

Literature Circles for Novel Study

What are Literature Circles?

Literature Circles are small student-led group discussions in which each group member has a specific role and has prepared for the discussion according to that role.

What do I have to do to prepare for Literature Circles?

1. Choose a Literature Circle Role (see below) for the first **LitCircle**. Establish a schedule to rotate each **LitCircle Role** so that within the timeline of the novel study, every group member will have had the opportunity to function in every role at least once.
2. Read the assigned chapters and complete a “Double-Entry Journal” prior to each **LitCircle** meeting date.
3. Complete the preparation for your assigned **LitCircle Role** (see below) prior to the next meeting date.
4. **AFTER** the **LitCircle**: complete the “LitCircle Reflection and Self-Evaluation” and “Group Members Evaluation” forms.

Literature Circle Roles:

Summarizer: Your job is to write a **brief summary** (*LEGIBLE, no more than one page in length*) covering all the important events from the assigned reading. Be sure to include at least 5 key points and explain how they changed the characters, build suspense, develop theme, foreshadow future events, etc. Share your summary and connections you’ve made to begin the meeting and help your group focus on the key ideas presented in the reading.

Discussion Director: Your job is to write down at least **6 questions** for discussion. These questions should be **open-ended** (*NO “YES/NO” questions*) and designed to spark interesting discussion. (*Thought-provoking literal, interpretive, and universal questions are not as difficult as they seem—usually they will come from your own thoughts, feelings, reactions, and connections you have as you read.*) During the discussion, your job is to encourage all group members to participate by involving them in the discussion, to ask follow-up questions when conversation lags, and to be sure that every member has a chance to present his/her preparation (acting as timekeeper).

Literary Luminary: Your job is to compile at least **6 quotations** (*interesting key lines, quotes, important text details*) from the reading that you think are **significant** or contain **poetic language** (*metaphor, simile, symbolism, personification, etc.*). Be sure to use MLA format for your citations. For each quote, write 3-5 sentences discussing what the quote means and what role it plays in the story. During the discussion, you will read each quote to your group, then ask your group what they notice about the quotation, what they think it means, and what role the quotation plays in the meaning of the story or expression of theme--before you offer your answers.

Word Wizard: Your job is to mark in the text with post-it notes and jot down **10-12 important, puzzling or unfamiliar words** that have meaning in the text as you are reading; then, look up the definitions in either a dictionary or online at www.dictionary.com. Be sure to include the page #, paragraph #, and direct quote from the text in which the word appears (underline word) along with its definition. You may also run across **words that stand out** somehow—*words that are repeated frequently, used in an unusual way, or are crucial to the meaning of the text.*

Illustrator / Travel Tracer: Your job is to **represent key scenes** from the reading with pictures—either a **drawing** (*sketch, cartoon, diagram, story map, flowchart*) or a **collage with magazine pictures or relevant internet pictures** (**full page 8 ½ x 11” with color**). **OR**--when you read a book in which the characters move around often and the scene changes frequently, it is also important to know where things are happening and how the setting may have changed. Your job then might be to **carefully track where the action takes place** during the reading assignment and **plot it on a diagram or map** (*i.e. between countries, counties, or within a city*). Be sure to include the pages numbers where the scene is described or takes place.

Adapted fr:

Daniels, Harvey. *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom* (1994).
The College Board (2010). <http://edselect.com/Docs/Litcir.pdf>
http://www.gcisd-k12.org/cms/lib/TX01000829/Centricity/Domain/61/Literature_Circles.pdf
http://www.ipadlitcircles.com/uploads/1/0/6/6/10664962/lit_circles.role_sheets.pdf

Double-Entry Journal

Name _____

Meeting Date _____

LitCircle Role _____

Reading Assignment _____

While you read the novel, you will be expected to record entries in a double-entry journal. You may include quotations from the text, questions about the text, and connections between the text and current events (in your school, community, local/national/world news), personal experiences, movies or other books you've read. You may also make connections between what has happened before and what might happen as the narrative continues. Look for the characters' internal and external conflicts and the ways that these conflicts influence their actions.

Text, Page #, & Paragraph # (Paraphrase or Quote a meaningful passage.)	Your Response (Analyze the text, form a personal or wider-world connection, connection to another book, movie, or author, or pose a thoughtful question.)	Peer Response (Ask another group member to make a comment here with his/her own connections—personal, wider-world, or other text/author.)

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Your name _____

Date _____

Group Member Evaluation: Please evaluate how well each member of your group functioned during your discussion today.

