

Reading Circles

OLE.4

TIME

30 minutes, once or twice weekly

OVERVIEW

Reading Circles provide a structure for students to explore and appreciate a variety of literary and informational texts and to discuss with others the texts they are reading. Talking about their reading ensures that students are actively involved in the construction of meaning as they have opportunities to explore ideas, hear others' interpretations, and develop critical reading skills.

Students participate in Reading Circle discussions using literary texts or teacher-selected texts relating to the current unit of study. Throughout the school year, students continue to participate in Reading Circle discussions of various formats. They also keep notes, such as Reading Circle Response Logs or journal entries, or give oral presentations about their texts.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through this learning experience (LE), students will achieve specific learning outcomes (SLOs) in various subject areas. Consider the intent of this LE and your choice of instructional and assessment strategies to determine which SLOs students may achieve, in addition to those identified.

English Language Arts

Consider the intent of this LE and your choice of instructional and assessment strategies to determine which SLOs students may achieve, in addition to those identified below:

- 1.2.2 *Explain Opinions* — Explain personal viewpoints in clear and meaningful ways and revise previous understanding.
- 2.1.1 *Prior Knowledge* — Seek connections between previous experiences, prior knowledge, and a variety of texts.
- 2.2.1 *Experience Various Texts* — Seek opportunities to experience texts from a variety of forms and genres [such as autobiographies, travelogues, comics...] and cultural traditions; share responses.
- 2.2.2 *Connect Self, Texts, and Culture* — Discuss own and others' understanding of various community and cultural traditions in various places and times as portrayed in oral, literary, and media texts [including texts about Canada or by Canadian writers].
- 2.3.1 *Forms and Genres* — Recognize key characteristics of various forms and genres of oral, literary, and media texts [such as novels, biographies, autobiographies, myths, poetry, drawings and prints...].
- 2.3.2 *Techniques and Elements* — Identify significant elements and techniques in oral, literary, and media texts, and examine how they interact to create effects.
- 5.2.1 *Cooperate with Others* — Assist group members to maintain focus and complete tasks; identify and solve group process issues.
- 5.2.2 *Work in Groups* — Select and assume roles to assist in the achievement of group goals; engage in ongoing feedback.

Science

Consider the intent of this LE and your choice of instructional and assessment strategies to determine which SLOs students may achieve, in addition to those identified below:

- SLOs related to Scientific Inquiry or the Design Process in Cluster 0: Overall Skills and Attitudes.

ICT LITERACY SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

Consider the intent of this LE and your choice of instructional and assessment strategies to determine which skills and competencies students may achieve, in addition to those identified below:

- basic operating skills
- concept mapping
- video production
- web page authoring
- word processing

SUGGESTED LEARNING RESOURCES**Software**

- concept mapping
- word processor

Internet

- IMYM Links Database: <<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ks4/tech/imym/resources/links.html>>
- Many websites provide lists of award-winning books, some with summaries, making appropriate selection of reading resources easier. Search the Internet using the terms “award winning young adult books.”

Print

- Appendix C: Index of Teaching and Learning Strategies and Tools
- Miscellaneous literary and/or informational texts.
 - For appropriate suggested titles, see Selected Bibliography.
 - For descriptions of English language arts learning resources approved for Grade 6, see The Governments of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon Territory, and the Northwest Territories. *Kindergarten to Grade 10 English Language Arts Resources: Compilation of Annotated Bibliographies from 1997 to 2001*. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education, Training and Youth, 2002. Available online at: <<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ks4/learnres/bibliographies.html>>.
- Buss, Cathleen, and Lee Karnowski. *Reading and Writing Literary Genres*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association, 2000.
- Daniels, Harvery. *Literature Circles: Voice and Choice in the Student-Centered Classroom*. York, ME: Stenhouse, 1994.
- Hill, Bonnie Campbell, Nancy J. Johnson, and Katherine Schlick Noe, eds. *Literature Circles and Response*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon, 1995.
- Manitoba Education and Training. *Grades 5 to 8 English Language Arts: A Foundation for Implementation*. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education and Training, 1998. (See Strategies That Make a Difference: Active Listening, 8-11.)
- McMahon, Susan, and Taffy Raphaels, eds. *The Book Club Connection: Literacy Learning and Classroom Talk*. New York, NY: Teacher's College, 1997.
- Peterson, Ralph, and Maryann Eeds. *Grand Conversations: Literature Groups in Action*. Richmond Hill, ON: Scholastic, 1990.

