

# LITERATURE CIRCLES AT NEW PALTZ MIDDLE SCHOOL

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# WHAT ARE LITERATURE CIRCLES?

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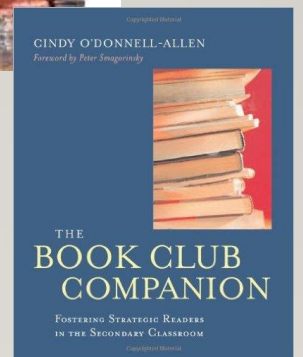
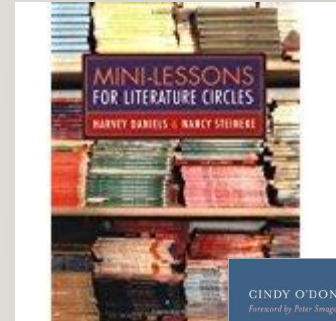
- Students work in small groups to read and analyze a novel.
- Novels at each grade level represent a variety of reading levels but are unified by a common theme or genre.
- Prep-tasks include reading a section of the book and noting observations about literary elements.
- Students then collaborate and discuss observations during class.
- Discussions are largely student-led after being modeled by the teacher.



# HOW LITERATURE CIRCLES BEGAN AT NPMS

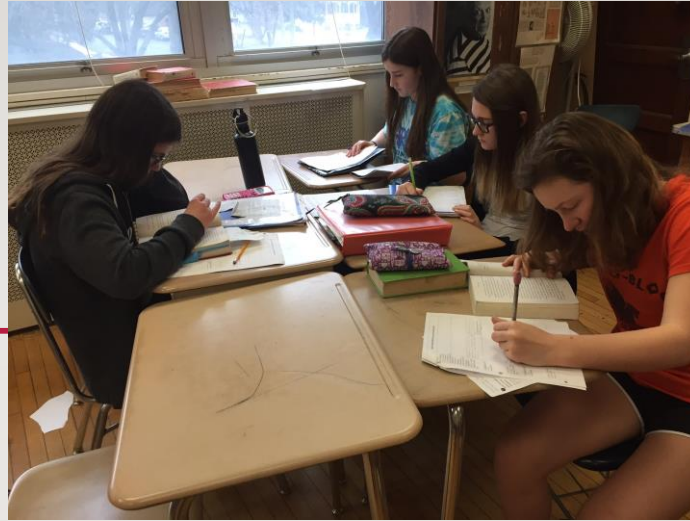
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- Why (Rationale): *The Giver* by Lois Lowry— Award-Winning yet challenging for many 7<sup>th</sup> graders
- Who: ELA teachers, reading specialist, library media specialist created a unit
- How: Research— books, colleagues from other schools
- What: Genre or theme-based book selections of varying difficulty in reading levels
- When: 2010 (approximately)



# BENEFITS

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- Students have the ability to choose the novel which creates invested learners.
- Carefully selected books allow students to be successful on their own levels.
- Using prior knowledge of literary elements, students guide the discussion of the important aspects of the novels.
- While students collaborate, teachers are able to assess students' application of literary elements taught throughout the year.

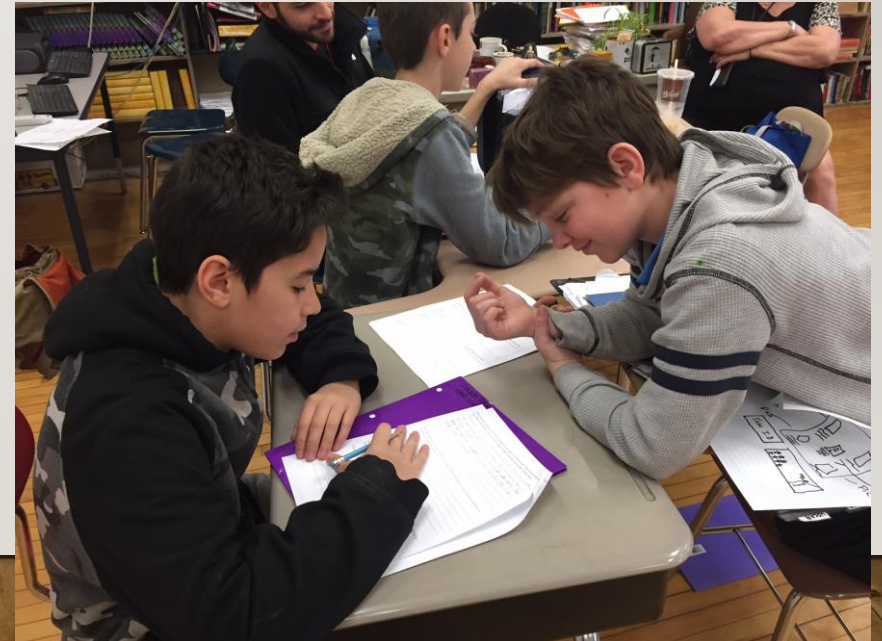
# SKILLS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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Literary Elements: Character Traits, Settings, Plot/Events, Genres, Points of View, Leads, Conflicts, and Vocabulary

Skills: Predicting, Inferring, Synthesizing Texts, Questioning, Making Personal Connections, Researching

Writing: Summary, Theme, Comparison, Analysis



# MODELING A LITERATURE CIRCLE JOURNAL ENTRY

- Activities can be complex; small-group work and collaboration can be unfamiliar or difficult.
- Students might need a phase of preparation or initial training.
- Mini-lessons cover:
  - Social skills
  - Cognitive strategies
  - Literary lens

Page #	Date	Entry Title
1	1/11/17	Successful Groups We Noticed in S1
2	1/13/17	Vocab S2+S3
3	1/23/17	Lit Terms S2+S3
4	1/30/17	Discussion Questions S4
5	2/1/17	Poetic Devices S5
6	2/2/17	Crazy / S6
7	2/7/17	Mind S7
8	2/7/17	Vocab S4+S7
9	2/8/17	BSQs S8+S9+S10
10	2/16/17	

#6 2/2/17	Poetic Devices S5	#7 2/3/17	Crazy Cards S6
Device	Concrete Detail	Explanation	Group Response
simile	"The flower is white and lay. Lovely like stars."	This is a simile because the flower and stars are being compared using like and as.	C-, the book has a weak plot that just has the character deciding between two men. It's also cheesy.
hyperbole	"she still has the sun on her face"	This is a hyperbole because she doesn't have the sun on her face. It's a exaggeration to make you think she's beautiful.	If romantic, cheesy novels aren't your thing this book isn't for you. It's a bit cliché.
simile	"Like a demon filling a game table head after head behind the door"	This is a simile because it's helping me vision what the school looks like.	I would jump in to when Xander says "I'm gonna win this one for my match" and just tape his face. Maybe it would make me like the book more.
imagery	"I can picture the inside of the school with its bright yellow walls, green tile floors and the classroom doors"	This is imagery because it's helping me vision what the school looks like.	Cheesy, romantic, shoney, ditte, predictable, mysterious

#8 2/7/17 Mind Map S7

C-4 Mind Map Reading Log

Name: Kendall Luchessa  
Section of the Book (page numbers): 196-230  
Character: Cassia

If you could climb inside this character's head, what do you think you'd find?

Important Images: Xander's Government, Cassia's artifact, Cassia's secret, Xander's match, Government - They're not trustworthy

Important Words: Xander, Government, Cassia, Xander - He's, Government - They're not trustworthy

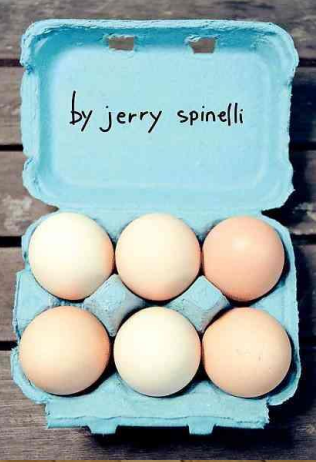
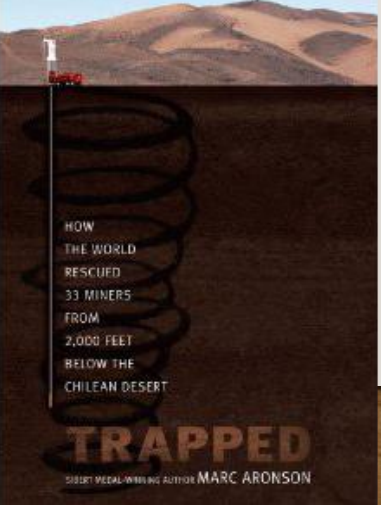
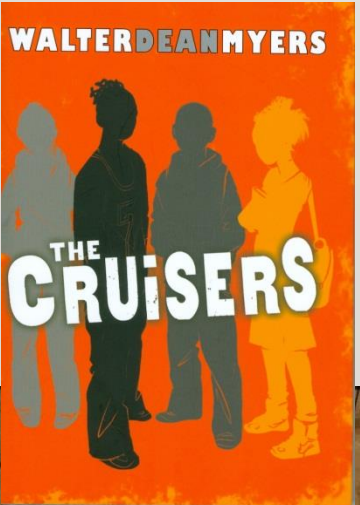
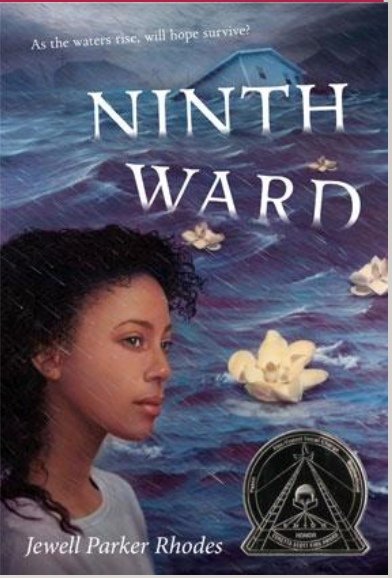
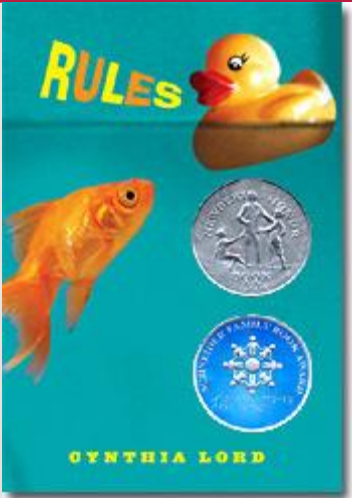
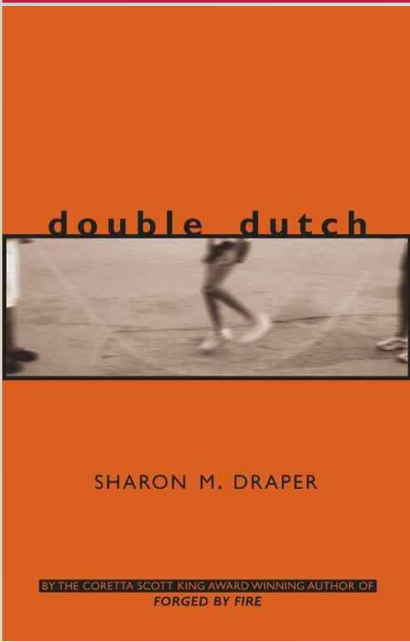
INSIDE THE HEAD...  
- Draw three symbols or images.  
- Record the three most important words in the story.

ON THE BACK OF THIS PAGE...  
- Make a legend for your map, briefly explaining what each of the three symbols represents and why you chose those three words.

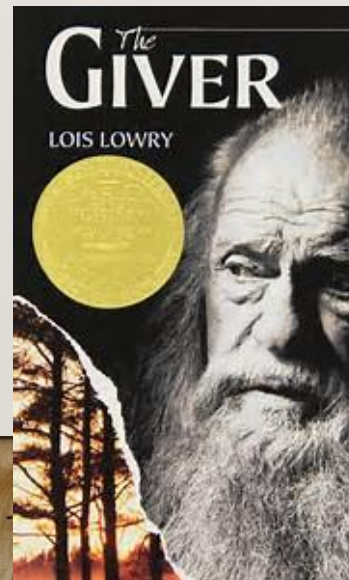
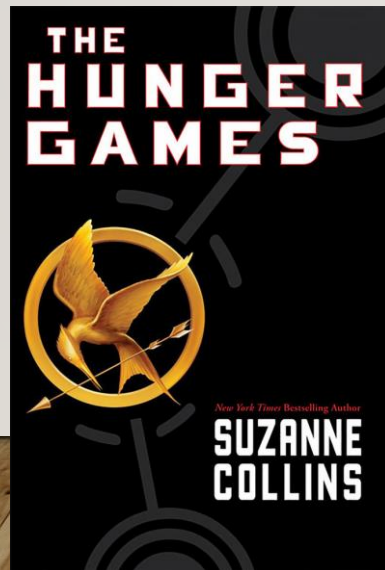
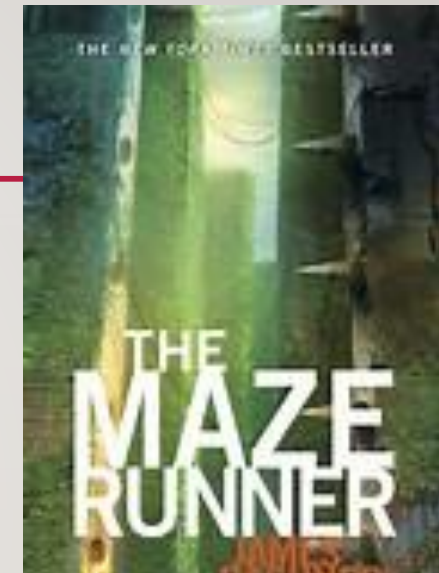
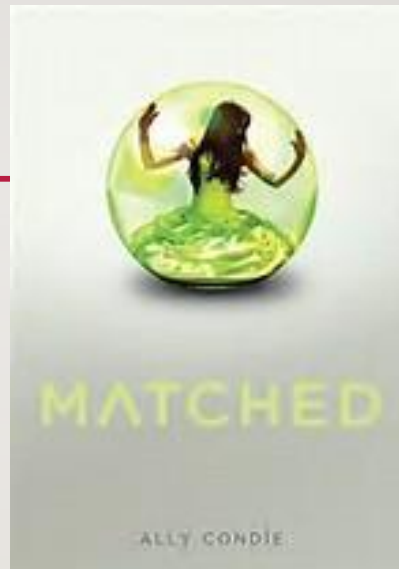
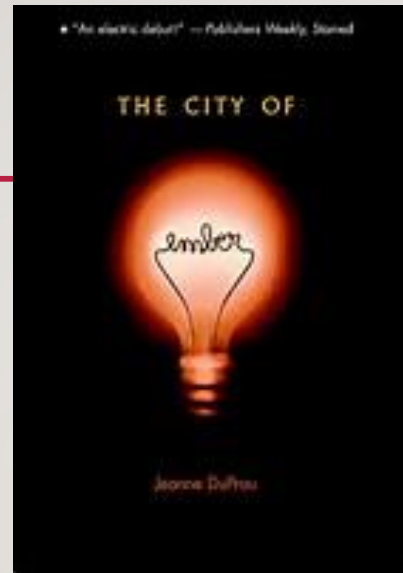
IN THE SPACE BELOW...  
- Write three real questions you still have about this part of the book.

1. How is Ky writing?  
2. Does Xander know?  
3. Why is the Society taking all this?

# THE BOOKS WE READ – 6TH GRADE



# THE BOOKS WE READ - 7TH GRADE





# THE BOOKS WE READ – 8TH GRADE

