What are Literature Circles?

Literature study provides opportunities to discuss how authors create and craft quality literature. By choosing the literature and by recording their responses and insights as they read, students take ownership of their learning. They participate in reflective discussions about literature within supportive group environments.

Purposes

- to develop personal responses to a text
- to experience peer sharing of understandings, interpretations, and comments about a text
- to extend students' comprehension of literary selections
- to involve students in discussion, negotiation, compromise and decision-making in a group setting
- to develop appreciation of authors' styles
- to develop good reading strategies

Literature Circle Procedure

Through book talks, introduce the students to the books they may choose for their literature circle groups.

Book Talks

Books talks can range from reading a review of the book or the blurb on the back of the book to a more elaborate presentation, which includes an excerpt of the text. Your book talk may include the following

- Reading the first few pages of the book and inviting students to make predictions about the story or comparing the story with other books students have read
- Reading aloud a description of the main character and discussing what students think this character will be like
- Showing the cover art and title and inviting students to predict the book's theme
- Relating the settings and inviting students who have visited that area to share information about the area

Allow students to browse through the books and to complete a book selection such as the one below.

Student Name			
After browsing through the bo	oks choices for	the literature cir	cles, place a
tick in the column that describe	es your level of	interest in the be	ook.
Book Title	Hot	Warm	Cold

Literature Circle groups are formed on the basis of student choice. However, the **teacher must review the lists to be sure that selected books are consistent with reading ability** and to accommodate the number of each title available. Encouraging children to indicate more than one acceptable (hot or warm) choice is very important.

Introducing the Role Sheets and Literature Circle Routines

Modeling Role Sheets:

Before the circles begin, modelling the role sheets and explaining how the literature circle unfolds, is important.

One way to model literature circles is to read a short story to the class. Using the overhead projector, introduce the roles one at a time and invite students to provide you with suggestions for completion based on the short story. This is your opportunity to coach the student about how each role will act as a prompt for leading an enthusiastic discussion. Another way to model the role sheets is to read a novel or short story and have the students complete each of the role sheets.

When students have been introduced to all the roles, turn your attention to providing instruction on conducting a literature circle meeting. Issues to emphase include the following

- Completing the required reading
- Completing journal responses (as required)
- Completing the roles sheet
- Participating in the discussion
- Including all literature circle members
- Demonstrating appropriate behaviour skills

A meeting contract or a self-evaluation may be useful in emphasising student expectations. (link to PDF)

Daily Procedure

Outline the daily procedure for literature circles. This procedure may include the following

- Daily sustained silent reading (20-30 minutes)
- Completing a journal response based on the daily reading (Link to PDF file) (10 minutes)
- Reading the required number of pages in preparation for the meeting, completing the assigned role sheet. Rehearsing role presentations.
- On meeting dates, being prepared to contribute with enthusiasm
- Following the meetings, completing the self-evaluation (link PDF file)

Share with students the make-up of the Literature Circle groups as determined from their book selection sheets. Distribute the books and share the end date of the literature circles with the students. At this point, students must meet and plan the activities they will undertake in the literature circle. Introduce and model how to complete the **Literature Circle Planning Guide**

Journaling

A journal is a place where students can record their reactions to the stories they are reading. Students can write about their feelings, thoughts and ideas about the text. Students will construct meaning as they write about and discuss the story with others.

A journal contains students' thoughts, feelings and reflections on various topics or experiences. Journal writing is rarely done to communicate with others, but is used to explore ideas and to communicate with oneself. Journal writing is often referred to as personal or free writing. This activity is appropriate for writers at all levels of development.

Purposes

- to use writing to explore ideas and to record observations, experiences and understanding
- to encourage students to take risks in manipulating language and in structuring meaning
- to provide opportunities for students to reflect upon their growth and development as writers

Literature Circle Planning Guide

	Book Title	
1	Names of Group Members	
1	values of Group Members	

The group decided to meet on the following dates and have read the indicated pages.

Date	Read from page	to	
Date	Read from page	to	
Date	Read from page	to	
Date	Read from page	to	
Date	Read from page	to	

The roles will rotate as follows:

Date		Date	
Student	Role	Student	Role
Date		Date	
Student	Role	Student	Role

Give your teacher a copy of your completed planning guide.

