

## LITERACY CIRCLES

Small groups read and discuss fiction or non-fiction texts at all grade levels, across the curriculum. Discussion groups of three to five students choose and read the same article, book or novel. Literacy Circles promote collaborative learning and independent reading.

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### **MATERIALS:**

multiple copies of a wide variety of literature, response journals, designated area in room

### **PROCEDURES:**

- Teacher introduces entire class to the books with a brief book talk: reading the beginning, sharing some information, looking at pictures, etc. (titles are recorded on the blackboard).
- Class has a chance to look through each of the books. (Arrange the books in each corner of the room, divide class into four groups, several minutes for browsing before moving to the next corner.)
- Students choose their 1st, 2nd and 3rd choice of book and write these on file cards.
- Teacher then puts students in the appropriate groups according to ability. Chances are that one of the student's choices is an appropriate choice, but the teacher is allowed the ultimate control.
- In small groups (3 - 5), children make connections between one book and another, compare works by an author, relate a story to their own lives, or discuss questions on a novel study.
- The teacher sets up a system for choosing books and schedules time for children to meet:
- Partners or groups read their books, noting parts they want to discuss and gather to talk about them.
- Students respond to a story by taking on a role – each person in the group can choose a different role, some of **these roles can be:**
- **Word Wizard:** look for special words to share and discuss (new words, strange words, important words)
- **Discussion Director:** write down a number of questions about the story that you would like the group to discuss
- **Connector:** find connections between the book and the real world or another story you have read
- **Passage Picker:** pick a part of the story that you would like to read aloud to the group
- **Illustrator:** draw a picture that is inspired by the story.

**These roles become obsolete as students internalize the comprehension strategies and apply multiple strategies to each text. Students then share their thinking through less structured discussions.**

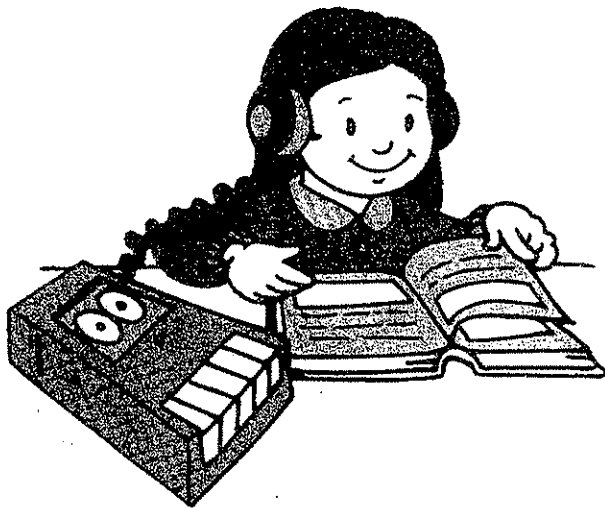
### **EXTENSIONS:**

- Complete a response journal following each literacy circle meeting
- Student designed project connected to text topic, author or genre.

# WHAT ARE LITERATURE CIRCLES?

Simply put, literature circles are student-run book discussion groups. Although there isn't one "right" way of doing literature circles, at the primary grade level most literature circles have the following characteristics:

Student groups usually consist of two to five students. Groups consisting of three to four students generally work best.



Student groups are determined by student book choice. Students select their own books from the text set established by the teacher. A text set is a group of different books related to a theme, author, genre or some other connecting element. (Lists of text sets along with brief teacher tips are provided later in this book.)

Text sets may include books which students are not able to read independently. The teacher, parents or older students may read the books aloud to students. In addition, students may "buddy read" or listen to the book on tape.

