

The Star Chamber (Fishbowl Style Discussion)

A Star Chamber is a modified fishbowl discussion wherein students in the class discuss a topic, and slowly get persuaded to join one side or the other as a fishbowl style discussion ensues.

The topic of the discussion is given ahead of time (this can be a matter of just minutes, or days). Brief articles may be provided outlining each position on an issue. However, students do not need to limit themselves to the material provided in their preparation for the discussion.

The Star Chamber starts out with a group of six students, chosen at random, who sit within an inner circle of six chairs. **Only the students in the Star Chamber may speak, and they can only speak for 60 seconds.** Students outside the Star Chamber must listen off to the side in the gallery until they are persuaded to join one side or the other. Once persuaded, a student may seat themselves within one of the two backbenches of the Star Chamber (see diagram below). After six minutes of discussion, an alarm will sound, and students on the backbench will trade places with their representatives on the Star Chamber.

As students enter the Chamber, they hand their Star Chamber ticket to the teacher (The Star Keep). Students earn a Round 2 ticket every time they coax students from the gallery to join their side's backbench. (A pat on a shoulder indicates which student persuaded the newcomer.)

All Round 1 tickets must be redeemed before Round 2 tickets can be redeemed.

The side with most participants at the end wins.

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