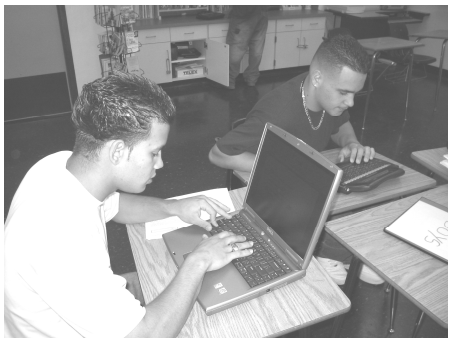


Goals and Objectives

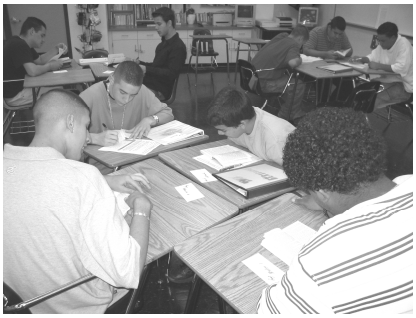
Technology is an area that is essential for teachers to envelope. The students of this generation are surrounded by technology. They are a part of a generation that is entertained by television and video games. In order to reach them and help them learn, teachers must use this modality to channel the students' brains. One of the areas that student with disabilities have the most difficulty with is the FCAT and how to use different reading strategies to better comprehend. ***Collaborate, Communicate – Create a Community!*** provides students with the opportunity to learn the reading strategies in a non-threatening environment. This provides students with a structured way to learn to love reading. Literature Circles give students a chance to read a novel and discuss the different elements of the novel while focusing on important FCAT skills and having fun. By working together, they learn to listen to other students and are encouraged to continue reading.

Collaborate, Communicate – Create a Community! will accomplish six goals:

1. Students will work collaboratively to accomplish given goals.
2. Students will improve their reading ability by using various reading strategies.
3. Students will become familiar with story elements.
4. Students will improve their ability to answer FCAT-style questions.
5. Students will use various technologies to complete activities related to their novel.
6. Students will create a web site to inform others of their accomplishments and encourage others to read their novel.

Competency Based Curriculum Standards

1. LA.A.1.4.2 Selects and uses strategies to understand words and text, and to make and confirm inferences from what is read, including interpreting diagrams, graphs, and statistical illustrations.
2. LA.A.2.2.7 Recognizes the use of comparison and contrast in a text.
3. LA.A.2.4.1 Determines the main idea and identifies relevant details, methods of development, and their effectiveness in a variety of types of written material.
4. LA.E.2.2.1 Recognizes cause-and-effect relationships in literary texts.
5. LA.E.2.4.1 Analyzes the effectiveness of complex elements of plot, such as setting of major events, problems, conflicts, and resolutions.



Course Outline

Collaborate, Communicate – Create a Community! is a nine-week instructional unit that focuses on various reading skills and increases the students' enjoyment for reading. It also improves their social and collaborative skills. Students with learning disabilities usually have social problems in addition to their primary disability. Through literature circles, they have to learn how to express their opinions and listen to the opinion of others in a respectful way. This project used literature circles as its main focus. Some of the lessons used were taken from www.literaturecircles.com. This web site is a great resource for any teacher planning on incorporating literature circles into their curriculum.

As part of our project, the students created a web site so that other students and teachers can learn from their experience. You may visit their web site at www.learnersunite.com.

Depending on the length of the novels and the ability level of the students, the timeline will vary. Every Friday was dedicated to developing the web site and evaluating the groups' work ethics. At the beginning, we had to review basic computer and web surfing skills. Eventually, the students were able to work independently on their web pages. Monday through Thursday was dedicated to reading the novel and completing various reading activities. Below is a suggested time line that can be used when implementing this project.

Projected Timeline

Week 1: Formation of groups, explanation of role, novel distribution, creation of novel boxes, preparation of binders
Week 2 – 7: Reading of novel and completing various reading activities
Week 8: Editing of web site, planning of group presentation
Week 9: Group Presentations

LITERATURE CIRCLES

This nine weeks will be different from all the others. Our class will be reading four novels at one time. We will accomplish this through Literature Circles. There are certain guidelines that we will follow.

