

Socratic Seminar

The Federalist, Paper Number 10
James Madison

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SECONDED 430

Instructional Model: Socratic Seminar

Students will participate in a structured discussion in the form of a Socratic Seminar regarding the issues and ideas raised in the text that is provided. The selected text is *The Federalist*, Paper Number 10, written by James Madison in which he discusses the threat of factions, the differences between a direct democracy and a republic, and the advantages of a republic over a democracy.

Overview:

In the late 1780s, vigorous debate ensued as to what the new Constitution of the United States should look like. The previous legal framework for the United States was the Articles of Confederation. The Articles of Confederation proved to be ineffective because the national government was provided with too little power and was too weak to effectively run the nation. In the debate over what the new Constitution should look like, two competing parties emerged: the federalists and the anti-federalists. The federalists believed in a strong national government, whereas the anti-federalists were fearful of giving too much power to the national government in the wake of being ruled by the British monarchy. Thus, the anti-federalists felt that an even greater proportion of government power should have been in the hands of the states to prevent the opportunity for tyranny. To quell the fear of the anti-federalists, prominent federalists such as James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay wrote 85 anonymous articles for the *New York Journal* in 1787 and 1788 explaining their position. In *The Federalist*, Paper Number 10, James Madison articulates why factions are a threat to civil society and also goes on to describe the differences between a direct democracy and a republic, while examining why a republic is better equipped to reduce the threat of powerful factions. The central question of this unit is: Why does James Madison believe factions are a threat to civil society? This Socratic Seminar allows students to discuss not only what factions are and if they feel they are a threat, but it also provides them with a forum for analyzing the differences between a direct democracy and a republic. Additionally, this exercise gives students the opportunity to examine different forms of government and explore their own conception of what a good form of government should look like. This Socratic Seminar on *The Federalist*, Paper Number 10, requires students to utilize higher order thinking skills and deep knowledge while having a discussion on some of the governing ideals believed in by the founders.

Rationale:

Many Americans mistakenly believe that the United States is a democracy, when in reality it is a republic. Although most people understand the basic premise of the American system of government and simply use the word democracy when they mean republic, it is still a factual error made by many people. Thus, this lesson serves to help students develop a clear understanding of how these two systems of government differ and why the founders established the United States as a republic. Additionally, this lesson examines the threat of factions to civil society and looks at the ways in which a republic can alleviate these concerns. By developing an awareness of what factions are and how they threaten civil society, students can use these skills to critically examine the current state of American politics, which some would argue has indeed become factionalized with two major political parties dominating America's political landscape. Therefore, students can make their own determination of whether factions are a threat to civil society and if the American political system has been factionalized. Fundamentally, a discussion of *The Federalist*, Paper Number 10 serves to enhance the political knowledge of students

regarding the American system of government so that they become more knowledgeable citizens who can better articulate their political beliefs.

Objectives:

Through this Socratic Seminar students will:

Academic:

- Explain what a faction is and describe why James Madison believes that factions threaten civil society.
- Articulate the difference between a democracy and republic.
- Explain at least two reasons that Madison cites as to why a republic is a better fit to prevent the threat of factions than a democracy.
- Describe who the intended audience of this text is and the text's larger historical context.

Intellectual:

- Analyze the text in order to find deeper knowledge and understanding.
- Engage in thoughtful discussion about an important text.
- Transfer thoughts from discussion into writing form for assessment.

Social:

- Listen attentively and take turns with classmates in a discussion.
- Build on and challenge each other's ideas.

