

English 10

Student-led discussions: *Purgatorio*

Students will lead discussions on assigned cantos. These discussions allow you to show your mastery over the material and guide other students to substantial, rich discussion of the ideas in the text. Your grade will be based on your preparedness for the class and the effectiveness of the material you provide, both orally and in writing.

Student-led discussions will be 15 minutes long; I will stop you if you go over, so you have to control the flow to make sure you cover everything you plan. I suggest you provide an overview handout with questions and space for people to take notes; that way students can see the scope of what you wish to discuss. This is not a presentation, though, so you don't want to reveal content.

The warm-up each day will be a short, teacher-provided quiz to hold students accountable for reading.

Possible approaches to your discussion:

- Have students complete a free-write in which they explore one of your main questions.
- Have students complete a free-write in which they consider in their own lives a universal version of a relevant question.
- Use a work of art that relates to famous characters in the text.
- Have students work in small groups to explore a difficult question together.
- Assign pairs of students short passages to explore (but then call on only a few, so you don't run out of time).
- Make a game that encourages reasonably deep coverage of your material. (No word searches or crossword puzzles.)
- Make a script and assign parts.
- Have students work material into another form (a song, a drawing...)
- Collaborate with another student assigned to your day.

Free advice:

- Have prompts and questions be specific enough that students understand what you are looking for.
- Pace out the discussion—15 minutes goes fast.
- Please do not give a presentation! Any lecturing should be 2 minutes or shorter at a time.
- Tie in your ideas with the themes and ideas we have been following throughout our reading.
- Visit university websites (<http://digitaldante.columbia.edu/>, The University of Leeds Centre for Dante Studies) rather than sketchy study-aid sites. You are expected to participate in the life of the mind, and there are perfectly accessible yet scholarly ideas available to you.

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If you miss your assigned day/time for any reason, the class will cover your canto; you will write a short essay that takes the place of your discussion.

If you need me to make any photocopies, please submit material no later than midnight the night before.

Sign up for an open additional canto if you would like extra credit in Quarter 3.