

### **Discussion Protocols:**

Student must always come prepared, which means having read a text or closely studied a concept. I suggest this be done in class. They must bring discussion questions and thoughtful ideas to share. They must enter discussions respectfully and skillfully. Reflection on content and process is required at the end of every activity. All these skills may need to be explicitly taught. The goal for all: Students learn how to run these completely on their own!

#### **1. Fishbowl:** (Any Subject)

- Divide class into 2 groups
- Give each group member a partner in the opposite group
- All students read and respond to the same text with questions and comments
- One group discusses the text using their notes in the center of the room while their partners evaluate the content and process of their partner's participation
- Students switch roles and the second group goes into the "fishbowl"
- Older students can be assigned to take notes on content
- Whole class debriefs about content and process

(To increase rigor assign discussion roles and other parameters make the discussion more complex)

#### **2. Save the Last Word for Me** (Great for ELA: to discuss figurative language, symbolism, practice providing evidence for ideas)

- Divide class into groups of 3
- All students do assigned reading (groups do not have to read the same text – this is a great place to differentiate)
- Each student chooses a quote from the text that best supports a question, idea, prompt or significance of a character or the text as a whole)
- The first student shares the quote and the remaining two say why they think the student chose that quote
- The discussion comes back to the first student who then explains how the others were right or wrong and then finally gives their reasoning
- Older students take notes on each quote and each analysis

#### **3. Salon or Matrix Protocol:** (Any subject)

- Divide class into groups of 3 or 5
- All students should have read a variety of texts on a particular topic
- Assign a "host" at each group
- Assign each group to take a particular subtopic, point of view or perspective to focus on. They must discuss and agree on their position on the topic and develop questions for their class mates to discuss.
- The host remains at the table and half the student rotate left and the other half rotate right
- The hosts facilitate discussions at their tables using their questions
- Students keep rotating until there are back in their original groups
- Hosts share out the salient points of the discussions they facilitated
- Older students can be required to take notes on content
- Class debriefs on content and process

4. **Jigsaw:** (Any subject)

- Divide the class into groups of 3 or more (depends on the number of students)
- Assign complimentary or separate readings to each group/word problems
- Each group reads/solves together, takes notes and agrees on the most important facts/ideas/questions to ask/solutions/formulas for teaching others about their text/problem
- Each member of the groups rotate so that they sit with members of the class who read different texts/solved different problems
- The goal is for the entire class to have a complete set of notes on a text or how to solve a variety of problems
- Class debriefs on content and process

**Tenets of a class room discussion:**

- Stay on topic
- Listen actively
- Give everyone a chance to speak
- One speaker at a time
- Build off each others comments
- Refer back to the text
- Back up your opinions – SAY WHY
- Bring people into the discussion
- Play devil’s advocate
- Debate respectfully
- Think before you speak
- Don’t pontificate
- You don’t have to agree with all ideas, you have to respect the speaker
- Keep professional body language, be profession in the way you act and speak
- Speak clearly

Sample rubric: (Can be made as simple or as complex as your students need it to be)

<b>My name:</b>	<b>My partner’s name:</b>	
<b>Fishbowl Rubric</b>		
I give my partner’s body language a		
a. thumbs up	b. thumbs in the middle	c. thumbs down
because...		
I agreed with my partner when he/she said....		
because...		
My partner is really good at...		
For next time, my partner will work on....		