Wisconsin Model Academic Standards:

B.12.2 Analyze primary and secondary sources related to a historical question to evaluate their relevance, make comparisons, integrate new information with prior knowledge, and come to a reasoned conclusion

B.12.6 Select and analyze various documents that have influenced the legal, political, and constitutional heritage of the United States

B.12.8 Recall, select, and explain the significance of important people, their work, and their ideas in the areas of political and intellectual leadership, inventions, discoveries, and the arts, within each major era of Wisconsin, United States, and world history

C.12.1 Identify the sources, evaluate the justification, and analyze the implications of certain rights and responsibilities of citizens

C.12.4 Explain the multiple purposes of democratic government, analyze historical and contemporary examples of the tensions between those purposes, and illustrate how governmental powers can be acquired, used, abused, or legitimized

C.12.10 Identify ways people may participate effectively in community affairs and the political process

C.12.13 Describe and evaluate ideas of how society should be organized and political power should be exercised, including the ideas of monarchism, anarchism, socialism, fascism, and communism; compare these ideas to those of representative democracy; and assess how such ideas have worked in practice

E.12.6 Analyze the means by which and extent to which groups and institutions can influence people, events, and cultures **in both historical and contemporary settings**

Common Core Standards (Grades 11-12):

Reading/History

RH 1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

RH 2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; providing an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among key details and ideas.

RH 4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term of the course of a text.

Writing

W1.B: Develop claims(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

W2.B: Develop the topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.

W2.C: Use varied transitions and sentence structures to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.

W2.E: Provides a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

W4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W9: Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Grade Level:

This Socratic Seminar can be used for students in the 11th or 12th grade. It is developed for upper level high school students because they will need to have ample background knowledge from previous classes on the subject and will be required to examine a complex political text from founder, James Madison. However, this lesson could be used for 9th and 10th grade students with modifications and scaffolding.

Time:

The approximate time required for this Socratic seminar will be two class periods, but it could possibly extend into a third class period. On the first day, the seminar will be introduced, the reading will be handed out, the ticket assignment will be given to students and explained, and the guidelines for proper discussion and student expectations will be handed out and discussed. On the second day, the seminar will begin and should take up 30-45 minutes. If the discussion is going very well and students are providing thoughtful and articulate responses, the discussion could be expanded to the next day of class. I anticipate debriefing the seminar would take about 10 minutes.

Course:

This lesson is designed for use in a U.S. History class, but it could also be utilized in a Political Science course such as American government. This lesson would most likely be used when discussing the debate over the Constitution between the federalists and anti-federalists in a history class. However, in a political science course, this could be used as part of a unit on political theory and the Constitution.

Materials:

Students will be provided copies of:

The Federalist, Paper Number 10

Discussion Guidelines sheet

Seminar Analysis sheet

Culminating Activity Holistic Rubric

Teacher will have and fill out:

Facilitator Evaluation sheet

Procedure**I. Introduction**

In preparation for this Socratic Seminar, a lesson should be devoted to covering the federalists and anti-federalists where their core beliefs and differences are examined. During this class, some background information could be covered as to what the *Federalist Papers* were, what their purpose was, who the intended audience was, and who wrote them. The day before the Socratic Seminar discussion is schedule to take place, each student will be provided with a copy of *The Federalist*, Number 10. Students will be instructed to read the document very carefully as if they were reading a love letter. Additionally, they will be told to think about the deeper meaning of the text, consider any possible questions that the text raises, and read between the lines. Students will also be asked to take notes on and underline or highlight any key areas in the text which they feel are especially important and/or compelling. At this point, the Discussion Guidelines sheet should be handed out to the students for them to read, and the teacher should briefly go over this sheet and what is expected of the students during the discussion. Thus, students will be instructed that this seminar is designed to be a discussion, where multiple perspectives are examined regarding the text, so that everyone can get a better and deeper understanding of it. It is also important to emphasize that the purpose of the Socratic seminar is not a debate but is a discussion as previously mentioned.

In addition to reading the text prior to the Socratic seminar, students will be required to complete a “ticket” in order to take part in the seminar. If a student does not complete a ticket for the day of the seminar, they will not be allowed to participate in the discussion. Students who have not completed their ticket will be separated from the rest of the class and will be required to complete another task such as taking notes on what is said in the discussion, recording the amount of times students participate, or working on another assignment on the discussion topic. The ticket for this seminar requires the students to make a Venn diagram that compares and contrasts a democracy and a republic. The following directions would be provided to the students:

In order to participate in the discussion, you will be required to complete a ticket and bring it with you to class on the day in which the discussion will be taking place. In order to complete the ticket, you must create and fill out a Venn diagram that compares and contrasts a democracy and a republic.

