

Lit circles

- Groups of four - based on book chosen
- **Connector (connect BY THEME NOT PLOT)**
- **Investigator (group understanding)**
- **Theme finder (Look for morals/theme)**
- **Discussion director (learning to ask smart questions is a life skill)**
- Get books from Library (in YOUR name)
- First come, first served



* All criterion in all rubrics are subsumed – that is you cannot “skip” the requirements of a level and going to the highest level exempts you from the work necessary for lower levels

Criteria	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5*
Constructs meaning	Makes vague connections to SELF or similar EVENTS	Makes general connections to SELF or similar EVENTS (plot based)	makes general, plot based connections between preferred text and other texts, general issues or events (REFERS to events in both texts)	Makes interpretive connections and references between THEMES from preferred text and other texts. Uses ACTUAL QUOTES from both texts to support arguments.	Makes perceptive connections and references to other texts, AND world issues or events (synthesis)
Language/ organization	Little or no editing in evidence.	Serious errors impede meaning.	Errors remain that require attention (no paragraphing, poor syntax, grammar errors)	Minor errors occur that call for better editing strategies (typos, spelling mistakes, minor grammar errors)	No errors

Connector

Examples

The final two chapters connect to Socrates. Both of them deal with the theme of death as being the cure for freedom. When Mayor Orden was selected for execution, he uses Socrates' last words, "Crito, I owe a cock to Asclepius, will you remember to pay the debt?" By this, Socrates meant that death is the cure for freedom of the soul from the body. Steinbeck uses it both as Socrates did and to show that Mayor Orden wants his people to carry on the fight. Socrates drank the poison without a fight, while Orden accepts his death without a fight. They accept death so that they can be free.

Theme #2: Fate vs. Free Will

Billy Pilgrim often expresses the belief that he has no control over his life and future, which is a philosophy he adopted from the Tralfamadorians. The Tralfamadorians deny that there is a direct cause behind anything, saying "Why *you*? Why *us* for that matter? Why *anything*? Because this moment simply *is*" (p.76-77). For example, he makes no effort to protest the Vietnam bombings or even prevent his own death, believing simply that his fate has already been decided.

The idea that humans have no influence over their lives and significant events are simply *meant* to happen is also present in the television show "Lost" in which characters grapple over whether or not destiny has any role in an individual's life. One of the characters strongly believes that he was meant for a specific role in life, which causes friction between him and the characters that believe they have more control over their lives. However, unlike in Slaughterhouse - Five, the characters in "Lost" try to make destiny come true instead of waiting for fate to happen to them.

Criteria	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Constructs meaning	No idea of what themes are in text or simply re-tells	Recognizes themes but cannot explain them Incomplete or partial understanding	Logical but obvious understanding of themes Alludes to examples	Draws meaning from the text beyond the literal (Reads between the lines) Gives clear examples	Makes perceptive connections to other texts, world issues and/or events Uses quotes and explains examples in depth
Language/ organization	Little or no editing in evidence.	Serious errors impede meaning.	Errors remain that require attention	Error occur that call for better editing strategies.	Flawless.

Theme finder

In the final part of the novel “The Bridge on the River Kwai”, there are two main themes that are present throughout. The first theme is “Man vs Self”, which almost completely relates to Colonel Nicholson himself. Throughout the book, the author puts a lot of emphasis on Nicholson’s pride, and it is clear because of it that he does as much as he can to remain proud to himself and to his soldiers currently imprisoned. Although initially portrayed by the author as the protagonist, his pride, along with his role in the construction of the bridge, both prompt him to eventually become the antagonist in the story. This is due to the fact that he is the one who completely disrupts Force 316’s mission, despite that force originating from the same country as him (England). Rather than going along with Joyce’s final step – blowing up the bridge and thus destroying the train passing over it – the fact that he had devoted so much time into leading his troop during the building process deteriorates the connection between them. He then becomes the enemy, something completely unanticipated at the commencement of the novel. Simply, Colonel Nicholson’s attachment to the bridge, as well as his own personality traits, cause him to become a completely changed soldier.

Example

Investigator

- Student finds historical, geographical, cultural or other information that would ***help group understand the novel***, NOT information about the AUTHOR or BOOK itself! Clarify setting, time, mood, historical context, etc. No book referencing (using book itself)
- Researches and then brings work to class for group circle. Includes information to be explained by the Investigator supported by maps, images, etc.

Investigator

Criteria	Level 1	Level 2		Level 4	Level 5
Content Relevance	Information is either incorrect, irrelevant OR IS BASED ON SIMPLY READING THE BOOK.	Information is pertinent but insufficient and/or does not clarify anything about the CONTENT of the text (book review or about the author).	Shares information that clarifies ONLY ONE issue in the novel for readers.	Shares information that clarifies MORE THAN ONE issue from the text.	Information gives insights into the many aspects of the plot, setting and character (s).
Validity of resources	Make no reference to sources. Seems “off the top of her/his head”	Makes vague references to sources (URL only)	Gives clear reference to text in the form of a bibliography (see below) but uses ONLY ONE source.	Refers to MORE THAN ONE source in the form of a complete bibliography.	Offers THREE OR MORE SOURCES AND criticism on the sources used. Internal citations used

Investigator

1. In the novel, it is very important to understand the geography of Korea since the story happens there and also since they reference to some seas, bays, etc. It is also important to understand the geography of the land because there are reasons why the mash units were always safe from the bombings, shootings etc. They were situated on top of a mountain (Korea is a very mountainous territory) which gave them an advantage. (Amanda Briney, 2014) They could see who was coming to attack them so they had time to get ready and attack.