Journal Prompts

There	e are many ways students can utilize journals during the reading of their
novel	s. Listed below are some suggestions for students to begin journaling.
	Summarize the events of the chapter.
	Describe the setting.
	Identify story characters.
	Describe character relationships.
	Describe the mood.
	Predict outcomes.
	Talk about the story problems and look for solutions.
	Compare to personal experiences.
	Explain/tell how the story makes you feel.
	Offer your opinion of a character.
	Compare a character in this story to another character about whom you have read.
	Explain/tell some of the hidden meanings you have found.
	Tell whether or not the characters have changed throughout the story.
	Critique the writing.
	Reflect on the author's use of language.
	als can also provide an opportunity for students to illustrate as well as
	about their readings.
	Character Maps
	Webs
	Plot Maps
	Venn Diagrams
	Sketches of Characters
	Charts
	Diagrams

Journaling Prompts For Students Who Need Scaffolding

Besides giving a structure to discussion groups and helping students understand mysteries, the role sheets are designed to help students develop good reading strategies. Students are asked to visualize, to summarize, to identify with characters, and to foreshadow. The following journal prompts will reinforce these strategies:

- 1) Good readers visualize or make pictures in their heads while they read. Think of all the events that have happened in the story up to the last page you read. Think of one event that you can picture in your mind. Write a paragraph describing this picture. Try to write it so that another reader could visualize this picture you have created with words.
- 2) As they read, good readers summarize the important ideas of each chapter. If something does not make sense, good readers go back and reread. Summarize the events of the chapter you read. Tell if there is an event that you feel is significant. Tell why you think so.
- 3) Good readers often identify with a character in a book. Tell about the character with whom you have identified or tell about your favourite character. Describe this character. Tell why or how you identify with him/her.
- 4) Good readers try to predict what will happen next or how the story will end before they read the last page.
 - a) Tell how you think the story will end. If you are not sure, tell how you would end the story if you were the author.
 - b) Tell about some other predictions you made. Were they correct or incorrect?

Reflection Prompt

- 1) Which role sheet did you enjoy doing the most? Why?
- 2) Which role sheet helped you most in understanding the story? Why?
- 3) If your discussion group (literature circle) helped you understand the story, tell how. If your discussion group did not help you to understand the story, tell what changes to the group could have helped you.

In Conclusion

Go to the website **http://ericwilson.com/links.htm**. Find the section "Reviews and Illustrations of Novels by Eric Wilson." Use the format used in these reviews, to write a review of the Eric Wilson novel you read. You may want to include an illustration.

Assessment Suggestions

Teacher Tools:

- Literature Circle Reflection
- Group discussion Checklist
- Journal Response Rubric
- Assessment Form for Discussion Groups
- Self Assessment Form
- Literature Circle Evaluation
- Novel Study Self Evaluation

Literature Circle Reflection

Date _	
	I have read to page
	I have completed a journal response.
П	Lhave completed role

	Home Run	Half Way Home	Still Swinging
Completed	I read it with time to	I finished in the nick of	I did not finish reading
Reading	reflect and re-read if	time.	the whole assignment.
	needed.		
Completed Role	I included lots of details	I have ideas but I could	I got a start but I need
	and good ideas.	have added more details.	more time.
Participated in	I shared my ideas and	I did some talking but I	I would have liked to add
Discussion	answered questions with	could have added more	more but my tongue was
	enthusiasm.	ideas.	not working.
Included others	I made sure everyone	Most people got a chance	I needed to ask everyone
	participated and received	to answer my questions.	questions. If I had been
	encouragement when I	I will remember to	more encouraging,
	did my role.	encourage more next	people would have
		time.	participated.
Good Group	I controlled my noise	I was on task most of the	Sometimes I was off
Member	level and I stayed on	time and I was almost	topic and needed to work
	task.	there when it came to	on the volume of my
		noise level.	voice.