II. Discussion

Before the students enter the classroom, all desks should be arranged in a circle. By doing this, students can view each other as they speak which helps to ensure that students clearly communicate with each other throughout the discussion. As students enter the classroom, they will also be instructed to have the following items on their desk: their name tag, completed tickets, their reading, and a notebook or sheet of paper so that they can take notes and write comments during the discussion. As previously mentioned, students who do not have their ticket completed will not be allowed to participate. These students will be given observe roles with possible tasks described in the above section. At this point, the teacher and students (who completed their tickets) should now join the circle. The teacher should also state the objectives of the seminar, and these objectives should also be written on the board. Next, the teacher should explain how these objectives and discussion skills used by the students in the seminar are important to the discipline of history and serve to enhance our understanding of, and participation in, democratic discourse. Students should be told, “The goal of this Socratic Seminar is to gain a deeper understanding of the values, issues, and ideas in the text, and to actively listen, evaluate, and build on each other’s comments.” At this point, a brief refresher should be given as to the guidelines of the discussion that were provided the previous day, and it should be emphasized once again that this is a discussion and not a debate.

Prior to beginning the discussion, students should be given about 3-5 minutes to review the text and their notes. Doing so allows them to refresh their memories as to the content of the text and will enable students to be better participants in the discussion. After this brief review time is completed, the teacher should state the focus question to commence the discussion: Why does James Madison believe factions are a threat to civil society? The question should then be written on the board so that students can refer to it throughout the discussion. This question serves as a starting point for the discussion. Students should then be given time to think about the question, formulate and organize their ideas, and then respond. It is important to remind them to always refer to the text and respond to the ideas of their classmates. The teacher should allow the discussion to lead itself, but there is a list of questions that can be used to keep the discussion

engaging and to help promote the involvement of more students (See Discussion Questions sheet).

The teacher should make sure to keep the discussion moving, but students should still be given ample time to think and respond. Additionally, the discussion questions should be used to help guide the seminar, but the teacher should also ask students to clarify their responses and interject at times with probing questions. Some important questions for the teacher to ask are: "How do you know that? Where did you find that in the text? How does that relate to what 'X' said?" The goal is not to guide students to one clear answer but instead to allow multiple perspectives to be discussed and examined throughout the seminar. The teacher should not make the group come to a consensus on one correct answer or position.

It is important to be aware of a few things as the discussion progresses. The teacher should watch for students who want to participate but are having trouble joining in the discussion. If this is the case, these students should be called on so that they share their thoughts. Additionally, it is important to monitor for students that seem to be dominating the discussion at the expense of other students. If this is the case, the teacher should chime in and ask these students to hold off for the time being so that other students can get involved. It is also very important for the teacher to watch the time since time is needed to debrief the seminar. The Socratic seminar is designed for two class periods with the first day being the introduction of the seminar and the second being the actual discussion and the debrief. Additionally, the teacher should be sure to ask the students if anyone else has something to add prior to closing the discussion. If nobody else has anything they would like to add, the discussion should then be closed and the debriefing of the seminar should commence.

III. Debrief

After the discussion has ended, the teacher should explain the debriefing process to the students. They will be told that we will be assessing whether or not the objectives of the seminar were met. To start, the teacher should hand out the Seminar Analysis sheet for students to complete. After all of the students have filled out the sheet, the teacher should go around and ask the students the following questions: What is something you have learned or understood better from the seminar?, What was done well?, What was done poorly and how can we fix that? Students should be allowed to pass on answering all or some of the questions if they so prefer. Each student should be given the chance to speak. After that has happened, the debrief should be opened up for any other comments. However, it is important to remember that these additional comments should not be about discussing the text but instead the seminar itself.