The peninsula of Korea is situated in eastern Asia. There are five bodies of water that surround Korea: the Sea of Japan, the Yellow Sea, the Korea Strait, the Cheju Strait and Korea Bay. After world war two the Korean peninsula got split in to South Korea and North Korea. The largest city in all of Korea is Seoul. The Korean peninsula is mostly covered by mountains. Seventy percent of Korea is covered by mountains. Agriculture is reserved to only some areas since it takes a flat surface to do any activity concerning agriculture and since most of the area is mountainous, Korea has specific places that are made for agriculture. There are many huge mountains situated in the Korean peninsula. The biggest one is Baekdu Mountain. It is a volcano and is situated near the borders of china and North Korea. The climate in Korea depends of which half we are talking about. North Korea is usually cool and South Korea is usually very warm. (South Korea Government, 2012) (Colombus Travel Media, 2014).

Example of level 5

Briney, Amanda. "The Korean Peninsula." About. January 1, 2014. Accessed November 7, 2014. <http://geography.about.com/od/northkorea/a/korean-peninsula.htm>. This source was very useful because it gave me tons of information about the Korea, when it was separated and why. It also gave lots of information as to why battles were easier to win if you were located on the top of the mountain. It gave me lots of information about the territory where the book took place.

De Haan, Phil. "50 Years and Counting: The Impact of the Korean War on the People of the Peninsula." 50 Years and Counting: The Impact of the Korean War on the People of the Peninsula. May 1, 2002. Accessed November 7, 2014. <http://www.calvin.edu/news/2001-02/korea.htm>. This website was extremely useful because it helped me understand tons of years later how people are still affected by the war and how. It also gave me information as to how many people passed away in this atrocity, what happened during the war etc.

MURTHY, R., and Rashmi Lakshminarayana. "Mental Health Consequences of War: A Brief Review of Research Findings." National Center for Biotechnology Information. July 27, 5. Accessed November 7, 2014. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1472271/>. This website was based on sociology. On this website

Discussion

Create twenty questions to challenge your group to read “between the lines”. Can’t be answered by someone who hasn’t read the book but can’t be answered by looking at a specific page

Director

Criteria	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4*	Level 5
Constructs meaning	Seems unprepared: incomplete or sketchy notes.	Less than twenty questions. Questions prepared but simple quick answers suffice.	Asks at least twenty questions directly from text and/or questions are speculative and could be answered by someone who had not read the book (“would you do that?”)	Understanding of the group is developed from answering questions. Impossible for anyone who has not read the book to answer the questions.	Questions draw comprehensive meaning from the text. Questions incite lively discussion
Complexity of questions	Too difficult or too easy.	Questions can be confusing or deal in facts only.	Questions mainly deal in facts (“answer can be found on page 17”)	Questions are challenging but also incite further discussion (beyond the initial question)	Perceptive, at time profound questions that make references to larger issues outside the text

All criterion in all rubrics are subsumed – that is you cannot “skip” the requirements of a lower level assuming the highest level exempts you from the work necessary for lower levels (examples developing only ten comprehensive questions that incites lively discussions, ignoring the criterion in level two of twenty questions).

Rubric for Discussion Director

Lit Circles: Week 3- Discussion Director

1. How is Kilgore Trout similar to Billy Pilgrim?
2. At first Billy questions the Talfamadorians mentality (pg.117), but then he accepts it and implements it in his own life. Why does he accept it?
3. When Billy adopted this new mentality and thought, what does it say about free will?
4. Why should we not live by the way Talfamadorians perceive life, "Ignore the awful times, concentrate on the good ones."?
5. Why does Billy constantly lie to his wife? What does the lying say about his character?
6. Why does the author of the novel, Kurt Vonnegut, break the fourth wall and address the fact that he was there when the Americans had bowel problems? Why would Kurt Vonnegut feel the need to even break the fourth wall in general?
7. The author put in Howard W. Campbell's monograph about how malnourished and ill-equipped the Americans are. Why would he do that?
8. Billy says that he is "Cinderella". How are they similar?
9. Billy knows when, where and how he will die. Why did he not try to stop it?
10. If you knew about your death or other people's death like Billy did, would you try to stop or prevent them? Why or why not?
11. Why would the Germans be more generous to the Americans as they leave? (i.e make the Americans arrive to the prison camp in two cars but allow them to leave in four)
12. Why do the Germans that meet the Americans in Dresden consider themselves fools?
13. Why do the citizens of Dresden feel offended when they saw Billy?
14. Billy agreed with the statement "All the real soldiers are dead." Why does he agree and what does that say about him?

Example