Appendix A

Greetings, September 2019

Recently I talked with the students about the book PEAKand our next novel unit beginning in November*.* I am writing to you now because students need to **purchase a copy of Peak and** have **it read and pre-unit work completed by Tuesday, December 17th, 2019**. I realize this date is far off, but I wanted to give students a wide window to complete this important goal and expectation*.* Students will work with some of the most challenging concepts and skills from the AZ College and Career Readiness Standards. What’s more, PEAK is full of some of the most important issues young adolescents face today. The book represents themes: courage, honesty, loyalty, interdependence, change, responsibility, family, sacrifice and respect. The main character, Peak, and the events that affect his survival while on Mt. Everest and his survival and growth as a young adolescent drive these themes. We will also study travel to Everest (sort of) and I hope to Skype with Gary Guller (a man who conquered Everest) and the author of *PEAK*, Roland Smith.

Students will work with:

* research strategies
* annotating a text
* viewing and listening
* paraphrasing, summarizing and note-taking
* Socratic Seminar
* elements of literature integration and literary terms analysis
* anchor questions/comprehension: cause and effect, comparison/contrast, sequencing
* explanatory and argumentative writing including sentence variety
* poetry and quotes

I encourage you to give your student(s) extra or special chores to earn their own copy of the novel. Since students will learn to annotate the text, the book needs to be a clean copy, so copies from siblings are a no - no. The book can be a used copy purchase, but must not have any markings in it. There will have a few extra copies if you would like to read the book, and for any student who is unable to purchase the novel. Please email me if purchasing the novel creates a hardship in anyway.

There are many opportunities for differentiation throughout this unit, so that all students are challenged. I know your teen will have a “PEAK” experience with the novel and the Everest unit. Please contact me if you have any concerns or questions. I value your feedback!

*Julie* [Julie.Sprague@dvusd.org](mailto:Julie.Sprague@dvusd.org)

**What you can do:**

* Research Mt. Everest and Read PEAK along with us.
* Check Powerschools
* Encourage students to complete all prework unit requirements before the December due date.

Socratic Discussion for the Upper and Middle Grades

*The Socratic Seminar is patterned after the way Socrates conducted learning activities in Ancient Greece. All of his students were expected to share their thoughts, opinions and evidence regarding the written and spoken word. Students were further required to read, analyze and evaluate assigned materials prior to class discussion. Socrates remained quiet to allow true discussion to flow from his students.*

*Today, when a class is conducted using the Socratic Seminar method, students are also required to come prepared to discuss assigned materials and share ideas and opinions, using the text or real life experience to back up their answers. They are not permitted to participate in the class unless they are prepared. This method of instruction can be used effectively for any genre or subject, fiction or nonfiction.*

**Procedures**

Teacher Preparation

Before the class discussion, the teacher prepares three types of questions: (in subsequent seminars students should contribute questions as well as long as they have been taught the three types of questions). Teacher may or may not review answers before the actual discussion.

1.) Literal (create 3 of these)

- a general question that directs students into the text

- an introductory or exploratory question related to a topic that is easy for students to locate in the text

2.) Inferential (create 3 or 4 of these)

- a question about specific content, theme, or main idea

- an inquiry that challenges students to examine a central position

- a request to interpret or explore a passage in the text

- a "how...?" or "why...?" question

- a challenge to students to compare and contrast characters, motivations, descriptions, tones, etc.

- an examination of vocabulary or interesting phrases

3.) Evaluative (create 3 or 4 of these)

- a question that establishes the relevance of the text to students

- an inquiry that connects the text with the real world

- an application of the text to self

- a comparison of the text with real life

**Note: You must use these three types of questions in this order. This allows the discussion to begin in a relatively non-threatening manner and allows students' confidence to build as more complex questions are asked.**

*Developing good questions is essential to an effective Socratic Discussion.*

Student Preparation

A. Prior to the discussion, students are asked to read the text, magazine article, or newspaper; watch the video; listen to the song; etc., and to record their answers to the questions which the teacher (or peers) has developed.

Important: Students should be instructed to record their responses in complete sentences and to explain them thoroughly using text evidence. The "why" is everything! They must write down as much as they know – not one answer per question. If there are several answers then several answers should be recorded. In subsequent Socratic Seminars students can and should contribute to the questions.

