* Literature circles are small, peer-led discussion groups whose members have chosen to read the same story, poem, article, or book.
* While reading each assigned portion of the text (either in or outside of class), members make notes to help them contribute to the upcoming discussion, and everyone comes to the group with ideas to share.
* Groups meet on a regular, predictable schedule when conducting literature circles.
* Participants use written or drawn notes to guide both their reading and discussion.
* Group meetings aim to be natural conversations.
* Students may play a rotating assortment of task roles when conducting literature circles.
* The teacher serves as facilitator, not a group member or instructor when implementing
* literature circles.
* Evaluation is by teacher observation and student self-evaluation.
* Assigned role sheets provide a temporary support to help peer-led discussion groups get started.
* The assigned roles in literature circles can ease the transition from teacher-directed to student-directed.
* Assigned role sheets provide a temporary support to help peer-led discussion groups get started; however, role sheets in literature circles are to be transitional devices. Something tempts teachers to cling to them for too long.
* Start small to develop the literature circle procedure with participants—an article, paragraph, or a poem are good starting points.
* When using the role sheets for literature circles, model how each role is performed, particularly for the elementary level.
* View literature circles as a long-term classroom investment: literature circles require a modest down payment of time for training, but once they’re installed in your portfolio of strategies, they pay big dividends in the reading program all year long.
* Literature circles should strive to be groups between 2-7 .
* Literature circles may look quite different from one grade level to the next.
* Literature circles allow the teacher to practice explicit strategy instruction in a creative, motivating manner.
* The reading assignment for literature circles has to be long enough to include discussion-worthy content.