Comments:

Journal Rubric

	Mostly Correct	About Halfway Home	Not Under Control Yet
IDEAS AI	My writing has purpose, makes a point, or tells a story.	It is easy to see where I'm headed, but there are gaps.	Yikes! What's my topic?
IDEAS AND CONTENT OF MY JOURNAL	My paper is clear and rich in details.	My ideas are clear, but I need to get specific.	The information is limited or unclear.
ENT OF	Every piece adds something to the whole.	I don't go far enough to make my point.	I repeat myself! Totally random!
EI	I have used capitals correctly.	Most sentences and proper nouns begin with capitals.	I've got caPital lEttErs scattered All Over the plaCe or NOT aT all.
DITING AND	My spelling is accurate.	Spelling of simple words is correct, but may not always be right on the harder words.	Speling errerz our commun, evin on simpl werdz.
EDITING AND PROOFREADING MY	Periods, commas, exclamation marks, and quotation marks are in the right places.	I know where to place periods, commas, exclamation marks and quotation marks but I left some out.	My paper have errors in punctuation? and grammar that send the reader back two the beginning from a sentence to sort thing out
_	Every paragraph is indented to show where a new idea begins.	Paragraphs are present but not all begin in the right spots.	I haven't got the hang of paragraphs yet.
JOURNAL	My paper is well edited with most or all errors corrected.	My paper reads like a first draft; I was more concerned with getting my ideas down than making sure all the editing was done.	The truth is that I haven't spent much time editing this paper.

Assessment Form for Discussion Groups

Names: Date:				
Groups Discussion Topic or Focus:	., ,			
Check appropriate box. Provide e	Yes	No	Sometimes	Evidence
Everyone participates and shares in the discussion process. Communication is interactive.	- 00			
The group is supportive of its individual members. Group climate promotes friendliness.				
Group members often ask questions for clarification or elaboration.				
The group discussion stays on topic, or on directly related issues.				
The group is energetic and enthusiastic				
What was the best thing about the w	, , ,	worked togethe	er?	
How did you solve that problem?				
What else might you have done?				
What specific plans do you have for	· improvement)		

Self-Assessment Form

Name Date		
My group was discussing		
		Example
I shared my ideas and offered my suggestions	1 2 3	-
I spoke clearly and slowly enough	1 2 3	
I answered others questions	1 2 3	
I remained on topic and helped the group stay focused	1 2 3	
I encouraged others to participate	1 2 3	
I disagreed without hurting others feelings	1 2 3	
I summarized or repeated my ideas when necessary	1 2 3	
I gave reasons for opinions	1 2 3	
I listened courteously and effectively	1 2 3	
I tried to understand and extend the suggestions of others	1 2 3	

Literature Circle Evaluation

Literature Ci	ircle Evaluation	
Student:		_
Grade:		
Date:		
	Student	Teacher
I am prepared for our meetings.	1 2 3	1 2 3
preparation work done in notebook literature book at school, not at home reading completed	1 2 3	1 2 3
	1 2 3	1 2 3
	1 2 3	1 2 3
I participate well in discussions. ask questions of others	1 2 3	1 2 3
offer my own ideas	1 2 3	1 2 3
encourage and respect others' opinions make eye contact with others keep my voice at arm's length	1 2 3	1 2 3
	1 2 3	1 2 3

Key: Student/Teacher Comments

- 1. I am doing my job well.
- 2. Yes, I do this.
- 3. I do not always do this and need to improve.

Novel Study Self-Group Evaluation Guide

	 I talked about the book in the discussion group. I listened to what other people had to say about the book. I did not fool around in my group. I marked places I did not understand or places I wanted to discuss with my group (post-it notes, bookmarks, etc.). 		
My	overall rating of myself is as follows:		
	ink the person who worked the hardest in my group is		
bec	ause		

Lesson Title: Mock Investigation Motivational Lesson for Mystery Unit

Unit Activities

Teacher Preparation Needed

- Invite RCMP Constable to Visit
- Principal Participation
- Teacher Detective Coat and Hat (Optional)

Instructional Objectives

- The students will activate and build upon their own language and experience. (C)
- The students will gather and record information and ideas using a plan, organizer or listening guide. (IL)
- Students will make judgments and draw conclusions. (CCT)

Lesson Plan

1. Engaging

- Introduce the RCMP constable.
- Using the teacher as an eyewitness, the RCMP constable will go through the investigative procedure.
- Teacher will answer all investigative questions regarding an accident that he/she has seen in the past.
- RCMP constable will model the procedure and data collection using the five Ws.
- RCMP constable will clarify the difference between investigator and eyewitness.
- Students will copy down the investigative template.