Next, the teacher will explain the culminating activity to the students and a written description of the assignment and holistic scoring rubric would be provided. Additionally, the teacher should mention that a productive facilitator of Socratic seminars is someone who reflects on the seminars that he or she has facilitated. Thus, the students should be told that the teacher will also be filling out an evaluation form covering his or her role as facilitator (facilitator evaluation sheet). This facilitator evaluation sheet should be completed on when the teacher has time after the seminar is completed, ideally on the same day.

IV. Assessment

There will be two forms of assessment for the Socratic seminar. The first is an informal of assessment of the seminar as a whole and of each individual student. The Seminar analysis sheet, comments from the debrief, and comments or participation from the debrief serve as tools for this informal assessment. It is important to remember that even though students are being informally assessed, they are not being graded on their participation and comments during the seminar.

The second is a formal assessment which will be a brief response paper where students are expected to respond to a series of questions (see written assignment and holistic scoring rubric sheet). The response paper is required to be one page in length, and students are expected to use the text, ideas from the seminar, and/or their notes in their response.

V. Socratic Seminar Evaluation

In order for a teacher to successfully facilitate thoughtful Socratic seminars, he or she must reflect upon Socratic seminars that have been implemented. Thus, I have provided a Facilitator evaluation sheet for teachers to fill out after the Socratic seminar is completed, ideally on the same day.

<http://www.glencoe.com/sec/socialstudies/btt/celebratingfreedom/pdfs/045.PDF> (*The Federalist*, Paper Number 10 can be found at this link. The reading starts on the following page.)

Discussion Questions

- Do you believe factions are a threat to American civil society?
- What are the differences between a republic and a democracy?
- What solutions does Madison pose as ways of preventing factions from emerging?
- In what ways do factions emerge according to Madison?
- Do you agree or disagree with Madison's assessment that a republic is best equipped to reduce the likelihood of powerful factions emerging? Why or why not?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of a small republic? Of a large republic?
- According to Madison, is a small or large republic best equipped to deal with factions? Explain your answer.
- Who was the intended audience of this document?
- What was the purpose of this document?
- What type of government would you rather live in: a democracy or republic? Explain your answer.
- Do you believe that American politics has currently become factionalized? Explain your answer.
- If American politics has been factionalized, do you believe changes should be made to prevent this? If so, what changes should be made? How would we go about making those changes?
- Overall, do you believe James Madison would be happy or upset with the state of American government in light of the beliefs he articulated in *The Federalist*, Paper Number 10?
- Are you satisfied with the current structure of American government?

Discussion Guidelines

1. Don't raise your hand to speak
2. Only one person is allowed to speak at a time
3. Refer to the text when you are making a comment
4. Strive to build on or challenge the ideas of your classmates
5. Take notes throughout discussion so you can refer back to particular parts of the text or to what classmates said
6. Have a name tag and display it at all times
7. When responding to a classmate, look in their direction and give them eye contact so that clear communication is established
8. This is a discussion and not a debate
9. In this discussion, the goal is for multiple perspectives to be examined to enhance our understanding
10. The discussion creates a sense of openness where students are willing to reconsider their previous views
11. The discussion gives students the opportunity to share their thoughts and have their thoughts expanded on and improved from the comments of their classmates
12. In a discussion, students must respect their classmates and their opinions even if they do not agree with them
13. In a discussion, there is an assumption that there is no right answer and that through cooperation, people can achieve a solution that is flexible and workable
14. In a discussion, there is no sole correct answer to the question or topic at hand
15. On the other hand, a debate is oppositional with two sides trying to prove each other wrong; each side seeks to find weaknesses and flaws in the opponent's argument
16. A debate is defensive in nature and not collaborative
17. A debate creates a condition in which sides become hardened in their positions
18. A debate assumes that one side has the correct answer and demands that a conclusion needs to be reached
19. Once again, we are taking part in a discussion and not a debate