1. **Each of you will be part of a team. Each team will have a different novel to read. Here are the teams for the literature circles:**

   Team 1: Stephanie, Diana, Marjorie, Krystin

   Team 2: Jorge, Victor, Jonathan

   Team 3: Alain, Alex, Elvis

   Team 4: Edwin, Marlon, Orestes, Henry

   Now, create a team name: _____

2. **Each team will maintain a binder containing all of the tasks that are completed. You will be responsible for keeping this binder organized.**

3. **The week's schedule will go as follows:**
   - **Monday through Thursday – complete literature circle tasks**
   - **Friday – work on web site**

4. **Monday through Thursday's schedule will go as follows:**
   - **5 minutes: review what took place in the story the day before by reading yesterday's quick summary, distribute the role cards, read the directions of the task sheet**
   - **40 minutes: read the story and complete tasks**
   - **5 minutes: write a quick summary of what took place in today's reading**
   - **10 minutes: share what took place in today's reading with the rest of the class**

5. **Each member of the team will be assigned a role for the day. You will know what roles belong to the day because the task cards related to that role will be placed in the front pocket of your binder. One member cannot have the same role twice in a row.**

6. **The assignment for the day will be located in the sheet protector inside the binder.**

7. **Each member must participate each day. If you are absent, you will not receive credit for assignments completed that day. It is extremely important that you are here every day!**

8. **Grades:**
   - **You will have one assigned task each day. The team will be graded on how well the task is completed.**
   - **You will receive one grade per week for reading an acceptable amount of the book for the week. It is important that you stay on task.**
   - **You will receive one individual grade for the week based on your team's assessment on how much you participated in the tasks for the week. Absences will affect this grade.**

9. **Task Cards:**

   Task cards need to be created for the Literature Circle Roles. As a team, decide who will create the different cards. Use the remainder of the class to create these cards for your team.

10. **As mentioned before, each team will read a different novel. Here are the novels each team will read:**
    - **Team 1: <u>Every Time a Rainbow Dies</u>**
    - **Team 2: <u>Whale Talk</u>**
    - **Team 3: <u>Aimee</u>**
    - **Team 4: <u>Danger Zone</u>**

ROLES FOR LITERATURE CIRCLES

Task Director: This person is responsible for making sure every member stays on task and completes their assignment. (*Required daily*)

Page Master 1: This person's responsibility would be to read the passage aloud to the group with the assistance of Page Master 2. (*Required daily*)

Page Master 2: This person's responsibility would be to read the passage aloud to the group with the assistance of Page Master 1. (*Required daily*)

Character Captain: This person is responsible for sharing observations made about the main character(s).

Word Wizard: This person is responsible for finding four unknown words in the text.

Savvy Summarizer: This person is responsible for listening carefully while the story is being read. He/she would take notes during the reading. After the passage is read, he/she would create a one-paragraph summary of what was read with the assistance of the other group members.

Imaginative Illustrator: This person is responsible for creating a picture that summarizes what was read. It could be a comic strip, a stick-figure drawing, or something more elaborate.

Discussion Director: This person is responsible for creating four good discussion questions. He/she would then take one of those discussion questions and write information from the story that relates to the question.

Clever Connector: This person creates a connection from the story world out into the real world.

Travel Tracer: This person is responsible for tracking where the action takes place in the book. He/she would connect background information from the group on any topic related to the book (e.g. geography, history, information about the author).

Literature Circles Assignment Sheet

	Date	Start Page	End Page	Task to Complete	Task Completed
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					
21					
22					
23					
24					
25					

TASK DIRECTOR

Group Name: _____ Date: _____

Task Director's Name: _____

Chapter: _____ Pages: ____-____

<u>Task Director</u>: Your job is to make sure each member of your team understands what they are supposed to do for that day. You are also responsible for making sure that everyone stays on task. Finally, you must make sure that the task for the day is completed.

<u>Step One</u>: Fill in the chart below. As you fill it in, make sure each member of your team understands what they are responsible for doing for today.

<u>Step Two:</u> You must also fill in the "Task Completed" section of the <u>Literature Circles Assignment Sheet</u> in the front of your folder. If your group finished the task during class, you will write "Done in class." If your group did not finish during class time, you will write "Will finish for homework" and write down the name of the person who will be responsible for finishing the task.

Page	Name of Student	Role for the Day
1		
2		
3		
4		

CHARACTER CAPTAIN

Group Name: _____ Date: _____

Character Captain's Name: _____

Chapter: _____ Pages: ____-____

<u>Character Captain</u>: Your job is to share observations you have made about the main character(s). Select four adjectives that describe one or more of the characters in your novel. Support your selection with an example taken from your reading assignment.

