

What are literature circles?

Defining Literature Circles

1. Students **choose** their own reading materials
2. **Small temporary groups** are formed, based upon book choice
3. Different groups read **different books**
4. Groups meet on a **regular, predictable schedule** to discuss their reading
5. Kids use written or drawn **notes** to guide both their reading and discussion
6. Discussion **topics come from the students**
7. Group meetings aim to be **open, natural conversations about books**, so personal connections, digressions, and open-ended questions are welcome
8. In newly-forming groups, students may play a rotating assortment of task **roles**
9. The teacher serves as a **facilitator**, not a group member or instructor
10. Evaluation is by **teacher observation and student self-evaluation**
11. A spirit of **playfulness and fun** pervades the room.
12. When books are finished, **readers share with their classmates**, and then **new groups form** around new reading choices.



Reading Roles for Literature Circles

Discussion Director

Asks "fat" questions about the story to help the group have dynamic discussion. "Why...How...If..." Your task is to help people talk over the "big ideas" in the reading and share their reactions. Ask the questions only. You do not need to include your response here. The person commenting needs to answer the questions.

Passage Master

Locate a special section of the text that you think your group members would like to revisit. These can be funny, scary, confusing, interesting, a vivid description, or any other good part you read. You decide which passage is worth discussing. Include the passage and your response. The person commenting will react to your response.

Word Wizard

Specialize in locating words that you choose. These are not passages but single words. The words can be new, different, strange, funny, interesting, important, or hard. Cite the word and the page on which it is located. Give the meaning. Write the sentence that includes your word. Tell why it was chosen. Write a new sentence with the word. Those commenting will give a response and write a new sentence with the word.

Connector

Find connections between the story and the world outside. It can be current or past real world events and experiences. You can connect to life experiences, school, neighborhood, other people and problems, other stories or writings on the same topic, similar events at other times and places, and other writings by the same author. Your task is to understand the story better by relating to it and bring the connections to the discussion with others. Include the connection and your response. Those commenting will respond to the connection.

Critical Thinker

Develops questions for critical thinking based on Blooms Taxonomy. You will include six questions using key words from the *Quick Flip Questions for Critical Thinking* booklet developed by Linda G. Barton and published by [Edupress, Inc.](#) The levels are Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation. Those commenting will answer one or more questions.

What is a discussion group or literature circle?

During literature circles, students meet in small groups to discuss, respond, and reflect on their reading. The teacher or students facilitate the discussion, and as students progress through the primary grades, they will become able to take on parts of this facilitator role. A goal of primary-grade literature circles is to guide students to become more independent with each component of the discussion so that they are ready to hold discussion groups with very little teacher coaching by the end of second grade or

the beginning of third. Literature circles, reading workshop, and Guided Reading groups are all part of a balanced literacy program for young readers.

What does a discussion group/ literature circle look like?

Students begin by reading a predetermined amount of text. It is important for all children, regardless of reading level, to have the opportunity to participate in literature discussion. Emergent readers can discuss texts that have been read during shared readings or heard during read-alouds.

Each literature circle lasts approximately 10-20 minutes, depending on the text. Teachers may set a general focus for the discussion (e.g., character description, dialogue, setting), however, discussions should allow for open-ended response. It is important that students feel comfortable sharing ideas and taking risks in the discussions. Teachers should monitor good discussion and questioning behavior.

Good discussion and reflective thinking strategies need to be modeled and practiced with students ahead of time. Teachers may want to have students help generate the guidelines as a class. Some examples of guidelines are:

Guidelines for Interaction	Guidelines for Interpretation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One speaker at a time.• Explain your thinking.• Let other people talk.• Stay on the subject.• Take your turn at listening.• Share your ideas.• Show respect for others' ideas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support your ideas using the book. (What words or pictures in the book made you think of your idea? Can you show where in the book it says that?)• Support your ideas with your own experience (What happened in your life that is like this situation? Who do you know that is like this character and why?)

For what purposes do students meet in literature circles?