B. Active Listening – see *How to Demonstrate Active Listening below*

Class Setup and Procedures for Socratic Seminar

Students are arranged in two concentric circles. The inner circle contains the speakers who will be involved in the discussion. The outer circle contains the listeners. Students in the outer circle are not to speak at all. They listen, reflect and take notes. No more than 8-10 students in the inner circle at one time. If you have larger sections, three sessions may need to occur.

**Note: After students have experienced at least two seminars, two empty seats are reserved in the inner circle.**

Students in the outer circle have the option of joining the inner circle when:

1) the discussion appears to be off topic.

2) the discussion becomes nonproductive with arguments and "put downs."

3) inner circle members have not discussed an area considered important by the outer circle member. They feel they must share or the discussion is incomplete.

When a student opts to take an empty seat, he or she becomes the next speaker.

(*Once a student takes an empty seat, he or she must stay for the remainder of the discussion. When both empty seats are taken, the inner circle is complete. Students must weigh whether they really want to enter the inner circle as outside circle points could be lost.)*

Responsibilities of the inner circle members

Three rules: Each member of the inner circle must…

1. … speak to every question even if they must repeat something already shared.
2. …contribute to the “discussion” – include inner circle members.
3. …demonstrate active listening (*How to Demonstrate Active Listening)*

Students are to clear desks and display prepared answers to the discussion questions, the rubric, and the *How to Demonstrate Active Listening*. (No pencil or pen is allowed.) Students, not the teacher, determine the first speaker. A student enters the discussion only when the previous speaker indicates that he or she has finished with either a non-verbal cue or by stating, “Complete”; it is important to teach students to momentarily pause in between speakers.

The final responsibility of the inner circle members:

1) Come to a consensus on each question

OR

2) Simply make sure each member has had an opportunity to discuss answers to the assigned questions, and then agree to disagree.

After each question inner circle students must ask the other circle and teacher if they are ready to move forward. Readiness is confirmed by a thumbs up or down sign.

Responsibilities of the outer circle members

Three rules: Each member of the outer circle:

1. Listens and compares how they remember answering with what the inner circle is sharing
2. Does NOT talk, write “personal” notes, fidget, sigh or make guttural sounds, etc.
3. Takes notes: either summarize or script

A. Summary notes - students listen to the whole of the discussion recording significant statements and/or answers other than their own, then record the final consensus

OR

B. Script - students write as much of the discussion content as possible as the discussion evolves. At the end of the discussion, outer-circle students are to highlight or circle any words or phrases they believe to be important.

To ensure the practice of good listening skills, students are required to keep their answer papers put away. Otherwise, students tend to compare their work with the ongoing discussion.

**Note: Since outer circle students are not to talk at all, they can simply raise their hand if they have a hard time hearing inner circle students. An inner circle student will see the hand and ask the speaker to, “Please repeat what you said and speak up.”**

Students switch circle positions during the discussion so that all members of the class have a chance at both positions. For example, Group A might be the inner circle for the first half of the discussion, and might discuss questions 1,3,5,7,and 9; at the conclusion of A's discussion, Group B (the outer circle) would summarize and respond. Next, the students would switch positions, so that Group B is now the inner circle and Group A forms the outer circle. Group B would then discuss questions 2,4,6,8, and 10. Make certain that you divide the three types of questions evenly between Group A and Group B, so that each group begins with Literal questions, moves on to Inferential questions, and finally responds to Evaluative questions. It is vital they are done in this order so that students can warm up to the discussion itself. Experienced Socratic Seminar participants and/or older students may forgo the Literal question and begin with the inferential questions.

When students select their own questions they may duplicate any questions they deem intriguing questions as long as they believe they have more to add to the discussion.

Responsibilities of the teacher

Select appropriate and interesting material for discussion

Prepare the discussion questions for the assigned topic or lead class in an inquiry to create their own questions.

During the Socratic Seminar keep silent unless disorder occurs, students answers are terribly incorrect or students fail to detect an off-topic event. (The role of the teacher is similar to that of a "Sergeant at Arms" in a courtroom--no verbal or nonverbal feedback, no directions once the discussion begins.) The first discussion is an exception – teachers may need to jump in and teach how to participate: remind, explain or encourage once the discussion is underway.

Debriefing: Students and Teachers

Sometimes the best part of the seminar is when both circles have switched and one circle is formed. Students AND teachers can contribute to the discussion by bringing up new ideas, speaking to questions that were not selected in their inner circle time, etc.

**Note: This time is for closure. What still needs to be said? Do not leave any misconceptions or inaccurate facts unsaid.**

Possible Assessment and Evaluation – Can use Self, Peer, and Teacher Evaluation

1) Students' created questions.