BLMs

- BLM OLE.4#1: Reading Circle Learning Centre
- BLM OLE.4#2: Guess the Role
- BLM OLE.4#3: Reading Circle Discussion Notes
- BLM OLE.4#4: Reading Log
- BLM OLE.4#5: Suggested Writing Topics for Reading Circle Response Log (Fiction)

- BLM OLE.4#6: Reading Circle Response Log
- BLM OLE.4#7: Rubric Template for Peer/Group Assessment and Self-Assessment of Reading Circle Discussion
- BLM OLE.4#8: Retelling
- BLM OLE.4#9: Student Self-Assessment for Responding to Literature
- BLM OLE.4#10: Before, During, and After Reading Strategies: Self-Reflection

TBLMs

- TBLM OLE.4#1: Roles of Group Members in Reading Circles
- TBLM OLE.4#2: Variations for Reading Circles
- TBLM OLE.4#3: Teacher Observation Checklist for Reading Circles
- TBLM OLE.4#4: Response Assessment Checklist
- TBLM OLE.4#5: Assessing Active Listening

Materials

- chart paper

SUGGESTIONS FOR INSTRUCTION

Preparation and Set-up

- Select a short story from an approved Grade 6 English Language Arts learning resource and choose two or three guiding questions from the accompanying teacher's guide.
- Obtain a class set of texts or small-group sets of several texts. The Department's Special Materials Services supports the education of students who are print handicapped. For information, see <<http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ks4/blind/specmat/index.html>>.
- Decide which Reading Circle variation will be used and which roles group members will play initially. Create a chart describing all roles and what behaviour and outcomes are expected at each Reading Circle session. See TBLM OLE.4#1: Roles of Group Members in Reading Circles and TBLM OLE.4#2: Variations for Reading Circles.
- Set up bookmarks or favourites of links to websites where students can find examples of book reviews (see IMYM Links Database), or place these links on the class website.

Activating Strategies

- Discuss formats or situations in which students may have shared their reading (e.g., reading with parents, reading to younger students) or when they may have experienced shared reading (e.g., Story Time, teacher-librarian reading aloud, a televised reading program).
- Select a group of students to demonstrate a Reading Circle, using Scenario 1 of TBLM OLE.4#2: Roles of Group Members in Reading Circles. Give students an opportunity to rehearse for the demonstration.
- Using a Think-Pair-Square grouping, students discuss reasons for sharing ideas about a text and the possible benefits of having a regular sharing time.
- Review the 5Ws (What? Who? When? Where? Why?) questioning technique with students to prepare for class sharing.
- Within Peer/Partner Interview groupings (also known as Peer Conferencing), students practise questioning. Help students develop suitable questions, reminding them that open-ended questions lead to thoughtful and interesting answers.

Acquiring Strategies

- Have a group of students demonstrate a Reading Circle discussion while the other students sit in a circle around the "demo group." Using BLM OLE.4#2: Guess the Role, the observers attempt to identify the roles held by each "demo group" participant.

- Discuss and agree upon appropriate sharing and listening behaviours. Inform students that they will be assessed on their practice of those behaviours or skills. Review active listening skills (see TBLM OLE.4#5: Assessing Active Listening).
- Distribute copies of BLM OLE.4#3: Reading Circle Discussion Notes. Model how students are to complete their discussion notes, pointing out appropriate kinds of questions.
- Select a new text (e.g., short story).
- Post guiding questions, as suggested in the teacher's guide of an approved Grade 6 English Language Arts textbook. The questions may include a discussion on literary elements, character traits and development, informational text structure, personal reactions to the story, predictions on what will happen next, and so on.
- Students read the selected text from an approved Grade 6 English Language Arts textbook, and take notes, using BLM OLE.4#3: Reading Circle Discussion Notes.
- Discuss, as a class, what was successful in the Reading Circle demonstration and what could be done to improve the discussion. Ask students to identify roles played by members of the "demo group." In a Think-Pair-Share grouping, students write a job description for each role identified.
- As a class, review the role descriptions, add to them as needed, and write them out on chart paper to be posted. Students receive a print copy for their Personal OLE Binder.
- With student input, develop a rubric for peer/group assessment and self-assessment of participation in Reading Circle discussion, using components outlined in BLM OLE.4#7: Rubric Template for Peer/Group Assessment and Self-Assessment of Reading Circle Discussion or any other components students suggest.

