

Socratic Debates & Discussion - Sign up for 1 discussion

1. I'm a loser baby! Biggest Loser Socratic

- After reading your novel, you feel your character was really a big drip. Usually, novels herald heroes, but this author showed me a person I don't want to be!
- You will argue with other novel readers about which one of your novels had the biggest loser as a character
- Bring text evidence (specific scenes and 2 - 5 quotes)
- These are the characters that annoy us or we hate for a reason. However, they exist for 2 reasons:
 - to be a foil - to our main characters, opposite or different enough so their faults make their main character's shine or highlight personal qualities
 - or to be an antagonist - a force that pushes the main character towards their goals
 - Sometimes they are antiheroes - a type of protagonist that has bad qualities, yet we secretly keep rooting for them

A. List 5 - 10 reasons why your character is a loser

(ex: critical of best friend, always complaining)

A. Why does your character deserve to win the loser award? What is a true loser (in your opinion) and how does your character match that?

My character is more of a loser than any other character because.... (explain how the character messes up their own life or someone's else's)

A. Despite your character being a loser, does his / her role help your main character in some way?

My character exists in order to.... (explain how your character contributes to the novel.....)

A. Find 5 quotes - explain how these reveal annoying or immoral (wrong) character trait

Quote	This demonstrates
<i>Example: "But before you think Rowdy is only good for revenge, and kicking the shit out of minivans, raindrops, and people, let me tell you something sweet about him: he loves comic books. But not the cool superhero ones like Daredevil or X-Men. No, he reads the goofy old ones, like Richie Rich and Archie and Casper the Friendly Ghost. Kid stuff. He keeps them hidden in a hole in the wall of his bedroom closet. Almost every day, I'll head over to his house and we'll read those comics together. (14-15)</i>	<u>Example argument:</u> Arnold believes Rowdy is his best friend, because he has very few friends to choose from. Rowdy constantly pulls him into fights and the only other redeeming quality Arnold can say is that he secretly reads comic books. Rowdy is not honest about who he truly is, hiding behind a tough face - makes him more insecure than the main character.
Quote	This demonstrates

2. Best contributing character or Best turnaround Socratic

- At the beginning of the novel, you felt your character was a drip, After finishing your novel, you feel your character needs to be recognized for what they did offer. Main characters only. Debate with your fellow classmates about which main character had the best turnaround, learned the Most. (Meg, Holden, Ralph, George, Julio, Iggy)
- You will argue with other novel readers about which one of your novels had the character who showed us some hope by turning it around in life. Bring text evidence (specific scenes and 2 - 5 quotes)
- Novels help us to understand how to be better people or behave towards people by developing characters who struggle and then achieve these goals. They make us relate and sometimes try better ourselves.

A. What 5 - 10 characteristics does my character exhibit that shows they have developed / learned or contributed to the story more than any other ? (determined, learns to speak up for others)

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A. Why does your character deserve to win the turn-around award?

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- A. Despite your character have some problems at the beginning, how is what your character understands or does the most important aspect of being a better person?

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- A. Find 4-5 quotes - explain how these examples illustrate your character's achievement of these qualities or traits.

Quote	This demonstrates
<u>Example:</u> Arnold Palmer (main character) in Diary of a Part-Time Indian <u>Quote</u> <i>"You've been fighting since you were born," he said. "You fought off that brain surgery. You fought off those seizures. You fought off all the drunks and drug addicts. You kept your hope. And now, you have to take your hope and go somewhere where other people have hope."</i> <i>I was starting to understand. He was a math teacher. I had to add my hope to somebody else's hope. I had to multiply my hope.</i> <i>"Where is hope?" I asked. "Who has hope?"</i> <i>"Son," Mr. P said. "You're going to find more and more hope the</i>	<u>Example argument:</u> To be someone in life, you have to have a voice to fight for yourself & others. Arnold is born a weak character and seems to adopt this weakness in his attitude as well as physically. Throughout the story, he learns to create his own fights, stand up for himself, and understand how struggle benefits him personally. He chose to leave the reservation in order to help himself and then others. He wanted his journey at equal education to be provided for others and knew he had to pave the road in order to make that happen for other people. His goals or not only personal, trying to better himself, but his traits help his tribe / society as well. He is a quintessential example of what it means to become more independent in life, move beyond stereotypes, and actually contribute to the world.

<i>farther and farther you walk away from this sad, sad, sad reservation." (p. 33)</i>	
Quote	This demonstrates

3. Best supporting character role / sidekick socratic

It's Not about you! Tweeted so many others

- Stupid Main characters get all the hype! Look at how much they learned and developed. Teachers love to read our essays on this. Well I am here to set it straight, It's not about them, IT'S ALL ABOUT ME! If it wasn't for me getting in the way or helping my character save his butt, we wouldn't have a novel! I am the secret overlooked reason my character is even thought about.

- You will argue with other novel readers about which one of your novels had the best supporting character who was the real thing behind your main character. They offered insight, patience, perseverance, etc.

A. What qualities or traits make this character a supportive individual? List 5 - 10

A. Why does your character deserve to win the best supporting character award?

A. Is your character essential to your main character? How and why?

A. Find 4-5 quotes - explain how these examples illustrate how your character supports

Quote & Theme	This demonstrates
<u>Example:</u> Coach (main character's basketball coach) in Diary of a Part-Time Indian <u>Quote</u> "I believe in you. I look at you out on that court and I see tru promise." (p. 119)	<u>Example argument:</u> Some people don't say much, but their small amount of words or presence are so important in making a difference. Coach is one of the few positive influences in Arnold's life. However, if it were not for his constant presence and small words of encouragement towards the end of the story, Arnold would not have had the presence of mind to stand up and confront his friend Rowdy. He had always taken the lower, more vulnerable position in their friendship, and now through the playing on the team, he was able to see how much leverage and possibility he has to offer to others. He didn't always see this and the coaches gently nudging him to take risks helped him to see this. The coach's advice also helped Arnold to confront his home team after getting beat up. Arnold's character would have fallen without the coaches small, yet important support. He trumps other supporting character's because he cares, doesn't tell the main character what to do, but helps the main character to find his voice by asking questions.
Quote & Theme	This demonstrates

4. Theme socratic - book with the most needed Themes

The Book of Life: What to do and what not to do - Read this so you can figure it out!

