, folded, and pasted sheets of paper, making versatile containers into which purchases could be loaded for carrying home. The first paper bags manufactured commercially are said to have been made in Bristol, England, in the 1840s. In 1852, a "Machine for Making Bags of Paper" was patented in America by Francis Wolle, of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. According to Wolle's own description of the machine's operation, "pieces of paper of suitable length are given out from a roll of the required width, cut off from
15 the roll and otherwise suitably cut to the required shape, folded, their edges pasted and lapped, and formed into complete and perfect bags." The "perfect bags" produced at the rate of eighteen hundred per hour by Wolle's machine were, of course, not perfect, nor was his machine. The history of design has yet to see the development of a perfect object, though it has seen many satisfactory ones and many substantially improved ones. The concept of comparative improvement is embedded in the paradigm for invention, the
20 better mousetrap. No one is ever likely to lay claim to a "best" mousetrap, for that would preclude the inventor himself from coming up with a still better mousetrap without suffering the embarrassment of having previously declared the search complete. As with the mousetrap, so with the bag.

From Fish to Infinity

By Steven Strogatz

The Joy of X (Chapter 1)

The best introduction to numbers I've ever seen—the clearest and funniest explanation of what they are and why we need them—appears in a Sesame Street video called 123 Count with Me. Humphrey, an amiable but dimwitted fellow with pink fur and a green nose, is working the lunch shift at the Furry Arms Hotel when he takes a call from a roomful of penguins. Humphrey listens carefully and then calls out their order to the kitchen: "Fish, fish, fish, fish, fish, fish." This prompts Ernie to enlighten him about the virtues of the number six.

Children learn from this that numbers are wonderful shortcuts. Instead of saying the word "fish" exactly as many times as there are penguins, Humphrey could use the more powerful concept of six.

As adults, however, we might notice a potential downside to numbers. Sure, they are great timesavers, but at a serious cost in abstraction. Six is more ethereal than six fish, precisely because it's more general. It applies to six of anything: six plates, six penguins, six utterances of the word "fish." It's the ineffable thing they all have in common.

Viewed in this light, numbers start to seem a bit mysterious. They apparently exist in some sort of Platonic realm, a level above reality. In that respect they are more like other lofty concepts (e.g., truth and justice), and less like the ordinary objects of daily life. Their philosophical status becomes even murkier upon further reflection. Where exactly do numbers come from? Did humanity invent them? Or discover them?

An additional subtlety is that numbers (and all mathematical ideas, for that matter) have lives of their own. We can't control them. Even though they exist in our minds, once we decide what we mean by them we have no say in how they behave. They obey certain laws and have certain properties, personalities, and ways of combining with one another, and there's nothing we can do about it except watch and try to understand. In that sense they are eerily reminiscent of atoms and stars, the things of this world, which are likewise subject to laws beyond our control ... except that those things exist outside our heads.

This dual aspect of numbers - as part heaven, part earth is perhaps their most paradoxical feature, and the feature that makes them so useful. It is what the physicist Eugene Wigner had in mind when he wrote of "the unreasonable effectiveness of mathematics in the natural sciences."

In case it's not clear what I mean about the lives of numbers and their uncontrollable behavior, let's go back to the Furry Arms. Suppose that before Humphrey puts in the penguins' order, he suddenly gets a call on another line from a room occupied by the same number of penguins, all of them also clamoring for fish. After taking both calls, what should Humphrey yell out to the kitchen? If he hasn't learned anything, he could shout "fish" once for each penguin. Or, using his numbers, he could tell the cook he needs six orders of fish for the first room and six more for the second room. But what he really needs is a new concept: addition. Once he's mastered it, he'll proudly say he needs six plus six (or, if he's a showoff, twelve) fish.

The creative process here is the same as the one that gave us numbers in the first place. Just as numbers are a shortcut for counting by ones, addition is a shortcut for counting by any amount. This is how mathematics grows. The right abstraction leads to new insight, and new power.

Before long, even Humphrey might realize he can keep counting forever.

Yet despite this infinite vista, there are always constraints on our creativity. We can decide what we mean by things like 6 and +, but once we do, the results of expressions like $6 + 6$ are beyond our control. Logic leaves us no choice. In that sense, math always involves both invention and discovery: we invent the concepts but discover their consequences. As we'll see in the coming chapters, in mathematics our freedom lies in the questions we ask—and in how we pursue them—but not in the answers awaiting us.

Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare

PROLOGUE

1 Two households, both alike in dignity,
2 In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
3 From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
4 Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
5 From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
6 A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;
7 Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
8 Do with their death bury their parents' strife.
9 The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,
10 And the continuance of their parents' rage,
11 Which, but their children's end, nought could remove,
12 Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;
13 The which if you with patient ears attend,
14 What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend

The Statue of Liberty



AESOP'S FABLES – A

I
THE COCK AND THE PEARL

A Cock was once strutting up and down the farmyard among the hens when suddenly he espied something shining amid the straw. "Ho! Ho!" said he, "that's for me", and soon rooted it out from beneath the straw. What did it turn out to be but a pearl that by some chance had been lost in the yard? "You may be a treasure," said the cock, "to men that prize you, but I would rather have a single barley-corn than a peck of pearls."

II
THE WOLF AND THE LAMB

Once upon a time a Wolf was lapping at a spring on a hillside, when, looking up, what should he see but a lamb just beginning to drink a little lower down. "There's my supper," thought he, "if only I can find some excuse to seize it." Then he called out to the Lamb, "How dare you muddle the water from which I am drinking?"

"Nay, master, nay," said Lambikin; "if the water be muddy up there, I cannot be the cause of it, for it runs down from you to me."

"Well, then," said the Wolf, "why did you call me bad names this time last year?"

"That cannot be," said the Lamb; "I am only six months old."

"I don't care," snarled the Wolf; "if it was not you it was your father;" and with that he rushed upon the poor little Lamb and—

warra warra warra warra warra—

ate her all up. But before she died she gasped out—

VII
THE FOX AND THE CROW

A Fox once saw a Crow fly off with a piece of cheese in its beak and settle on a branch of a tree. "That's for me, as I am a Fox," said Master Reynard, and he walked up to the foot of the tree. "Good-day, Mistress Crow," he cried. "How well you are looking today: how glossy your feathers; how bright your eye. I feel sure your voice must surpass that of other birds, just as your figure does; let me hear but one song from you that I may greet you as the Queen of Birds." The Crow lifted up her head and began to caw her best, but the moment she opened her mouth the piece of cheese fell to the ground, only to be snapped up by Master Fox. "That will do," said he. "That was all I wanted. In exchange for your cheese I will give you a piece of advice for the future—

VIII
THE SICK LION

A Lion had come to the end of his days and lay sick unto death at the mouth of his cave, gasping for breath. The animals, his subjects, came round him and drew nearer as he grew more and more helpless. When they saw him on the point of death they thought to themselves: "Now is the time to payoff old grudges." So the Boar came up and drove at him with his tusks; then a Bull gored him with his horns; still the Lion lay helpless before them: so the Ass, feeling quite safe from danger, came up, and turning his tail to the Lion kicked up his heels into his face. "This is a double death," growled the Lion.