



Small Group Seminar Purpose and Guidelines:

(Teacher reads purpose and guidelines aloud to the entire class and may also hand these out or post on an overhead/smart board for students to follow visually)

The Small Group Seminar is a highly structured student led discussion of commonly read primary source documents; the documents are designed to present conflicting views on an important issue in American History.

The **Purpose** of the seminar is twofold:

1. Get students engaged with a primary source document.
2. Get students to reflect on history and make critical judgments about the documents (to engage critical thinking in history)

Generalized Instruction:

- Break into small groups (preferably 4-5 in each group; Instructor selects groups)
- The group will then select a leader to insure that guidelines and rules are followed; the leader will introduce each question to the group.
- Each individual will spend 15 minutes analyzing the documents to themselves.
- The first question will be answered in clockwise fashion, and after the first question the rest will be answered first come first served but one only at a time may speak.

Seminar Rules:

1. Students are encouraged not to express an opinion without first referencing the text.
2. No reference may be repeated.
3. Participants will take turns.
4. Participants will value the opinions of the other participants.
5. Participants will treat others with respect.

Note on Differentiation: Instructor can adjust time allotted, may select team leaders themselves or allow the group to, and even give each group a "mascot" such as a stuffed animal or any object to signify who is speaking within the group dynamic to maintain some decorum.