

Literature Circles

Introduction

Assessment:

You will be assessed according to:

- the quality of your contributions to your lit circle discussion
- the extent to which you keep up with your responsibilities to your group
- the quality of your ideas presented in your group's Lit Circle binder
- the quality of your group's discussions

Assignments:

Your group must:

- hold each member accountable for work, contributions to discussion, and respectful participation
- rotate the assigned roles so that each member has a chance to experience each responsibility

Reading Schedule:

| Section | Text | Pages (if in textbook) | Discussion Date (Fill in each week) |
|----------------|-------------|----------------------------------|---|
| One | | | |
| Two | | | |
| Three | | | |
| Four | | | |

Group Member Assignments and Responsibilities:

| Section | Member 1 | Member 2 | Member 3 | Member 4 |
|----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Name | | | | |
| One | Discussion Director | Character Watcher | Story Tracker | Passage Finder |
| Two | Passage Finder | Discussion Director | Character Watcher | Story Tracker |
| Three | Story Tracker | Passage Finder | Discussion Director | Character Watcher |
| Four | Character Watcher | Story Tracker | Passage Finder | Discussion Director |

Discussion Director

Outline of Responsibilities:

Your role is to identify the most important parts of the assigned text and develop at least five questions your group will discuss. Your job is to create and ask questions about the text, and then you and your group must discuss possible answers to your discussion questions. Don't worry about small details because those are covered in the comprehension questions. Focus on major themes or big ideas in the text and your reaction to those ideas. Your job is to also keep the discussion focused throughout the presentation. Encourage your group members to respond in detail and stay on task. The idea is to create the types of questions that will make the other students in your group think carefully about what they read and to feel that they are part of the story. Some possible questions are:

- Which part of the story brought out the strongest feelings?
- Was there anything in this part of the story that bothered or surprised you?
- If you could talk to the main character, what would you tell him or her to do?
- Do you agree with the main character's actions? Why or why not?
- What emotions did you experience when reading the text?
- Did the text have any examples of symbolism, irony, foreshadowing, or figurative language? What was the significance?
- What was the setting of the story? How did it contribute to the story?
- What did you think was the major purpose or important idea (theme) of the text?
- What was the most important event of the text and why?
- What was the most important change that took place in the text? How and why did it happen?
- What was the major conflict of the story?

Checklist for Discussion Director

- _____ I have at least 5 thought provoking questions for discussion (√-, √, √+)
- _____ My questions are not yes/no questions
- _____ I have anticipated responses for my questions to help guide the discussion (√-, √, √+) **X2**
- _____ **C** capital letters
- _____ **O** overall organization
- _____ **P** punctuation
- _____ **S** spelling and sentence structure

Character Watcher

Outline of Responsibilities:

Your first role is to lead a discussion on the characterization of the main characters in the text. Create a chart with the character names and descriptions of each character. Include evidence for your descriptions. Remember that characterization can be direct or indirect:

Direct Characterization:

The author literally tells the audience what a character is like. This may be done via the narrator, another character or by the character.

Indirect Characterization:

The audience must infer for themselves what the character is like through the character's thoughts, actions, speech (choice of words, way of talking), looks and interaction with other characters, including other characters' reactions to that particular person.

Your second role is to identify the most important characters of the assigned text and develop at least five character questions your group will discuss. Your job is to create and ask questions about the text, and then you and your group must discuss possible answers to your discussion questions. Focus on major ideas in the text and your reaction to those ideas. Some possible questions for discussion:

- Who are the major characters in the text?
- What major conflicts do they face? How does this affect the story?
- What effect do the character actions have on the plot or the other characters?
- What changes – in description, personality, or motive for example – did you notice when you read?
- How would you describe the physical appearance of the main characters?
- How would you describe the personality of the main characters?
- Do the characters possess character traits that are believable?
- Does the main character develop, grow or change as a result of the incidents in the story? How?
- What are the strengths/weaknesses of the characters?

