



How to thrive in **Literature Groups**

**in Mrs. Angie's
class**

It's exercise for your brain - educationally, it's the most important skill to possess and to practice. Reading is a great passion of mine, and I hope my students see that in me and become as excited as I am about reading. True, it takes a lot of time and is in some cases boring, but there's no other way to gain the information and hear the stories you can from reading...that goes for ten year-olds and hundred year-olds alike. Here's how we do it in my class:

Literature groups are decided by the teacher. A leader is chosen, and the groups read and discuss the book together much like a book club - for a grade! The students pick the book on their own from the approved reading list in the academic handbook, we order the books, and the students go for it.

At the beginning of the book, I will give each group a list of the readings that are due at each meeting. Each group meets twice per week (Mondays and Thursdays) and are observed in their participation. At the end of the meeting, students are assigned jobs to take on for that section and fill out the corresponding form. They bring that to the next group after they read the section and fill out the form to present it to the group. Grading for the first two quarters will be based on the students' participation and lit. group forms.

At some announced point in the first quarter, students will also be required to present a reading to the class once per week. I will assign each student a day, and each week that student is to prepare a short reading for their day. Students will be graded on fluency, vocabulary/pronunciation, clarity, pacing, and voice inflection (not reading monotonically). This will alternate between poetry and story reading from week to week. The poetry should be read appropriately as instructed in class (Listen to the examples below for further clarification). Students get to choose their own selections and should be about 2 minutes in length. Selections must be out of a book from the book list.

Here are some examples:

READING:	POETRY:
<p>"Mitzy, sit!" Mitzy looks up at me and tilts her head to one side. She wags her tail, but she won't sit. "Grrr," I growl. Mitzy whimpers and lowers her tail. "Sorry, girl." I kneel and give her a hug. "I didn't mean to scare you. I'm just frustrated. Teaching you to sit shouldn't be this hard." Mitzy is a full-grown Airedare terrier. Her short, wiry coat is mostly tan, with a big black patch over her back. She has a long nose, a stubby tail, small ears, and confused look in her eyes. The confused look is unusual for an Airedare. Airedares are usually very smart dogs. "OK, let's try again. Pay attention." I stand in front of her. "Mitzy, sit." Mitzy chases her tail and barks. This is impossible. When Mitzy's owners brought her in, they warned me that she was a little</p>	<p>Good morning, staff and students. Take note of what I say. In school we will have showers, For April starts today.</p> <p>Some teachers were suspended For giving too much work. Today, if you feel lazy, You'll be allowed to shirk.</p> <p>We want to find the student Who brought a pig to school. It is running down the hallways, And that's against the rule.</p> <p>Today, on our lunch menu Are bumblebees in sauce Or chopped-cockroach sandwiches And salad you can toss.</p> <p>Next year we'll pay our students For work they do in school. And if you believe these messages, Then you're an April Fool!</p>

<p>"slow." I promised them I could teach her the basic commands. There is no such thing as a dumb dog," I said. My grandmother, Dr. J.J. MacKenzie, taught me that.</p> <p>Gran owns this place, Wild at Heart Animal Clinic. she says that all animals - even pets like cats, dogs, and guinea pigs - are wild at heart. Kids, too. I taught her that.</p> <p>My parents died when I was a baby, and Gran took me in. I don't remember them, but Gran tells me I have my father's freckles and my mom's temper. Gran says taking care of animals prepared her for having me around. Very funny.</p>	<p><u>Bad Example</u> <u>Good</u></p> <p><u>Example</u></p> <p>THE IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading according to the phrase instead always pausing at the end of a line to create the common "poetry rhythm" • Voice inflection - being expressive • Volume & Clarity - not muttering • Knowing the vocabulary • Reading at a reasonable pace • Not breathing in the middle of sentences
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At the end of each book a book report will be due. The book report will be worth two assignments. Book reports should be two to three pages in length and follow the standards of the writing assignment guidelines. Book report grades will be recorded as a Language grade NOT a reading grade.

After the book report, a book project will be due. The book project will be worth two assignments. Options for the book project include: constructing a miniature stage set for a scene in the book (using clay, legos, etc.), preparing and presenting a monologue about the story dressed and acting as a main character, making a movie of the book (on a VHS tape), writing a poem about the book (at least ten stanzas long), writing a test about the book (at least seventy-five multiple-choice questions), re-writing the last chapter of the book, writing and perform a song about the book, writing and performing a puppet show of the movie or recording it on a VHS tape, rewriting the book as a children's book with full-page art and reading it to the lower grades, recording (on a cassette tape) a radio broadcast of an interview with the main character, adding a chapter to the book without disturbing the other events in the book, writing a play based on the book, making a comic strip of the book (at least twenty-five frames).

Also, students will be assessed on their reading ability bi-weekly in the areas of (1) fluency, (2) vocabulary pronunciation, and (3) reading comprehension.