Page	Paragraph	Character's Name	Adjective	Support from Story

Common Character Traits: A List of Adjectives

Adventurous	Awesome	Artistic	Athletic	Active
Beautiful	Brave	Bold	Bossy	Cheerful
Curious	Creative	Courageous	Considerate	Daring
Impulsive	Dainty	Dangerous	Exciting	Entertaining
Energetic	Funny	A fighter	Friendly	Fun-loving
Gentle	Generous	Happy	Humble	Hostile
Honest	Intelligent	Independent	Inventive	A leader
Lazy	Messy	Mischievous	Mean	Neat
Nasty	Nice	Nosy	Open	Poor
Proud	Pretty	Quiet	Rich	Respective
Rad	Sad	Sloppy	Serious	Successful
Shy	Short	Smart	Studious	Selfish
Simple	Tall	Trustworthy	Thoughtful	Unselfish
Warm	Witty	Wild	Wonderful	Silly
Melancholy	Mellow	Aimless	Loud	Prudent
Iconoclastic	Penurious	Belligerent	Loyal	visionary

WORD WIZARD

Group Name: _____ Date: _____

Word Wizard's Name: _____

Chapter: _____ Pages: ____-____

<u>Word Wizard</u>: Your job is to find words that the group may not know the meaning. Words chosen should be:

*** Important * Unfamiliar * Different * Puzzling**
*** Funny * Used in an unusual way * Interesting**

List four words you feel would be worth discussing with your group. Fill in the chart below. Use a dictionary only to fill in the "What It Really Means" part.

Word	Page	What We Think It Means	Reason for our Definition	What It Really Means (use the dictionary for this part only after all other parts are filled in)

SAVVY SUMMARIZER

Group Name: _____ Date: _____

Savvy Summarizer's Name: _____

Chapter: _____ Pages: ____-____

<u>Savvy Summarizer</u>: Your job is to help your group identify the main idea of what was read today. You will take notes while the Page Masters read the story. Only write down the major events that take place. After the reading is done, you will lead your group in writing a one-paragraph summary based on what happened in the story today. Highlight the notes that you choose to use in your summary. You do not have to use all of your notes. You can also have other information that you may not written down as notes.

<u>Notes Area</u>: Use the space below to take notes. It continues on the back of this page.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

One Paragraph Summary: Write your summary here.

IMAGINATIVE ILLUSTRATOR

Group Name: _____ Date: _____

Illustrator's Name: _____

Chapter: _____ Pages: ____-____

<u>Illustrator</u>: Your job is to provide an illustration for the section of the book your group is reading. Draw a specific moment from the story in the frame below. This is a "snapshot" of a funny, scary, emotional, or interesting point in the selection. You may create a cartoon snapshot, a realistic snapshot, or a stick figure snapshot. Be sure to draw in detail and color all of your work.

DISCUSSION DIRECTOR

Group Name: _____ Date: _____

Discussion Director's Name: _____

Chapter: _____ Pages: ____-____

<u>Discussion Director</u>: Your job is to write down some good questions that you think your group would want to discuss about this part of the book. Your job is to help people talk over the big ideas in reading and share their reactions. Usually the best discussion questions come from your thoughts, feelings, and concerns as you read. Remember that your questions should have answers that cannot be found directly in the book. List a minimum of four good thought provoking questions. Think about the FCAT questions cards.

<u>Discussion Questions for Today:</u>

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

4. _____

_____

CLEVER CONNECTOR

Group Name: _____ Date: _____
Clever Connector's Name: _____
Chapter: _____ Pages: ____-____

Clever Connector: Your job is to find connections between your novel and the outside world. This means connecting the reading to:

- **Your own life**
- **Happenings at school or in the neighborhood**
- **Similar events at other times and/or places**
- **Other books or stories**
- **Other writings on the same topic**
- **Other writings by the same author**

Think about a minimum of two connections that today's reading reminded you of. List the connection and explain how the events are similar. There are no wrong answers – whatever the reading connects your with is worth sharing.

Clever Connections for Today:

Connection #1:

_____

_____

Explanation for Connection #1:

_____

_____

_____

Connection #2:

_____

_____

Explanation for Connection #2:

_____

_____

_____

TRAVEL TRACER

Group Name: _____ Date: _____
Travel Tracer's Name: _____
Chapter: _____ Pages: ____-____

<u>Illustrator</u>: Your job is to provide a travel tracer illustration for the section of the book your group is reading. This is done by drawing many smaller pictures that show the different settings of the selection you read (kind of like a comic strip). Travel Tracer focuses each picture on the setting throughout the selection and shows how the setting influenced or changed the story. Be sure to draw in detail and color all of your work.