Applying Strategies

- When students are ready to start the Reading Circles, introduce them to the selected text with a brief "book talk."
- Students begin a Reading Log using BLM OLE.4#4: Reading Log.
- Divide students into Reading Circle groups, which they will keep for the duration of reading the first text.
- Establish guidelines and procedures that students will follow as they read their text selections, discuss them in their Reading Circles, and write journal responses. For format suggestions, see TBLM OLE.4#2: Variations for Reading Circles.
- Assign each student a starting job in the Reading Circles. Eventually, each group member will experience every role. For role descriptions, see TBLM OLE.4#1: Roles of Group Members in Reading Circles.
- Students read the assigned text and prepare for their Reading Circle discussions. They continue to read, discuss, and share in Reading Circles. The number of discussions can vary depending on the length of each text selection.
- Students select a writing topic from BLM OLE.4#5: Suggested Writing Topics for Reading Circle Response Log (Fiction) and prepare an entry for BLM OLE.4#6: Reading Circle Response Log. Encourage students to make links between their own lives and the lives of the individuals in the text. Students should also establish a connection between their reading and the current unit of study.
- Students present the text to other classmates at an OLE.5: Share the Learning or OLE.7: Speak Ye! Hear Ye! session. Individuals, partners, or small groups may
 - write a book review and submit it to a website that accepts student reviews
 - draw a comic strip to tell the story (this can be scanned into an electronic format)
 - set up a web page of book reviews on the school website and post student reviews there
 - dress as the main character in the text and do a book talk
 - create and videotape a commercial to "sell" the book to others
 - dramatize part of the book

- Browse through TBLM OLE.4#2: Variations for Reading Circles to determine how future Reading Circles may be set up.

Variations/Extensions

- TBLM OLE.4#2: Variations for Reading Circles provides several suggestions for varying the format of the Reading Circles.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT

- Students self-assess their participation by creating their own rubric using BLM OLE.4#7: Rubric Template for Peer/Group Assessment and Self-Assessment of Reading Circles Discussion. They identify and describe behaviours and levels of participation that constitute each level of achievement, with a 4 being the best.
- Confer with students on their work and participation, using TBLM OLE.4#3: Teacher Observation Checklist for Reading Circles and/or TBLM OLE.4#4: Response Assessment Checklist.
- Assess students' written responses to a text they have read, using BLM OLE.4#6: Reading Circle Response Log. Look for students' ability to
 - demonstrate comprehension of the material
 - make predictions
 - express an opinion
 - relate the text to their own experiences
 - ask questions
 - use signal or transition words to make the text more interesting
- Assess students' ability to retell the text orally or in writing using BLM OLE.4#8: Retelling.
- Students participate in self-assessment, using one of the following:
 - BLM OLE.4#9: Student Self-Assessment for Responding to Literature
 - BLM OLE.4#10: Before, During, and After Reading Strategies: Self-Reflection

CONNECTION TO INVENTIONS, INNOVATIONS, AND DISCOVERIES

- Students read texts that are related to the *Inventions, Innovations, and Discoveries* interdisciplinary unit.
- Oral presentations provide experience for the marketing component of the unit.

LEARNING CENTRE CONNECTION

- Students use BLM OLE.4#1: Reading Circle Learning Centre for learning centre instructions.
- Students access a website to look for book reviews of novels or to post their own reviews of texts.
- Students may post their reviews on the school website.

BLM OLE.4#1: Reading Circle Learning Centre

Overview

- This learning centre activity provides an opportunity to access websites where reviews of texts are posted, and to post students' reviews on such sites or on the school's own website.

Resources

- Internet
- ICT.9: Look for It: Learning to Search the Internet (Internet #1)

Task

- Access a website, already bookmarked, for reviews of texts.
- The recorder of each group writes up the information noted during the group's Reading Circle meetings and posts it on a book review website or the book review page of the school website.

Collaborative Goal

- Each member of the group should be a recorder at one time or another.

