

Preseminar

1. Build background for the text.
2. You may choose to give the text to students prior to the seminar, especially if it is complex.
3. Create or review ground rules for discussion.

Sample Ground Rules

- Only one person may speak at a time.
 - It is not necessary to raise your hand; simply wait until someone has finished speaking before you begin speaking.
 - Speak at least three times, but don't dominate.
 - Listen closely to all comments.
 - Make notes of your own thoughts and others' comments.
 - Ask questions.
 - Be respectful when commenting or responding to someone, even if you disagree.
 - Refer to the text when you speak.
 - Keep an open mind.
4. Go over your role as a facilitator and point out how a seminar is an opportunity for an exchange of ideas instead of a debate where one person or side "wins" an argument.

During Seminar

1. Arrange chairs or desks in a circle. You sit in a desk within the circle.
2. Be prepared to take notes in order to keep up with who has spoken and what has been said.
3. Have students read the text silently first.
4. Ask a student to read the text aloud or read it aloud yourself.
5. Identify main ideas from the text by first asking each student to respond to the same question, such as "What title would you give this text?" or "What is the most important word or idea in the text?"
6. Ask open-ended questions that you prepared in advance. Such questions should move participants into the text, perhaps eliciting multiple perspectives.
7. Don't necessarily stick to your script of questions. You may want to change questions based on responses of the students.
8. As necessary, remind students of the ground rules.

Postseminar

1. Thank students for their participation, focusing on positive comments or aspects of their behavior.
2. Ask students to reflect on their participation in writing, perhaps using the ground rules as a sort of rubric.
3. Create an assignment (such as a collaborative project, performance, or writing) related to the text.