Fitzgerald /10 Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Discussion Grading Rubric**

Because discussion of important topics is critical for citizens to become informed and participate in a democratic government, students will be assessed in this skill area, asking whether they can effectively participate in a discussion.

Work on the skill of discussion can take many forms in class, the goal being to prepare the student to take part in serious discussions as a citizen, and all these many forms of discussion can be graded: Socratic circles, debates, the sharing of and discussion of ideas with the whole class, with a partner, with a group of three, with a larger group on a project.

As with all graded skill areas, students will be graded in the same five specific qualities of the skill area throughout the year, so that students will know what to work on to improve.

* Students worked to brainstorm these qualities themselves, coming up with the following:

**Qualities of successful participation in a discussion, as brainstormed by students** -

* ideas shared -
  + freely
    - students enters into the flow of ideas
    - without being called upon or pressed or expecting other to wait unnaturally
  + in a timely manner - not far removed to the ideas being reacted to
* a reasonable amount of ideas are shared based on the time available and the size of the group
  + the student would be considered an equal or strong participant in the discussion
    - the student does not dominate the discussion
    - given lulls in conversation, student took chance to offer a new thought
* ideas accurate and clear –
  + might also help correct and clarify the ideas of others
* ideas well developed by detail – During group work this may be seen in the student referring to materials when discussing ideas with the group.
  + may take the form of reasons, examples (real or hypothetical), comparisons, connections, etc.
  + may also help develop or correct the ideas of others
* reflects that student has listened to the ideas of others and seeks the ideas of others
* body language and eye contact of a good listener
* looking at the person speaking
* turning toward the person speaking
* nodding
* giving verbally acknowledgment of the speakers ideas
* asking questions of the speaker,
* "bounce off of" or "flow from" ideas already shared
* doesn't repeat as if idea had not been shared already
* does not purposefully change subject
* student respectful of others and seeks the opinions of all
* ideas are stated in a way that conveys others may disagree
* does not make the discussion a competition

**Suggestions for how to improve on back.**

**Suggestions for How to Improve Your Participation in a Discussion**

* Ideas shared freely and in a timely manner
  + Prepare!
    - If topics for possible discussion have been offered, prepare ideas for each.
    - Imagine you were preparing for a test or other in-class assignment; you need to have studied to have thoughts to share.
    - Image the debate.
    - What ideas might be offered?
    - What ideas could you offer?
    - Rehearse yourself actually saying these ideas out loud.
* A reasonable amount of ideas are shared based on the time available and the size of the group
  + - If you are not talking enough
    - prepare more ideas (See above.)
    - take advantage of lulls in the conversation to offer the ideas you have prepared
    - listen to the ideas shared by others and respond to them
    - Do not worry about speaking at the same time as another person. If you have spoken less, the other person will nod and allow you to continue
    - If you have talked too much -
    - Be sure that you are not always the first one to respond to a new idea, others may be afraid their ideas will sound silly after yours.
    - Allow lulls in the conversation during which people can think.
    - State your ideas in a more open fashion and or directly state that you know other might disagree.
* Ideas accurate and clear –
  + Be careful to make eye contact with members of the group to catch any looks of confusion or uncertainty.
  + respond to any such looks, by again stating what idea you were responding to and possibly
    - rewording your idea
    - offering more or a different explanation
    - offering a specific example
* Ideas well developed by detail – During group work this may be seen in the student referring to materials when discussing ideas with the group.
  + Prepare developed ideas and plan how you will use these ideas to prove your point
    - Reasons
    - Examples (real or hypothetical)
    - Comparisons
    - Connections
  + Rehearse delivering the this development, making sure to practice giving yourself time to do so
* Reflects that student has listened to the ideas of others and seeks the ideas of others
* Note what behaviors were not seen and make an effort to specifically model them next time
* Look at the person speaking.
* Turn toward the person speaking.
* Nod.
* Give verbally acknowledgment of the speakers ideas.
* Ask questions of the speaker.
* Don't repeat as if idea had not been shared already.
* Don't purposefully change subject.
* State ideas in a way that conveys others may disagree.
* Do not act as if you are trying to win a debate.