

Lesson Plan

Objective: To teach self-awareness and interpersonal skills through reading instruction using Literature Circles.

Setting and materials:

- Age appropriate books for students to read.
- Role sheets see: Daniels, H. (1994). *Literature circles: Voice and choice in the student-centered classroom*. York, ME: Stenhouse.

Content Taught

- A. Taught to self-assess their reading abilities
- B. Taught to communicate on an interpersonal level with their peers
- C. Taught to develop their listening skills by participating in the group
- D. Students are able to better understand literature and become better readers
- E. All activities promote self-determination

Teaching Procedures

- A. Teacher organizes books together by broad themes to address standards in language arts, social studies, and health and wellness.
- B. Teacher selects students to participate in a Literature Circle, five to seven students.
- C. Literature Circle format is initially taught through modeling.
 - Teacher familiarizes students with the different roles that they will take on in the group; discussion leader, illustrator, connector, character captain, literary illuminary, researcher, investigator, and conflict catcher.
 - Students practice their roles and assigned tasks.
 - Eventually, teacher becomes a facilitator, allowing the students to make choices, raise questions, and discuss meaning of the reading. Teacher's role is to guide discussion towards more in-depth analysis when discussion is becoming more superficial.
 - Note that creators refer to role sheets as "training wheels" in that they should be phased out after the first three of four sessions, when students can grasp what their roles are. They are used as a backup, in case the conversation lags.
 - Also, literature circles are suggested to be informal in that students do not have to raise their hands or systematically move from one person to the next. Students are encouraged to speak freely about topics that struck them about the reading and not feel confined to only discuss topics on their role sheet.
- D. Students will take over leading literature circle.

Evaluation

- A. Teacher or teachers will observe students and complete rubric to assess students' participation. See Table 1.
- B. Students will complete a pre- and post-survey to self-assess their abilities as readers. See Table 2.

Table 1. Rubric for Teacher Assessment of Participation in Literature Circles

	Students in literature circle						
	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7
Discussion contributions							
Used book quotes to support Ideas							
Showed exceptional insight							
Interested, active listener							
Disagreed in appropriate manner							
Reinforced others' ideas							
Prepared for own task							
Made connections							
Score							
1 = non-proficient							
2 = partially proficient							
3 = proficient							
4 = advanced							

Table 2. Pre- and Post-Literature Circles Student Reading Survey

Directions: Circle the number from 1 to 5 that represents your ability as a reader.

	Low				High
1. How would you rate your reading ability	1	2	3	4	5
2. How would you rate your reading ability as compared to others in the classroom?	1	2	3	4	5
	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree	
3. I have trouble understanding what I read.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I have trouble remembering what I read.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I have trouble explaining to others what I read	1	2	3	4	5

Lesson Plan based on:

Blum, H. T., Lipsett, L. R., & Yocom, D. J. (2002). Literature circles: A tool for self-determination in one middle school inclusive classroom. *Remedial and Special Education, 23*, 99-108.