

# Activity Suggestions for Sherlock Holmes

## Literature Circles

A different option for reading Sherlock Homes is to use a Literature Circle format. This format works particularly well if time does not permit each student to read every story in the collection. In literature circles, students are given some choice in the selection of the story read, and each student performs a unique role in preparing for and participation in the group discussion.

One way to set up literature circles is for the teacher to give a short introduction to each mystery. Students then list on an index card their top three choices of which mystery they would like to read. The teacher can then look at the choices and create groups based on student preference as well as other factors, such as reading levels, behavior concerns, etc. It is ideal for each group to consist of a variety of students who, ultimately, will work well together.

There are many options for the roles that student perform during literature circles. This teacher guide includes five possible roles that the teacher may choose to use. These roles have been given a ‘mystery twist’ to heighten student interest in the genre and to encourage them to think like a detective. The roles are as follows:

<b>Discussion Detective:</b>	Create questions for the group to consider while reading
<b>Investigator:</b>	Track important clues in the story and encourage group members to predict outcomes
<b>Term Tracker:</b>	Identify words in the story that may be important to the story or tricky to figure out
<b>Travel Tracer:</b>	Track where the action of the story is taking place and note how setting changes may be key to figuring out the mystery
<b>History Highlighter:</b>	Look for things in the story that are unique to the time period when it is taking place

In literature circles, students meet to discuss the story assigned, reread confusing parts if necessary, and clarify understanding. Students read the assigned pages and prepare their roles ahead of time. When they come to the group, they should be prepared to share what they have learned and thus contribute in unique ways to the group discussion. Depending on time, students may switch roles in the course of their reading.

Note: it is very important to the success of literature circles that students understand what is expected of them. Modeling the completion of each role sheet and teacher expectations is a key part in preparing for group meetings. If possible, find another Sherlock Homes mystery that is not included in the Core Classics version. Use this additional story to model each role sheet and to host a “practice” literature circle meeting where a small group, including the teacher, can model what an ideal group meeting would look like.

# DISCUSSION DETECTIVE

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Book \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Assignment-pages \_\_\_\_\_

You are the *Discussion Detective*. Your job is to look for some good questions that you think your group would want to talk about. Don't worry about the small details: your task is to help people talk over the big ideas in the reading and share their reactions. *Get your group talking!*

## Sample Questions:

What was going through your mind while you read this?

What questions did you have when you finished the reading?

Did anything in the reading surprise you?

## Discussion Questions:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# HISTORY HIGHLIGHTER

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Book \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Assignment-pages \_\_\_\_\_

You are the *History Highlighter*. Your job is to look for things in the story that are unique to the time period in the story. For example, in a story about pioneers, there may be references to a covered wagon or travel by wagon train. Those things are unique to that time period. In today's reading, find items that are unique to this time period. Indicate where you found the items and their use.

Example:

Item: covered wagon

Use: The pioneers used covered wagons as a means of transportation from their homes in the east to the new land they were looking for in the west. Often they traveled in wagon trains.

Things to highlight:

Item: \_\_\_\_\_

Use: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Item: \_\_\_\_\_

Use: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Item: \_\_\_\_\_

Use: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Item: \_\_\_\_\_

Use: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# INVESTIGATOR

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Book \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Assignment-pages \_\_\_\_\_

You are the *Investigator*. Your job is to look for things in today's reading that are possible clues to the mystery. You will be making predictions and recording them here. When you have finished the story, you will go back and determine what things really were clues and what things were red herrings. Indicate where you found the clues and why you think they are important.

Clue 1: \_\_\_\_\_ page \_\_\_\_\_ paragraph \_\_\_\_\_

Importance: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Clue 2: \_\_\_\_\_ page \_\_\_\_\_ paragraph \_\_\_\_\_

Importance: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Clue 3: \_\_\_\_\_ page \_\_\_\_\_ paragraph \_\_\_\_\_

Importance: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Clue 4: \_\_\_\_\_ page \_\_\_\_\_ paragraph \_\_\_\_\_

Importance: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Clue 5: \_\_\_\_\_ page \_\_\_\_\_ paragraph \_\_\_\_\_

Importance: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# TRAVEL TRACER

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Book \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Assignment-pages \_\_\_\_\_

You are the *Travel Tracer*. Your job is to track carefully where the action takes place during today's reading. Describe each setting (time and place), being sure to indicate the reason for the setting changes (new clue, new character, etc.). Also describe the action that is happening in each setting. Use the back of this page for any illustrations that may help your group understand each setting.

Setting 1: page \_\_\_\_\_ paragraph number \_\_\_\_\_

Time \_\_\_\_\_

Place \_\_\_\_\_

Action \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Setting 2: page \_\_\_\_\_ paragraph number \_\_\_\_\_

Time \_\_\_\_\_

Place \_\_\_\_\_

Action \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Setting 3: page \_\_\_\_\_ paragraph number \_\_\_\_\_

Time \_\_\_\_\_

Place \_\_\_\_\_

Action \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Setting 4: page \_\_\_\_\_ paragraph number \_\_\_\_\_

Time \_\_\_\_\_

Place \_\_\_\_\_

Action \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_