Literature circles can be organized for a variety of purposes. Many times students are reading the same text, but it is also appropriate for students to be discussing different texts. For example, groups might be arranged around students:

- focusing on the same text.
- focusing on different texts of a particular author.
- focusing on the way authors use a particular strategy (setting, character traits, conflict...) in a variety of texts.
- focusing on different texts on the same theme (friendship, families, challenges...).
- focusing on different texts from the same genre (fairy tales, poetry, mysteries...).

The emphasis in these discussions focuses on comparing and contrasting texts and finding patterns in a variety of texts. Students will need to give a short summary of what they read before explaining their thinking, when there is a variety of reading material brought to the group.

How can teachers and students use literature circles to assess learning?

As teachers evaluate a discussion group, they should monitor that students are not only progressing in reading and writing strategies but also in discussion etiquette:

- attending to the topic.
- participating actively in the group.
- asking questions.
- "piggybacking" on others' comments.
- allowing all members of the group opportunity to participate.
- disagreeing constructively.
- supporting opinions with evidence.

The discussion structures and strategies listed above should be modeled and practiced with students through focus-lessons that give students a chance to observe a group being coached in a discussion of a text, and that allow for guided practice of strategies.

Recording the group interaction is important and can be monitored in a variety of ways:

- **Anecdotal Notes**
Anecdotal notes taken on individual students (on "post-it" notes or stickers) can then be placed on each student's folder for record-keeping.
- **Seating Charts**
Teachers record where each participant is seated, note the incidence of interaction among students, and take brief notes on comments voiced during the

discussion. This record-keeping slows the pace of discussion and automatically allows for extended time for thinking and reflecting on participants' comments.

Questioning

What are some questioning strategies that teachers can use to help students respond to reading?

Teachers use questioning to prompt discussion without dominating the conversation. A main purpose of a literature circle is to have children share their own ideas in response to their reading and hear the ideas of their peers. Teachers can facilitate the discussion by using guiding questions and should try to lead from where students are in their discussion. Students may also use their response journals as a stimulus for discussion.

One approach that teachers can use to structure literature discussions is shared inquiry. Shared inquiry is an approach that is based on teachers (and students) asking interpretive questions and allowing students the opportunity to discuss the question and ask follow-up questions to construct or extend meaning. For example, interpretive questions for Jack and the Beanstalk might include, "Why does Jack answer the old man's question by saying, 'Two in each hand and one in your mouth?', Why does the ogre's wife want to keep Jack from being eaten?", "Why does the author make Jack's mother a poor widow?" (Great Books Foundation, 1992, p.9)

In general, good interpretive questions:

- have more than one answer supported by the text.
- uses appropriate vocabulary for the participants.
- focuses on the text.
- requires students to take a stand.
- are specific to the particular text.

During the discussions, teachers should allow enough time for students to think before answering and time to rethink their answers based on later discussion. Teachers can help students examine questions more thoroughly by asking follow-up questions, which require students to be more accurate and specific:

- What makes you think that?
- How would another character react to that?
- Why did you think the problem would get solved in that way?

Some guidelines for teachers on modeling the leadership of a shared inquiry discussion are:

- Start with a good basic interpretive question.
- Model all discussion strategies thoroughly.
- Listen carefully to participants' comments.
- Take notes on participants' contributions.
- Encourage participants to talk to one another. ... Ask participants to relate ideas to the basic question.
- Encourage participants to refer to the text frequently.
- Be open to challenges to your questions.
- Give everyone a chance to contribute.
- Ask (and encourage students to ask) follow-up questions often.

(Information adapted from An Introduction to Shared Inquiry- Third Edition, 1992)

MCPS offers ongoing training on using the shared inquiry approach and the Junior Great Books program.

The most appropriate kinds of questions are engaging and thought-provoking. They rely on high-level thinking based on Bloom's taxonomy (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) and are open-ended.

Questions teachers use to guide their students' reflections should incorporate the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) stance questions. The MSPAP stances include reading for [global understanding](#), [developing interpretation](#), [personal reflection](#), and [critical analysis](#). Stance questions ask students to take a global, critical, personal, or interpretive stance when reading and responding to text. Responding to reading from the perspective of each stance encourages students to develop strategies that good readers use to construct meaning from a text.

