



**Midwest Teachers Institute**  
Teachers Helping Teachers

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**MTI 516-Best Practice Reading Strategy: Literature Circles in  
the K-12 Classroom**

**ONLINE COURSE**

<b>Instructor Information:</b>	
<b>Instructor Name:</b>	Elissa Kruse, M.Ed
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<b>Instructor Background:</b>	Elissa Kruse is an upper elementary school teacher in a diverse district in the western suburbs of Chicago, IL. She teaches language arts, math, science, and social studies. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from Western Illinois University. She also has a Master's Degree in Teaching from Aurora University. Elissa has a middle school endorsement, and she holds endorsements in reading and language arts as well. She likes blogging about her teaching adventures and creating original resources, aligned with the Common Core State Standards, for students and teachers to enjoy.

<b>Course Information</b>	
<b>Course Format (distance learning, online, webinar, experiential onsite courses):</b>	<b>Online Course</b> The LMS for delivering the course will be Canvas. An invitation will be sent to you by your instructor during the week prior to the start of your course. If you have not received an invitation, please email us at the MTI email address listed above. Approximately 112.5 hours of instructional time is devoted to this course per the requirements from the Higher Learning Commission for extended studies.

	<p>We recommend that you take an introduction to Canvas course as well to become more comfortable with our LMS. This can be done by clicking on the <i>help</i> tab, then <a href="#">Canvas 101</a>.</p> <p>If you are having trouble with Canvas, technical support is available online 24/7 under the <i>help</i> tab, then <i>report a problem</i>.</p>
<b>Prerequisites</b>	<p>All MTI courses are designed for educators who have a minimum of a bachelor’s degree and professional educator license. Prior to beginning the course, check with your district office to ensure that credit will be accepted for salary increase and professional development. <b>All courses are for 3 graduate semester hours/credits. When you register, you may choose which of our accredited university partners you would like to receive your official transcript from.</b></p>
<b>Accrediting Partners</b>	<p>For information about our accrediting partners, please visit our website at <a href="http://www.midwestteachersinstitute.org">www.midwestteachersinstitute.org</a> and click on partners to learn more about the choices available for you.</p>
<b>Required Books and Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Textbook: Daniels, H. (2002). <i>Literature circles: Voice and choice in book clubs &amp; reading groups</i> (2nd ed.). Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.</li> <li>● <a href="#">12 Activities to Use During Literature Circles or Your Next Novel Study</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Literature Circles: Getting Started</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Learning Outcomes/Competencies:</b>  At the completion of this course, the learner will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the essential components of genuine, peer-led discussion groups. <i>INTASC Standards 4, 7</i></li> <li>2. Engage mini-lessons that encourage productivity and literary understanding. <i>INTASC Standards 1, 4, 7</i></li> <li>3. Establish scheduling patterns for student-led book club meetings and reading time. <i>INTASC Standards 3, 4, 7</i></li> <li>4. Design and adapt assessments and grading procedures of Literature Circles. <i>INTASC Standards 1, 2, 6</i></li> <li>5. Understand and implement student-led book clubs throughout multiple grade levels. <i>INTASC Standards 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8</i></li> <li>6. Identify extension projects for individuals or groups based on student interests and abilities. <i>INTASC Standards 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9</i></li> </ol>	
<p><b>Course Description:</b> <i>Best Practice Reading Strategies: Literature Circles</i> is designed to assist teachers in developing, facilitating, and assessing Literature Circles in K-12 classrooms. The application of Literature Circles can span a wide spectrum of content areas, and can be easily hybridized to fit each individual teacher’s needs or desires. The goal is to help teachers foster student-led book clubs and discussions in their own classrooms that are based on student interest and choice. These peer-led book discussion groups can also help motivate students to</p>	

read, learn, and collaborate with one another.

**Learning Strategies:** Professional literature analysis, whole group discussions, personal reflection, application assignments and project-based learning.

**Experiential Learning Opportunities:** Students will be reflecting on the assessments and tools that they develop/learn about in class and measuring/estimating the intended impact on student learning in the classroom. Students will learn by doing while completing a variety of activities throughout the course.

## Format of the Course and Submitting Work

This course has a total of 5 individual assessments/assignments. You are required to complete all of the pieces with a total grade of an A or B in order to receive the credit for the course. It is recommended that the coursework be completed in the sequence listed below in the assessments chart below. This is an ONLINE course that runs for a five (5) week duration. Each week as directed by your instructor you will have assignments due. Answer and Discuss and Reflect and Respond assignments will be completed online using our LMS(Learning Management Software) Canvas. Your application, research project and evaluation assignments will be submitted electronically to your instructor. Files can be saved in PDF's or WORD Documents. You can also share via Google Drive format. Please contact your instructor if you have any questions or need help with the Google Drive format.

