

## “Best Practices” Components Matched with Socratic Seminar

Component	Explanation	Socratic Seminar
<b>Child-Centered</b>	Schooling should focus on investigating students’ own questions.	<b>Almost Always</b>
<b>Experiential</b>	Learning should involve active, hands-on experiences.	<b>Possibly<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Reflective</b>	Students and teachers should look back on experiences.	<b>Almost Always</b>
<b>Authentic</b>	Rich, complex ideas are at the heart of the curriculum.	<b>Almost Always</b>
<b>Holistic</b>	Ideas should be presented in purposeful whole-to-part contexts.	<b>Often<sup>2</sup></b>
<b>Social</b>	Family and community support can promote learning in schools.	<b>Possibly<sup>3</sup></b>
<b>Collaborative</b>	Children should be learning with and from one another.	<b>Almost Always</b>
<b>Democratic</b>	Students should have options in school and learn how to make good choices.	<b>Almost Always</b>
<b>Cognitive</b>	Students should engage with higher order thinking skills and metacognition.	<b>Almost Always</b>
<b>Developmental</b>	Activities should fit developmental stages.	<b>Almost Always</b>
<b>Constructivist</b>	Students should reinvent and construct their own understandings.	<b>Almost Always</b>
<b>Psycholinguistic</b>	We learn to talk by talking more. Therefore, students should talk more in school.	<b>Almost Always</b>
<b>Challenging</b>	Students should assume more responsibilities for their own learning.	<b>Almost Always</b>

**1:** Although Socratic seminars do not often involve kinesthetic, hands-on experiences, the students are actively involved in constructing their own understandings; this aspect has its own category under “Constructivist.” However, character-based seminars, which involve role-playing, can be experiential. Also, Socratic seminars could be conducted about dance, movements or other kinesthetic activities.

**2:** Socratic seminars are often used to explore large, universal themes, although they can also used to deeply investigate small details.

**3:** Socratic seminars can be facilitated with parents and community members, although the students may not be involved. However, experienced students could facilitate seminars for other classes, other schools, and parents. Interested students could form a philosophy club or other organization that employs Socratic seminar.