

# The Prince Online Socratic Seminar

## SENTENCE STARTERS

### Prior Knowledge

- This relates to...
- This reminds me of...
- I already know that...

### Asking Questions

- I wonder why...
- What if...
- Why is it...

### Making Connections

- That's like when...
- That reminds me of what we studied in...
- This is similar to when...
- I can relate to that because...

### Summarizing

- The main idea is...
- Everyone seems to think...
- The most important points are...

### Comparing

- \_\_\_ is like \_\_\_ because...
- Machiavelli is saying the same thing as...
- Machiavelli and Carnegie agree that ... but I think \_\_\_ would not agree about... because...

### Clarifying/Revising

- What I mean is...
- Another way of saying this is...
- I didn't mean to imply...
- At first I thought... but then I realized...

### Reflecting and Relating

- In the end, I believe...
- I first thought... but now think... because...
- While I realize... I think... because...
- My conclusion at this point is that...

## Overview

Instead of writing a traditional paper or presentation, I thought we could combine writing and discussion by having a Socratic Seminar online. In short, a Socratic Seminar asks students to consider a subject from different perspectives, asking questions that help them and their classmates to clarify and extend their thinking about the subject they are studying.

## Objectives

- Learn how to post written responses to an online blog
- Consider a question from several different perspectives
- Pose questions to other students, the text, and the author that lead to new and deeper thinking about the subject
- Elaborate on your thinking through written discussion
- Make connections to the text, yourself, other texts, and the world
- Provide support for your ideas from the text or other reliable sources

## Grading

- Your grade on this assignment will be based on the quality of your participation in class and online, as well as the quality of your work as spelled out in the "Online Socratic Seminar Rubric." This is equivalent to half the value of a chapter test, so do your best work.

## Step One (*Day One*)

- Log on to the blog: [kollarusonline.weebly.com](http://kollarusonline.weebly.com)
- Read the directions and *The Prince* found in the "European Renaissance" section.
- Post a response to the question, "If you had a group project that was a significant part of your grade, would you want Machiavelli to be a member of your group? As part of your response, you need to connect these ideas to *The Prince* somehow, using examples from the text to develop and support your ideas. This should be a thoughtful, well-developed response, not just a couple of sentences dashed off.

## Step Two (*Day Two*)

- Read most of the other responses from your classmates on the blog.
- Post **two questions** in response to other people's posts. These questions should invite people to clarify or defend their ideas. For example, you might ask, "What about if everyone in the group did that? What would be the effect of that?" or you might ask, "How would strangers react to this type of behavior? Friends?"

## Step Three (*Day Three*)

- **Respond** to at least **two** questions or postings.
- Your responses should be well-developed. Use some of the sentence starters in the margin to help you get started if you are stuck.

## Step Four

- Read through most of the responses, jotting down notes about big and common ideas that appear throughout the different comments.
- Write a final commentary that ties together your own thoughts and those of others, but also adds one last idea, perhaps your final thought about this subject.
- Include in this last comment new ideas or opinions you have about this subject and what led you to these new thoughts.