<b>Assessments</b>		<b>Approximate contact hours for each assessment</b>
Introduction to using Canvas video and pre-survey		1 hour
Required reading from textbook.		27.5 hours
Additional course websites provided and reflection time.		2.5 hours
Answer and discuss weekly questions posted by instructor to online classroom at Canvas forum. (5 @ 9 points per question), including time for re-reading previous assignments and posts.	45 points	10 hours
Reflect on classroom experiences and the required reading, then respond to 2 posts weekly made by colleagues online at Canvas classroom forum. (10 total @ 9 points per response).	90 points	10 hours
Studying (time to reread and take notes)		3.5 hours
Application assignments (45 points each)	90 points	10 hours
Field experience in the classroom implementing and		28 hours

creating strategies for student success.		
Research project (planning, researching, and formulating)	100 points	10 hours
Final evaluation essay	100 points	10 hours
<b>Total</b>	<b>425 points</b>	<b>112.5 hours</b>
<p><b>Grading Scale: A (90-100%); B (80-89%)</b>  <b>*Anything below a B will not receive graduate credit and result in a failing grade of F.</b></p> <p>If you do not receive a B or higher, your work will be returned to you for further correction and completion. You will be allowed one (1) re-submit to your instructor to achieve a grade of B or higher. If after your re-submit, you still do not achieve a B or higher you will receive a failing grade of F and therefore forfeit the 3 graduate credits.</p>		

<b>Answer and Discuss Rubric- 5 questions @ 9 points each</b>			
Category	Superior (3 pts)	Sufficient (2 pts)	Minimal(1pt)
<b>Supporting Evidence in Practice</b> ____/3	Response shows strong evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.	Response shows evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.	Response shows some evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.
<b>Accuracy</b> ____/3	All supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.	Almost all supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.	Some of the supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.
<b>Grammar and Spelling</b> ____/3	Response includes 0-1 mistakes in grammar or spelling.	Response includes a few grammar and spelling mistakes.	Response includes several grammar and spelling mistakes.

<b>Reflect and Respond Rubric- 10 responses @ 9 points each</b>			
Category	Superior (3 pts)	Sufficient (2 pts)	Minimal(1pt)
<b>Supporting Evidence in Practice</b> ____/3	Response shows strong evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.	Response shows evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.	Response shows some evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.
<b>Accuracy</b> ____/3	All supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.	Almost all supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.	Some of the supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.
<b>Grammar and Spelling</b> ____/3	Response includes 0-1 mistakes in grammar or spelling.	Response includes a few grammar and spelling mistakes.	Response includes several grammar and spelling mistakes.

<b>Application Project Rubric- 2 applications @ 45 points each</b>			
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Category	Superior (15-13 pts)	Sufficient (12-10 pts)	Minimal(9-7pts)
<i>Supporting Evidence in Practice</i> ____/15	Response shows strong evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.	Response shows evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.	Response shows some evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.
<i>Accuracy</i> ____/15	All supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.	Almost all supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.	Some of the supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.
<i>Grammar and Spelling</i> ____/15	Response includes 0-1 mistakes in grammar or spelling.	Response includes a few grammar and spelling mistakes.	Response includes several grammar and spelling mistakes.

<b>Research Project Rubric- 100 points</b>			
Category	Superior (20-18 pts)	Sufficient (17-16 pts)	Minimal ( 15-14pts)
<i>Understanding of web tool</i> ____/20	Shows strong understanding of activity, concept, or tool and maximize learning	Shows adequate understanding of activity, concept, or tool and benefit learning.	Shows little understanding of activity, concept, or tool and may not benefit learning.
<i>Practical evidence</i> ____/20	Shows strong evidence of ideas and insights gained from this course and how they are applied to classroom.	Shows evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to classroom.	Shows little evidence of ideas and insights from this course or how they are applied to the classroom.
<i>Completion</i> ____/20	Completed in a thoughtful and meaningful manner.	Completed, but with minimal quality.	Not all projects are completed and of those that are, some are minimal quality.
<i>Grammar and Spelling</i> ____/20	Includes no mistakes in grammar or spelling.	Includes few grammar and spelling mistakes.	Includes numerous grammar and spelling mistakes.
<i>Sequencing</i> ____/20	Sequenced, showing if-then thinking and the logical order required to complete skill, solve problem, or use tool.	Not always sequenced, showing incomplete if-then thinking and understanding of logical order required to complete skill.	Confusing making it difficult to replicate activities; little understanding of logic or if-then thinking evidenced.

