

Literary Circle

This activity can be both an educational activity and a community service project. It should be conducted with a group of children or teens who can meet together regularly. The initial task is to select a book about hunger/hunger-related issues that all members of the group will read. The literary circle should have 4-6 members. If you have a larger group, several literary circles can be formed. Books can be fiction or nonfiction depending on the interests of the group members. For each meeting the group decides how much of the story should have been read (e.g., 1 chapter, first 10 pages...). In the group, different members assume specific roles. One person serves as discussion leader, another person serves as the word finder (looks up definitions of words that group members do not know), another person serves as summarizer (summarizes ideas shared by the group after a meeting and shares the summary with the group at the next meeting). Group members can rotate roles at each meeting or after several meetings. Once the group finishes the book, the next step is to develop one or more projects based on the book. For example:

- The group could write and then act in a play based on the book. The play could be presented to parents, other groups of children/teens.
- The group could create an art or educational exhibit based on the book that could be shared with schools or the community.

Go to <http://litsite.alaska.edu/workbooks/circloreading.html> for an example of literary circles being conducted with middle school students at Dzantik'i Heeni Middle School in Juneau, Alaska

Other helpful links

<http://home.att.net/~TEACHING/litlessons.htm>
<http://eduscapes.com/ladders/themes/circles.htm>

Suggested books that focus on hunger and hunger-related issues:

- The Family Under the Bridge by Natalie Savage Carlson
- Broken Beaks by Nathaniel Lachenmeyer
- A Kids' Guide to Hunger & Homelessness: How to Take Action! by Cathryn Berger Kaye
- The War On Hunger by Ron Fridell
- No Place to Be: Voices of Homeless Children by Judith Berck

Also go to http://www.readtofeed.org/for_kids/looks_at_books/ for Heifer Picks