2. Exploring

- Students will split into two groups (investigators and eyewitnesses).
- RCMP constable will send investigators on a secret mission.
- Investigator students will go to the library to research the definition of a felony.
- During this time, the principal (wearing a ski mask) will enter the classroom in which the eyewitness students are located.
- The principal will steal an object of importance.
- The classroom teacher will attempt unsuccessfully to stop the principal.
- Investigators will return to the class to report their findings.
- The teacher files a complaint regarding the theft to the RCMP constable.
- Investigator students each pair up with one eyewitness student. Using the procedure modeled by the RCMP constable, the student investigators take the eyewitnesses' statements.
- When the statements are completed, the RCMP constable and the whole class will compile a suspect list.
- RCMP constable will guide students through the process of sorting through possible suspects until a decision about the identification of the guilty party is reached.
- RCMP constable and all students will go and arrest the principal.

3. Extending

• Students will write a report based on the theft for a school memo or newspaper. Students will use their investigative notes to report an account of what took place. Digital pictures of the "criminal" in handcuffs may be added to the report.

5. Suggested Adaptations

- If you are unable to have a RCMP constable, contact a detachment for information regarding the investigative procedure.
- Supervision is required when investigator students are outside the classroom.
- Any staff member could fill in for the principal.

6. Assessment

- Student Participation
- Investigative notebook sheets can be assessed for understanding of the five Ws.

Lesson One

Lesson Title: Characteristics of Mysteries

Unit Activities

Teacher Preparation Needed

- Tangram sheets
- Short Mystery Story Suggested short stories: "The Redheaded League," adapted by J. Conaway, Cornerstones Analogy 5B. "Dr. Quicksolves Who Dunnit Puzzles:" by J. Sukach, Cornerstones Analogy.

Instructional Objectives

- The students will share ideas, observations and experiences. (C)
- The students will use personal experiences and prior knowledge as a basis for exploring and expressing opinions and understanding. (C) (PSVS)
- The students will understand a variety of forms and genres. (IL)
- The students will use a graphic organizer to clarify and shape understanding. (IL)
- The students will experiment with visual elements and ways in which these elements convey meaning. (N) (IL)

Lesson Plan

1. Engaging

• Have students share about mystery stories the students have read. Ask students to explain what made the mystery stories different from other

genres. Have students tell about mystery stories viewed on television, on videos and/or at the theatre.

2. Exploring

A. CHARACTERISTICS OF MYSTERIES

- Brainstorm characteristics of mysteries, listing student ideas. Read a short mystery story. Discuss whether the story has any of the characteristics students have listed. After hearing the story have the students add to the list.
- Give the characteristics of mystery stories:
 - o suspicious characters
 - o eerie settings
 - o clues (false clues are often used to throw you off the track)
 - o puzzling plots
 - o suspense
 - o danger
 - o spine-tingling words

B. COMPARING MYSTERIES TO A PUZZLE (Teacher dialogue)

- Reading a mystery is like putting together a puzzle. You need to put all the pieces together to see the big picture. A good reader tries to solve the mystery before the author uncovers the solution.
- Put the tangram puzzle pieces together to make the letter M. The characteristics of mystery are pieced together to create a suspenseful story. To be a good reader of mystery stories, you must keep these characteristics in mind as you read.
- Without referring to your tangram, write as many characteristics of mysteries as you can remember on a web with the word "mystery" in the center.

3. Suggested Adaptations

• Dictionary. Have students look up the following words: suspense, mystery, eerie, suspicious.

4. Assessments

- Observe students' ability to listen and respond to the ideas of others. (Use the Discussion Checklist in the evaluation component of the Renewed Language Arts Curriculum.)
- Determine how many characteristics of mysteries students can put on a web with the word "mystery" in the center.

Lesson Two

Lesson Title: Learning About Eric Wilson

Unit Activities

Teacher Preparation Needed

- Video, Mysteriously Yours (22 minutes)
- Viewing Guide for Video
- Internet Guide for Website
- Books by Eric Wilson

Instructional Objectives – Indicate those that are interdisciplinary.

