

## **«Reading circles» as a tool for making your students be eager to read, discuss and analyze the text at Speech Practice lessons**

This article presents the method of motivating students to read a literary work prescribed by the curriculum as part of compulsory reading with the subsequent development of students' desire to analyze the text in order to identify linguistic and grammatical structures, working on vocabulary and stylistic means in order to understand cultural, time and value layers, and also for the purpose of the possibility to use these units in modern speech. The described method encourages discussions concerning the work read by students with their deeper understanding of the situation and the subject matter than just retelling without understanding and feeling the situation [7]. Giving examples and establishing connection between the situational and sensual manifestations depicted in a literary work with the personal experience of the reader or experience that took place in the observational aspect of the student's life, using the skill of comparing different cultural and ethnic images with a cultural and ethnic atmosphere that is familiar and close to the student's atmosphere, giving examples of different variations of the ending of the work arouse students' interest in developing and presenting the situation which is depicted in the literary work to real time. This method can motivate and get a student interested in a non-routine process of reading, analyzing and discussing and raise awareness of the value of reading in a person's life; with further interest in more thoroughful reading in order to enrich and enlarge the student's inner world, his/her cultural and educational level; comprehending and expanding his/her own vocabulary in order to achieve a high level of foreign language skills.

**Keywords:** Reading circles, method, The Discussion Leader, The Summariser, The Connector, The Word Master, The Passage Person, The Culture Collector, The Role Sheet, reading, analysis, discussion.

## **«Reading circles» як засіб заохочення студентів до читання, дискутування та аналізу прочитаного тексту на уроках усної практики**

Репрезентовано методику заохочування студентів до читання літературного твору у межах обов'язкового програмного читання з подальшим розвитком у студентів бажання аналізувати текст із метою виявлення

мовних та граматичних конструкцій, опрацювання вокабуляру та стилістичних прийомів із метою зрозуміння культурного прошарку, часового виміру та ціннісного простору, а також задля реальної можливості використання цих одиниць у сучасному мовленні. Методика розвиває навички дискусії з приводу прочитаного твору з ширшим заглибленням у ситуацію і тематику твору, ніж банальний переказ без осмислення та відчуття ситуації; наведення прикладів та встановлення зв'язку ситуативно-почуттєвих виявів, зображених у художньому творі, з реально пережитим читачем досвідом або досвідом, який мав місце у спостерігальному аспекті життя студента [7]. Порівняння різних культурно-етнічних зображень з культурно-етнічною атмосферою, звичною та близькою до атмосфери студента, наведення прикладів різноманітних варіацій завершення твору спонукають студента до порівняння зображеної ситуації з реальним часом. Ця методика дійсно спроможна мотивувати та зацікавити студента нерутинним процесом читання та переказу, можливістю аналізу та дискусії і викликати свідомість цінності читання у житті людини; до подальшої зацікавленості у більш заглибленому читанні з метою збагачення внутрішнього світу студента, його культурно-освітнього рівня; осмислення та розширення власного вокабуляру з метою досягнення високого рівня володіння іноземною мовою.

**Ключові слова:** Reading circles, методика, The Discussion Leader, The Summariser, The Connector, The Word Master, The Passage Person, The Culture Collector, reading, The Role Sheet, читання, аналіз, дискусія.

The task of reorganizing the modern system of humanitarian education is the necessity to establish a connection between human-centric and cultural-centric learning in the process of studying a foreign language not just as a means of communication, but also the knowledge of the cultural and value environment in order to deeply understand the nature of the language and its subsequent use on a high linguistic and communicative level [4].

For more than 100 years many well-known colleges have been collaborating with communities across Canada, The UK and The USA to ensure all students have the reading, comprehensive and discussing skills to reach their full potential. Ensuring that students learn to love to read and read well, will enable them to find success in all areas of their lives. It builds knowledge, confidence and creativity. This guide is to help interested individuals, groups and organizations set up and run effective reading circles. They are easy to organize, inexpensive to run and have lifelong impact on students [4].

The methodological basis of the study is made on cultural and anthropological principles to have been studied, improved, applied and practically and scientifically proved by all well-known universities and colleges as Oxford University (The UK), Frontier College (Canada), Kansas State University and others. To implement the task we used general scientific research methods and such

sources: Oxford University Press <https://elt.oup.com/teachers/readingcircles/?cc=gb&selLanguage=en>; Reading Agency <https://readingagency.org.uk/resources/2075/>; Frontier College Canada <https://www.frontiercollege.ca/getattachment/3da25c05-29d6-44dd-a2c9-c3b61887d3f1/readingcircle.aspx>; Faculty Focus.