<p>Global Understanding forming an overall impression of a text.</p> <p>Requires students to think about the overall meaning of what they have read. Students are asked to explain the topic, gist, or theme, supporting their ideas with details.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the problem/conflict in the story? (Reading for literary experience)• Summarize the reading selection. (Reading to be informed)• How would the directions be used to perform the task? (Reading to perform a task)
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<p>Developing Interpretation Revisiting the reading selection.</p> <p>Requires students to verify specific details about ideas in the story to support characterization, setting, conflict, resolution, sequence of events, or causes and effects. With informational text, students must demonstrate an understanding of topics and supporting details.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do the pictures help you perform the task? (Reading to perform a task) • How are the two readings similar and different? (Reading to inform) • What changes did you see in this character? (Reading for literary experience) • How did the conflict develop and get resolved? (Reading for literary experience)
<p>Personal Reflection Connecting to what a reader knows.</p> <p>Requires students to consider their prior knowledge and use this experience to construct meaning from the text. Students compare the author's point of view with their own view, or information from the text with students' background knowledge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What questions would you ask the author or characters? (Reading for literary experience) • What additional information would have helped you complete the task? (Reading to perform a task) • What new information did you learn? (Reading to be informed.) • What would you have done if you were the character? (Reading for literary experience)
<p>Critical Analysis analyzing the way the author wrote.</p> <p>Requires students to analyze what they have read by thinking about the author's purpose and craft, by evaluating elements of the text, and by judging the usefulness of a story or passage.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you improve the author's directions? (Reading to perform a task) • What kind of background information do you think the author needed to write this story? (Reading to be informed) • Was the reading convincing? (Reading for literary experience)

Teachers should always model how to use the text to support their answers. Students should discuss where they found information in the text. They may locate and mark their evidence with a "post-it" note or removable sticker, or read aloud the actual sentence where they found the information.

Literature Circles

A Literature Circle is a structure for getting students to talk about a novel with their peers as they read it together. Students are in charge of the discussion and the decision of how many pages will be read before the next discussion. There are between four to six students in each literature circle, and each member rotates one of the following jobs throughout the project: Discussion Director, Literary Luminary, Character Captain, Connector, Artistic Adventurer, and Vocabulary Enricher. The students really love the approach because they are empowered with so much choice and get to "run" the show.

ORGANIZATION

1. I divide the class into groups of four to six students, and begin by letting the students choose which novel their circle is going to read. I describe each novel the students are to choose from, and then pass out a [selection sheet](#), having students rank their choices based on their abilities and their interests.
2. I have students assign roles within their group for each discussion date. First, I explain what each role consists of, while passing out the [Director's Log](#) and one packet of [Group Role Sheets](#) for each circle. I explain that each student will have the chance to take on every role. I have the students fill out the Director's Log. I also hand out my [Scoring Guidelines](#) so students know how they will be evaluated.
3. I pick a day when the whole novel has to be read, and then leave it up to each circle to assign specific sections to read before their discussion sessions.
4. I have students meet in their Literature Circles for discussion twice a week. Each student, depending on his or her role in the group, has a different task to complete beforehand, in order to prepare for the circle discussion. Each assignment is explained on the Group Role Sheets, and also overviewed on the [Role Description](#) handout.

Special Note: Under the inclusion model, I work with special education students as well as traditional and gifted and talented students all at the same time. When I teach Literature Circles, I have the special education students listen to an audio tape of the book. I pass out the response sheets [Low Auditory Learners](#) to them after they listen to a segment of story, having them complete the packet in sections.



PROCESS

1. First, I have my students fill out their [Journals](#), quickly summarizing what they read in preparation for their discussion group, reacting to the reading, and making a prediction of what they think will happen next in the novel.

2. Once in their Literature Circles, students present the material they have prepared for class, following the assignments in the Group Role Sheets. At the end of the discussion time, students evaluate their discussion for that day, noting their evaluation on the [Attendance Evaluation Form](#). If the discussion did not go as planned, students will discuss why, and offer solutions for ensuring their next discussion goes more smoothly. Students then assign roles to each member for the next discussion group, and also decide how much of the novel they will read before their next discussion.