<b>Evaluation/Reflection Rubric- 100 points</b>				
Category	Superior (20-17 pts)	Sufficient (16-13 pts)	Minimal(12-9pts)	Below Standard (8 pts)
<i>Supporting Evidence in Practice</i> ____/20	Response shows strong evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.	Response shows evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.	Response shows some evidence of ideas and insights from this course and how they are applied to the classroom.	Response shows little evidence of ideas and insights from this course and there is little evidence they are applied to the classroom.
<i>Accuracy</i> ____/20	All supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.	Almost all supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.	Some of the supporting facts and statistics are accurately represented.	Many of the supporting facts and statistics are inaccurately represented.

<b>Grammar and Spelling</b> ____/20	Response includes 0-1 mistakes in grammar or spelling.	Response includes a few grammar and spelling mistakes.	Response includes several grammar and spelling mistakes.	Response includes numerous grammar and spelling mistakes.
<b>Logical Sequencing</b> ____/20	Response is written in a clear, concise, and well organized manner. Thoughts are presented in a coherent and logical manner.	Response is mostly clear, concise, and well organized. Thoughts are presented in a coherent and logical manner.	Response is somewhat unclear and/or disorganized. Some thoughts are presented in a coherent and logical manner.	Response is mostly unclear and/or disorganized. Many thoughts are presented in an incoherent and illogical manner.
<b>Reflection</b> ____/20	Response demonstrates an in-depth reflection on, and personalization of, the theories, concepts, and /or strategies presented in this course.	Response demonstrates some reflection on, and personalization of, the theories, concepts, and /or strategies presented in this course.	Response demonstrates a minimal reflection on, and personalization of, the theories, concepts, and /or strategies presented in this course.	Response demonstrates no reflection on, and personalization of, the theories, concepts, and /or strategies presented in this course.

## Course Schedule

### **Week 1 – Introduction to Literature Circles and LMS-Canvas Tutorial**

- Read Chapters 1 and 2
- Reply to the discussion question posted by the teacher by Tuesday night
- Read the posts from other students and respond to at least 2 by Thursday night

### **Week 2 –Getting Started with Literature Circles (Organizing, Planning and Managing)**

- Read Chapters 5 and 6
- Reply to the discussion question posted by the teacher by Tuesday night
- Read the posts from other students and respond to at least 2 by Thursday night
- Application Assignment #1 must be completed by Sunday night

#### **Application # 1**

Mini-lessons and conclusion project (p. 86)

Daniels lists that the typical time distribution for Literature Circles might consist of the following:

- 5 minutes – mini-lesson
- 20-30 minutes – group meetings (and/or reading time)
- 5-10 minutes – conclusion/sharing/debriefing

He describes in great detail the importance of mini-lessons and conclusions/sharing sessions.

Considering those guidelines and the information in the text, complete both items below in a 2 to 3 page write-up:

1. Develop a mini-lesson you would present before setting your students free to meet as a group or before providing them reading time. The mini-lesson could be procedural or literary. Some examples of mini-lessons include “How to select books that are right for you,” “Things that can be included in a Response Log,” and “The main ingredients of a mystery.” Be sure to include the following (and anything else you think is necessary):
  - The focus/objective of the lesson

- The purpose/rationale for this specific mini-lesson (Why do YOUR students need this lesson?)
  - The plan for the lesson (steps you will take)
2. Develop a conclusion/sharing out to wrap up the lesson (p.88) Be sure to include the following (and anything else you think is necessary):
- The focus/objective of the conclusion/sharing session (What will the students learn from it?)
  - The purpose/rationale for this specific sharing session (Why do YOUR students need this?)
  - The plan for how you will run this session

### **Week 3- Applying Literature Circles in the Grade(s) you Teach**

- Please read Chapters 8, 9, and 10.
- Please reply to the discussion question posted by the teacher. Must be completed by Tuesday night.
- Read the posts from other students and respond to at least 2. Must be completed by Thursday night.
- Application 2 due by Sunday night

### **Application #2**

Assessment (p. 185)

In Chapter 12, Daniels provides a list of “Principles of Constructive Assessment,” and then a list of multiple assessment types you can utilize in Literature Circles.

Develop a new type of assessment for Literature Circles that encompasses all of Daniels’ *Principles of Constructive Assessment*. Include answers to all of the following questions about the new assessment in a 2 to 3 page paper that is in APA format:

- What is the name of the assessment? or What will it be called?
- What will it assess?
- What would it look like?
- Why would it be beneficial for students?
- How do you know that the assessment is encompassing all of Daniels’ “Principles of Constructive Assessment?”

