Inner/Outer Circle Discussion

How Does It Work?

- Each class member will come to class armed with a set of questions about the selection. (See handout)
- The class will be divided into two groups: An inner circle, and an outer circle, and each group will its own responsibilities.

Inner Circle Responsibilities:

- The inner circle does the discussing. They direct their conversation to each other, NOT the outer circle.
- The discussion is theirs, and covers their own ideas and questions that arise in response to questions offered by the outer circle.
- Be prepared to support your responses with examples/quotes from the text! Bring your annotated copy of the text with you to the discussion!

Outer Circle Responsibilities:

- The outer circle provides the questions for the inner circle to discuss.
- When the discussion of the inner circle “finishes” a question, another student tosses out another, and so on.
- If there is a lull in conversation, or a question was not addressed to an outer circle members’ satisfaction, they should prompt the inner circle to continue, but . . .
- Outer circle members MUST NOT take part in the discussion!!
- As the outer circle listens, they should take notes over the inner circle’s discussion, and write down ideas and commentary.
Point-Winning Moves

1. Initiating discussion
2. Giving information
3. Asking for information
4. Giving positive or negative reactions to opinions of others
5. Asking for positive or negative reactions to opinions of others
6. Courteously confronting or challenging others’ opinions or incorrect facts
7. Restating another person’s contribution for clarity or to show personal understanding
8. Asking others to restate their contributions
9. Giving or asking for examples
10. Giving or asking for clarification or summary
11. Encouraging, helping, or praising others
12. Relieving group tension

Point-Losing Moves

1. Being aggressive, disrespectful, or hostile
2. Making self-confessions (i.e. “Well, I didn’t read but...”)
3. Being defensive
4. Competing for attention
5. Refusing to participate
6. Seeking sympathy
7. Pleading for a “pet” idea (i.e. “My idea is better than anyone else’s.”)
8. Dominating the discussion.
9. Mocking or laughing at others.