

## Literature Circle Assignment

**Purpose & Overview.** A literature circle allows students in the same classroom to share ideas from a variety of printed sources, including journal articles and books. This group project is designed to provide sources and ideas for a Professional Awareness Essay, to introduce you to professional reading, and to challenge you to teach without telling. Your group's task is to research print resources available on your assigned topic and to plan and present an ACTIVITY in which you introduce the class to your topic. You will sign-up for a Literature Circle group in class.

**What Is a Literature Circle?** If you don't already know what a Literature Circle is, investigate several possible ways to organize and work in one. Check out one of these websites and then talk to your instructor if you still don't understand.

- The *LiteratureCircles.com* website is co-hosted by the Walloon Institute and Stenhouse Publications, with assistance provided by National-Louis University, Chicago.  
<http://www.literaturecircles.com/>
- The *Literature Circles Resource Center* is an educational service to K-8 teachers from Seattle University's School of Education. It provides in-depth information and resources on literature circles and is designed to be interactive. Book lists, guidelines, and resources for literature circles change periodically; and you can download forms and guidelines to adapt. <http://www.litcircles.org/>

### What to Do

1. **Individually look for journal articles**—Pick one that addresses your assigned question.
2. **Share what you found** with other members of your Literature Circle.
3. **As a group, select the “best” article**—the one which does the best job of answering the question. Decide how to **distribute the article to the class one week before your presentation**. *Do you want to scan the article and post it on Oncourse or e-mail it to everyone? Would it be easier (but more costly) to duplicate the article? Who will pay for the duplication? Who will collate and staple the pages?* These are real questions teachers face everyday.
4. **Plan and present an in-class activity**. Your challenge is to find a way to **ACTIVELY** involve (no talking heads please) your classmates in ideas related to article **WITHOUT** telling so they will remember the ideas. The style you use to communicate the key ideas is up to you. For example, you could present a skit and then involve the class in a discussion of ideas portrayed in the skit. Perhaps you would prefer to involve your classmates in a debate. If your group has excellent computer skills, you might create a web-based activity and have your classmates complete it before class. Just like in a real classroom, it's up to you to decide how to present key ideas. You will have **10-15 minutes** for your activity. If you need ideas or suggestion, I have several books with ideas on active learning which you may borrow. Also, the following website has tips for organizing active discussions: <http://www.tpress.com/pdfs/mcdonaldprot.rtf#715>. Once you have planned your lesson, get together to **PRACTICE** and to get a sense of the timing of your presentation. If members of your Literature Circle are confused by the directions, imagine how much more confused your classmates will be. If you think your presentation will take more or less than the suggested time, notify me so that I may plan accordingly. *NOTE*. You will provide feedback to Literature Circle groups other than your own—print out the needed forms from the Internet.
5. **Note: After the presentation**, everyone in class will have your groups' article to refer to when writing the Professional Awareness Essays. See Professional Awareness Essays assignment for details.

## Literature Circle – Peer Feedback

Indicator \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Directions:* Circle the appropriate number to indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

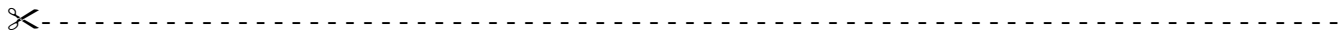
**From my point of view,**

- ... the article and activity were helpful in preparing me to write a Professional Awareness Essay.
- ... the sequencing and pace of the activity was appropriate.
- ... I was actively engaged the whole time.
- ... every presenter demonstrated enthusiasm/interest.
- ... the activity helped me think more deeply about the educational issues related to this topic.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided or Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

The most effective thing about the article was . . .

To make the Teach-a-Chapter presentation effective I suggest . . .



## Literature Circle – Peer Feedback

Indicator \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Directions:* Circle the appropriate number to indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

**From my point of view,**

- ... the article and activity were helpful in preparing me to write a Professional Awareness Essay.
- ... the sequencing and pace of the activity was appropriate.
- ... I was actively engaged the whole time.
- ... every presenter demonstrated enthusiasm/interest.
- ... the activity helped me think more deeply about the educational issues related to this topic.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided or Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

The most effective thing about the article was . . .

To make the Teach-a-Chapter presentation effective I suggest . . .

Topic \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_

### Literature Circle Feedback

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Weak</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Article was appropriate, thought provoking, and distributed to class members on-time</li> <li>• Activity was student-centered &amp; creative, no evidence of talking-head</li> <li>• Class member were actively engaged throughout the presentation</li> <li>• Activity promoted deep understanding of topic</li> <li>• Presentation was well-timed and cohesive</li> <li>• All team members showed enthusiasm</li> <li>• All team members participated actively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Article was appropriate &amp; distributed to class members on-time</li> <li>• Activity generally avoided the talking-head model of teaching</li> <li>• Class member were generally engaged</li> <li>• Activity promoted basis understanding of topic</li> <li>• Presentation was consistent</li> <li>• Most team members showed interest</li> <li>• Most team members participated actively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Article was not generally appropriate OR not distributed to class members on-time</li> <li>• Activity was mostly teacher talk rather than student-centered</li> <li>• Class members were frequently inattentive</li> <li>• Activity mainly lecture with limited attempt to facilitate understanding</li> <li>• Presentation was disorganized</li> <li>• Some team members showed little or no interest</li> <li>• 1-2 team members dominated presentation</li> </ul>

\_\_\_\_\_ All members Present    \_\_\_\_\_ Absent Members:

**Comments:**