Literature Circle Evaluation

Grading Criteria	Points (0 to 5)
Summary (Concise, yet Complete and Accurate)	
Vocabulary (Word Choice and Definitions)	
Questions (Quality of Questions and Answers)	
Graphic Organizer (Completeness and Quality)	
Participation in Literature Circle Meeting	
Total Points/Letter Grade	

0 - 5 = F, 6 - 10 = D, 11 - 15 = C, 16 - 20 = B, 21 - 25 = A

Name: _____

Comments:

Literature Circle Evaluation

Grading Criteria	Points (0 to 5)
Summary (Concise, yet Complete and Accurate)	
Vocabulary (Word Choice and Definitions)	
Questions (Quality of Questions and Answers)	
Graphic Organizer (Completeness and Quality)	
Participation in Literature Circle Meeting	
Total Points/Letter Grade	

0 - 5 = F, 6 - 10 = D, 11 - 15 = C, 16 - 20 = B, 21 - 25 = A

Name: _____

Comments:

Literature Response Questions

Do any of the characters change in the story? What caused them to change?	Would you like to read something else by this author? Why or why not?
How are you different from one of the characters? Explain.	How might the story be different if it had happened somewhere else (or in a different time period)?
If you could trade places with one of the characters, which one would it be, and why?	If you had been the main character in this story, would you have acted differently? Explain why or how.
Was there a character you didn t like? Why didn t you like this character?	How did you feel about this story? Would you recommend it to someone else? Why or why not?
What was the theme or the author s message? What events helped you figure out the message?	What do you think was the best part of the story? Why?

Developed by Laura Candler – Teaching Resources at www.lauracandler.com

Q A R

Right There The answer in the text usually easy to find. The words to make up the question and the Words used to answer the question are right there in the same sentence. Ex. How many types of fossils are there ? Flags: Who, What, When, Where, how many	**Author and you** The answer is not in the story. You need to think about what you already know , what the author tells you in the text and how it fit together. Ex. Predict what kind of fossils will be found in California? Flags: Why judgment words, predict…
Search and Find The answer in the selection, but you need to but together different pieces of information to find it. Words for the question and words for the answer are not fond in the same sentence. They come from different places in the selection. Ex. What kinds of fossils were found in Florida? Flags: plurals…	**On My Own** The answer is not in the selection. You can even answer their question without read the selection. You need to use your own experience. Students ask this type of question to being out their prior knowledge. Ex. Is it better to dig up the fossils and study them or leave them where they are? Flags:

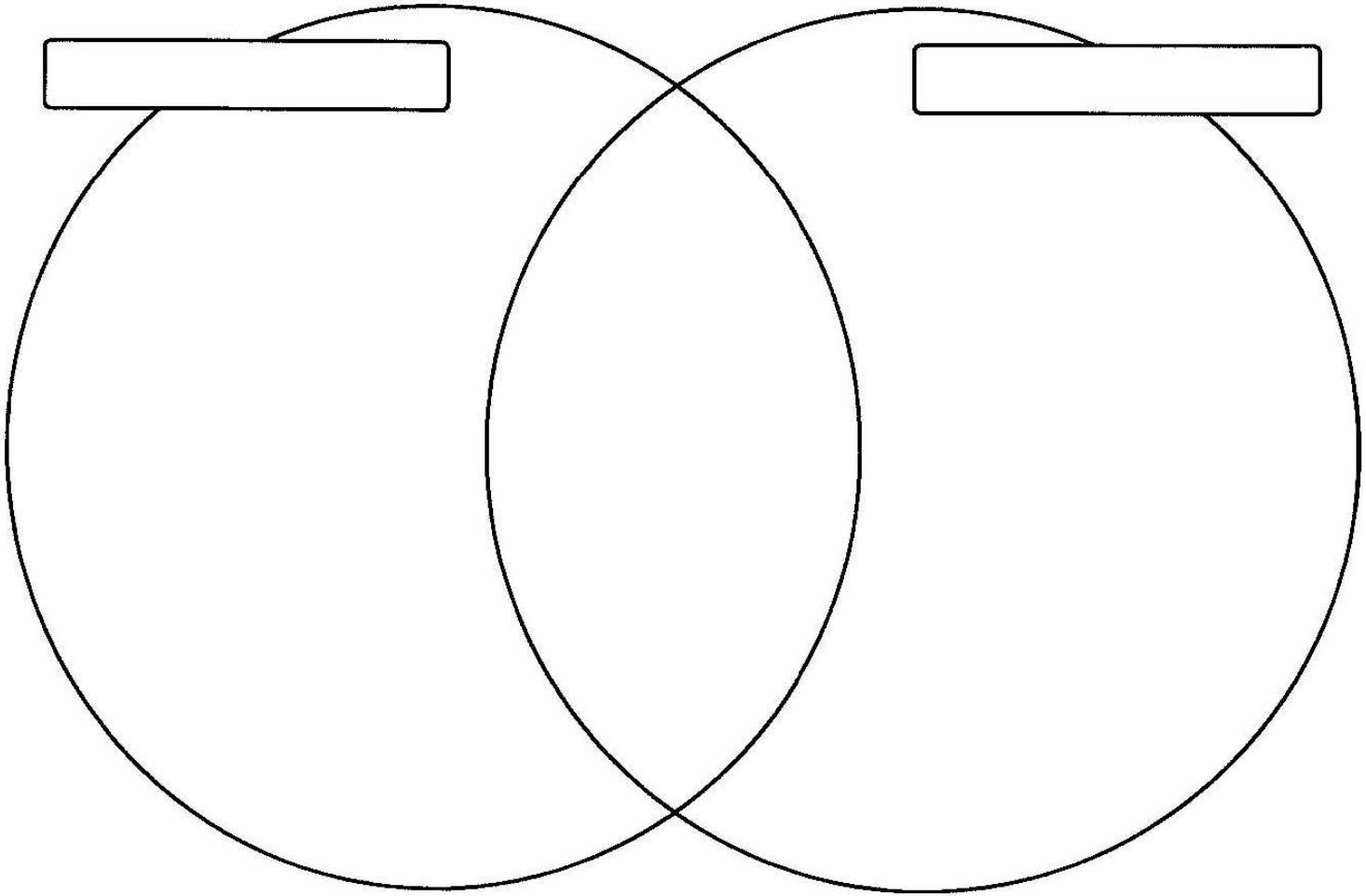
QAR'S

Identify at least 2 questions of each type of QAR from your text, a quiz or test. Write them in the corresponding box.

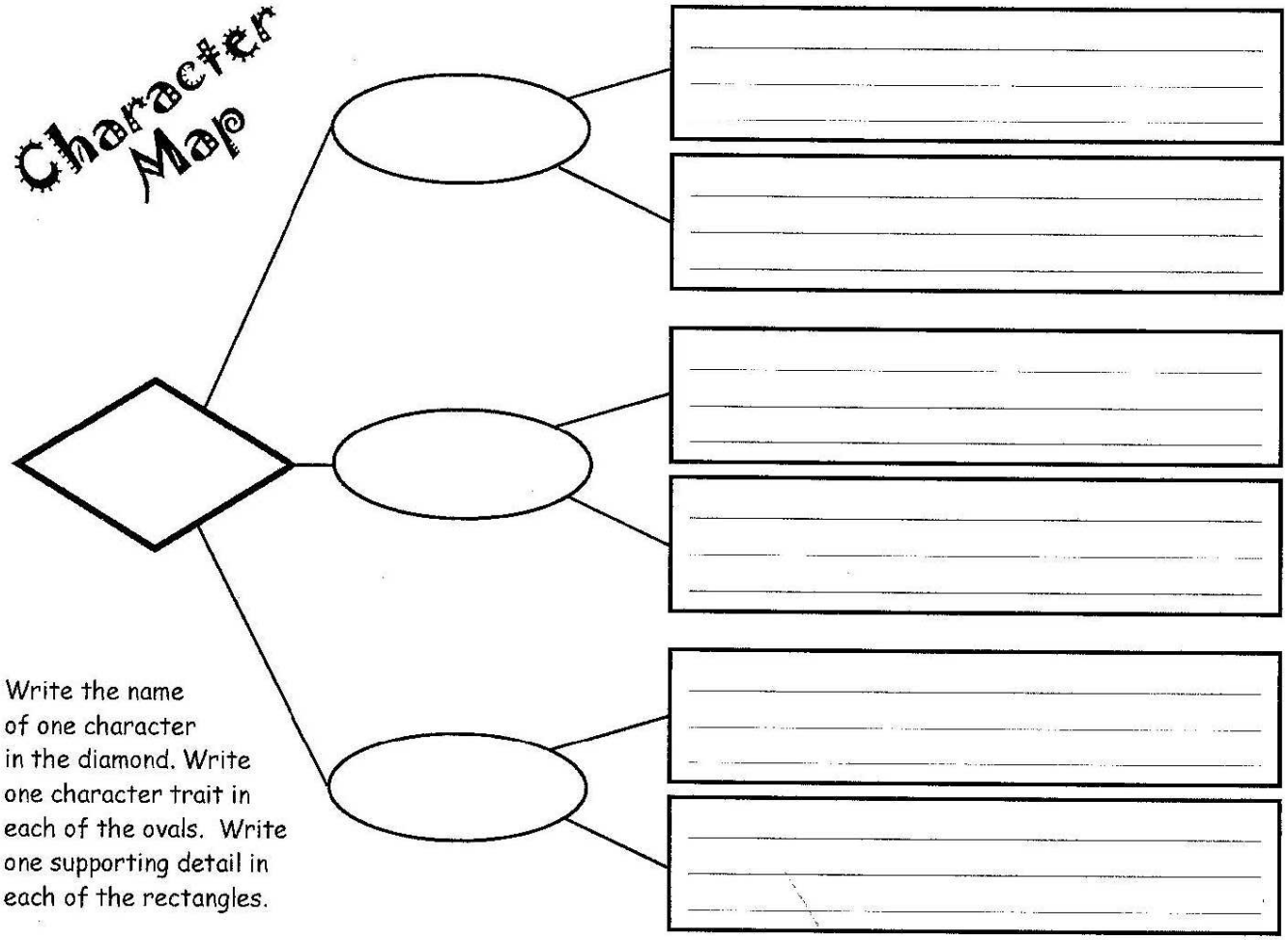
IN THE BOOK QUESTIONS	IN MY HEAD QUESTIONS
Right There	Author and You
Search and Find	On My Own