Name: _____

Date: _____

Seminar Analysis

Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent

Positive Behaviors:

- ___ 1. I came prepared for the seminar
- ___ 2. I was respectful to other students during the discussion
- ___ 3. I was thoughtful in making comments
- ___ 4. I attentively listened to others as they commented and shared their thoughts
- ___ 5. I kept an open mind for opinions that were different from my own
- ___ 6. I built on what my classmates said before sharing my opinion
- ___ 7. I used examples from the text to support my comments
- ___ 8. I spoke comfortably and confidently in the seminar
- ___ 9. I clearly shared my thoughts and clarified them when asked
- ___ 10. I carried myself in a positive manner throughout the discussion

Negative Behaviors:

- ___ 11. I did not listen to others
- ___ 12. I interrupted others
- ___ 13. I did not give eye contact to the person who was speaking
- ___ 14. I talked off topic and went off on tangents
- ___ 15. I talked too much or not at all
- ___ 16. I was disrespectful to myself and to my fellow classmates

What is the best idea or comment from a classmate that you heard in the seminar?

On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rank the seminar with 1 being very poor (poor participation, students were very disrespectful of other students, and few if any thoughtful contributions were provided) and 5 being excellent (active participation with nearly all students contributing, mutual respect, and insightful/thoughtful contributions were made throughout) _____

Feel free to make any additional comments below:

The Federalist, Paper Number 10: Response Paper Description and Scoring Rubric

Name: _____

To conclude this seminar, you are required to write a one page paper responding to the following questions: “Do you feel James Madison was correct in believing that factions are a threat to civil society? Do you agree or disagree with Madison’s assessment that a republic is best equipped to counter the threat of powerful factions emerging? Explain your answers in detail. You are expected to utilize the text and ideas from the seminar which support your point of view. Additionally, notes that you took during the seminar may also be used to help write this paper. This paper will be graded on a 4 point scale according to the following criteria.

4- Textual evidence and ideas from the seminar are referenced at least 4 different times, the paper has few grammatical and/or spelling errors, and the evidence utilized is accurate throughout and relates directly to the question.

3- Textual evidence and ideas from the seminar are referenced at least 3 different times, the paper has some grammatical and/or spelling errors, and the evidence utilized is mostly accurate throughout and is mostly related to the question.

2- Textual evidence and ideas from the seminar are referenced at least twice, the paper has numerous grammar and/or spelling errors, and the evidence utilized is somewhat accurate and is loosely related to the question.

1- Textual evidence and ideas from the seminar are referenced at least once, the paper has many grammar and/or spelling errors, and the evidence utilized is mostly inaccurate and is unrelated to the question.

0- Assignment is not completed or handed in.

Lesson Plan Evaluation/Reflection

This lesson is designed for use in a U.S. History class, but it could also be utilized in a Political Science course such as American government. This lesson would most likely be used when discussing the debate over the Constitution between the federalists and anti-federalists in a history class. However, in a political science course, this could be used as part of a unit on political theory, the Constitution, and the ideology of the founders. This Socratic Seminar can be used for students in the 11th or 12th grade. It is developed for upper level high school students because they will need ample background knowledge from previous classes on the subject, and because they will be required to examine a complex political text from founder, James Madison. This lesson serves a very important purpose for students who are citizens of a Democratic Republic. By taking part in this Socratic seminar, the students will have a clearer understanding of their country's government and how it differs from a direct democracy. Additionally, they will have an awareness of "factions" and can examine whether or not factions are a contemporary threat in American society.