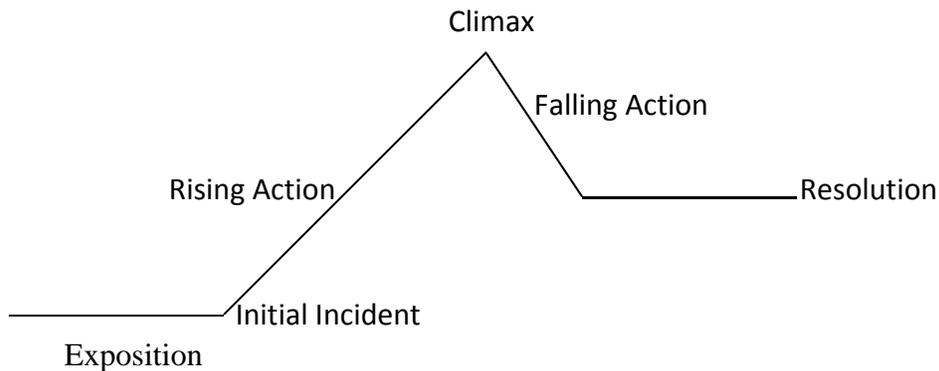
Checklist for Character Watcher

- _____ I have at least 5 thought provoking character questions for group discussion (√-, √, √+)
- _____ My questions are not yes/no questions
- _____ I have anticipated responses for my questions to help guide the discussion (√-, √, √+)
- _____ I have a detailed chart outlining the descriptions of the characters (√-, √, √+)
- _____ C capital letters
- _____ O overall organization
- _____ P punctuation
- _____ S spelling and sentence structure

Story Tracker

Outline of Responsibilities:

Your role is to use a plot graph to summarize the important events and ideas from the text. In the summary, limit the discussion to the most important plot events, key highlights, and major ideas. Note any changes in character, plot, tone or mood. **Write the summary in linear form not graph form.**



Questions **to consider** discussing:

- What are the most important events in the text?
- What makes them so important?
- What effect do these events have on the plot or the other characters?
- What changes – in plot, character, tone, or mood – did you notice?

Checklist for Story Tracker

- _____ I have a summarized plot graph with accurate details from the text (✓-, ✓, ✓+) **x3**
- _____ C capital letters
- _____ O overall organization
- _____ P punctuation
- _____ S spelling and sentence structure

Passage Finder

Outline of Responsibilities:

Your role is to find special sections of the text that you would like to re-read with the group. Limit the passage to a maximum of four sentences and rewrite the passage in your assignment. The point is to identify **5** interesting, funny, puzzling, or important paragraphs from the reading section. Discuss the reasons for choosing the passage with the group.

Share your passage with the group by:

- reading together orally as a group,
- reading it to the group, or
- asking a group member to volunteer to read the passage.

Examples of **reasons** for picking a particular passage:

- This was important because...
- The passage showed good description of setting or characters, colourful language, special technique for telling the story, etc...
- The passage highlighted symbolism, character, plot, mood, tone, conflict, irony, foreshadowing, etc....
- This was a fun way of saying ...

Don't forget to explain the reason you chose the passage.

Checklist for Passage Finder

- _____ I have chosen 5 significant passages to share and discuss in detail (√-, √, √+)
- _____ I used a variety of reasons for choosing a passage and explanations are insightful (√-, √, √+) **X2**
- _____ **C** capital letters
- _____ **O** overall organization
- _____ **P** punctuation
- _____ **S** spelling and sentence structure
- _____ /19

Literature Circle Reflections

Name: _____

Date: _____

Text Title and Author: _____

| Reflection Statements | $\sqrt{+}$ | $\sqrt{}$ | $\sqrt{-}$ |
|---|------------|----------------------|------------|
| I brought all required materials to the Literature Circle discussion (text, Literature Circle Workbook, pencil/pen, paper). | | | |
| I prepared thoughtful and complete role discussions. | | | |
| I shared the roles I was responsible for with enthusiasm and confidence. | | | |
| I asked questions to clarify my understanding of the text and/or to help me better understand others' ideas. | | | |
| I was a careful and caring listener, giving my complete attention to other group members when they were speaking. | | | |
| I actively and respectfully responded to other group members' ideas. | | | |
| Total: | | | /18 |

What was an important contribution you made to the discussion today that was not prepared in your role assignment?

What was an important idea or explanation expressed by someone else during the discussion?

What was your favorite part of the discussion today?

Teacher Comments:
