

# LITERATURE CIRCLES

Overview, Expectations,  
Roles, Reflection

GRADE LEVEL: 6 - 12

INCLUDES:

- Overview and Expectations for Students
- Literature Circle Role Worksheets: Summarizer, Connector, Passage Finder, Sketcher, Synthesizer
- Debrief Reflection

**BRAIN WAVES**



INSTRUCTION

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# LITERATURE CIRCLES



A literature circle is a small group gathering together to discuss literature in depth. The discussion is guided by your responses to the Literature Circle Role worksheets that are completed before class. While working in a literature circle, you will be engaging in critical thinking as you read, discuss, and respond to texts.

## Expectations

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- Actively read your book
- Gather with your literature circle group
- Prepare for literature circles by completing Literature Circle Role worksheets thoroughly and thoughtfully
- During your literature circle meetings, you are expected to:
  - Come prepared
  - Sit so everyone can see each other
  - Get started right away
  - Look at the person who is talking
  - Listen to understand
  - Ask questions to develop understanding
  - Speak clearly but not too loud
  - Wait for the speaker to finish before you start speaking
  - Build on each other's ideas
  - Stay on topic
  - Provide evidence for your thinking

## Requirements

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### BEFORE

- Complete a Literature Circle Worksheet based on the book you are reading
- Prepare to share your role worksheet with the small group

### DURING

- Gather with literature circle group
- Present the material you prepared with your group
- Actively listen to all group members
- Participate in a literature discussion

### AFTER

- Evaluate your group's discussion
- Complete the Debrief worksheet

## Evaluation

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- Your literature circle group will be monitored to ensure that you 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 the opportunity to participate
  - Disagreeing constructively
  - Supporting opinions with evidence
- As an individual you will be assessed on:
  - Completion and quality of Literature Circle Role worksheet
  - Your participation in the discussions
  - Literature circle debriefing worksheet

## Literature Circle Roles

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**Summarizer:** As a summarizer, you will be creating a brief summary of your reading so far. You will be noting the important points and main ideas of the reading to share and discuss with your group.

**Connector:** As a connector, you will find connections. These connections can be between the book and another book, your personal life or the outside world. You’ll be sharing text examples and your connections during your literature circle meeting.

**Sketcher:** As a sketcher, you will be drawing illustrations (or finding images elsewhere) that relate to what you are reading. You will be selecting passages to “sketch” and then sharing the passages and sketches with your group.

**Passage Finder:** As the passage finder, you will be selecting a few special sections from your book that you feel are worth sharing and discussing with your group. The passages you find may be memorable, interesting, puzzling, funny, or important.

**Synthesizer:** As the synthesizer you will be evaluating the new thinking and discoveries you gained from your reading. After listing new ideas and answering questions, you will discuss your understandings with your group.



# Summarizer

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Literature Circle # \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

On Page: \_\_\_\_\_

Provide a brief summary of your reading so far. Make sure that you jot down the important points and main ideas of the reading.

## Summary:

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Record at least five major events from the pages you have read so far:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Add any other major events you discussed with your group.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_



# Connector

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Literature Circle # \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

On Page: \_\_\_\_\_

What has your reading reminded you of? Be sure to include connections to yourself, other texts, and the world.

<b>Summary of Passage</b> (including page #)	<b>Connection &amp; Connection Type</b> (to self, to others, to outside world)



# Sketcher

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Literature Circle # \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

On Page: \_\_\_\_\_

Quickly sketch key scenes from your reading. Explain what is going on in the scenes and why you think the scenes are so important. (If you would prefer not to sketch, find images to glue in the spaces provided.)

<b>Sketch a Scene</b>	<i>Explain what is happening and why it is important.</i>
<b>Sketch a Scene</b>	<i>Explain what is happening and why it is important.</i>
<b>Sketch a Scene</b>	<i>Explain what is happening and why it is important.</i>



# Passage Finder

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Literature Circle # \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

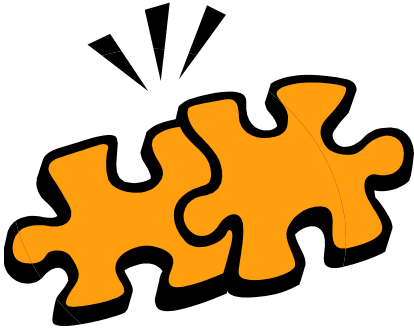
On Page: \_\_\_\_\_

Locate a few special sections of the text that you believe are worth hearing and discussing. These passages should be memorable, interesting, puzzling, funny, or important. Be sure to include the page number of the quote.

- What is happening in the passage?
- What makes this passage so memorable, important, or interesting?
- What important part of the text does the passage help you understand?
- Why is it worth repeating?
- Why did you choose the passage?
- What does this passage mean?

Passage and page number	Significance of passage





# Synthesizer

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Literature Circle # \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

On Page: \_\_\_\_\_

What new thinking have you gained from your reading so far?

How have your understandings changed?

New Thinking:

Changed Thinking:

What big idea do you think the author was trying to convey?

What are your thoughts, feelings, and concerns about your reading?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Literature Circle Role \_\_\_\_\_

### Literature Circle Debrief

To what degree did you **participate** in today's Literature Circle discussion?

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Name two important **contributions** that you made to the discussion.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Name two important things that you **learned from others** through active listening.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Check the **discussion etiquette** elements that were evident in today's discussion.

- Attending to the topic
- Participating actively in the group
- Asking questions
- "Piggybacking" on others' comments
- Allowing all members of the group the opportunity to participate
- Disagreeing constructively
- Supporting opinions with evidence

Note two suggestions for the next literature circle discussion.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_