

## Seminar Reflection Guide

The first version of the “Seminar Teaching Guide” was created in 1994 to help teachers, trainers, and administrators identify components of a successful seminar. In the past ten years the thinking about a successful seminar has evolved, suggesting that modifications needed to be made to the original document. Each item was carefully considered by a number of experts in seminar facilitation. As a result, some familiar items have changed slightly, several new items have been added, some were removed, and some were left unaltered. The purpose, however is the same: to improve facilitation by defining the components that make an excellent seminar.

You may choose to complete this tool as a self-assessment. As soon as possible after the seminar, complete the document. The resulting insights will be more powerful if you use a video recording of your seminar because you will often notice statements and behavior that you did not see during the seminar. This will help you more accurately complete the document.

Another way to improve your seminar facilitation is to ask another teacher, mentor, or administrator to observe you, using the document as a common medium to provide feedback. You may select a section on which you would like to focus and direct the observer to concentrate on items in that section only. If you would like feedback on multiple sections you may request that as well. It should be noted that the document was not intended to be used by someone only observing the video. The seminar is such a dynamic experience that the person providing feedback needs to be in the room throughout the seminar.

Part one of the document asks questions that invite your reflection on your growth through a series of seminars. Each time you complete the form, keep the results in your portfolio and use it to show growth over the school year. The current recommendation is to complete the entire form three times during the school year. Parts of the form may be used at any point. Part 2 has been modified from the earlier format to a Lichert scale to strengthen the idea of the learning process. Often, the numbers require further explanation and space has been left between the items to offer further clarification, suggestions for future behavior, or notes explaining why the item did not apply.

As you complete the reflection, please keep in mind the purpose: to improve facilitation of the seminar as described by the National Paideia Center. It should not be used to calculate a score that could be used to rank or rate the performance of the facilitator.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Subject \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_

Text: (title, genre) \_\_\_\_\_

Facilitation goal selected \_\_\_\_\_

Participation goal selected \_\_\_\_\_

### **Part 1**

✿ I have led \_\_\_\_\_ (approximate number) of seminars this year with this class. Were there any special circumstances that should be considered while reflecting on this seminar?

✿ How did this seminar text\* address the curriculum?

✿ What did you do to prepare the students for this seminar?

✿ What follow-up activities were planned for the students?

✿ How did you determine student understanding of the ideas and values?

✿ Reflecting on your growth as a facilitator, choose a goal for the next seminar.

✿ Additional Comments

## Part 2

For each of the following items please circle 1, 2, 3, or 4 as appropriate.

1 = definitely      2 = probably      3 = possibly      4 = definitely not

### Pre-Seminar Activities

1. The text chosen was appropriate for a seminar and the ability of the students.      1      2      3      4

2. The room was arranged so that participants could easily make eye contact with one another.      1      2      2      2

3. A process goal was selected before the seminar began.      1      2      3      4

4. The teacher had clearly stated expectations for behavior as evidenced by the students' actions.      1      2      3      4

5. Students had adequate preparation for the discussion as evidenced by the quality of comments.      1      2      3      4

### Teacher as Facilitator

6. The teacher was seated on the same level with the students.      1      2      3      4

7. The teacher took notes/mapped the discussion.      1      2      3      4

8. The teacher was knowledgeable about the text being discussed and could locate references to aid students in supporting the point being made.      1      2      3      4

9. The teacher refrained from giving his or her own opinion during the seminar.      1      2      3      4

- |                                                                                                                                                         |   |   |   |   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 10. The teacher helped make connections between ideas.                                                                                                  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 11. The teacher encouraged student interaction (provided opportunities for shy students, was aware of eye contact).                                     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. The teacher clarified when students misunderstood or factual errors were made by further questioning or probing if not corrected by other students. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. The teacher occasionally paraphrased students' remarks when necessary for clarification.                                                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. The teacher stopped misbehavior quickly and effectively.                                                                                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. The teacher accepted and encouraged divergent views and opinions.                                                                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16. The teacher included the whole group in discussion and did not focus on a select few.                                                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 17. The teacher refrained from summarizing the discussion (telling students what they learned at the end of the seminar).                               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

**Questioning Strategies**

- |                                                                                                                                                                           |   |   |   |   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 18. The teacher questioned students, not telling or teaching factual knowledge about the text.                                                                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 19. The opening question was broad and each participant was given an opportunity to respond (this does not mean every seminar must begin with the round robin technique). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

20. The questions posed did not lead students to a preconceived “right” answer. 1 2 3 4

21. The teacher allowed sufficient wait-time for students to think before allowing responses or asking another question. 1 2 3 4

22. The teacher was a good listener and framed follow-up questions from student comments. 1 2 3 4

23. The teacher made smooth transitions between questions asked (not “my next question is”). 1 2 3 4

24. The teacher asked questions that generated higher order thinking (analysis, synthesis, evaluation). 1 2 3 4

25. The teacher asked closing questions that encouraged students to explore the personal relevance of text. 1 2 3 4

### **Student Participation**

26. Students had a copy of the text being discussed in front of them or where all could refer to it. 1 2 3 4

27. Students observed the rules of behavior for seminar participation. 1 2 3 4

28. Students talked more than the teacher. 1 2 3 4

29. Students did not require permission from the teacher or other students to speak during the seminar. 1 2 3 4

30. Students directed comments to each other rather than the teacher. 1 2 3 4

31. Students showed respect for others' views and opinions by listening and not criticizing others. 1 2 3 4

32. Students supported their statements with references to the text. 1 2 3 4

33. Students used each others' names when agreeing or disagreeing with one another. 1 2 3 4

34. Students asked meaningful questions during the seminar. 1 2 3 4

35. Students were comfortable sharing opinions based on text evidenced by a conversation-like atmosphere. 1 2 3 4

**Post-seminar activities**

36. The process goal was re-examined and suggestions were made for the next seminar. 1 2 3 4

37. The map or reflections was shared with the students. 1 2 3 4

38. Students were given the opportunity to further reflect on and articulate their thoughts. 1 2 3 4