3. After their discussion, they come back to their journals to reflect on how the discussion changed their way of looking at the novel as well as to evaluate their performance in the circle that day. At the end of class, each student hands in their journal and completed role assignment from the Group Role Sheets. These contribute to each student's final grade.

Literature Circles Handouts:

[Director's Log](#)

[Group Role Sheets](#)

[Scoring Guidelines](#)

[Role Description](#)

[Low Auditory Learners Packet](#)

[Journal](#)

[Attendance Evaluation Form](#)

Discussion Director

Date: _____

Novel you're reading: _____

Pages read to prepare for this discussion: _____

As the Discussion Director, it is your job to write down some good questions that you think your group would want to talk about. List a minimum of five thought provoking questions below. (Think of these starters: Why..., If..., What..., Who..., and How...)

1.)

2.)

3.)

4.)

5.)

Literary Luminary

Date: _____

Novel you're reading: _____

Pages read to prepare for this discussion: _____

As the Literary Luminary, it is your job to read aloud parts of the story to your group in order to help your group members remember some interesting, powerful, puzzling, or important sections of the text. You decide which passages or paragraphs are worth reading aloud, and justify your reasons for selecting them. Write the page numbers and paragraph numbers on this form along with the reason you chose each passage. You must choose a minimum of 3 passages.

Some reasons for choosing passages to share might include:

* Pivotal events * Informative * Descriptive * Surprising * Scary

* Thought-provoking * Funny * Controversial * Confusing * Personally meaningful

Location	Reason for choosing the passage
Page _____	_____
Paragraph _____	_____

Location	Reason for choosing the passage
Page _____	_____
Paragraph _____	_____

Location	Reason for choosing the passage
Page _____	_____
Paragraph _____	_____

Connector

Date: _____

Novel you're reading: _____

Pages read to prepare for this discussion: _____

As the Connector, it is your job to find connections between the novel your group is reading and the outside world. This means connection the reading to:

- * Your own life * Happenings at school or in the neighborhood
- * Similar events at other times and places * Other books or stories
- * Other writings on same topic * Other writings by the same author

Think about a minimum of two connections today's reading reminded you of. List the connection and explain how the events are similar.

- 1.)
- 2.)

Character Captain

Date: _____

Novel you're reading: _____

Pages read to prepare for this discussion: _____

As the Character Captain, it is your job to share observations you have about the main character(s). Select three adjectives that describe one or more of the characters in your novel, and support your selection with an example taken from your reading assignment.

Character	Specific Example of behavior/action:
Character: Adjective:	Page: _____ Paragraph: _____
Character: Adjective:	Page: _____ Paragraph: _____
Character: Adjective:	Page: _____ Paragraph: _____

Common Character Traits: A List of Adjectives

adventurous	awesome	artistic	athletic	active
beautiful	brave	bold	bossy	cheerful
curious	creative	courageous	considerate	daring
impulsive	dainty	dangerous	exciting	entertaining
energetic	funny	a fighter	friendly	fun-loving
gentle	generous	happy	humble	hostile
honest	intelligent	independent	inventive	a leader
lazy	messy	mischievous	mean	neat
nasty	nice	nosy	open	poor
proud	pretty	quiet	rich	respectful
rad	sad	sloppy	serious	successful
shy	short	smart	studious	selfish
simple	tall	trustworthy	thoughtful	unselfish

warm	witty	wild	wonderful	silly
melancholy	mellow	aimless	loud	prudent
iconoclastic	penurious	belligerent	loyal	visionary

Artistic Adventurer

Date: _____

Novel you're reading: _____

Pages read to prepare for this discussion: _____

As the Artistic Adventurer it is your responsibility for sharing an artistic representation of the material you read for today's Literature Circle. Some ideas for sharing may include: a character, the setting, a problem, an exciting part, a surprise, a prediction, or anything else. Examples of genres for expression may include:

* Artwork * Music * Poetry * Collage * Mobile

Have fun! Let your imagination soar!

What I shared: _____

In the space below please provide a written description of what you shared and explain how it represents a facet of the assigned reading.