Student's Name: _____				LitCircle Role: _____			
Behavior During LitCircle		Often	Sometimes	Never			
Stayed on Task During Group Activities							
Cooperated with Other Group Members							
Treated all Members with Respect							
Made Significant Contribution to the Group							
Completed Assigned Work							
Comments:							
I think this student deserves a/an: A - B - C - D - F for today.							

Student's Name: _____				LitCircle Role: _____			
Behavior During LitCircle		Often	Sometimes	Never			
Stayed on Task During Group Activities							
Cooperated with Other Group Members							
Treated all Members with Respect							
Made Significant Contribution to the Group							
Completed Assigned Work							
Comments:							
I think this student deserves a/an: A - B - C - D - F for today.							

Student's Name: _____				LitCircle Role: _____			
Behavior During LitCircle		Often	Sometimes	Never			
Stayed on Task During Group Activities							
Cooperated with Other Group Members							
Treated all Members with Respect							
Made Significant Contribution to the Group							
Completed Assigned Work							
Comments:							
I think this student deserves a/an: A - B - C - D - F for today.							

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Student's Name: _____ LitCircle Role: _____			
Behavior During LitCircle	Often	Sometimes	Never
Stayed on Task During Group Activities			
Cooperated with Other Group Members			
Treated all Members with Respect			
Made Significant Contribution to the Group			
Completed Assigned Work			
Comments:			
I think this student deserves a/an: A - B - C - D - F for today.			

Student's Name: _____ LitCircle Role: _____			
Behavior During LitCircle	Often	Sometimes	Never
Stayed on Task During Group Activities			
Cooperated with Other Group Members			
Treated all Members with Respect			
Made Significant Contribution to the Group			
Completed Assigned Work			
Comments:			
I think this student deserves a/an: A - B - C - D - F for today.			

Student's Name: _____ LitCircle Role: _____			
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Literature Circle Role Sheet:

Summarizer

Name _____

Meeting Date _____

Book Title _____

Reading Assignment _____

Summarizer: Your job is to write a **brief summary** (*LEGIBLE, no more than one page in length*) covering all the important events from the assigned reading. Be sure to include at least 5 key points and explain how they changed the characters, build suspense, develop theme, foreshadow future events, etc. Share your summary & connections you've made to begin the meeting and help your group focus on the key ideas presented in the reading.

Summary:

Key Points:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

How do you think you did in the literature circle today?

I read the required pages _____ Yes _____ No

I recorded the key points _____ Yes _____ No

I kept my summary brief _____ Yes _____ No

I participated in the discussion _____ Yes _____ No

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Literature Circle Role Sheet:

Discussion Director

Name _____

Meeting Date _____

Book Title _____

Reading Assignment _____

Discussion Director: Your job is to write down at least 6 questions for discussion. These questions should be open-ended (NO "YES/NO" questions) and designed to spark interesting discussion. (Thought-provoking literal, interpretive, and universal questions are not as difficult as they seem—usually they will come from your own thoughts, feelings, reactions, and connections you have as you read.) During the discussion, your job is to encourage all group members to participate by involving them in the discussion, to ask follow-up questions when conversation lags, and to be sure that every member has a chance to present his/her preparation (acting as timekeeper).

Possible Discussion Questions for today's LitCircle:

- 1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Tips: Consider

- A discussion of a work's characters: are they realistic, symbolic, or historically-based?
What motivates the characters or leads them to make the choices they do?
An in-depth discussion of the work's events
A discussion of any confusing passage or event
The historical context and/or events that occurred in a particular work
Commentary on the social, political, or economic context in which a work was written – How does the context influence the work?
An analysis of a specific image, passage, phrase, etc. OR an analysis of a recurring image, phrase, event, etc.

How do you think you did in the literature circle today?

- I read the required pages ____ Yes ____ No
I prepared good discussion questions ____ Yes ____ No
I kept the other members on task ____ Yes ____ No
I kept the discussion going ____ Yes ____ No
I participated in the discussion ____ Yes ____ No

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Literature Circle Role Sheet:

Literary Luminary

Name _____

Meeting Date _____

Book Title _____

Reading Assignment _____

Literary Luminary: Your job is to compile at least **6 quotations** (*interesting key lines, quotes, important text details*) from the reading that you think are **significant** or contain **literary devices** (*allusion, metaphor, simile, symbolism, personification, etc.*). Be sure to use MLA format for your citations. For each quote, write 3-5 sentences discussing what the quote means and what role it plays in the story. During the discussion, you will read each quote to your group (or ask other members to read one too), then ask your group what they notice about the quotation, what they think it means, and what role the quotation plays in the meaning of the story or expression of theme--before you offer your ideas.

