

The Seminar

A common misunderstanding among high school students is that presentations and seminars are the same thing. In fact, they are very different learning opportunities. A student presentation is focused on a single student or student group presenting information to their audience – like a lecture, the presentation is focused on the presenter and is a largely passive learning experience for the audience which listens, may take notes and, on occasion, ask a question or two. The seminar by contrast, is an active learning experience for all involved. In a successful seminar students have read and struggled to understand a reading's relevance and importance to the course material – especially the readings place in our study of a particular period and its importance to the "Big Questions" presented in the course. Students come to a seminar prepared to discuss the reading and its importance with each other. The teacher has very little to do with the conversation save for the occasional question, keeping the conversation focused and on track and ensuring that the rules of decorum are followed. Students should interpret and challenge the reading and each other's interpretations of its meaning and importance.

The seminar is very much an extension of the skills touched on in the critical thinking exercise we did around historical photos. Students read (usually a primary source text), gather evidence and make inferences based on the evidence they take from their reading and background knowledge.

A note on decorum: Often students will disagree in their interpretations of the text and its meaning and importance to our study. This is to be expected. When disagreements arise you are expected to assemble and present evidence to support your position. Your classmates should listen carefully and in turn present their position. At no time is it acceptable to shout or speak loudly over others or to criticize the person not their ideas. Such behaviour will not be tolerated by the teacher or your peers and if that behaviour were to continue you would be asked to leave the seminar – your resultant non-participation impacting your mark negatively. The classroom and the seminar must be a safe environment for all. Your teacher will go through the Seminar Rubric on the reverse to ensure that you have a clear understanding of how you will be graded during the seminars.

Important: You have the opportunity to drop one seminar mark throughout the year – this could be your lowest mark but if you are absent for a seminar for whatever reason that is the mark that will be dropped.

SEMINAR – PARTICIPATION RUBRIC

CRITERIA	LEVEL 4 (80-100%)	LEVEL 3 (70-79%)	LEVEL 2 (60-69%)	LEVEL 1 (50-59%)	LEVEL 0*
Knowledge & Understanding <i>The student knows the material and its importance within the course of study</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates <i>thorough</i> knowledge of content demonstrates <i>thorough</i> understanding of content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates <i>considerable</i> knowledge of content demonstrates <i>considerable</i> understanding of content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates <i>some</i> knowledge of content demonstrates <i>some</i> understanding of content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates <i>limited</i> knowledge of content demonstrates <i>limited</i> understanding of content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates <i>very little</i> knowledge of content demonstrates <i>very little</i> understanding of content
	9.8 9.5 9 8.5 8.3	7.8 7.5 7.3	6.8 6.5 6.3	5.8 5.5 5.3	4 3 2
Thinking <i>The student is able to challenge the material and other students in a respectful and academic manner</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses critical/creative thinking processes with a <i>high degree</i> of effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses critical/creative thinking processes with <i>considerable</i> effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses critical/creative thinking processes with <i>some</i> effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses critical/creative thinking processes with <i>limited</i> effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> uses critical/creative thinking processes with <i>very little</i> effectiveness
	9.8 9.5 9 8.5 8.3	7.8 7.5 7.3	6.8 6.5 6.3	5.8 5.5 5.3	4 3 2
Communication <i>The student is able to clearly and meaningfully convey their ideas</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> expresses and organizes ideas and information with a <i>high degree</i> of effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> expresses and organizes ideas and information with <i>considerable</i> effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> expresses and organizes ideas and information with <i>some</i> effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> expresses and organizes ideas and information with <i>limited</i> effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> expresses and organizes ideas and information with <i>very little</i> effectiveness
	9.8 9.5 9 8.5 8.3	7.8 7.5 7.3	6.8 6.5 6.3	5.8 5.5 5.3	4 3 2
Application <i>The student is able to begin and build on discussion of the material and its place in our course of study</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with a <i>high degree</i> of effectiveness makes connections within and between various contexts with a <i>high degree</i> of effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with <i>considerable</i> effectiveness makes connections within and between various contexts with <i>considerable</i> effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with <i>some</i> effectiveness makes connections within and between various contexts with <i>some</i> effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with <i>limited</i> effectiveness makes connections within and between various contexts with <i>some</i> effectiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> transfers knowledge and skills to new contexts with <i>very little</i> effectiveness makes connections within and between various contexts with <i>very little</i> effectiveness
	9.8 9.5 9 8.5 8.3	7.8 7.5 7.3	6.8 6.5 6.3	5.8 5.5 5.3	4 3 2

*Student has failed to meet the minimum requirements of the assignment.

Comments:
