General Activity: Socratic Seminar

A Socratic Seminar is explained as an activity where:

“Students help one another understand the ideas, issues, and values reflected in a text through a group discussion format. Students are responsible for facilitating their group discussion around the ideas in the text; they shouldn’t use the discussion to assert their opinions or prove an argument. Through this type of discussion, students practice how to listen to one another, make meaning, and find common ground while participating in a conversation.”

- This format is excellent because there are many common themes throughout the characters’ stories. Especially with such relevant topics such as bigotry and prejudice, students and educators could easily hold these discussions to understand both the past and the present.
- The footnote at the bottom provides a link that helps explain the process of a Socratic seminar.
- This would be an excellent post-walk activity. Socratic seminars are often used with a text (like a short blurb from a book), but in this case, the text could be the performances given at the cemetery, the student biographies for each character, or the Pantagraph articles from the teacher packet. The themes that are shared between characters give more room for interpretation from students.
- The link below is a resource for students who may be struggling to create responses during the seminar: https://www.facinghistory.org/sites/default/files/Socratic_Seminar_Stems.pdf.

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