



# Role Call: Literature Circles for Today's Classroom



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Published by K20 Center

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**Time Frame** 50-75 minutes

## Essential Question(s)

- What is comprehension?
- What comprehension skills support choice reading?
- How do literature circles and choice readings support comprehension skills?

## Summary

In this session, participants will explore authentic approaches to literacy and comprehension using literature circles and modernized role cards that fit the needs of today's ELA classroom.

## Learning Goals

- Identify higher-order comprehension skills that support literacy
- Develop an understanding of authentic strategies that engender comprehension in the classroom
- Discuss and commit to the authentic literature circle format that supports literacy when using a choice reading

## Attachments

- [Authentic Learning and Teaching—Role Call.pdf](#)
- [Literature Circles Benefits and Roles—Role Call.docx](#)
- [Literature Circles Benefits and Roles—Role Call.pdf](#)
- [Literature Circles Roles—Role Call.docx](#)
- [Literature Circles Roles—Role Call.pdf](#)
- [Myth Handout Literature Circles—Role Call.docx](#)
- [Myth Handout Literature Circles—Role Call.pdf](#)
- [Notecatcher Literature Circles—Role Call.docx](#)
- [Notecatcher Literature Circles—Role Call.pdf](#)
- [Presentation Slides Literature Circles—Role Call.pptx](#)

## Materials

- Literature Circles Presentation Slides
- Literature Circles Notecatcher (attached)
- [Critical Thinking Wheel 1](#) (Engage) (linked)
- [Critical Thinking Wheel 2](#) (Evaluate) (linked)
- Greek Myths Handout (attached; one story per group)
- Literature Circle Role Cards (attached; one per group)
- Authentic Learning and Teaching Handout (attached; one per student)

15 minutes

## Engage

Use the attached **Presentation Slides**. Go over the essential questions on **slide 3**. Briefly discuss the objectives on **slide 4**.

Move to **slide 5** introduce the [Engage: Critical Thinking Wheel](#).

Place participants into 4-5 breakout rooms. Tell learners that a participant in each breakout room will share their screen showing the Critical Thinking Wheel, spin the wheel for various participants, and facilitate a discussion by addressing the questions from the wheel. The questions are listed below.

- **Describe:** What is comprehension?
- **Compare:** How is comprehension similar and different when using the literature circle format?
- **Analyze:** What strategies do you use to support authentic comprehension?
- **Apply:** How does the literature circle format support comprehension?
- **Argue For or Against:** What might be an argument for or against comprehension taught through choice reading versus forced reading?

*Allow 8-10 minutes for this activity.*

Close breakout rooms. Allow learners a few minutes to quietly reflect on the following questions:

- What did you think of the critical thinking wheel?
- Have you ever used something like this in your classroom? How did you use it?

Move through **slides 6-10** and ask groups to share out some highlights from their discussion.

*Allow 5-7 minutes for whole-group share-outs.*

20 minutes

## Explore

Move to **slide 11**. Briefly explain what role cards are and how you will be using them in a literature circle.

Move through slides **12 - 15** as you explain the duties and order of each role.

After reviewing the roles, move to **slide 16** to explain the literature circle activities. Break participants into groups. Provide participants a link to a Google folder where the breakout groups have been organized and paired with a specific story. This will allow participants to easily identify which myth they will be reading. The **Literature Role Cards** will also be linked at the top of each myth document.

Change to **slide 17** and remind students of their tasks and order before starting breakout rooms.

*Allow 12-15 minutes to work through roles.*

Bring groups back together and go to **slide 18** to facilitate a brief discussion by asking the following questions:

- What do all of these stories have in common?
- What are some common themes that can be pulled from these Greek & Roman myths?
- What is an essential question that could be used for these Greek & Roman myths?
- What did you enjoy about that experience?
- How did the role cards affect your analysis of the text?
- What was challenging about that experience?

*Allow 5-8 minutes for discussion.*

10 minutes

## Explain

Move to **slide 19**. Instruct students to consult the **Authentic Learning and Teaching** handout as they reflect upon the literature circles activity.

Then, have participants read the **Literature Circles Benefits and Roles** handout that expands on literature circles, their effectiveness, and how the roles can be updated to be more inclusive using technology.

After reading, move to **slide 20** and complete a [3-2-1](#) strategy in a whole-group setting.

Discuss with participants how to overcome the roadblocks and obstacles mentioned in their 3-2-1s.

*Allow 8-10 minutes to complete this activity.*

15 minutes

## Extend

Move to **slide 22**. Instruct participants to consider one unit for which they could use a choice-reading literature circle format that authentically supports literacy and comprehension.

Ask participants to record the selected concept and comprehension strategy on the **Literature Circle Notecatcher**.

The Literature Circle Notecatcher asks them to complete the following:

- Column 1 - List one upcoming unit with their activities/theme/essential question.
- Column 2 - List 3-6 books/texts you could use in a literature circle to replace that unit while still maintaining a common theme/essential question.
- Column 3 - What roles could you use in your literature circle? How could you incorporate the digital/tech aspect of literature circles?
- Column 4 - How will this support comprehension?

*Allow 10 minutes for participants to complete this activity.*

*Allow 5 minutes to share out.*

10 minutes

## Evaluate

Move to **slide 22**.

Display the [Evaluate: Critical Thinking Wheel](#) and ask learners to share their understanding of comprehension through Literature Circle Role Cards by answering the questions from the wheel.

*Allow 8-10 minutes.*

## Resources

- Baldwin, J. (2004, March 15). *Old Greek Stories*. Retrieved from Project Gutenberg: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/11582/11582-h/11582-h.htm>
- K20 Center. (n.d.). 3-2-1. Strategies. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/117>
- *Pandora's Box, the Greek Myth of Pandora and her Box*. (n.d.). Retrieved from Greek Myths and Greek Mythology. <https://www.greekmyths-greekmythology.com/pandoras-box-myth/>
- *Psyche and Eros Myth*. (n.d.). Retrieved from Greek Myths and Greek Mythology. <https://www.greekmyths-greekmythology.com/psyche-and-eros-myth/>
- Word Wall. (n.d.) Engage: Critical thinking wheel. <https://wordwall.net/resource/22461494/engage-critical-thinking-wheel>
- Word Wall. (n.d.) Evaluate: Critical thinking wheel. <https://wordwall.net/resource/23169263/evaluate-critical-thinking-wheel>
- Reciprocal Teaching Role Cards. (2009). Solution Tree Press: [go.solution-tree.com/literacy](http://go.solution-tree.com/literacy)