What to Do with the Results of This Learning Centre

- Publicize the school website and the student book review page on the website in the school newsletter.

BLM OLE.4#2: Guess the Role

Name _____ Date _____

In the column on the right, record the name of the student playing the role described in the middle column.

Role	Description	Student
Discussion Director	With the help of the teacher, develop a list of questions to help the group discuss the selected reading. Help the group talk about the big ideas in the reading and share their reactions without worrying about small details. Usually the best discussion questions come from personal thoughts, feelings, and concerns related to the reading. These can be noted during the reading or as a reflection after the reading.	
Summarizer	Prepare and present a brief summary of the day's reading in a short (one or two minute) statement. Be sure to cover the key points, the main highlights, and/or the essence of the reading. If there are several main ideas or events to remember, number the key points.	
Literary Luminary (For Fictional Text)	Find a few special sections of the text that the group might like to hear read aloud. The idea is to help the group remember some sections of the reading that are interesting, powerful, funny, puzzling, important, and so on. Decide which passages are worth hearing, and then jot plans for how they should be shared. Read passages aloud, ask someone else to read them, or have the group read them silently. Discuss that section with the group.	
Information Interpreter (For Informational Text)	Find a few sections of the reading that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are especially relevant to the topic • explain the subject very concisely and clearly • shed new light on the issue • communicate information previously unavailable • are controversial, or thought provoking 	
Connector	Find connections between the reading and the real world. This means connecting the reading to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal life • happenings at school or in the community • similar events at other times and places • other people or situations Possible connections may also be found between this reading and other writings on the same topic, or by the same author.	
Vocabulary Enricher	Be on the lookout for important words in the day's reading, or words that are puzzling or unfamiliar. While reading, jot down the words, and add their definition later. Point out to the group familiar words that stand out in the reading, such as words that are repeated often, that are used in an unusual way, or that are key to the meaning of the text.	
Illustrator	Draw an illustration of something specifically discussed in the reading or related to it, or of a feeling experienced from the reading. It can be a sketch, cartoon, comic, diagram, flow chart, or stick-figure scene, and may be labelled. Show the illustration to the others in the group without commenting on it. One at a time, group members speculate on the meaning of the illustration and connect it to their own ideas about the reading. After everyone has expressed his or her opinion, explain the drawing, describing how it came about or what it represents.	
Recorder	Take notes of what all group members say during a discussion of the text. Use notes to write a review of the text, including an opinion of why other students might want to read it. Post the review on a suitable website (see IMYM Links Database) or on the class website.	

BLM OLE.4#3: Reading Circle Discussion Notes

Name _____ Date _____

Reading Circle Selection		
Title	Author	
Summary of Text	Read-Aloud Section	
	Page Numbers	
	Reason for Choice	
Discussion Questions and Notes		
New Vocabulary	Connections (To real world or to <i>Inventions, Innovations, and Discoveries</i> unit)	Illustration

BLM OLE.4#5: Suggested Writing Topics for Reading Circle Response Log (Fiction)

Choose one or more of the following ideas and questions to assist you in responding to texts, using BLM OLE.4#6: Reading Circle Response Log.

1. What predictions can be made about the story using the cover of the book, the table of contents, and the illustrations?
2. Who wrote this story? When was it written? What purpose did the author have in writing this story?
3. Describe the setting of the story using words and pictures.
4. Describe the main character using words and pictures. Write a paragraph to compare this character to yourself.
5. What is the story about? What is the story's main conflict? Predict how it may be resolved.
6. What do you like about the story? Give the author suggestions for improvements.
7. Make a comic strip showing the main events in the story.
8. Write a different ending to the story.
9. Is this a feel happy, feel sad, feel angry, or feel... kind of story? Explain.
10. Choose a passage that appeals to as many senses as possible. Prepare to read this passage aloud in your Reading Circle group.
11. Think about this week's reading selection. Which events or people are most vivid? Make a sketch illustrating a vivid event or person.
12. Choose a character. List at least 10 adjectives that describe that person. Give a reason for the choice of adjectives.
13. A cinquain poem has five lines and a definite pattern, but it does not rhyme. Here is an example:
 - Line 1: 1 word Michael
 - Line 2: 2 words Gentle giant
 - Line 3: 3 words Helping many people
 - Line 4: 4 words His courage is unique
 - Line 5: 1 word Policeman
14. Select a character from the text. Write a cinquain poem about this character. Share it in your Reading Circle group.
15. Make a list of 10 new words you learned from the story. Beside each word, write a synonym and a sentence using the word correctly.
16. Write a friendly letter (minimum of 100 words) to the author of the story, giving personal ideas and opinions about the story. Put the letter in an envelope and send it to the publisher.
17. Make a travel brochure to advertise the setting of the story.
18. Does this story resemble real life? Explain in personal terms.
19. Write a reading response for the section of the story just completed. The response should consist of three paragraphs:
 - The first paragraph is a summary.
 - The second paragraph is a prediction of what will happen next.
 - The third paragraph is a comment about an issue or problem that is happening in the story.

