

# Literature Circle Teacher's Guide



## What is a Literature Circle?

A literature circle is a small group of students who work together and take on individual roles or jobs to help further discussion about an assigned text. Typically the teacher has assigned the text based on the student's reading levels, interest, or as an extension of a curriculum topic.

## What is the purpose of a Literature Circle?

Engagement! Students are assigned (or may choose) rotating roles to supplement the reading assignment. The roles are designed to give each student a way to engage with the text and have talking points for discussion. Literature Circles build community, foster critical thinking skills, and lay groundwork for strong oral and listening behaviors.

## How does this tie in with the Bee Cause Lessons?

Combining science and literature can help students make more meaningful connections with both. When a teacher uses the Bee Cause lessons, students are already excited to work with living, stimulating, interactive subject matter -- bees! By adding source texts rich with facts and vocabulary, any teacher can make cross-curricular connections resulting in more student engagement as well as fostering a love of reading.

## How can this be done with digital learning?

Teachers can host Literature Circles easily and effectively with the support of online tools. [Clever](#), [Epic!](#), [MackinVia](#),

and [Tumblebooks](#) are some of the options for assigning digital reading. Teachers can send Literature Circle Roles to students via the school's chosen Learning Management Systems, i.e. Google Classroom, No Red Ink, Seesaw, or Canvas. Discussions can continue on a regular schedule between teacher and students with video conferencing tools as well. The Literature Circle Roles can be presented by the students with paper and pencil or with digital components both in the classroom and via digital learning.

## How to get started on your Literature Circle:

### THE BOOK

- For the first Literature Circle lesson, the teacher may want to choose a book that is slightly below the reading level of the group to get them started. A good selection will allow them to be successful at executing the roles free of excessive challenges. The students should be able to interpret and comprehend the information.
- The teacher should increase the challenge as he/she moves through titles and through the Bee Cause lessons. Whether using Lexile levels, DRA levels, or Guided Reading levels, there are many quality fiction and non-fiction texts to support the science of bees.

### THE GROUPS

- It is important to group students by reading level as well as ability to get along. Consider the strong thinkers and strong talkers when selecting groups.
- A teacher can have multiple Literature Circle groups going on each week with a different text.

- Students should be held accountable for their role in each meeting.
- Consider modeling how to have productive conversations about the text, including how to listen, give and take thinking time, how to ask questions, and how to use the Literature Circle Roles sheets.

## THE ROLES

- The teacher should set the reading assignment as well as the meeting time for each week. Consistency is key.
- The book can be broken up into multiple readings and multiple roles depending on the length. This means that roles can rotate each week to different students for the same book.
- A reading group can be successful using all of the roles, or only a few that the teacher feels will get the students motivated. Roles can be substituted in or out as the teacher deems the role more or less valuable with the content of the book.



## Literature Circle Group Roles Description

### CONNECTOR

Your job is to find connections between the book and the world outside. This means you connect the reading to:

- Your own life
- Happenings at school or in the community
- Similar events at other times and places
- Stories in the news
- Other people or problems
- Other books or stories
- Other writings on the same topic

### QUESTION ASKER

Your job is to write down some good questions for your group to talk about. These could be questions:

- You had while you were reading
- About a character
- About the story
- About a word
- You'd like to ask the author

### LITERARY LUMINARY

Your job is to pick parts of the story that you want to read aloud and talk about in your group. These can be:

- Good parts
- Interesting parts
- Funny parts
- Scary parts
- Parts with good writing
- Parts with good description

Be sure to mark the parts you want to share with a post-it note or bookmark.

### ARTFUL ARTIST

Your job is to draw anything about the story that you liked:

- A character
- The setting
- A problem
- An exciting part
- A surprise

- A prediction of what will happen next
- Anything else

Draw on a piece of printer paper or poster board if you need it. When your group meets, don't tell them about it, let them discuss it and talk about it first. Then you can tell them about it.

## WORD WIZARD

Your job is to look for special words in the story. You can find words that are:

- New
- Strange
- Funny
- Interesting
- Important
- Hard

When you find a word that you want to talk about, mark it with a post-it note or write it down (make sure to include page numbers and paragraph numbers so you can easily find the words you need).