PASS Standards

Standard One: Higher Order Thinking, Score: 4

The main purpose of this lesson is for students to gain a better understanding of the main ideas, beliefs, and issues through a vigorous discussion about the text. Through discussion, students will bring many different perspectives to the table, drawing on their prior knowledge and their interpretation of *The Federalist*, Paper Number 10. This seminar requires students to think critically regarding the beliefs that James Madison held concerning factions and systems of government. To succeed in this seminar, it is necessary that students interpret Madison's writing, synthesize it with prior knowledge regarding the time period and the debate over the Constitution, create their own interpretations as to whether factions are indeed a threat to the civil society, and examine whether factions exist today. Thus, the teacher's role is that of a facilitator where he or she seeks to create a forum in which the students can engage in higher order thinking. Overall, I feel that this Socratic seminar scored a 4 in the category of higher order thinking because it provides students with the opportunity to use critical thinking and analysis to examine a complex text.

Standard Two: Deep Knowledge, Score: 4

One of the major goals of a good social studies education is to examine content in proper depth. This allows students to examine the central issues and main themes of social studies while being able to dig deep into the content material. The Socratic seminar looks deeply into *The Federalist*, Paper Number 10. The students are not only required to vigorously examine the text but also to look at Madison's assessment of the threat of factions and the form of government that can best counteract factions. Additionally, the students will use the text and the ideas that are raised in the seminar to draw conclusions to answer the question for the response paper. The greater significance of this text is that it highlights the historical context of its time in the late 1780s with the federalists and the anti-federalists being at odds over what the Constitution would look like. Although this seminar could be construed as narrow in the sense that it examines one of the Federalist papers, I would argue that it actually covers a broad area since it brings up the

historical context of its time and examines greater questions regarding the nature of American government. For this reason, I feel that this lesson scored a 4 in the category of deep knowledge.

Standard 3: Substantive Conversation, Score: 4

The nature of this lesson as a Socratic Seminar is tailor made for substantive conversation. The role of the teacher in this lesson is also minimized in comparison to a more direct form of instruction such as lecture. I fully anticipate that upon implementing this seminar, it would be quite successful. The benefit of a Socratic Seminar is that students respond to each other's claims with little direct input from the teacher. Thus, students will converse with one another and directly address each other in the discussion. The topic of this discussion should also engage the students and encourage them to participate in a substantive conversation. In general, politics is an interesting topic to many who are often more than willing to share their thoughts. The fact that this lesson is partially based upon examining the difference between a republic and a democracy should also interest students because many students may not have a firm understanding of what the difference is prior to this lesson. Additionally, the discussion relates back to current day politics because students will have the opportunity to share their opinion as to whether politics has been factionalized today and, if so, is this problematic. The nature of my limited role should enhance student conversation and make the discussion more authentic as it is not scripted in any way. Overall, I would score this standard with a 4 because the nature of the lesson, as well as the topic being discussed, should inspire substantive conversation.

Standard 4: Connection to the World Beyond the Classroom, Score: 2

A lesson which seeks to connect to the world beyond the classroom provides students the opportunity to apply their knowledge to relevant real world issues. There are many good topics in social studies that allow students to make these connections such as the Civil Rights Movement. This lesson is not tailored to meet these criteria and, for this reason, I would score this standard with a 2. Although, this lesson directly relates to America's republican system of government and poses some major questions as to whether Madison's concept of factions are indeed a threat to the civil society, it does not apply this knowledge beyond our seminar. In this lesson, the students are primarily concerned with examining the text, coming up with responses to the focus question, and building upon the comments of their classmates. To score highly in this standard, I believe that students would have to produce something tangible which could be used outside of the classroom. For example, if the class wrote letters to their representative discussing the threat of factions, I feel it would score a 4 or 5. Overall, connections outside the classroom are important in social studies, but this standard is not the main focus of this lesson.

Standard 5: Ethical Valuing, Score: 4

This lesson seeks to address a few ethical issues regarding the American political system and the civil society. The lesson is designed to focus on Madison's concept of factions, where the students will discuss what Madison meant by factions, if his solution to limit the influence of factions was correct, and whether students see factions existing in current American politics. Additionally, the other major component of this lesson is based on discussing the difference between a democracy and a republic and the advantages of a republic that Madison describes. Thus, students are given the opportunity to examine these two systems of government and decide whether or not they agree with Madison. Furthermore, they could state which system they feel is better and explain why so. Another area that could be addressed in this lesson is whether or not

American politics is living up to the ideals set by James Madison in the text and whether politics is too divisive. For the previously mentioned reasons, I would assign this standard a score of 4 because it seeks to examine ethical questions regarding American politics and the American system of government.