2) Students' labeling of types of questions and selection for discussion.

3) Students' written responses to the three types of questions.

4) Inner Circle members' use of effective discussion skills. (Criteria to be determined by teacher and students before the SD; see attached)

5) Outer Circle members' use of active listening skills. (Criteria to be determined by teacher and students before the SD.)

6) Summaries or scripts of Outer Circle members at the end of the SD.

7) Students' abilities to sincerely add to the group's success. (Criteria to be determined by the teacher and students before the SD.)

8) Student evaluation of discussion including what they would have changed, done differently, etc.

9) Use of either specific text vocabulary and/or sentence types in written responses.

10) Use of non-verbal cues.

**How to Demonstrate Active Listening**

*As we listen, our personal opinions, judgments, and beliefs can distort what we hear. As a listener, your role is to* ***listen to what the person is saying, think about what is being said, reciprocate non-verbal cues; summarize and synthesize*** *(combined their ideas and your own).**It is not an easy task!*

Here are three specific ways to practice your role as a listener.

**Encourage the speaker.**

Sincerely Complimenting

1. Listen to peers and determine what you understand, agree with or like.
2. Select a compliment that is detailed.

“Eowyn, your idea about not getting the gun is really important because…”

“Jeremiah, that idea about… is cookie worthy!”

“Oh, man, John, I never thought about that - - you are right…”

1. Acknowledge peer and share compliment.
2. Prompt people to share

“Julie, you have good ideas, why don’t you share?”

“Jherica, would you add?”

“Elias, what thoughts do you have?”

**Ask Probing Questions**

Good probing questions are general and brief, allow for multiple responses, avoid yes/no responses, and allow the speaker to think through their answers.

Possible Question Prompts

Follow-up questions may be asked by inner circle members; for example:

* What do you mean by...?
* Where in the text do you find support for…?
* Would someone take issue with....?
* Why do you think this is the case?
* What do you think would happen if…?
* How was…different from…?
* What sort of an impact do you think…?
* When have you done/experienced something like this before?
* How did you decide/determine/conclude…?
* What is the connection between…and…?
* What if the opposite were true? Then what?

**Provide Feedback.**   
Piggybacking

1. Listen to the peer’s entire comment and decide how you can add to further the discussion
2. Wait for the peer to finish speaking
3. Acknowledge their view by using their name and ideas, then add your ideas.

“Sarah, I love how you shared that… and I would like to add…”

“Jack, what you said about…got me thinking and I would piggyback that by sharing that…”

“Seth, piggybacking on your idea about…I would add…”

Paraphrasing

   1. Listen to peer’s entire comment, decide how you would restate (say it differently)

   2. Decide what you will say to help clarify and ask questions to clarify certain points.

“Isabella, what do you mean when you say…”

“Is this what you mean?”

“Andrew, What I’m hearing you say is…”

“Rachel, it sounds like you are saying…”

**Non-verbal Cues**

*Reciprocate Non-verbal Cues: To become a better communicator, it’s important to become more sensitive not only to the non-verbal cues of others,* ***but also to your own.***

**Why non-verbal communication matters -** The way you listen, look, move, and react tells the other person whether or not you care, if you’re being truthful, **and how well you’re listening.** When your non-verbal signals match up with the words you’re saying, they increase trust and understanding. When they don’t, they generate stress, mistrust, and confusion.

**Types of non-verbal communication and body language**

**Facial expressions -** The human face is extremely expressive, able to express countless emotions without saying a word. And unlike some forms of non-verbal communication, facial expressions are universal. The facial expressions for happiness, sadness, anger, surprise, fear, and disgust are the same across cultures.

**Body movements and posture -** Consider how your perceptions of people are affected by the way they sit, walk, stand up, or hold their head. The way you move and carry yourself communicates a wealth of information to the world. This type of non-verbal communication includes your **posture, bearing, stance, and subtle movements.**

**Gestures -** Gestures are woven into the fabric of our daily lives. We **wave, point, beckon, and use our hands when we’re arguing or speaking energetically**—expressing ourselves with gestures often without thinking. However, the meaning of gestures can be very different across cultures and regions, so it’s important to be careful to avoid misinterpretation.