- The students will use various visual texts to find information (video, Internet). (TL)
- The students will select relevant information. (IL) (CCT)
- The students will pause at appropriate moments and reflect. (CCT)
- The students will think, talk, and write about what has been viewed. (C) (PSVS)

Lesson Plan

1. Engaging

- Show students some of the books written by Eric Wilson.
- Determine if students have read any of his books.
- Ask if students know anything about Eric Wilson.
- Each student should think of one important thing he hopes to find out about Eric Wilson.

2. Exploring

- Review the Viewing Guide; a purpose for watching the video.
- Watch the video. Students make notes to use in answering questions while watching.
- After students have completed the Viewing Guide, discuss the questions.
- Students respond to the question, "After seeing Eric Wilson on the video, do you feel differently about reading books written by him? Discuss why or why not."

3. Suggested Adaptations

• Look up the information about Eric Wilson on the Internet. Follow the Internet Guide

4. Assessments

- Observe discussion using Sample Oral Language Assessment
- Observe Viewing/Internet Guides

5. Student Handouts

- Mysteriously Yours –Viewing Guide
- Internet Guide

The next five lessons model the literature circle roles. Understanding each role will enable students to work independently. The students will be involved in guided practice to learn each role. The teacher will read a short story or an Eric Wilson novel to introduce the roles and to prepare students.

Lesson Three

Lesson Title: Asking Probing Questions

Unit Activities

Teacher Preparation Needed

- Eric Wilson Novel or a Short Story
- Chief Inspector Role Sheet

Instructional Objectives

- The students will use a variety of comprehension strategies (asking questions, inferring, confirming, rejecting predictions, and conclusions.) (CCT)
- The students will express and respond to ideas and opinions concisely and clearly. (C)
- The students will appraise ideas for clarity and ask extending questions. (CCT)

Lesson Plan

1. Engaging

- Explain that solving a mystery takes some serious investigation. Compare two questions such as these:
 - 1. Is Tom guilty?
 - 2. What makes you think that Tom is guilty?
- Talk about which question will be more helpful in solving the mystery.

2. Exploring

- Set the purpose by reviewing the role sheet.
- Read several chapters of an Eric Wilson novel or a short story.
- Each student writes five questions about what he has heard.
- Categorize questions as easy to answer or ones that make the students think.

3. Assessments

• Observe types of questions students asked.

4. Student Handouts

• Chief Inspector Role Sheet

Lesson Four

Lesson Title: Summarizing The Plot

Unit Activities

Teacher Preparation Needed

- Eric Wilson Novel or Story to Read
- Daring Detective Role Sheets

Instructional Objectives

- The students will use personal experiences and prior knowledge as a basis for exploring and expressing opinions and understanding. (C)
- The students will demonstrate active listening skills by summarizing main ideas. (C)
- The students will write journal entries with increasing confidence, clarity, and fluency. (C)
- The students will provide thoughtful feedback and responses. (CCT)

Lesson Plan

1. Engaging

(Teacher dialogue)

• Good readers often identify with a main character in a book. Tell about times when you have become so involved that you felt as if you were one of the main characters.

2. Exploring

- Set the purpose by reviewing the role sheet with the students.
- Read several chapters from the Eric Wilson book or another mystery.
- After reading, decide what important events have happened.
- Students should understand that important events make up the plot of the story. Model writing in the first person.
- Students will complete the role sheet by writing a journal entry in the first person. Students will write the summary from either Tom's or Liz's point of view.
- Have several students read their summaries

3. Assessments

• Observe students' ability to use the key points of the plot when writing a summary in the first person.

4. Student Handouts

• Daring Detective Role Sheet

Lesson Five

Lesson Title: Visualize Setting

Unit Activities

Teacher Preparation Needed

- Eric Wilson Novel or Short Story
- Copies of Silent Stalker Role Sheet
- Strategy- Sketch to Stretch from Curriculum

Instructional Objectives – Indicate those that are interdisciplinary.

- The students will visualize. (C)
- The students will convey an idea using an illustration. (C)
- The students will seek others' viewpoints to build on personal responses and understanding. (PSVS)
- The students will identify setting in oral text. (IL)
- The students will support personal opinions, insights and conclusions with examples and evidence. (CCT)

Lesson Plan

1. Engaging

 Explain to students that it is important for a detective to follow the suspects. In this role, students are given the name "Silent Stalker". Discuss why a detective must follow suspects when he is solving a mystery.

