

## The use of Lesson Study to prepare students to ask purposeful questions in a poetry Socratic Seminar

Beatrice Leong  
Cheryl Wong

Methodist Girls' School  
Singapore

### Abstract

*The aim of the research was to explore how teachers through Lesson Study could help students with the strategies to participate in a poetry Socratic Seminar. Of particular interest was how teachers could encourage students to reach expert levels for the advanced skills of justification, expansion of ideas and making connections during the Socratic Seminar, as well as the behavioural scaffolding students needed to participate in a Socratic Seminar. The outcome showed encouraging results in how the Lesson Study not only showed students asking better quality, higher order questions while focussing on the text, but also helped to improve and refine the teachers' quality of teaching.*

### Introduction

The purpose of this research was to look into how Lesson Study could be used as a means to help students ask more purposeful questions during a Socratic Seminar poetry analysis. From past observations and experiences, the teachers were aware of the lack of confidence and knowledge students demonstrated when it came to the analysis of poems. Thus, for the majority of students, this would translate into a superficial analysis and discussion of poems. Hence, it was believed that the Socratic Seminar would give students a clear structure and greater confidence in their poetry analysis. Previous lessons using the Socratic Seminar in poetry analysis involved using a template for students to ask questions and focus their analysis. The question that the teachers were interested in was how, through Lesson Study, the range of purposeful questions that students could ask during a Socratic Seminar could be increased and, in turn, lead to greater knowledge and confidence in pupils in poetry analysis.

### Literature review

Research has shown the immense potential of the Socratic Seminar in engaging students in and fostering students' critical thinking and close reading (Polite & Adams, 1996, 1997; Copeland, 2005). The pedagogy has application not just in language classrooms (Metzger, 1998) but any classroom where texts are discussed, like Mathematics (Tanner & Casados, 1998) and Science (Chowning, 2009). During Socratic Seminars, students pay close attention to the texts they read and identify questions to ask and answer; they also pose further queries as they inquire deeper into the topic

(Copeland, 2005). Studies on the use of Socratic Seminars to foster critical thinking suggest that teachers, in planning for Seminars, should ‘compel students to utilise higher order thinking skills’ (Polite & Adams, 1996).

Lesson Study was chosen as the methodology for conducting this research because of the research team’s decision to focus the research on student learning rather than student performance. Assessment during the Seminar is essentially of student performance, of the collaborative skills and dispositions needed to participate in a group dialogue about the poem. Research on the use of the Socratic Seminar has previously focussed on the effect of the Socratic Seminar: developing dialogic skills and language fluency. There is a lack of research on the pre-lesson stage of the Seminar, of the impact of helping students with the skills needed to be successful participants of the Seminar. Lesson Study research is not only used to study students’ understanding of academic content, but is also used to examine their readiness before a performance task, for example, whether they have the tools needed to explain scientific phenomena (Dobb, 2002).

Our research, in examining the pre-seminar stage through Lesson Study, explores how teachers can help students to become more effective and successful dialogists by acquiring the ability to ask purposeful questions, a range of questions that will enable students to not only analyse a poem but explore the nuances and underlying meanings of the text to gain insight.

Our research question is:

How do teachers prepare students to ask more purposeful questions during a Socratic Seminar on poetry analysis?

## **Methodology**

### *Samples*

For this study, three Year 3 Language Arts classes taught by two teachers in a secondary school in Singapore formed the groups for the research lessons. Based on the students’ Language Arts mid-year exam results, the pupils in Class A were the strongest academically while students in Class B were the weakest in Language Arts. The MSP (Mean Subject Point) for Class A was 4.92, for Class B, it was 4.41 and, for Class C, it was 4.63. A higher MSP indicates a class with better results in the subject. The maximum possible score is 7.

The Lesson Study research lesson was conducted with three iterations with a debriefing session after each iteration. As the focus of the Lesson Study was to observe the effects of changes made in the lessons in order to improve the students’ questioning techniques, it was decided that this could be seen more clearly when two revised lessons were carried out. Class A was taught by Teacher Y, Class B by Teacher Z and Class C by Teacher Y. The Lesson Study research team comprised four teachers including Teachers Y and Z. The same four teachers participated in the goal-setting, planning and debriefing sessions, and were present either as the teacher or observers at the research lessons.

### *Intervention*

The following were the steps the Lesson Study research team took. This constitutes the report (Chokshi, Ertle, Yoshida & Fernandez, 2001) of the Lesson Study process, documents the discussions and reflections of the team, as well as the issues encountered by the team.

## Goal-setting

While students from the three classes have been taught the tools of literary analysis for poetry and the skill of writing commentaries, a written assignment revealed that the students' interpretations and analyses were superficial and their arguments, undeveloped. The Socratic Seminar was selected for implementation because of its aim to generate questions and facilitate deeper understanding of the texts discussed. However, the Socratic Seminar as an activity is a complex one. It is a student-led and teacher-facilitated dialogue of intellectual engagement, cooperation and conversation where the goal is not to answer questions but to generate more questions.

Literature (Trickey & Topping, 2004) suggests that the process of developing student dialogue should include teacher behaviours that help to foster a climate conducive to the development of thinking skills: behaviours like setting ground rules in advance, showing respect for each student, providing non-threatening activities, accepting individual differences, modelling thinking skills and allowing students to be active participants (Trickey & Topping, 2004).

Lesson Study was the methodology selected because of its suitability for studying student and teacher behaviours and interactions.

The development of two skills was identified as the target to be studied. Students had to learn to:

1. ask authentic questions about the poem to further/deepen understanding on issues raised;
2. develop/build on each other's ideas so as to further/deepen understanding of the poem.

Hence one of the aims of the lesson was to provide practice for students to improve in the skills required for the Socratic Seminar.

The alignment was also determined by the Language Arts Department's *Map of Understandings and Skills for Language Arts (2014)*, in particular by the following standards:

*Literature Learner Outcomes and Skills: Developing and Communicating Responses to Texts*

*LS 12 Personal and Critical Responses – formulate personal responses to texts by making connections between the text and prior knowledge, personal experiences and imagination, and critically refine these through analysis, interpretation, evaluation and synthesis of textual evidence; express these responses in a variety of ways.*

*LS 13 Respond to different Views and Perspectives – respond personally and critically to different views and perspectives (including literary theorists and critics) with evidence from a text; reassess own perspectives and refine them in the light of these views and perspectives.*

## Planning

During the planning meetings, teachers in the research team who had used the Socratic Seminar with the previous batch of students suggested useful strategies and materials for use during the lesson. Besides giving a rundown of how the Seminar should be implemented, they suggested providing students with samples of types of questions and sample question stems for students to apply. They included,

- Opening questions: intended to get the seminar off to a start.
- Guiding questions: intended to examine deeper meanings in the text and to adjust the seminar if it was getting off track; and
- Closing questions: intended to help the group bring the seminar to a close, though not

necessarily leading to any final conclusions.

In addition, one of the teachers suggested providing students with a dry run or watching a video of a Seminar in progress and providing students with a copy of the rubrics beforehand so that students know the expectations of the Seminar.

For the implementation of the research lesson, a list of pre-seminar writing prompts was found that contained five types of questions with definitions.

- Closed-ended (CE): questions about the text that will help everyone in the class come to an agreement about events, characters or situations in the text; these are questions that will enable comprehension of the poem.
- Open-ended (OE): questions about the text that will require proof and group discussion and 'construction of logic' to discover or explore the answer to the questions; these are inferential questions.
- Literary Analysis (LA): questions dealing with HOW an author chose to compose a literary piece; these are questions about writer's craft (style and technique).
- Universal Theme (UT): questions dealing with a theme(s) from the text that encourage group discussion about the universality of the text.
- World Connection (WC): questions connecting the text to the real world or the readers' lives and observations about the world.

The questions can be categorised according to level of difficulty from comprehension, inferential to analysis and inquiry questions.

During a planning meeting, it was decided to conduct a dry run of the Seminar so that students could experience a Seminar before participating in one in which they would be assessed. It was then decided that the research lesson would focus on a segment helping students ask a range of questions that would further the discussion during the Seminar.

### Lesson Study Observation Questions

The team used the observation protocol developed by the school's professional development team. The questions to be answered by the teacher observers as they observed the lesson were:

1. Were the goals met? Which instructional decisions might have attributed to helping students meet the goals?
2. What aspects of the goals were not reached? What supporting evidence is there?
3. What aspects of the lesson went well?
4. Were the students actively engaged? Can you provide supporting evidence of their behaviour?
5. What evidence is there of students' understanding of the key ideas/concepts (i.e. how did they demonstrate their understanding)?
6. What did the teacher do to encourage communication and to move discussions forward thus creating a Learning Environment?
7. What went well? What were the areas for improvement?

### Lesson Study 1 (1 hr)

In July 2015, Teacher Y conducted the first lesson with Class A. The following lesson plan was used. Three teacher-observers observed the lesson. During the group discussion, the teacher-observers sat in with different groups to listen in and observe.

Time Frame	Activities (with rationale)	Resources
10 mins	<p>Introduction to the skills needed for the Socratic Seminar</p> <p>Remind students of the Seminar’s purpose/aim: to facilitate deeper understanding of ideas and expansion of their own thinking about the poems through shared discussion.</p> <p>Difference between dialogue and debate → to focus on attitudes needed (Rationale: to understand the value of the Socratic Seminar which lies in the co-construction of knowledge)</p> <p>Skill sets identified from rubrics with alignment to 21st Century Competencies (21CC).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active Participation – be attentive, listen actively and be on task</li> <li>• Collaboration – encourage participation, respectfully support one another, respond to and build on each other’s responses</li> <li>• Communication – articulate ideas clearly, make specific references to the text to justify and give clear explanations/elaborations</li> <li>• Thinking/cognitive skills/habits of mind – suspend judgement/keep an open mind, listen for deeper meaning, search for strength or validity in all ideas, explore different possibilities</li> </ul>	PowerPoint
20 mins	<p><b>Skill: asking authentic questions about text for further understanding</b></p> <p>What are authentic questions? (Open-ended, with no right or wrong answers and meant to further inquiry)</p> <p>Students examine question types</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are World Connection, Open-ended, Closed-ended, Universal Theme, and Literary Analysis questions? (Writing Prompt questions)</li> <li>• How can these be Opening, Guiding and Closing questions?</li> </ul> <p>ACTIVITY: In groups, they write one question from each type of writing prompt on one of the poems they have discussed in class (‘Postcards from Chinatown’ or ‘Night Shift’) and classify each under the types of Seminar questions – if it is an Opening, Guiding or Closing question.</p> <p>Class Discussion: Which writing prompt can be used as Opening/Guiding/Closing questions? Can prompts be classified under more than one type, e.g. what does the poet suggest about ‘Postcards from Chinatown’? This can be used as a Guiding question to elicit the main ideas in the poem as well as a Closing question to synthesis the poet’s purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If time permits: What other questions would you ask as Opening, Guiding or Closing questions on this poem?</li> </ul> <p>Preparation for the Socratic Seminar: to write at least one question in each of the categories.</p>	<p>PowerPoint and worksheets with question types and examples</p> <p>Students’ copies of poems</p> <p>Plain A4 paper</p>

After the class was dismissed, the teacher-observers discussed the teaching which had been conducted by Teacher Y as well as the group discussions during Lesson Study 1. This will be discussed further in the Results section. With the feedback from the teacher-observers, changes were made to the next lesson, which was conducted within the hour but this time by Teacher Z with Class B.

