

Teacher instructions for literature circles activity:

1. I use these sheets when my students have done choice novels in small groups. They have usually read the book independently and come to class with their novel and annotations of the text.
2. Move students into groups of 5. Each of these literature circle sheets gives the 5 roles in a different order. Each student will do a different role in the group literature circles with each rotation. Give each student a sheet (this works best with groups of 5; if the groups are smaller, they will be missing a role—I haven't found this to be a problem in my classes, but do make sure someone has the "discussion director" role first.)
3. Give the groups a "big" topic to discuss for the "first topic" on the sheet. Here are some I commonly use with my classes. Only pick one of these for the first rotation.
 - a. What were the major conflicts in your novel?
 - b. Which character in the novel undergoes the most change?
 - c. Describe the structure and point of view of your novel and explain why the author chose the structure and point of view that he or she did.
 - d. What is the overall tone of the novel? What passage best shows this tone? How does the author create the tone in that section?
 - e. What are the major themes of the novel?
 - f. What was the author's purpose in writing this novel?
 - g. How does the author's use of diction or syntax support his or her purpose?
 - h. What are the major symbols/ motifs in the novel?
 - i. Any other broad topic that pertains to the novels chosen for your classes.
4. After approximately 10-15 minutes, tell students they are moving on to topic #2. Choose another topic from the list above, and students should then perform their new role with the new question.
5. Keep changing topics and roles every 10-15 minutes. The switching of topics and roles seems to keep my students more engaged and interested throughout the discussion. I've found this is a great way to make literature circles work on the high school level.

Literature Circles

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Today you will spend most of the period discussing your supplemental novel—it is the in person version of your blackboard discussions! The online discussions will count as ½ of a composition grade, and this in class discussion will count as ½ of a composition as well. I will give you roles to complete; keep in mind that the most important thing is the DISCUSSION, not filling in this sheet—still do both, but don't let filling in the sheet take away from your discussion.

Title of your novel: _____

Mini Discussion #1 Topic: _____

Talk about this for appx. 10 minutes!

Your role for this topic: Discussion Monitor

Directions: Before the discussion, write down everyone's names. During the discussion, put a check mark each time a person makes a good comment, a "T" for each text reference, a "C" for each time they make a connection (to another text, another comment, to the world, etc) and a star if they make an AMAZING, THOUGHT-PROVOKING comment. There should only be one or two stars probably total.

Name	Discussion marks

Mini Discussion #2 Topic: _____

Talk about this for appx. 10 minutes!

Your role for this topic: Illustrator

Directions: Draw a cartoon/ comic strip or illustration that best illustrates the outcome, or strongest point made during your discussion.

Mini Discussion #3 Topic: _____

Talk about this for appx. 10 minutes!

Your role for this topic: Connector

Directions: During the discussion, try and make the three connections below. The text to text can be about any other book you've read, or, if you want, just connect it to Gatsby! Text to self is a personal connection, and text to world is a history/culture/current events connection.

Text to text connection:

Text to self:

Text to world:

Mini Discussion 4# Topic: _____

Talk about this for appx. 10 minutes!

Your role for this topic: Discussion Director

Directions: You are in charge of starting the discussion, pushing people to think in new ways, asking questions when it gets quiet or if the conversation gets off course, and challenging the thinking in your group.

Write down 4 questions you introduced during this topic's discussion below:

1.

2.

3.

4.

Mini Discussion 5# Topic: _____

Talk about this for appx. 10 minutes!

Your role for this topic: Quotation scribe

Directions: During the discussion, write down three quotations that the group used to support the points brought up during the conversation. Include page references.

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