Character Comparison

Book Title _____



Character Map



Write the name of one character in the diamond. Write one character trait in each of the ovals. Write one supporting detail in each of the rectangles.

Developed by Laura Candler (Teaching Resources at http://home.att.net/~teaching)

Format for an "I Am" Poem

First Stanza

I am (two special characteristics about person)

I wonder

I hear

I see

I want

I am (first line of the poem repeated)

Second Stanza

I pretend

I feel

I touch

I worry

I cry

I am (first line of poem repeated)

Third Stanza

I understand

I say

I dream

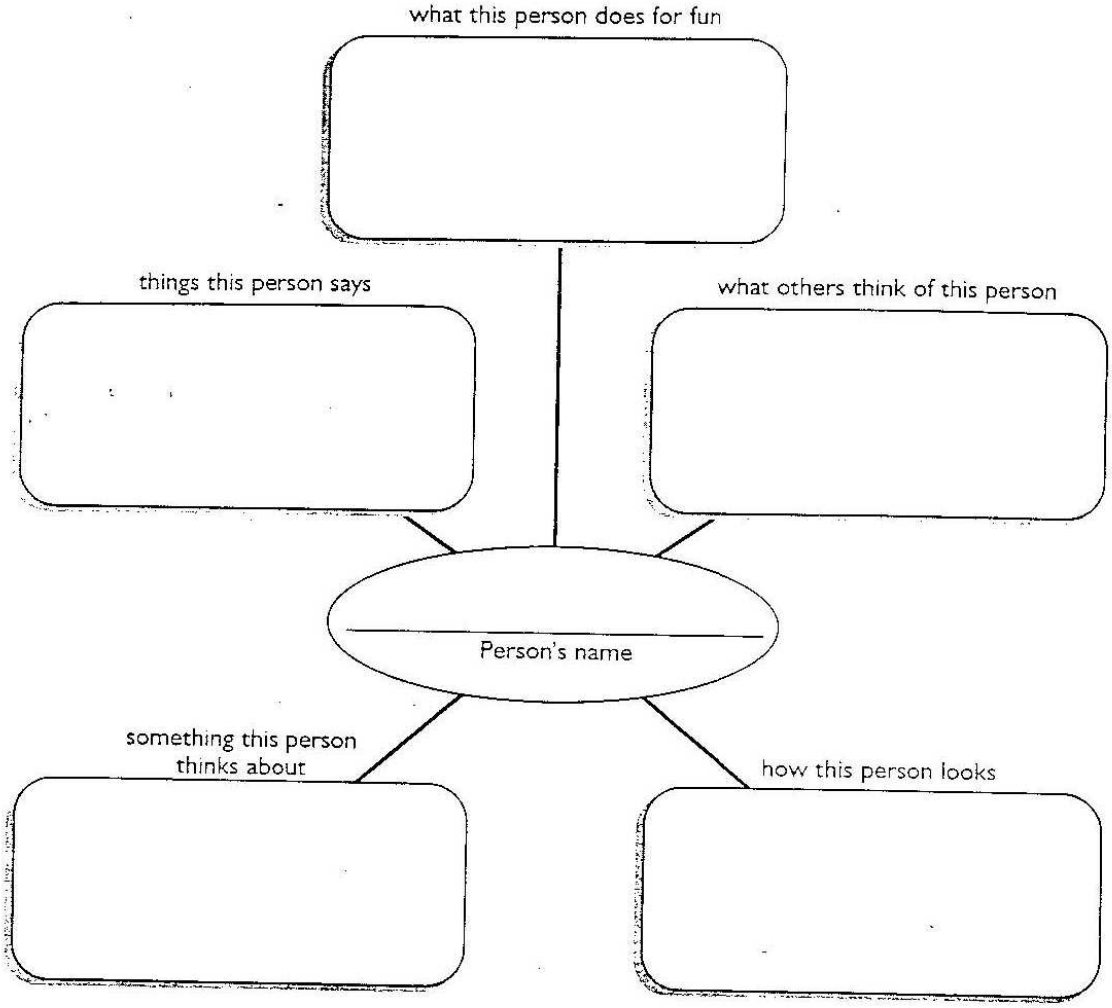
I try

I am (first line of poem repeated)

Character Someone You Know

Goal: Identify character traits.

An author helps us get to know a character by what that character says, what he does, what he thinks, how he looks, and how others respond to him. People you know are like characters in a novel. They say and do things that tell you what kinds of people they are. Choose someone you know, and write his name in the center below. Then complete the character web to describe the person.



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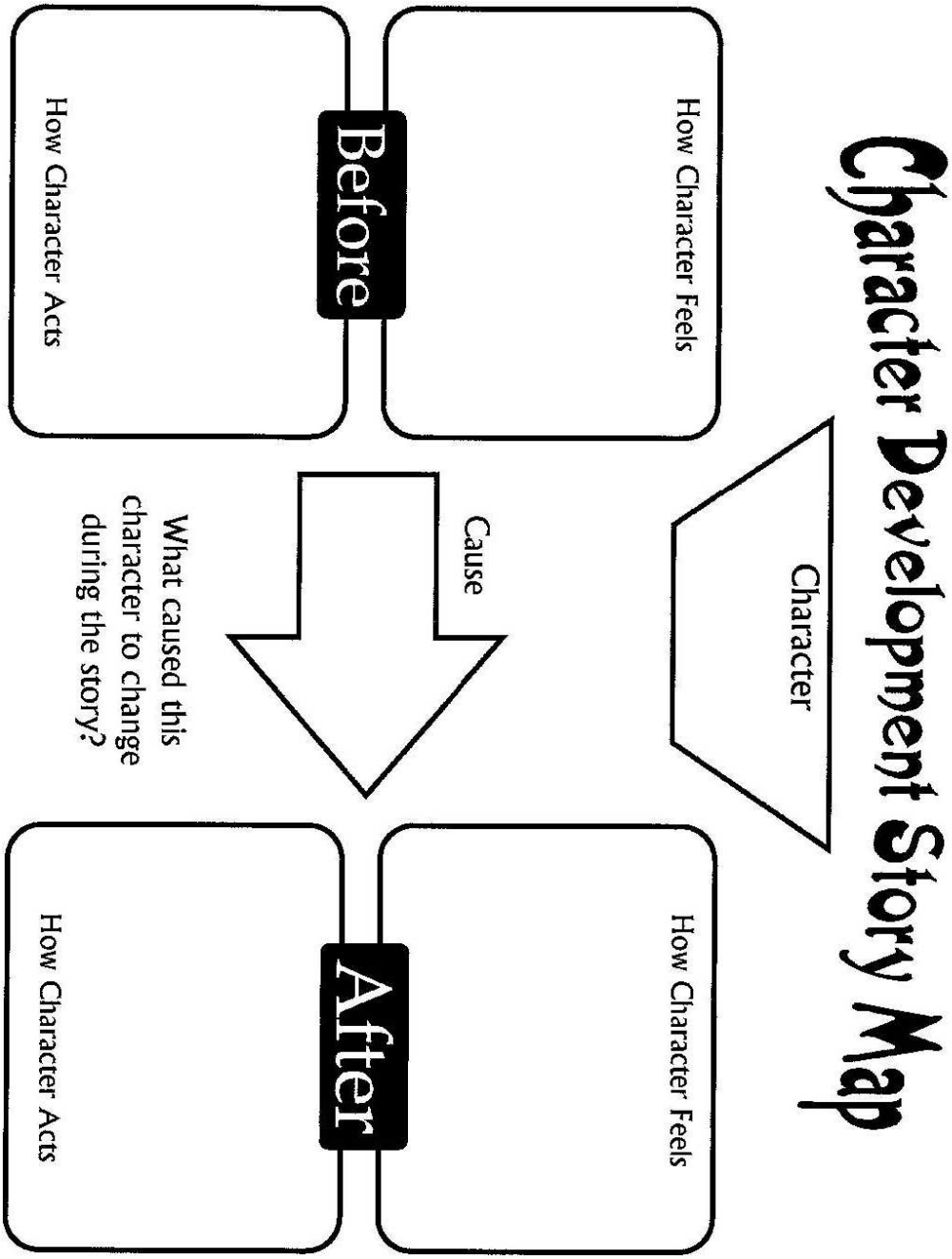
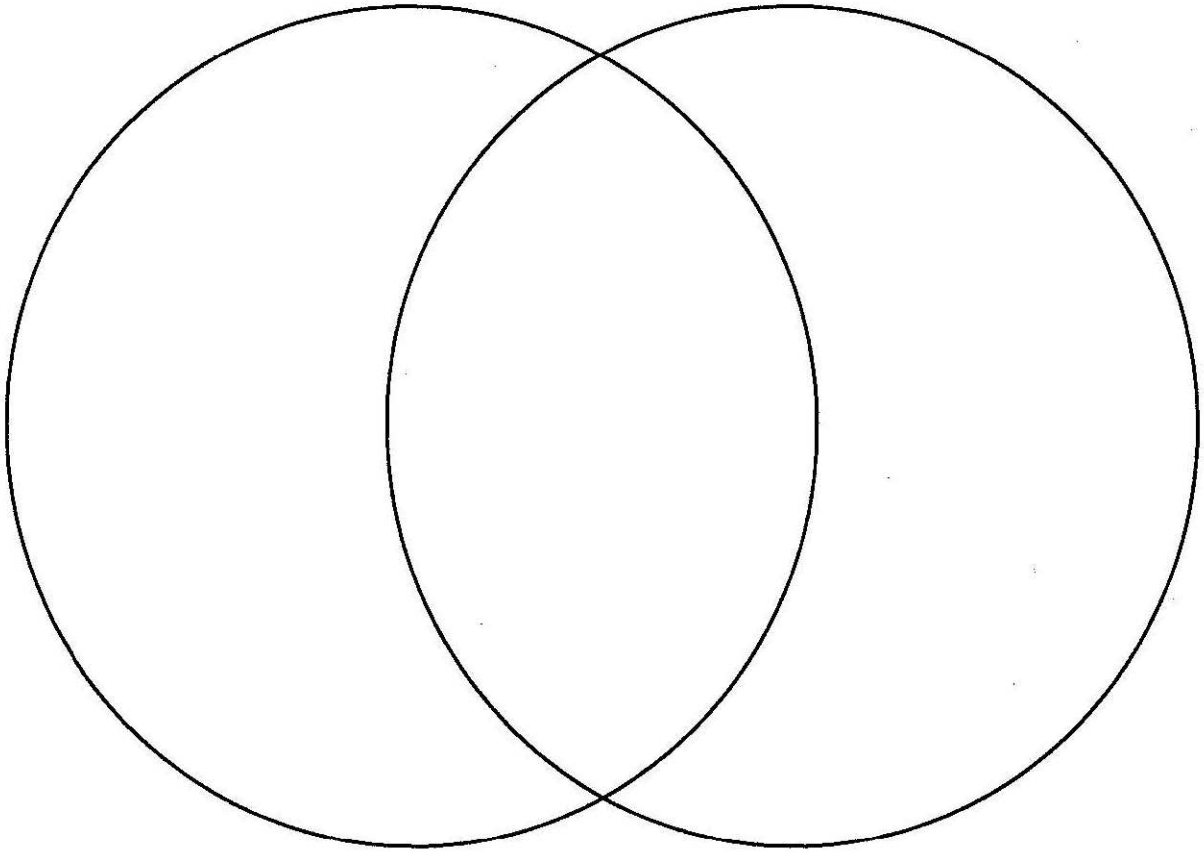