### Lesson Study 2 (1 hr)

Teacher Z made changes to her lesson after feedback from the Lesson Study team. The same three teacher-observers sat in during the lesson. During the various group discussions, the three teacher-observers sat in with different groups to observe the group discussion.

1. Teacher Z introduced the task of crafting questions by taking students through the process incrementally starting with question types they were familiar with (5W1H type – who, when, what, why, where, how).
2. Teacher Z introduced and explained the taxonomy of pre-Socratic Seminar questions that could be used during a Socratic Seminar poetry analysis, focussing particularly on the higher order question types of Universal Theme questions and World Connection questions. Two PowerPoint slides were added to focus students' attention. The first elaborated on what Universal Theme and World Connection questions were, and the second included examples of these question types based on poems students had discussed prior to the lesson.
3. After Teacher Z's explanation, the pupils worked in groups to discuss formulating examples of the different pre-Seminar question types based on a poem they had studied earlier.
4. Each group was called by Teacher Z to present their examples of the different pre-Seminar question types. Teacher Z then reviewed each group's examples with the class who gave feedback.
5. Due to a lack of time, not all the groups were able to present their examples. The class was dismissed after some final instructions for the next lesson.

The teacher-observers had a debriefing session once again to discuss the students' responses during the lesson as well as Teacher Z's teaching. Further improvements were made to the lesson plan as well as refinements to the instructions given to the students in order to elicit more accurate responses more quickly. This will be discussed in the Results section.

In summary, the teachers studied the first two lessons. After each lesson, the lesson was discussed with suggestions given for improvement for the next lesson. The first revised lesson, Lesson Study 2 was carried out on the same day as Lesson Study 1 to fit the week's schedule. The second revised lesson, Lesson Study 3 was carried out after Lesson Study 2 within the same week but not on the same day because of timetabling constraints. Lesson 3 will not be discussed here as the teacher-observers were unable to observe the lesson due to timetabling constraints. However, a video recording of the lesson enabled reflections and observations to be made.

### Data collection

In August 2015, the following data was collected:

- Video recordings of three Lesson Study lessons.
- Two Lesson Study Observations which were recorded by three teacher-observers each time.
- Video recordings of the teachers' debriefing meetings after each lesson.
- Video recordings of the students' participation during the various Socratic Seminars.
- The students' individual written reflections of the Socratic Seminar process.

## Results

### *Lesson Study*

To answer the research question of how the teachers' lessons prepare students to ask more purposeful questions during the Socratic Seminar poetry analysis, a detailed analysis of the two research lessons studied are in order. The focus of the debriefing meetings was on:

- Achievement of aims/objectives of the lesson
- Student engagement and demonstration of understanding
- Teachers' behaviour in facilitating learning; their encouragement of communication and of moving discussions forward

Feedback from Lesson Study 1 included the pace of the lesson, whether the students were still unclear over the various pre-Seminar question types particularly Universal Theme and World Connection questions as well as whether more specific instructions from the teacher ought to be given to the students. The teachers had a discussion to clarify their own understanding of what Universal Theme and World Connection questions were to clarify the definitions and terms used by Teacher Y in Lesson Study 1.

Based on the first de-briefing session, the following changes were recommended to Lesson Study 1:

1. In order to shorten Teacher Y's introduction section on the Socratic Seminar as a dialogue, reduce lengthy elaborations on the Socratic Seminar rubrics as that will have been covered during the previous lesson and only focus on what is necessary, which is explaining the different pre-Seminar question types. This will allow for more time for the practising of writing questions, which is the main lesson objective.
2. Have students bring to the lesson a poem they have already discussed in class before so that they can have a common basis for formulating pre-Seminar questions.
3. Provide an introduction to types of questions by starting with question types students are familiar with – the '5W1H'.
4. Be clear about the types of pre-Seminar questions, especially the Universal Theme questions and the World Connection questions, so as to advise students/groups in their formulations of questions as well as to clarify students' questions.
5. Provide examples based on a text on the pre-Seminar worksheet that the pupils are all familiar with. This will help the students to formulate the pre-Seminar questions quickly and more efficiently. The worksheet only carried definitions of the various question types and one example of each type.
6. Find a more time-efficient and effective way for groups to share their questions. Instead of having volunteers from each group share each question type, it is suggested to have groups show their questions on the visualizer as this will help to cut down time on writing questions on the whiteboard.
7. Have the groups' examples of each pre-Seminar question typed on a sheet of paper for ease of comparison and discussion instead of just verbalizing them to the class.

