Before you read the notes, watch the Teaching Channel video first, it will help make everything make more sense.

How I train Socratic Seminar:

1. Count your number of participants (Example 26)
2. Subtract 5 or 6 from your total—depending on if you have an odd or even number of participants. This will determine how many evaluator roles you will have.
3. You MUST have pairings for speaker/coach, so if you have 10 speakers, you have to have 10 coaches.
4. During a break, I would cut out the speaker/coach cards for 10, which would use 20 of my participants for the Socratic circle.
5. Then, I would cut out 6 of the evaluator roles (Big Board, Evidence Tracker, Timekeeper, Transition Tracker, and Comment Counter x2) . I usually have two Comment Counters because sometimes it is difficult to see and keep up with the entire group. Depending on your numbers, you can manipulate the number of your evaluator roles.
6. After you have your role cards cut out, place them in a container for your participants to draw out a role. (Usually, I count during the presentation, cut out roles during a break, and have participants draw as they come back from break.)
7. Set up your chairs in your Socratic circle (double layer for speaker/coach). After everyone has drawn their role, introduce Socratic Seminars with the ppt.
8. Watch the video (when it comes in the ppt), telling everyone to watch the video through the lens of 1. their role and 2. the structure of the Socratic Seminar. Many will have done seminars before, but not in this structure.
9. Discuss structure from the video.
10. Now, you are ready to move into the Socratic Seminar.
11. Post your question for the seminar and distribute text.
12. I usually use the following timeline for an hour’s time slot:
    1. Call up Speaker 1 and Coach 1 to pick up number, clip it to Speaker 1’s lapel, and have them go meet at a spot in the room. Then allow rest of number to come up and do the same. I use numbers to help the Comment Counters in training groups where participants don’t know each other’s names. In my classroom setting, I didn’t use numbers.
    2. 10 minutes for Speaker/Coach conference with materials and find evidence to respond to the question. (In a true Socratic Seminar, members would also come to the group with a few compelling questions.)
    3. Get chart paper and markers for your Evaluators. Have them place their chart paper around the room close to the circle, so they can hear. Meet with them during this 10 minutes to confirm their roles/responsibilities.
    4. When your timekeeper says 10 minutes is up, call the speakers/coaches to the circle.
    5. Go over ground rules slide from the ppt.
    6. Repeat the question to the group.
    7. I usually post the Academic Transitions slide during the circle.
    8. 4 minutes for speakers to speak (I usually have my co-presenter or someone outside of the circle randomly pick a number to select the opening speaker).
    9. Coaches are listening, strategizing, taking notes/annotating, preparing for coaching session.
    10. Half-time—let the evaluators re-cap what they have charted offer any suggestions.
    11. 4 minutes for speakers/coaches coaching session.
    12. Speakers/coaches switch seats. Be sure to have their number on their speaker, so the Comment Counters can see.
    13. 4 minutes for speakers to speak.
    14. Evaluators comment
    15. Close seminar.
    16. Participant Discussion of structure/other ideas for making it work/how they use Socratic, etc.

* These times are for minimum times for demo purposes. They may be adjusted to fit your training needs. You could do 15 minutes prep, then 5 minute rotations, etc.—whatever works best for your time limits.
* In a classroom setting, I would leave speakers for two rounds before switching roles, but usually training time does not allow.
  1. Speaker
  2. Coaching
  3. Speaker
  4. Halftime/Evaluator Reporting
  5. Switch Roles
  6. Speaker
  7. Coaching
  8. Speaker
  9. Evaluator Summary
* In a classroom, I also team the evaluators with a partner, so they may participate in the circle, as well. Their pair would just switch out with another team in the circle.