Quotation & Passage Location: "quote" (pg #).	Reason for Selecting	Plan for Reading & Discussing
1. Page _____ Paragraph _____		
2. Page _____ Paragraph _____		
3. Page _____ Paragraph _____		
4. Page _____ Paragraph _____		
5. Page _____ Paragraph _____		
6. Page _____ Paragraph _____		

Possible Reasons for Picking a Passage to Share:

- Important Informative Descriptive
- Surprising Funny Well Written

Figurative Language / Literary Devices:

Allusion, Simile, Alliteration, Metaphor, Symbolism etc.)

How do you think you did in the literature circle today?

- I read the required pages ___ Yes ___ No
- I located several passages ___ Yes ___ No
- I shared and explained my choices ___ Yes ___ No
- I participated in the discussion ___ Yes ___ No

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Literature Circle Role Sheet: Word Wizard

Name _____

Meeting Date _____

Book Title _____

Reading Assignment _____

Word Wizard: Your job is to mark in the text with a post-it note and jot down **10-12 important, puzzling or unfamiliar words** as you are reading; then, look up the definitions in either a dictionary or online at www.dictionary.com. Be sure to include the page #, paragraph #, and direct quote from the text in which the word appears (underline word) along with its definition. You may also run across **words that stand out** somehow—*words that are repeated frequently, used in an unusual way, or are crucial to the meaning of the text.*

Page # Paragraph #	“Direct Quote” (Underline Word)	Definition of Word
1. Page _____ Paragraph _____		
2. Page _____ Paragraph _____		
3. Page _____ Paragraph _____		
4. Page _____ Paragraph _____		
5. Page _____ Paragraph _____		
6. Page _____ Paragraph _____		
7. Page _____ Paragraph _____		
8. Page _____ Paragraph _____		
9. Page _____ Paragraph _____		
10. Page _____ Paragraph _____		
11. Page _____ Paragraph _____		
12. Page _____ Paragraph _____		

How do you think you did in the literature circle today?

I read the required pages _____ Yes _____ No

My words were important to meaning of text _____ Yes _____ No

My definitions were clear _____ Yes _____ No

I participated in the discussion _____ Yes _____ No

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***AFTER* Literature Circle Reflection**

1. In what ways have you improved as a discussant over the course of these Literature Circles?

Consider:

- Active Listening
- Contributing ideas
- Referring to the text as your support
- Asking questions and follow-up questions
- Not interrupting; using “wait time” to give others a chance to speak
- Disagreeing respectfully by prefacing statements with phrase such as, “I respect your opinion...”, “I can see why you feel that way...” or “I agree to disagree with you on...”

2. What do you **like best** or find **most useful** about Literature Circles?

3. What do you find **most challenging** about Literature Circles? How might you deal with this challenge next time?

4. What ideas, events, characters, etc. do you wish to revisit or continue discussion in the next Literature Circle?

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Literature Circle Reading Schedule

Group Members:

- | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 3. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 4. _____ | 6. _____ |

Reading Schedule:

Date Reading Assigned	Pages to Read / Chapters to Read	Meeting Date / Due Date	My LitCircle Role For this Meeting

Role Rotation:

Meeting Date	Discussion Director	Summarizer	Literary Luminary	Word Wizard	Illustrator / Travel Tracer

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Weekly Reading Connections Blog

While you read the novel, you will be expected to record entries in a double-entry journal format. You may include: quotations from the text, questions about the text, and connections between the text and current events (in your school, community, or local/national/world news), personal experiences, movies or other books you've read. You may also make connections between what has happened before and what might happen as the narrative continues. You might look for historical connections between the setting and history of the time period in which the novel is set and the attitudes displayed by the characters or the characters' internal and external conflicts and the ways that these conflicts influence their actions.

Text, Page #, & Paragraph # (Paraphrase or Quote a meaningful passage.)	Your Response (Analyze the text, form a personal or wider-world connection, connection to another book, movie, or author, or pose a thoughtful question.)

As you finish your assigned reading for the week and your double-entry journal, choose 1 - 2 of your entries to post to Ms. Dyer's English IV Blog located on my website: www.dyerenglish.weebly.com.

You must post 1-2 connections, questions, etc. you made from your weekly assigned reading, including a reference to the text [paraphrase or "direct quote" (page #)] that sparked your interest or roused your emotions and the page number where it occurred.

After you've posted your connections/questions for the week, read your fellow classmates posts. Respond to a minimum of two (2) other students' posts. Remember that you must adhere to all standards rules of "Netiquette" (see **NETIQUETTE RULES on English IV Blog page**).

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