### **Week 4 –Assessment and Nonfiction Texts**

- Read Chapters 12 and 13
- Reply to the discussion question posted by the teacher by Tuesday night
- Read the posts from other students and respond to at least 2 by Thursday night
- Research project due. Must be completed by Sunday night

### **Research Project**

Daniels refers to assessment in the reading for Week 4, but there isn’t much about extension projects that can be very beneficial to students. Research literature circle extension projects. Use the internet, books, or scholarly articles to find your sources. ([www.litcircles.org](http://www.litcircles.org) has some ideas, and there are several other scholarly websites and articles that can be used.) Find some projects that you think your

students will be successful with. Possibly, they'll integrate technology or develop something using physical resources.

Write a 3 to 5 page paper **or** create a 10 to 12 slide presentation that references each of the following items:

- Identify 3 (or more) extension projects that you think your students would be successful with.
  - Provide the name of each project and a description of what each is
- Explain how each project will be completed (materials needed, group activity or individual?, process, etc.)
- Explain why you think this will benefit your specific groups of students
- Identify appropriate grades/ages with which these projects can be done
- Cite your source(s) at the end of the project
- If you choose the paper it must be 3 to 5 pages in APA format.

### **Week 5 – Reflecting and Putting it all Together**

- Reply to the discussion question posted by the teacher by Tuesday night.
- Read posts from other students and respond to at least 2 by Thursday night
- Evaluation/Reflection Assignment must be completed by Sunday night

### **Final Evaluation/Reflection Assignment**

Find an article from a scholarly journal (Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, International Reading Association, etc.) that pertains to Literature Circles/Literacy Circles/Student-Led Book Clubs. You must cite the article you use for this assignment in a “References” page at the end of the project. Once you have finished reading the article, complete **one** of the following activities (**100 points**):

1. Develop a Google Slide, PowerPoint or Prezi Presentation you would utilize during a professional development session to inform your peers about Literature Circles. In the presentation, explain why Literature Circles are effective, some ways to initiate Literature Circles in the classroom, how to develop a schedule for Literature Circles so they can fit in with the district’s curriculum mandates, ways to assess Literature Circles, and any other information that you believe to be relevant to your specific audience about Literature Circles.. Use evidence from the article and the book to support your presentation. Minimum 12 slides.
2. Create a plan and presentation (in any way you choose) for sharing Literature Circles with parents of the students in your classroom. Provide parents with information regarding Literature Circles, why they are effective, the role of students in Literature Circles, how their child will be assessed, how they could help at home, and inviting them to come and see Literature Circles working in your classroom. Use the article and the book to help support your usage of Literature Circles in the classroom. This can be a slide presentation (minimum 12 slides, a formal letter (minimum 2 pages), or a newsletter (minimum of 5 headings to reflect the requirements above).

## **End of Course Survey**

Now that you are finished with this class, please take the time to help us improve our product. In order to make sure that we are providing the best possible service, please take our [survey](#).

We appreciate your help and your commitment to the profession.

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## Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty is any form of cheating which results in students giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise or receiving credit for work which is not their own. Any academic dishonesty is grounds for dismissal. Any student judged to be engaged in cheating may receive a failing grade for the course, or any other penalty, which the instructor finds appropriate. Academic dishonesty is a behavioral issue, not an issue of academic performance. As such, it is considered an act of misconduct and is also subject to the University disciplinary process as defined in the Student Code of Conduct.

### Acts of Dishonesty Include:

- Cheating—intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours.
- Fabrication—intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of information or citation in an academic exercise.
- Facilitating Academic Dishonesty—intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of the institutional code of academic integrity.
- Plagiarism—the deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, or statements of another person as one’s own without acknowledgement.

Unauthorized Collaboration—intentionally sharing information or working together in an academic exercise when the course instructor does not approve such actions.

## ADA Statement

The University abides by the Americans with Disability Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which stipulates that no student shall be denied the benefits of an education “solely by reason of a handicap.” If you have a documented disability that may affect your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Coordinator as soon as possible to arrange accommodations. In order to receive accommodations, you must be registered with and provide documentation of your disability to the Disability Resource Office.

The Disability Resource office will provide Extended Studies with documentation of the disability and any accommodations that are needed.

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**The ten INTASC standards are listed below. Specific standards for knowledge,**

**dispositions, and performances accompany each principle, but space does not permit listing them below. For a complete copy of the INTASC standards, contact Jean Miller, Director of INTASC, Suite 700, One Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington DC 20001-1431.**

## **The INTASC Model Core Teaching Standards (April 2011)**

### **The Learner and Learning**

#### Standard #1: Learner Development

The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

#### Standard #2: Learning Differences

The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

#### Standard #3: Learning Environments

The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

### **Content Knowledge**

#### Standard #4: Content Knowledge

The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.

#### Standard #5: Application of Content

The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.

### **Instructional Practice**

#### Standard #6: Assessment

The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.

#### Standard #7: Planning for Instruction

The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

#### Standard #8: Instructional Strategies

The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

### **Professional Responsibility**

#### Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice

The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.

#### Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration

The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.