BLM OLE.4#6: Reading Circle Response Log

Name _____ Date _____

Title _____ Pages Read This Session _____

As Retold By _____

<p style="text-align: center;">Sample Signal Words</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Select one of the writing topics from BLM OLE.4#5: Suggested Writing Topics for Reading Circle Response Log (Fiction) Write your response below. Use at least three of the sample signal words on the left.</p>
<p>accordingly afterwards also as a result as well as at the same time besides finally for instance for this reason furthermore immediately in brief in contrast in other words in short in spite of in summary indeed however likewise meanwhile on the contrary specifically that is therefore thus to recap yet</p>	

Reference:
Manitoba Education and Training. *Grades 5 to 8 English Language Arts: A Foundation for Implementation*. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education and Training, 1998. (For more Signal and Transition Words in Texts appropriate for Grade 6, refer to Grade 6, 338.)

BLM OLE.4#7: Rubric Template for Peer/Group Assessment and Self-Assessment of Reading Circle Discussion

Name _____ Date _____

Author _____

Text _____ Pages Discussed _____

Rating Scale 4 = _____ 3 = _____ 2 = _____ 1 = _____

Name(s):	Rating				Total
	4	3	2	1	
The student					
• is prepared					
• listens to others					
• contributes ideas					
• respects others					
• stays on topic					
• encourages others to share					
Comments					

BLM OLE.4#8: Retelling

Name _____ Date _____

Title _____ Author _____

As Retold By _____

Sample Signal Words	Retelling
accordingly afterwards also as a result as well as at the same time besides finally for instance for this reason furthermore immediately in brief in contrast in other words in short in spite of in summary indeed however likewise meanwhile on the contrary specifically that is therefore thus to recap yet	

Retelling: Adapted from *Grades 5 to 8 English Language Arts: A Foundation for Implementation* (Manitoba Education and Training BLM-75).

BLM OLE.4#9: Student Self-Assessment for Responding to Literature

Name _____ Date _____

Title Discussed _____ Author _____

Use the rating scale below to describe your experience in your Literature Study group. Write any comments that will help clarify your rating.

Rating Scale: $\frac{\text{High}}{5}$ $\frac{\text{Low}}{1}$

Response to Literature	Rating					Comments
	5	4	3	2	1	
• I was willing to express my interpretations of the literature.						
• I listened to and respected the comments and questions of others.						
• I used the comments of others to extend my understanding of the literature.						
• I asked questions and reviewed the selection to try to understand it better.						
• I cooperated with my peers to prepare a group interpretation of the selection.						
• I enjoyed the experience of responding with the group.						

Student Self-Assessment for Responding to Literature: Adapted, by permission, from *English Language Arts: A Curriculum Guide for the Elementary Level*. Copyright © 1992 by Saskatchewan Education.

Reference:

Manitoba Education and Training. *Grades 5 to 8 English Language Arts: A Foundation for Implementation*. Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education and Training, 1998. (See BLM-88.)

BLM OLE.4#10: Before, During, and After Reading Strategies: Self-Reflection

Name _____ Date _____

Check the strategies that you used to help you read.

