

Character Education and Violence Prevention through Literature Circles

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Literature Circles

- Literature Circles are small, peer-led discussion groups whose members have chosen to read the same story, poem, article, or book. While reading each group-assigned portion of the text, members make notes to help them contribute to the upcoming discussion, and everyone comes to the group with ideas to share.

(Daniels, Harvey. 2001. *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in Book Clubs & Reading Groups*. 2nd ed. Portland, ME: Stenhouse.)

Steps to Beginning Literature Circles

- Train students
 - Model for the students
- Form groups
 - Reading the same books
 - Ideal size is 4-5
- Choose books
 - Student selected
 - Book pass / book talk
- Scheduling
 - Groups decide how much per night
 - Teacher sets a time frame (i.e.. Everyone will complete the book in two weeks)
 - Group meetings:
 - Grades 3 – 6 = every 2-3 days
 - Grades 7 – 12 = 1 – 2 times per week

During Literature Circles

- Discuss the book: 20 – 30 minutes
- Mini – Lessons
- Sharing time – students reflect on what happened that day. Think about what went well and what we need to work on.
- Book Project – something you may need to do for a grade.

Creating a Classroom Climate

- Class Icebreakers
- Setting Group Expectations / Rules
 - Be prepared
 - Listen to others
 - On task
 - Ask questions
- Teach students how to disagree