Character Development Story Map
Character
How Character Feels
How Character Acts
Before
Cause
What caused this character to change during the story?
How Character Feels
How Character Acts
After

Text Pattern

Choose 1 text pattern of each kind and place them in their corresponding box. Label the flags.

Describing	Compare and Contrast
Sequencing	Cause and Effect

Venn Diagram



Pattern created by Laura Candler (Teaching Resources at http://home.att.net/~teaching)

How Literature Circles fit into Reading Programs

1. **Reading Aloud**

2. **Shared Reading**
   (visible text)

3. **Guided Reading**
   (leveled text groups)

4. **Independent Reading**
   (kids on own:
   Reading Workshop/Literature Circles)

5. **Shared Writing**
   (teacher scribe)

6. **Interactive Writing**
   (teacher/kids share pen)

7. **Guided Writing** or **Writing Workshop**
   (teacher guided, conferences, mini-lessons)

8. **Independent Writing**
   (own pieces)

www.LiteratureCircles.com

Where Do Literature Circles Fit in "Best Practice" Classrooms

Integrative Units
Thematic/Interdisciplinary Studies, Problem/Project-Based Learning, Negotiated Curriculum

Small Group Activities
Partners, Teams, Group Investigations, Centers, Peer Writing Groups, Literature Circles

Representing-to-Learn
Written and Graphic Thinking; Journals, Logs, Sketchbooks

Classroom Workshop
Studio/Laboratory Method; Teacher and Peer Conferences; Process, Practice, Modeling

Authentic Experiences
Real Materials, People, Places; Primary Sources, Simulations; Community Research & Service

Reflective Assessment
Student Goal-Setting and Reflection; Formative focus; Parent-Teacher-Student Partnership

Reading Workshop
Teacher-Directed, Independent Reading(SSR, DEAR)