Before I read, I...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • read the title • read the bold headings • predicted what the selection was about • thought about what I already know about the topic • asked myself questions about the topic • skimmed the selection • understood my task • set my goal for reading
As I read, I...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • looked for main ideas • took notes • drew diagrams and maps to help me remember the main ideas and important details • confirmed what I already knew about the topic • looked for answers to my questions • summarized the main ideas • stopped to question myself • used context clues to figure out words I did not know • reread sections that I did not understand
After I read, I...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • thought about what I had learned • summarized the main ideas • discussed ideas with a friend • looked for more information on the topic • sketched or wrote about the information
<p>Think about which strategy helped you the most. How did that strategy help you? Explain.</p> 	

Before, During, and After Reading Strategies: Self-Reflection: Adapted from *Grades 5 to 8 English Language Arts: A Foundation for Implementation* (Manitoba Education and Training BLM-17).

TBLM OLE.4#1: Roles of Group Members in Reading Circles

For the Reading Circle discussions, ensure that students are assigned particular roles with clear job descriptions. The roles should rotate weekly within the group so that all students experience all roles. Explain roles and job descriptions and give students time to practise the roles.

The following scenarios describe possible roles. Adapt the scenarios to suit the class size or needs. Print the selected scenarios and have students put a copy in their Personal OLE Binders.

Reading Circle Roles: Scenario 1	
Roles	Responsibilities
Group Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefly summarize the selected text at the beginning of the Reading Circle discussion. • Encourage each group member to share the information or reaction she or he has prepared following the last discussion. • Pose the guiding question or activity for the day's discussion, after having discussed it with the teacher. • Summarize the agreed-upon reading and reactions to be completed for the next discussion.
Group Recorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record the discussion with the help of group members.
Group Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be prepared for the discussion. • Be sure to support statements with evidence from the text. • Listen attentively as other group members make their comments and add to the ideas presented. • Respect the opinion of others and speak one at a time.

Reading Circle Roles: Scenario 2	
Discussion Director	<p>Develop, with the help of the teacher, a list of questions to guide the Reading Circle discussion about the selected text. Help group members to talk about the big ideas in the reading selection and to share their reactions without worrying about small details. Usually the best discussion questions come from personal thoughts, feelings, and concerns related to the reading, which can be noted during the reading or as a reflection after the reading.</p> <p>At first, use general questions such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was going through your mind while you read? • What questions did you have when you finished this section? • Did anything in this section of the text surprise you? <p>During the Reading Circle discussion, direct the discussion about the day's reading. First, call on the Summarizer to give a brief summary of the reading. Then lead the discussion with prepared questions.</p>
Summarizer	<p>Prepare and present a brief summary of the day's reading in a short (one or two minute) statement that conveys the key points, the main highlights, and/or the essence of the assignment. If there are several main ideas or events to remember, number the key points.</p>

(continued)

Reading Circle Roles: Scenario 2 (continued)

<p>Literary Luminary (For Fictional Text)</p>	<p>Identify a few special sections of the text that the group might like to hear read aloud. A passage may be selected for various reasons: it is important, surprising, funny, confusing, informative, controversial, well written, thought provoking, and so on. The idea is to help people remember some interesting, powerful, funny, puzzling, or important sections of the text. Decide which passages are worth hearing, and then jot plans for how they will be shared. Read passages aloud, ask someone else to read them, or have people read them silently, and then discuss that section with the group. Record the location of the reading passage, reason for the choice of reading passage, and the plan for reading, using BLM OLE.4#3: Reading Circle Discussion Notes.</p>
<p>Information Interpreter (For Informational Text)</p>	<p>Identify a few sections of the text that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are especially relevant to the topic • explain the subject concisely and clearly • shed new light on the issue • communicate information previously unavailable <p>A passage may be chosen for various reasons: it is important, informative, clear, well written, controversial, thought provoking, and so on.</p>
<p>Connector</p>	<p>Find connections between the text and the real world. This means connecting the reading to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal life • happenings at school or in the community • similar events at other times and places • other people or situations <p>Identify possible connections between the text and other writings on the same topic, or by the same author. Because connections are personal, there are no right or wrong answers with this role.</p>
<p>Vocabulary Enricher</p>	<p>Be on the lookout for important words in the day's reading, or words that are puzzling or unfamiliar. Jot down the words while reading, and add their definition later. Look for familiar words that stand out in the reading (e.g., words that are repeated often, used in an unusual way, or key to the meaning of the text) and point them out to the group. Record the page number, word, definition, and plan for sharing, using BLM OLE.4#3: Reading Circle Discussion Notes.</p>
<p>Illustrator</p>	<p>Draw an illustration of something specifically discussed in or related to the text, or of a feeling experienced in reading the text. The illustration can be a sketch, cartoon, comic, diagram, flow chart, or stick-figure scene, and may be labelled. Show the illustration to others in the group without commenting on it. One at a time, group members speculate on the meaning of the illustration and connect it to their own ideas about the reading. After everyone has expressed his or her opinion, discuss the illustration, explaining how it came about or what it represents.</p>
<p>Recorder</p>	<p>Take notes of what all team members say about the text during the Reading Circle discussion. Synthesize the information, with the intention of writing a review of the text. Based on the ideas or facts presented during the discussion, write an opinion of why the text should be read. Post it on a suitable website (see IMYM Links Database) or on the book reviews page of the school or class website.</p>

