**Facilitator Guide to the Socratic Circle**

The **Socratic seminar** is a formal discussion, based on an event, activity or text, in which the leader asks open-ended questions. It’s called the Socratic Circle or Socratic Method, because this is the way Socrates, the Greek Philosopher taught, which was very different from other teachers and philosophers at the time. Within the context of the discussion, students listen closely to the comments of others, thinking critically for themselves, and articulate their own thoughts and their responses to the thoughts of others. While in Socratic seminars, GUSLA students will reflect on their experiences participating in GUSLA workshops, community service projects, and SEEDS lessons.

Teachers/leaders facilitating the discussions will help guide the conversation of their assigned group of 10-12 students, while allowing students to lead the deeper conversation and reflection of the week’s events and how the experiences have impacted them as a student, leader and/or future college student. The facilitator will begin the discussion by posing a question, however, the goal is for students to keep the discussion going by asking open-ended questions that stem from inquiry, and by providing responses that grow from the thoughts of others. Students (and the facilitator) are discouraged from asking ‘yes’ or ‘no’ questions, or responding in a persuasive and combative manner.

***This outline is a suggestion, as these circles are intended to be student-led and questions should build on one another and the prior discussion.***

1. Introduce what a Socratic Circle is by summarizing, in a student-friendly way, the description above.
2. Begin the discussion by posing the first question:
   1. What was your favorite part/activity of this week at GUSLA?
3. Depending on the students’ participation in the discussion through their responses and questions to each other, consider asking these follow-up questions:
   1. Why was that your favorite activity?
   2. How will that experience (referring to favorite activity) impact you (as a student/as a future college student/as a friend)?
4. Continuously encourage students to keep the discussion going by responding to their peers based on their own experience and perceptions, then asking additional questions. Remind them that their questions must be open-ended. Re-direct the discussion if students are responding to each other with an intent to persuade or debate each other’s opinions.
5. Here are a list of optional questions and follow-up questions you can pose to the group if/when the discussion has died down:
   1. What did you think of the College Knowledge Workshop?
   2. How did the ropes course make you feel? How can you apply that to other aspects of your life?
   3. What did you learn about yourself during the board-breaking activity?
   4. What are your thoughts about the other activities led by the Seeds Facilitators?
   5. How did you feel after completing your community service project?
   6. What skills did you gain during the program that you can apply at school to become a better student?
   7. How do you think GUSLA has prepared you to be a college student?
   8. In what ways do you feel you have changed or grown as a result of spending the week at GUSLA?
   9. If you were in charge of GUSLA, what would you do differently? (what activities would you add/remove) Why?
6. Wrap Up by summarizing the main points and asking if there are any last comments students would like to make before this opportunity ends.

*Remember the list of nine questions are suggestions for you, as the facilitator, to keep the conversation moving. The goal is for students to lead the discussion, so do not feel the need to get through all the questions, or to ask them in any particular order.*