Standard 6: Integration, Score: 3

This Socratic Seminar integrates other disciplines but based on the topic chosen, only to a limited extent. In discussing *The Federalist*, Paper Number 10, only two of the disciplines of social studies are examined: History and Political Science. There is not really an economic, behavioral science, or geographic component to this lesson. I do believe that the connection between history and political science in this lesson is seamless as the two overlap neatly in discussing this topic. In many ways, political science is history. The only major difference is that the focus shifts slightly when studying a topic through the lens of political science versus history. Although this lesson fails to use most of the social studies disciplines, it does integrate reading and writing skills which are utilized in English classrooms. The ability of students to analyze a text is a critical element that is taught in both English and Social Studies classrooms. Additionally, students will be required to use their writing skills when they complete the writing assessment after the seminar is completed. Good writing requires not only content knowledge but also proper mechanics, organization, and structure. These are all skills that students primarily learn while studying English. Thus, for the standard of integration, I would give this lesson a score of 3 since it does integrate other social studies disciplines and the subject of English, but only to a limited extent.

Potential Changes and Improvement

Overall, I feel confident that this Socratic seminar would go quite smoothly as the text that I have chosen is a deep and thoughtful text written by one of the founders, James Madison. Examining Madison's thoughts allows students the opportunities to get a glimpse of some of the beliefs that guided men like him during the late 1780s, when the debate over the nature of the Constitution ensued. Undertaking a discussion on this text will foster a discussion over the system of government that Americans live under and whether or not factions are a threat to the civil society. Studying the foundations of the American political system is a fascinating experience for anyone who has a keen interest in politics because this knowledge allows us to weigh in on contemporary political issues. Thus, this lesson should result in a thoughtful discussion by the students involved.

If I had to make any changes to this lesson, I think I would spend more time prior to this lesson discussing the differences between a democracy and a republic. Although, I believe Madison articulates this difference fairly well, more information could be quite helpful. For example, I could instruct students as to what a direct democracy is by using Athens in Ancient Greece as an example. Additionally, the Roman Republic could be used as an example of how a republic is structured. I think what may also be helpful is if I assigned students to read editorials arguing that American politics is too divisive or is not too divisive to get them thinking about Madison's concept of factions and the threat of factions. In assigning these articles prior to the seminar, students would be primed to think about contemporary politics in direct relation to Madison's thoughts. Overall, it is hard to foresee all necessary changes because one is not going to have a

good idea of how successful this lesson is until it is implemented. However, I feel these changes could be beneficial.

Transcendent Teaching and Learning Issues

During this lesson, I learned quite a bit as I realized that it takes time and deep thought to create a powerful discussion lesson. I had a relatively easy time deciding what text to use because, as a Political Science minor, I am very familiar with *The Federalist*, Paper Number 10. This text is also one that I have a personal attachment to as I deeply revere the founders and the founding documents such as the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Federalist Papers. Madison's thoughtful beliefs make this text a good one for discussion as there are many different directions in which students could go. In creating this lesson, I utilized considerable time to ensure that the proper amount of detail was established.

As a believer in constructivist and student-centered learning, this lesson fit well with my educational philosophy. My role as the teacher takes a back seat to that of my students who are the driving force of discussion where they construct knowledge. I also firmly believe that good social studies education needs to encompass higher order thinking skills and depth, instead of breadth, because deep knowledge and critical thinking skills will help students become thoughtful citizens throughout the rest of their lives. Thus, I feel this lesson addresses my core teaching beliefs, and I look forward to implementing it in the future.