

Literature Circle Notes: Overview of the Roles

Discussion Director: Your role demands that you identify the important aspects of your assigned text and develop questions your group will want to discuss. Focus on the major themes or "big ideas" in the text and your reaction to those ideas. What interests you will most likely interest those in your group. You are also responsible for facilitating your group's discussion.

Illuminator: You find passages your group would like to/should hear read aloud. These passages should be memorable, interesting, puzzling, funny, or *important*. Your notes should include the quotations but also why you chose them and what you want to say about them. You can either read the passage aloud yourself or ask members of your group to read roles.

Illustrator: Your role is to draw what you read. This might mean drawing a scene as a cartoonlike sequence or an important scene so readers can better understand the action. You can draw maps or organizational trees to show how one person, place, or event relates to the others. Explain how your drawing relates to the text. Label your drawings so we know who the characters are. Make your drawing on a separate sheet of paper.

Connector: Your job is to connect what you are reading with what you are studying or with the world outside of school. You can connect the story to events in your own life, news events, political events, or popular trends. Another important source of connections is books you've already read. The connections should be meaningful to you and those in your group.

Summarizer: Prepare a brief summary of the day's reading. Use the questions to the right to help you decide what to include. In some cases, you might ask yourself what details, characters, or events are so important that they would be included on an exam. If it helps you to organize the information, consider making a numbered list or a time line.

Sample Questions

- What were you thinking about as you read?
- What did the text make you think about?
- What do you think this text/passage was about?
- How might other people (of different backgrounds) think about this text/passage?
- What *one* question would you ask the writer if you got the chance? Why?
- What are the most important ideas/moments in this text/section?
- What do you think will happen next—and why?
- What was the most important change in this section? How and why did it happen?

Sample Questions

- What is happening in this passage?
- Why did you choose this passage?
- What does this passage mean, or what is it discussing?
- How should you present this passage?
- Who is speaking or what is happening in this passage?
- What is the most unique aspect of this passage—and why is it unique?
- What did this quotation/passage make you think about when you read it?
- What makes this passage so confusing, important, or interesting?

Sample Questions

- Ask members of your group, "What do you think this picture means?"
- Why did you choose this scene to illustrate?
- How does this drawing relate to the story?
- Why did you choose to draw it the way you did?
- What do we see—I e., who and/or what is in this picture?
- What, if anything, did drawing it help you see that you had not noticed before?
- What did this quotation/passage make you think about when you read it?
- What are you trying to accomplish through this drawing?

Sample Questions

- What connections can you make to your own life?
- What other places or people could you compare this story to?
- What other books or stories might you compare to this one?
- What other characters or authors might you compare to this one?
- What is the most interesting or important connection that comes to mind?
- How does this section relate to those that came before it?

Sample Questions

- What are the most important events in the section you read?
- What makes them so important?
- What effect do these events have on the plot or the other characters?
- What changes—in plot, character, or tone—did you notice when you read?
- What questions about the section you read might appear on an exam?
- What might be a good essay topic for this section of the story?