2. Exploring

- Set the purpose by reviewing the role sheet.
- Read several chapters of the Eric Wilson novel or short story.
- Together, record the places where the action takes place. If possible, also record the time.
- Introduce students to a quick sketch. Sketch the most important setting in these chapters. More important than the sketch itself is what the students think about the setting.
- After sketches are completed, have students discuss/share their sketch to partners or to a small group.

3. Assessments

• Observe sketches and discussions to determine if the group is ready to perform this role in a literature circle.

4. Student Handouts

Silent Stalker Role Sheet

5. Handout File Names

Stalker

Lesson Six

Lesson Title: Foreshadowing and Vocabulary Development

Unit Activities

Teacher Preparation Needed

- Eric Wilson Novel or Short Story
- Super Sleuth Role Sheet
- Three Words from Each Chapter with Definitions and Page Numbers

Instructional Objectives

- The students will use personal experiences and prior knowledge as a basis for exploring and expressing opinions and understanding. (C)
- The students will make inferences. (CCT)

- The students will use textual cues, key ideas and sequence of major events to construct and confirm meaning. (IL)
- The students will support opinions with evidence from text. (CCT) (IL)
- The students will set purposes and predict what text might be about. (CCT)
- The students will use a dictionary to determine word meaning. (IL)

Lesson Plan

1. Engaging

• Discuss books read or programs watched in which students know how the story would end before the last pages were read or before the last part was viewed.

2. Exploring

- Set the purpose by reviewing the role sheet.
- Read part of the Eric Wilson novel or a short mystery.
- Students should record clues.
- Discuss clues found.
- Decide which clues students think may be helpful in solving the mystery.
- Teacher should have selected three words that have interesting meanings beforehand that have interesting meanings. The definitions should be in riddle or clue form.
- Give the page number. Have students locate the word.
- Have students write the definition of a word, in the chapters students found interesting, in clue or riddle form. Students read their definition to class and give the page number. Other students should guess the word.

3. Assessments

• Observe the quality of definitions and clues found.

4. Student Handouts

Super Sleuth Role Sheet

Lesson Seven

Lesson Title: Tracking Down Suspicious Characters

Unit Activities

Teacher Preparation Needed

- Eric Wilson Novel or Short Story
- Suspect Searcher Role Sheets

Instructional Objectives – Indicate those that are interdisciplinary.

- The students will use personal experiences and prior knowledge as a basis for exploring and expressing opinions and understanding. (C)
- The students will make judgments and draw conclusions. (CCT)
- The students will support opinions using evidence from text. (CCT)
- The students will convey ideas using an illustration. (C)
- The students will ask others for their ideas and express interest in their opinion. (PSVS)

Lesson Plan

1. Engaging

• Talk about books, videos or movies students have read or seen in which the least suspicious person was guilty.

2. Exploring

- Set the purpose by reviewing the role sheet.
- Read a part of an Eric Wilson novel or the short story.
- List characters that were introduced.
- Refer to the list for students to reflect on their selections. Ask students to sequence suspects from least to most suspicious. Listen to students' responses. Students sketch the most suspicious suspect. Students share the sketches with the class, giving reasons for their selections. Encourage the students to ask questions of students whose opinions differ.

3. Assessments

• Observe sketches and responses to ensure student understanding of Suspect Searcher role.

4. Student Handouts

• Suspect Searcher Role Sheet

5. Handout File Names

Searcher

Lesson Title: Culminating Activities

- Once the literature circle groups have completed their Eric Wilson mystery novel.
- Participate in the interactive learning activity for students.
- Dramatize the novel to explore the understanding of the plot.
- A Talk Show presentation would allow the students to become a character from the novel.
- A Puppet Play would allow students to depict a section of the novel.
- A Book Talk given by the group would allow for reports of their impressions of the novel.
- A Mural would incorporate a sketch of each group member's favourite section in the novel.
- A Wordless Picture Book would allow the students to convey the plot of the novel.
- A Poster could promote the novel.
- A Diorama display would allow the students to relate a visual imagery from the novel.
- A Commercial would allow for students to create a theatrical trailer for the novel, which is to become a blockbuster movie.