Vocabulary Enricher

Date: _____

Novel you're reading: _____

Pages read to prepare for this discussion: _____

As the Vocabulary Enricher, it is your job to look for especially important vocabulary words within the book your group is reading. Words chosen should be:

* Important * Unfamiliar * Different * Puzzling

* Funny * Used in an unusual way * Interesting

List a minimum of 5 words you feel would be worth discussing with your group.

Word selected and page # where found:	Definition based on context -- use of dictionary is encouraged!	Reason word was selected:

When your group members meet, help them find and discuss the words you have chosen. You might discuss the following:

- How does the word fit in the story?
- How does this word make you feel?
- What is the etymology of this word?
- What images does this word evoke?
- Does this word carry any specific connotations?

Discussion Director's Log for the Book Selected

Group Members:

Group Roles

April 9

Discussion Director _____

Literary Luminary _____

Connector _____

Character Captain _____
Artful Artist _____
Vocabulary Enricher _____

April 13

Discussion Director _____
Literary Luminary _____
Connector _____
Character Captain _____
Artful Artist _____
Vocabulary Enricher _____

April 16

Discussion Director _____
Literary Luminary _____
Connector _____
Character Captain _____
Artful Artist _____
Vocabulary Enricher _____

April 20

Discussion Director _____
Literary Luminary _____
Connector _____
Character Captain _____
Artful Artist _____
Vocabulary Enricher _____

April 23

Discussion Director _____
Literary Luminary _____
Connector _____
Character Captain _____
Artful Artist _____
Vocabulary Enricher _____

April 27

Discussion Director _____

Literary Luminary _____

Connector _____

Character Captain _____

Artful Artist _____

Vocabulary Enricher _____

Role Description

Overview: A "Literature Circle" is a structure for talking about a book with your peers as you read it together. Students are in charge of the discussion and for setting reading assignments together (how many pages read before next discussion). There are between 4 -6 members in each literature circle, and each member rotates one of the following jobs throughout the project.

Discussion Director/Facilitator: This student is responsible for writing down 5 thought-provoking questions for the purpose of group discussion based on that day's reading assignment. As the group Facilitator, it is also this student's job to direct the group discussion, keep track of student work, and rate the group's "Habits of Work" each day the group meets.

Literary Luminary/Alternate Facilitator: This student is responsible for choosing parts of the story that he/she wants to read out loud to the group. The idea is to help students remember some interesting, powerful, puzzling, or important sections of the text being read. The Literary Luminary must decide which passages or paragraphs are worth reading aloud, and justify the reason for selecting them. Additionally, if the Discussion Director is absent, this student will serve as the Facilitator.

Connector: This student is responsible for finding connections between the text his/her group is reading and the outside world. This means connecting the reading to the following: his/her own life, happenings at school or in the community, similar events at other times and places, other books or stories, other writings on the same topic, or other writings by the same author.

Character Captain: This student is responsible for revealing specific personality traits of the character(s) within the novel. This means he/she will find examples in the assigned reading of behaviors/actions that help group members to know the character(s).

Artful Adventurer: This student is responsible for sharing an artistic representation of the material read. Avenues for expression may include: artwork in any medium, music, poetry, collage, music, mobile or anything else which represents an aspect of the material read.

Vocabulary Enricher: This student is responsible for finding especially important vocabulary in the story. Vocabulary selected should focus on words that are unfamiliar, interesting, important, repetitive, funny, puzzling, descriptive, vivid or those used in an unusual way.

Literature Circles During Reading Strategy

Reading Skills

- Reading and discussing books
- Connecting with books
- Taking responsibility as readers and constructing meaning together
- Debating and challenging one another
- Making drawings and notes that reflect readers' ideas
- Asking open-ended questions
- Reading aloud of favorite passages
- Revisiting the text constantly
- Proving points and settling differences by using specific passages
- Thinking critically

Overview of the "Literature Circle" Strategy

"Literature Circles" - small groups of students gathered together to discuss a piece of literature in depth - is a teaching method that allows students to become critical thinkers as they engage in ongoing dialogue with a book, in this case *Wish You Well*. Literature circles provide a way for students to engage in critical thinking and reflection as they read, discuss, and respond to the book. Collaboration is at the heart of this approach. In classrooms all across the country, literature circles are helping to create a student-centered learning environment. Through structured discussion and extended written and artistic response, this strategy guides the students to a deeper understanding of what they read. The key aspect of this strategy is the structured use of role sheets (see below) as the students learn to discuss and contribute to the group. These sheets can also be used as evaluation tools.