When your group meets, help your friends talk about the words you have chosen. You can discuss:

- How does this word fit into the story?
- Does anyone know what this word means?
- Shall we look it up in the dictionary?
- How does this word make you feel?
- Can you draw this word?

## 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 the reading assignment.

## TRAVEL TRACER

*(designed to be used with fiction text)*

When you are reading a book in which characters move around often and the scene changes frequently, it is important for everyone in your group to know where things are happening and how the setting may have changed. That's your job: carefully track where the action takes place during today's reading. Describe each setting in detail, either in words or with an action map or diagram. *Always give the page locations where the scene is described.*

## RESEARCHER

Your job is to find background information on any relevant topic related to your book. This might include:

- The geography, weather, culture, or history of the book's setting
- Important information about the author and other related works
- Information about the time period in the book
- Information on any topics or events that occur in the book
- Information on any topics or events that may have influenced the author
- Pictures, objects, or materials that illustrate elements of the book
- The history of words or names used in the book
- Information about any character that is based on a historical person
- Information you found interesting and wanted to learn/share more about





# Artful Artist



**YOUR JOB** is to draw anything about the story that you liked:

- A character
- The setting
- A problem
- An exciting part
- A surprise
- A prediction of what will happen next

## **DIRECTIONS**

Read the assigned section of the book. In the space to the right, draw anything about the story that you liked.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to draw their response to the story.













## STANDARDS MAPPING FOR 3<sup>RD</sup>, 4<sup>TH</sup>, AND 5<sup>TH</sup> GRADES

Literature Circle Role	Informational Text: Common Core ELA <sub>2</sub>	Literature: Common Core ELA <sub>2</sub>
<b>Connector</b>	<u>RI.3.6</u> ; <u>RI.3.9</u> ; <u>SL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.4.1</u> ; <u>RI.4.6</u> ; <u>SL.5.1</u> ; <u>RI.5.6</u> ;	<u>RL.3.6</u> ; <u>SL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.4.1</u> ; <u>RL.4.6</u> ; <u>SL.5.1</u>
<b>Question Asker</b>	<u>RI.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.4.1</u> ; <u>SL.5.1</u> ; <u>RI.5.1</u>	<u>RL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.4.1</u> ; <u>RL.4.1</u> ; <u>SL.5.1</u>
<b>Literary Luminary</b>	<u>RI.3.6</u> ; <u>SL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.4.1</u> ; <u>SL.5.1</u>	<u>SL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.4.1</u> ; <u>SL.5.1</u>
<b>Artful Artist</b>	<u>RI.3.6</u> ; <u>SL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.4.1</u> ; <u>SL.5.1</u>	<u>RL.3.7</u> ; <u>SL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.4.1</u> ; <u>SL.5.1</u>
<b>Word Wizard</b>	<u>RI.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.4.1</u> ; <u>RI.4.4</u> ; <u>SL.5.1</u> ; <u>RI.5.4</u>	<u>RL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.4.1</u> ; <u>RL.4.4</u> ; <u>SL.5.1</u> ; <u>RL.5.4</u>
<b>Summarizer</b>	<u>RI.3.2</u> ; <u>SL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.4.1</u> ; <u>RI.4.2</u> ; <u>SL.5.1</u> ; <u>RI.5.2</u>	<u>RL.3.2</u> ; <u>SL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.4.1</u> ; <u>RL.4.2</u> ; <u>SL.5.1</u> ; <u>RL.5.2</u>
<b>Travel Tracer</b>	<u>RI.3.3</u> ; <u>SL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.4.1</u> ; <u>RI.4.3</u> ; <u>SL.5.1</u> ; <u>RI.5.3</u>	<u>RL.3.3</u> ; <u>SL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.4.1</u> ; <u>RL.4.3</u> ; <u>SL.5.1</u>
<b>Researcher</b>	<u>RI.3.3</u> ; <u>SL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.4.1</u> ; <u>RI.4.3</u> ; <u>SL.5.1</u>	<u>SL.3.1</u> ; <u>SL.3.4</u> ; <u>SL.4.1</u> ; <u>SL.5.1</u>