The objective of the article is to identify educationally viable concepts and practical measures to address the problem among students of very little desire to read and even the less desire to discuss. Add to that the fact that many are not particularly good readers or people who like to read, and the result is students arrive at the class not having done the reading. The reading circle is an exciting new approach which can enhance your reading group meetings. Originally designed for English language learners, the model can be applied to any reading group who wants to get creative with their approach [5].

The problem under research is important to message and convince the students how low literacy skills are directly linked to poverty, poor health and high unemployment. Literacy is more than just the ability to read and write. It's the ability to understand the printed word and to put it to use. It's about strengthening culture, achieving goals, gaining knowledge and recognizing potential. It's about succeeding in today's world. Forty-two percent of the adults in the world have trouble with everyday tasks that involve reading. These are millions of people who are not reaching their potential. Literacy is an essential skill in today's world. The main purpose of a Reading circles is to provide a safe place where students can develop a love of reading and books [4]. Reading circles combine, in a natural way, the skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. They help motivate students to acquire both the habits of reading extensively and of working autonomously [5].

Reading Circles are small groups of students who meet in the classroom to talk about stories read. These groups allow language learners to have enjoyable, interesting discussions in English. In a Reading circle, each student plays a different role in the discussion. The six main roles are: The Discussion Leader, The Summarizer, The Connector, The Word Master, The Passage Person, The Culture Collector [6].

To prepare for their roles, each student completes a Role Sheet. The Role Sheets break reading down into smaller sub-skills with each student focusing closely on one way of encountering the text. The students read the story from their given perspective (role) outside the class. Then they are brought together in the Reading circle, where they use their Role Sheets as prompts for discussion, and during this process of discussion the parts become whole. Reading Circles are reading and discussion groups which are very much student centered [6]. The teacher's role is to provide students with a framework for success:

- Teachers select reading material appropriate for their student population.
- Small temporary groups are formed in the classroom.
- Different groups read the same text.

- Groups meet on a regular, predictable schedule to discuss their reading.
- Students use written notes to guide both their reading and their discussion.
- Discussion topics come from the students.
- Group meetings aim to be open, natural conversations about stories.
- The teacher serves as a facilitator, not a group member or instructor.
- A spirit of playfulness and fun pervades the room.

It is also important to spend some class time introducing the Role Sheets clearly to students. These steps are recommended:

- Put students into groups of five or six. Try to make sure that there are at least two confident students in each group.
- Give each student a set of the six Role Sheets.
- It is often a good idea to introduce the first five roles now, and wait until the second or third session of Reading Circles before introducing the sixth role, Culture Collector.
- Present each role one at a time, pausing after each one. Allow students time to talk among themselves in their groups, to consolidate their understanding of the role. Encourage them to write notes on the Role Sheets, which they can keep and refer to later when they assigned a particular role.
- After the five (or six) roles have been presented, give students a photocopy of the Role Sheet. Invite them to write down a few questions about the roles. These questions then can be put on the board, and teachers can either answer them or elicit answers from other groups in the class [6].

#### **Student's Role Sheets:**

##### **The Discussion Leader's job is to ...**

read the story twice, and prepare at least five general questions about it.  
ask one or two questions to start the Reading Circle discussion.  
make sure that everyone has a chance to speak and joins in the discussion.  
call on each member to present their prepared role information.  
guide the discussion and keep it going [6].

##### **The Summarizer's job is to ...**

read the story and make notes about the characters, events, and ideas.  
find the key points that everyone must know to understand and remember the story.

retell the story in a short summary (one or two minutes) in your own words.

talk about your summary to the group, using your writing to help you [6].

##### **The Connector's job is to ...**

read the story twice, and look for connections between the story and the world outside.

make notes about at least two possible connections to your own experiences, or to the experiences of friends and family, or to real-life events.

tell the group about the connections and ask for their comments or questions.  
ask the group if they can think of any connections themselves [6].