After the above changes were implemented, the following was observed in Lesson Study 2:

1. The pace of the lesson at the start was brisker as there was less 'teacher talk' while the lesson was more focussed on its objective of getting students to craft pre-Seminar question types.

2. Using a common poem that the students were familiar with helped to focus the discussion on the types of pre-Seminar questions instead of grappling with understanding the poem.
3. There was more time for the groups to craft their pre-Seminar questions; however, this could lead to students becoming disengaged (see point 1 below).

Further recommendations were made based on Lesson Study 2:

1. The manner in which the various groups shared their pre-Seminar questions could be further improved upon. It was found that some pupils were disengaged when Teacher Z spent extended time explaining the errors and misconceptions at the visualizer. The groups presented their questions group by group rather than according to question type. It was recommended to use 'post-its' or to explore technology apps like Padlet or mind mapping tools so that the same question types from the various groups could be grouped together for discussion and comparison.
2. Teacher Z's pacing of the lesson could be improved as there was insufficient time to go through all the groups' presentations.

Teacher Y implemented these suggestions with Class C and found that the lesson proceeded well, with the pupils showing clear understanding of the different question types and how to phrase their questions. Also, the pacing of the lesson was well carried out, with sufficient time allocated for each section of the lesson.

### *Data collected from pupils' Socratic Seminar discussions*

Seven Socratic Seminar groups' recordings were transcribed to check for questions articulated in the course of the discussions. These formed about half of the total number of Socratic Seminars carried out. Unfortunately the other recordings had a sound quality that was found to be unsuitable for transcription.

The transcriptions were analysed according to the question types taught to the students during the pre-seminar lesson.

Table 1

*Number of different types of questions asked by the seven groups in the course of their seminars*

Seminar Group recordings	Closed-ended	Open-ended	Literary Analysis	Universal Theme	World Connection
0003	4	1	3	1	0
0004	1	4	12	3	2
0004a	2	5	2	2	1
0005	3	1	7	6	0
00011	2	3	7	1	0
00015	8	6	3	1	7
00016	2	4	5	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>

From the analysis of questions asked by students during the seminars, it was observed that every group attempted to ask more purposeful questions and were engaged in asking the various question types, except for three groups that did not attempt World Connection questions. This



could indicate a lack of certainty about asking questions of this type, or a lack of time to develop these broader inferences from the poems. The group that asked seven World Connection questions (Video 00015) took their discussion off tangent (from the poem) and made speculations about Singaporeans' attitudes they had observed without making reference to the text used during their Socratic Seminar. Sample responses included:

*What do you think 'how to cut a branch' is, as an application to our lives?*

*How do you think you would react if you saw a foreign worker cutting trees? Would you have the same mentality as the author or would you think something else?*

*How do you think how the author portrays foreign workers can be applied to working in general?*

The transcripts also showed that each Seminar group was able to develop their discussions through a logical progression of the questions they posed, starting from Closed-ended questions to Open-ended and Literary Analysis questions to the Universal Theme and World Connection questions.