- You have always felt some people just need to be taught a few more lessons about life. After reading your book, you feel your author left you with a pretty good impression of how people should be or not be, how people should behave or not behave. You feel other people who don't often get this should read this book so they will get it! (example: just be humane people! like in Golding)
- The government is putting out a survival manual and kit of life lessons people should follow after a possible apocalypse.

A. What themes / messages / life lessons does your book teach people?

- What happens to people when they act a certain way?
- How do people behave and how should they behave?
- What traits are most important when finding success, following your dreams, or overcoming problems?

Themes in my book

Sample Life Lessons / themes offered in books.

- savagery destroys the self and eventually the group
- isolation is not an escape, but a handicap that only helps you create a false illusion of the world

- It is terrible to be fake, but even more terrible to be fake yourself
- you can control your own destiny (i.e. overcome fears and change social situations) with a positive frame of mind
- Love is the essential ingredient for overcoming fear & hatred & monotony
- Situations don't change because of what someone else does, they change because of what you choose to do (action vs. inaction)

B. Why are these themes important for humankind to know and live by? (Why should we bother to pass along these messages or thoughts?)

C. Where do these themes show up in my book?

There is room for 3 life lessons and novels and in this kit. As a team, you will argue which novels get in and which get left out, never again to be seen by the world's eyes.

Quote that reveals theme	This demonstrates
<u>Example: Theme: Violence should not be a way of life. only a means to an end when necessary</u> "His father is drinking hard and throwing hard punches, so Rowdy and his mother are always walking around with bruised and bloody faces. 'It's war paint,' Rowdy always says. 'It just makes me look tougher.'" - Junior and Rowdy, p. 17	<u>Example argument:</u> Junior lives under the constant threat of physical violence. Although he attempts to assuage the threat through his drawings and light-hearted approach to the problem, he is nevertheless subjected to regular beatings by members of the reservation, including the adults. But violence serves as a form of communication in the reservation. Junior believes it is the Indian's acknowledgement that they are going nowhere that fuels their violence. Thus, like Rowdy, physical violence is also communicative, but he has to decide how much he wants to adopt violence into his way of life. Towards the end, he decides to shy away with it deciding to take a stand with his words more.
Quote	This demonstrates

D. As a group, order your books by importance.. Y you will need to decide what order they go in (1 being the most important). Keep in mind, disease is rampant after a Zombie apocalypse, so even if your novel makes it into the novel, everyone might not have time to read it, since they will be dying of malnourishment. What are the top books people should read in their last hour and pass onto their loved ones they are leaving behind?

Socratic Agendas

Socratic #1 BIGGEST LOSER

Round #1 - go around

- Introduce yourself to the group
- Explain in one sentence what your book is about & briefly what role your character plays that you are arguing about

Round #2 - popcorn style

- State your first argument & evidence - Why is your character a loser?

wait until everyone goes at least once

- criticize another person's argument & bring new evidence to support another point

Round #3 - popcorn style

- Of your group, who should win the biggest loser award?

Socratic #2 BEST TURNAROUND OR CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD

Round #1 - go around

- Introduce yourself to the group
- Explain in one sentence what your book is about & briefly what role your character plays that you are arguing about

Round #2 - popcorn style

- State your first argument & evidence - Why is your character a good example for the world to know about?

wait until everyone goes at least once

- criticize another person's argument & bring new evidence to support another point

Round #3 - popcorn style

- Of your group, who should win the biggest turnaround award?

Socratic # 3 BEST Supporting Character

Round #1 - go around

- Introduce yourself to the group
- Explain in one sentence what your book is about & briefly what role your character plays that you are arguing about

Round #2 - popcorn style

- State your first argument & evidence - How is your character the most helpful? Why are they essential to the novel?

wait until everyone goes at least once

- criticize another person's argument & bring new evidence to support another point

Round #3 - popcorn style

- Of your group, who should win the best supporting character award?

Socratic # 4 BEST Life Lesson

Round #1 - go around

- Introduce yourself to the group
- Explain in one sentence what your book is about & what ideas you want to propose to put in the vault today. (I am here to change your minds about how love can change the world - A Wrinkle in Time)

Round #2 - popcorn style

- State your first argument & evidence - What is your first life lessons your book offers and why should people know this?
- wait until everyone goes at least once
- criticize another person's argument - why is your life lesson more important for people to know if we are restarting society?

Round #3 - popcorn style

- Which 3 books should go into the vault as models to the future citizens responsible for recreating this world and in what order?

For credit:

you must participate in a socratic with novel (new ideas) can't repeat what someone else has said

- 1- 2 X = C specific example from book & reason
- 3 - 4 X = B specific examples from book & reasons, & respond to someone else's argument

- 3 - 5 = A specific examples from book & reasons, & respond to someone else's argument, provide different ways of looking at your character's contributions or lack of contributions

You must also participate as:

- an entertained observer of the court
- a jury member at least 1 X

Jury members - help to assess the effectiveness of the arguments, determine a winner, and contribute to assessing the participants

Notetaker - take notes on conversation