**The Word Master's job is to ...**

read the story, and look for words or short phrases that are new or difficult to understand, or that are important in the story.

choose five words (only five) that you think are important for this story.

explain the meanings of these five words in simple English to the group.

tell the group why these words are important for understanding this story [6].

**The Passage Person's job is to ...**

read the story, and find important, interesting, or difficult passages.

make notes about at least three passages that are important for the plot, or that explain the characters, or that have very interesting or powerful language.

read each passage to the group, or ask another group member to read it.

ask the group one or two questions about each passage [6].

**The Culture Collector's job is to ...**

read the story, and look for both differences and similarities between your own culture and the culture found in the story.

make notes about two or three passages that show these cultural points.

read each passage to the group, or ask another group member to read it.

ask the group some questions about these, and any other cultural points in the story [6].

**Notes for the teacher:**

When asking the first questions, the Discussion Leader calls on each student at least once, so the teacher's goal is to pay attention that each member of the Reading circle is taking part in discussion, everyone is giving the idea in turn without interrupting the other participants, the Discussion Leader is encouraging students to ask as many questions on the story read as possible [6].

During the Summarizer's retelling emphasize that the Summarizer retells the story in their own words, and does not copy too much from the story text. Make sure that all participants of the Reading circle agrees and has the full picture of the story retold [6].

In some kinds of story (for example, mystery, horror, adventure), students will rarely have had similar experiences. But they can still find connections with the feelings or thoughts of characters in the story (for example, fear, shock, guilt, excitement), so during the Connector's job the teacher's task is to be aware that the former can arise in students the interest in exploring their life experience [6].

Speaking about the Word Master's job, the teacher is to make sure that students understand they should look for words that are important in the story – they do not have to choose unknown words. Students should use an English-to-English learner's dictionary to define new words. Encourage students to look for special uses of common words and to ask questions such as, «What do you

think \_\_\_\_\_ means here?» or «Why does the writer repeat the word \_\_\_\_\_ eight times in the first two pages of this story?» [6].

Remind the Passage Person that students do not have to choose passages containing the main events in a story. Interesting descriptions, characters' thoughts, or pieces of dialogue often provide good material for group discussion. Students must remember to give their reasons for choosing a particular passage [6].

The Culture Collector role is probably the most challenging one, and it may be best if a confident student acts as Culture Collector the first time the role is used.

Explain that «your culture» includes your background, your customs and traditions, your everyday life. Encourage the Culture Collector to ask the group for help in understanding puzzling cultural issues in the story. This role and the Connector role are similar. Both look for connections: the Connector finds connections with personal experience; the Culture Collector compares and contrasts cultures, and finds cross-cultural connections [6].

It is also important for the teacher while running the Reading circles to pay attention, notice, write down the grammar mistakes having been made by the students during the discussion; to mark the level of their competence and activity in running the Reading circle with the purpose of giving the further feedback to each student personally.

Discussion in small groups of five or six may be new for many students, and for the first Reading circle session, it is a good idea to allow only thirty to forty minutes of discussion time. This should be enough for each group to go through all the roles and have time for follow-up questions and comments. The goal is to finish before the students have exhausted their enthusiasm for discussion so that they will be motivated to try Reading circles again [6]. Although, as shows my experience, it is always exciting for students to run Reading circles, so you will hardly need to arouse their interest to do it again. The only thing you will need is to limit their time according to the timetable. The further Reading circles are usually the students' eager desire to read, work on the story chosen and to discuss.

And, of course, to make your Reading circle even visibly exciting, you can surprise your students by giving out to them badges with the first letters (**DL**; **S**; **C**; **WM**; **PP**; **CC**) of their roles before starting the Reading circle which they will change with one another at the next discussions.

Whichever texts are used, the essence of Reading Circles remains the same. It is enabling learners to have meaningful, interesting discussions in English. The teacher's role is to:

- make sure that students are reading stories at appropriate language levels for them;
- present the roles clearly so that students know what is expected of them;
- assign a manageable quantity of text for Role Sheet preparation;
- then step back, and allow Reading Circles to work their magic!

Conclusions from this study and the prospect of further exploration in this direction says that scientific search proves that Reading helps students learn how language is used, builds vocabulary, expands imagination, and helps make sense of the world. Reading can also provide the tools for developing critical thinking skills. Reading aloud with children is one of the cheapest, simplest, and most effective ways to help them become lifelong readers and with it educated, confident and spiritually enriched people.

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