Rightfully, the most questions asked were of the Literary Analysis type as the Seminar was meant to be a means of developing their understanding through literary analysis of the text. Samples included:

*In a way is it ironic? I mean in a way it does contradict what you all are talking about...*

*...throughout the poem there's the use of run-on lines and so I was just wondering what the significance of that could be...*

Besides this type, Open-ended and Closed-ended questions helped Seminar participants understand the text better. Samples from the pupils included:

*The title of our poem is 'Bigger, Newer, Better' and what are some words that the author uses to describe the grandeur of the house? (Closed-ended question)*

*Why do you think the author chose to use the perspective of the house? Why not the owner? (Open-ended question)*

Universal Theme and World Connection questions posed a challenge to the pupils. While fewer Universal Theme and World Connection questions were asked, these nevertheless still generated insights and understanding of the concerns raised in the poems. Not all groups demonstrated the ability to ask good Universal Theme questions. This was flagged as an area of concern for teachers to take further action due to its importance to the subject.

One group's questions (from Video 00011) were leading questions that suggested interpretations rather than invited inquiry. The group leader took it upon herself to direct most of the questions in that seminar. Samples from there included:

*The poet's attitude seems to differ between the second stanza and the third stanza. Why do you think it differs and how?*

*In this poem, the poet uses a lot of metaphors and similes as well as hyperbole, how do these emphasise the message of the poem and why do you think this is important?*

### *Pupils' responses towards the pre-Socratic Seminar*

A post-Socratic Seminar Reflections questionnaire with nine questions was given to the pupils from the three classes. The questions were open ended in nature and sought the students' views on the pre-Socratic Seminar activities as well as the Socratic Seminar itself. Data was collected from 57 pupils' post-seminar Reflections. In particular with reference to the question, 'Was there any pre-seminar activity (or activities) which you found useful or beneficial to your preparation for the Seminar?', 29.8% of pupils indicated that they found the pre-seminar sessions useful to prepare them for the seminar. Sample responses included:

*The writing activity helped me understand the different types of questions and how they should progressively be asked.*

*Learning the different types of questions that can be asked e.g. World Connection question was also beneficial as it kept the Seminar going once we used them for opening/ guiding/ closing questions.*

*The lesson on asking different types of questions – closed ended, universal theme etc. helped me to prepare sufficiently for the seminar.*

*The pre-Seminar lesson on the type of questions that could be formed and asked helped bring a purpose and focus to the poem and to be able to come up with certain topics to discuss during the actual seminar.*

### **Discussion**

The study indicated, as expected, that providing pupils with scaffolding in asking a range of questions allowed for more purposeful questioning during their Socratic Seminar poetry analysis. This was achieved through the pre-Socratic Seminar activities.

The Lesson Study revealed gaps in students' learning. This difficulty was seen in students' understanding of the differences between types of questions, especially World Connection versus Universal Theme questions. They also had difficulty with applying the conceptual understanding required for the more difficult questions. This was observed almost immediately when the teacher observers sat in to observe the group discussions and was the first point raised for modification during the debrief. The opportunity during the first debrief session to clarify the differences also helped make Teacher Y's explanation to students clearer during the second lesson. Changes made to the subsequent lessons, helped to improve each teacher's teaching and communication of ideas and concepts to the students. This translated to less time taken and less confusion over the construction of the various types of questions by Class C, the last class to be taught.

Other observations from the Lesson Study were made about how teachers' practice and behaviour during lessons could impact student learning. Changes made to subsequent lessons of this nature that came about as a result of the Lesson Study included the pacing of the lesson, having a focussing text, and having a more efficient way of sharing and consolidating student responses. Further fine-tuning to the teaching included focussing on the essentials, e.g. the different question types and their differences. It also highlighted to the teachers, the importance of time management in ensuring that the goals of each lesson were met. With Lesson Study, Teachers Y and Z saw how the students' mode of presentation of responses could be improved upon thereby maximising the use of the time available. The original method of each group presenting the various

question types on a sheet of A4 paper was seen as being less efficient compared to having the various groups contribute the same question type on a single sheet of paper thereby allowing for comparison. Through Lesson Study, the teachers were able to find a way to help facilitate student learning by organising and making student thinking visible.