Activity for the "Literature Circle" Strategy

1. Select members for the Literature Circles (discussion groups).
2. Assign roles for the members of each circle.
3. Assign reading to be completed by the circles inside or outside of class.
4. Select circle meeting dates.
5. Help students prepare for their roles in their circle.

6. Act as a facilitator for the circles.

Blackline Master
Discussion Sheet for Literature Circles

Name: _____

Group: _____

Book: *Wish You Well* by David Baldacci

Role: _____

Pages: _____

While you are reading or after you have finished reading, prepare for the circle meeting by assuming the identity of one of the strategists below and completing and then presenting your strategy:

Clarifier: Your job is to find 5 words or concepts that are important to the story, list and explain each word/concept, and write down its page number.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Summarizer: Your job is to prepare a brief summary of the book. You want to convey how the characters are influenced by the various events and how the main conflict contributes to the resolution.

Key Events:

Summary:

Questioner: Your job is to develop a list of four questions about this book that your circle might discuss. Your task is to help circle members discuss the big ideas in the book and share their reactions. Center your questions on the 5 Ws + How. Be prepared to read aloud key passages that present the answers. List page numbers.

Question 1:

Answer

Question 2:

Answer

Question 3:

Answer

Question 4:

Answer

Predictor: Your job is to predict what you think will happen next in this story. After each prediction defend your reasoning.

Based on what I have read, I predict that the following events will happen:

1. Why:
2. Why:
3. Why:

Blackline Master
Literature Circles Role Sheet
Summarizer

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Meeting Date _____ Assignment: Pages ____ to ____

Summarizer: Your job is to prepare a brief summary of today's reading. Your group discussion will start with your 1-2 minute statement that covers the key points, main highlights, and general idea of today's reading assignment.

Summary:

Key Points:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Connections: What did today's reading remind you of?

Blackline Master
Literature Circles Role Sheet
Discussion Director

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Meeting Date _____ Assignment: Pages ____ to ____

Discussion Director: Your job is to develop a list of questions that your group might want to discuss about this part of the book. Don't worry about the small details; your task is to help people talk over the big ideas in the reading and share their reactions. Usually the best discussion questions come from your own thoughts, feelings, and concerns as you read. You can list them below during or after your reading. You may also use some of the general questions below to develop topics for your group.

Possible discussion questions or topics for today

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Sample questions

- What was going through your mind while you read this?
- How did you feel while reading this part of the book?
- What was discussed in this section of the book?
- Can someone summarize briefly?
- Did today's reading remind you of any real-life experiences?
- What questions did you have when you finished this section?
- Did anything in this section of the book surprise you?
- What are the one or two most important ideas?
- What are some things you think will be talked about next?

Topic to be carried over to tomorrow: _____

Assignment for tomorrow: Pages ____ to ____

Blackline Master
Literature Circles Role Sheet
Investigator*

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Meeting Date _____ Assignment: Pages ____ to ____

Investigator: Your job is to dig up some background information on any topic related to your book. This might include

- the geography, weather, culture, or history of the book's setting
- information about the author - her/his life and other works
- information about the time period portrayed in the book
- pictures, objects, or materials that illustrate elements of the book
- the history and derivation of words or names used in the book
- music that reflects the book or its time.

This is not a formal research report. The idea is to find bits of information or material that helps your group better understand the book. Investigate something that really interests you - something that struck you as puzzling or curious while you were reading.

Sources for information

- the introduction, preface, or "about the author" section of the book
- library books and magazines
- on-line computer search or encyclopedia
- interviews with people who know the topic
- other novels, nonfiction, or textbooks you've read

Topic to be carried over to tomorrow: _____

Assignment for tomorrow: Pages ____ to ____

Blackline Master
Literature Circles Role Sheet
Illustrator*

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Meeting Date _____ Assignment: Pages ____ to ____

Illustrator: Your job is to draw some kind of picture related to the reading. It can be a sketch, cartoon, diagram, flow chart, or stick figure scene. You can draw a picture of something that is discussed specifically in your book, something that the reading reminded you of, or a picture that conveys any idea or feeling you got from the reading. Any kind of drawing or graphic is okay. You can even label things with words if that helps. Make your drawing on this paper.

Connections: What did today's reading remind you of?

***Blackline Master
Literature Circles Role Sheet
Connector****

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Meeting Date _____ Assignment: Pages ____ to ____

Connector: Your job is to find connections between the book your group is reading and the world outside. This means connecting the reading to your own life, happenings at school or in the community, similar events at other times and places, or other people or problems that this book brings to mind. You might also see connections between this book and other writings on the same topic or other writings by the same author. There are no right answers here. Whatever the reading connects you with is worth sharing!

Some connections I found between this reading and other people, places, events, authors:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Topic to be carried over to tomorrow: _____

Assignment for tomorrow: Pages ____ to ____

Blackline Master
Literature Circles Role Sheet
Vocabulary Enricher*

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Meeting Date _____ Assignment: Pages ____ to ____

Vocabulary Enricher: Your job is to be on the lookout for a few especially important words in today's reading. If you find words that are puzzling or unfamiliar, mark them while you are reading and then later jot down their definition, either from a dictionary or from some other source. You may also run across familiar words that stand out somehow in the reading - words that are repeated a lot, are used in an unusual way, or provide a key to the meaning of the text. Mark these special words, and be ready to point them out to the group. When your circle meets, help members find and discuss these words.

Page No. & Paragraph	Word	Definition	Plan

Topic to be carried over to tomorrow: _____

Assignment for tomorrow: Pages ____ to ____

Blackline Master
Literature Circles
Self-Assessment Form

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Date Started _____

My Contribution to Group Discussion

Rate each entry as: 1 - Needs Improving, 2 - Satisfactory, or 3 - Very Good

Type of Contribution	Rating	Example
I shared my ideas and offered my suggestions.	1 2 3	
I spoke clearly and slowly enough to be understood.	1 2 3	
I answered other's questions.	1 2 3	
I remained on topic and helped the group stay focused.	1 2 3	
I encouraged others to participate.	1 2 3	
I disagreed without hurting others' feelings.	1 2 3	
I summarized or repeated my ideas when necessary.	1 2 3	
I gave reasons for opinions.	1 2 3	
I listened courteously and effectively.	1 2 3	
I tried to understand and extend the suggestions of others.	1 2 3	

My most important contribution to the discussion was:

My plan for improvement is:

Blackline Master
Literature Circles
Assessment Form for Discussion Groups*

Name _____ Circle _____

Book _____

Date Started _____

Group's Discussion Topic or Focus

Check the appropriate box. Provide evidence where possible.

	Yes	No	Some- times	Evidence
Everyone participates and shares in the discussion process. Communication is interactive.				
The group is supportive of its individual members. Group climate promotes friendliness.				
Group members often ask questions for clarification or elaboration.				
The group discussion stays on topic or on directly related issues.				
The group is energetic and enthusiastic.				

What was the best thing about the way this group worked together?

What was one problem the group had?

How did you solve it?

What else might you have done?

What specific plans do you have for improvement?

Literature Circle Notes

Literature Circle Group _____

Date _____

As you read sections of this book make notes about things you have questions about or want to share with your group. Also write vocabulary words you would like to learn more about.

Vocabulary words:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Questions:

Notes:

Mark those words!

Literature Circles: Mark those words!

Literature Group Members:

Name of Book: _____

Author _____

As you read your book, mark the parts of the book that you would like to discuss with your literature group. Record keywords to help you remember what each part is about. Record the page number.

Keywords: _____

Page _____

Keywords: _____

Page _____

Keywords: _____

Page _____

Literature Circles: I just have to ask these questions!

Literature Group _____

Book _____

Author _____

While reading your book, write down questions you want to ask your literature group.
Write the page number that may help you explain your question.

Question 1: _____

Page _____

Question 1: _____

Page _____

Question 1: _____

Page _____