**Eye contact -** Since the visual sense is dominant for most people, eye contact is an especially important type of non-verbal communication. The way you look at someone can communicate many things, including interest, affection, hostility, or attraction**. Eye contact is also important in maintaining the flow of conversation and for gauging the other person’s response.**

**Space -** Have you ever **felt uncomfortable during a conversation because the other person was** standing too close and **invading your space**? We all have a need for physical space, although that need differs depending on the culture, the situation, and the closeness of the relationship. You can use physical space to communicate many different non-verbal messages, including signals of approval or disapproval, aggression or dominance. **A lean towards a speaker shows interest, while a lean out shows disinterest.**

**Voice -** It’s not just what you say, it’s ***how*** you say it. When we speak, other people “read” our voices in addition to listening to our words. **Things they pay attention to include your timing and pace, how loud you speak, your tone and inflection, and sounds that convey understanding**, such as “ahh” and “uh-huh.” Think about how someone's tone of voice, for example, can indicate sarcasm, anger, affection, or confidence.

# **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

# **Socratic Discussion Rubric**

Written Answers

majority of ?s complete

accurate answers

evidence is provided p#s

details/examples

# Inner Circle

Content:

encourages group interaction

easily expresses ideas

supports/explains comments

Structure:

eye contact

articulates/annunciates

appropriate volume

appropriate length & speed

Active Listening:

sincerely compliments

piggybacks answers

paraphrases

asks probing questions

Outer Circle

Listening:

no speaking,

no laughing at,

no whispering,

no facial expressions

no writing personal notes

no movements

no sighing, guttural sounds,

## Notes:

easily readable; organized

complete

# **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Student: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Explanatory Essay Rubric Aligned with AZMerit  Assignment Title: Dangers of Everest | | | | | | | |  |
| **Criteria** | | **AzMerit Alignment** | **Min. Proft Not Yet! 1** | **Part Proft 2** | **Proft 3** | **High Proft 4** | **SCORE Enter 1-4 per row** |
| I have focused my essay on the topic including thesis statement | | I have a clever **hook**, **clear-controlled idea**, and focused **thesis statement** that explains the prompt topic.  I have appropriate style and objective tone.  **(No 2nd Person)**. My essay is organized.  I use a variety of **transitions.** |  |  |  |  |  |
| My essay includes appropriate point of view and contains an unbroken flow | |  |  |  |  |  |
| I have cited textual evidence to support my answer | | My text evidence is properly **cited sources.**  My evidence is balanced 2 inferences : 1 quote  I used a variety of **elaborative** techniques.  **(Evidence is explained and how it connects to my topic is clear).**  It is clear that I understand the topic and text. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I have explained and elaborated my evidence | |  |  |  |  |  |
| I have rephrased my essay with a concluding paragraph. | | I have **restated my thesis** and have a satisfying **sinker** sentence that **connects back to**  **essay topic.** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | | | | **0** | **1** | **2** |  |
| **Conventions** | Minor errors but **no repetitive errors.** Adequate use of capitalization, punctuation, sentence variety and formation and spelling. | | |  |  |  |  |
| Comments: | | | |  |  |  | **Total** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Student: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Argument Essay Rubric Aligned with AZMerit  Assignment Title: Climb or Don’t Climb | | | | | | | |  |
| **Criteria** | | **AzMerit Alignment** | **Min. Proft Not Yet! 1** | **Part Proft 2** | **Proft 3** | **High Proft 4** | **SCORE Enter 1-4 per row** |
| I have focused my essay on the topic including thesis statement | | I have a clever **hook**, **clear-controlled idea**, and focused **thesis statement** argues the prompt topic.  I have appropriate style and objective tone.  **(No 2nd Person)**. My essay is organized.  I use a variety of **transitions.** |  |  |  |  |  |
| My essay includes appropriate point of view and contains an unbroken flow | |  |  |  |  |  |
| I have cited textual evidence to support my answer including counterargument | | My text evidence is properly **cited sources.**  My evidence is balanced 2 inferences : 1 quote  Counterargument is complete  I used a variety of **elaborative** techniques.  **(Evidence is explained and how it connects to my topic is clear).**  It is clear that I understand the topic and text. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I have explained and elaborated my evidence | |  |  |  |  |  |
| I have rephrased my essay with a concluding paragraph. | | I have **restated my thesis** and have a satisfying **sinker** sentence that **connects back to**  **prompt topic.** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | | | | **0** | **1** | **2** |  |
| **Conventions** | Minor errors but **no repetitive errors.** Adequate use of capitalization, punctuation, sentence variety and formation and spelling. | | |  |  |  |  |
| Comments: | | | |  |  |  | **Total** |