Through Lesson Study, the teachers were able to help the students participate more meaningfully in the Socratic Seminars. The students' understanding of the various question types were clarified, which led to a better crafting of the questions and better participation during the Socratic Seminar as a result of the teachers' implementation of changes after the Lesson Study lessons had been carried out. One of the questions in the survey sought to measure the students' feedback to pre-seminar activities (which included the lesson on crafting seminar questions followed by the hands on practice, a group practice Seminar and viewing the video of a Seminar in action),

*Was there any pre-seminar activity (or activities) which you found useful or beneficial to your preparation for the seminar?*

Of the students, 29.8% answered that they specifically found the pre-Seminar activity on the crafting of question types useful for the Socratic Seminar. The low response could be attributed to a flaw in the survey question which lacked clarity in that it did not specifically measure the students' responses to the lesson on crafting question types alone. Due to the general nature of the question, the students chose to focus on other aspects of the pre-Seminar activities which included the practice Seminar, and the viewing of the video on Socratic Seminar, among others.

Another possible reason could be attributed to the sequence of the pre-Seminar activities. The viewing of the video as well as the lesson on crafting Seminar questions took place before the practice Seminar. Furthermore, for the first two activities, the students were passively absorbing the information in class as opposed to the practice Seminar which was experiential learning.

## **Conclusion**

The results of this study supported the idea that clarity in the design of lesson materials was important to avoid misconceptions and confusion. It was also important to make thinking visible by providing relevant examples of question types – not just for visual learners but to focus students' attention on the material and help them to analyse and make connections during discussion.

Having the teacher observers study the lesson meant that various members of the class (not just the teacher) could be observed: they were able to see how engaged students were during the lesson, and if they were not, why not. The observation on the classroom environment was not an intended research question but was in the research team's observation notes. The observation corroborates research which suggests that the process of developing student dialogue should include teacher behaviours that help to foster a climate conducive to the development of thinking skills: behaviours like setting ground rules in advance, showing respect for each pupil, providing non-threatening activities, accepting individual differences, modelling thinking skills and allowing students to be active participants (Trickey & Topping, 2004).

Further research could be conducted on Lesson Study research skills, particularly in honing teachers' skills in observing pupil behaviour during research lessons, and hence probing pertinent issues in the implementation of pedagogy and assessment for learning. Another area that could form the subject of future research could be on the impact of teachers' behaviour during lessons

on student motivation and engagement. Further extension of the Socratic Seminar activity could be to have the Seminar in a whole class setting. This will help the development of more collaborative inquiry discussion as well as empower pupils to make independent, informed observations about texts as they discover connections more organically.

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## Appendix A

### METHODIST GIRLS' SCHOOL

#### Integrated Programme Year 3

#### Language Arts

#### Poetry Socratic Seminar Personal Goals and Reflections

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_

What problems/challenges have I encountered in previous COIs / Socratic Seminars?

What concerns do I have for participating in this Seminar?

What are one / two (at most) goals I have for this Seminar?

What will I do to succeed at this Seminar?

(For after the Seminar)

Did I succeed in my personal goals?

What did I contribute to the discussion?

What did I wish I had said?

What is your overall evaluation of the seminar?

(For after the Seminar)

Reflection on the Seminar discussion of your group & the Seminar preparation process

What interesting ideas did you hear/discuss regarding the poem and would you like to include in your own analysis? Or would you like to think about further (either from a group member or a hot seat member)?

How did participating in a Poetry Socratic Seminar help you to understand the poem better? Or help you to analyse the poem better/more deeply?

Was there any pre-seminar activity (or activities) which you found useful or beneficial to your preparation for the seminar?

Did you like the Poetry Seminar Activity? Do you think that having more Seminars would be useful to deepen your understanding of texts (literary and non-literary)?

What would be some follow-up activities that would help you to go further/advance your skills in poetry analysis and interpretation?