TBLM OLE.4#2: Variations for Reading Circles

Selecting the Text

- All students in the class read the same text.
- Each group reads a different text on the same theme. Texts can be of varied reading levels and related to the unit theme or concept.
- Each member of the group reads a different text of the same genre. Texts can be of various reading levels and related to the unit theme or concept.

Reading the Text Selection

- Students read the whole text selection before meeting in the Reading Circles.
- Students read an agreed-upon section of the text before meeting in the Reading Circles.
- Students read the text during the Reading Circle meeting, usually identifying some sections to be read independently the day before the next meeting.

Discussing the Text in Reading Circles

- At the beginning of each Reading Circle discussion, students record on a group chart (see BLM OLE.4#3: Reading Circles Discussion Notes) the page numbers of the text selection they are reading, and write a two- or three-sentence summary of what they have read to date.
- Assign a question for discussion at each Reading Circle, or construct questions specific to each title, as in a traditional novel study. The discussion can be videotaped or recorded by the group's recorder and edited by the group (OLE.2: Daily Edit).
- Give students a list of guiding questions to work through in sequence or according to the group's preference. The questions can be recorded by the group's recorder and edited by the group (OLE.2: Daily Edit).

Responding in Journals

- Assign questions for written response.
- Students write personal reactions to their reading, predict what will happen next, or comment on an issue raised in the text.
- Vary the responses at each session (e.g., vocabulary, setting, plot, character).

Comparing and Contrasting Texts

- Form new Reading Circles where each member of the group reads and shares a different text. This allows for sophisticated compare and contrast experiences, as well as critical thinking activities.

Posting a Book Review on the Internet

- See BLM OLE.4#1: Reading Circle Learning Centre.

TBLM OLE.4#3: Teacher Observation Checklist for Reading Circles

Date _____

Select a few items to focus on at each Reading Circle session or observe one Reading Circle group per session.

Observation Criteria	Student Names															
Reading Circle Discussion																
• expresses ideas and opinions about the text and the author's purpose																
• listens to others																
• contributes ideas																
• respects others																
• stays on topic																
• encourages others to share																
Reading Response																
• reads an appropriate number of pages of text each session																
• writes an appropriate response																
• shows understanding of text in response																
• writes using proper mechanics																
Comments																

This page is best printed landscape style on legal-size paper. More columns may be added as needed.

TBLM OLE.4#4: Response Assessment Checklist

Date _____

Select a few items to focus on for each retelling.

Response Observed	Student Names															
The student																
• states the main idea or theme of the story																
• describes the setting																
• describes the main character and supporting characters																
• states the goal or story problem																
• describes the plot																
• describes the resolution of conflict, goal, or problem																
• expresses a personal reaction or opinion																
• relates ideas and opinions about the text																
• relates ideas and opinions about the author's purpose																
Comments																

This page is best printed landscape style on legal size paper. More columns may be added as needed.

TBLM OLE.4#5: Assessing Active Listening

Check the observed behaviours.

Active Listening Skills and Strategies	Student Names													
The student														
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrates attentiveness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — looks at the speaker — thinks about and tries to understand what the speaker is saying — controls personal activity level — encourages the presenter with non-verbal cues (e.g., nodding, smiling) 														
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shows appreciation for others' ideas 														
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recalls relevant information 														
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarifies ideas 														
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides feedback 														
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asks relevant questions 														

Assessing Active Listening Skills: Adapted from *Grades 5 to 8 English Language Arts: A Foundation for Implementation* (Manitoba Education and Training BLM-54).

