

# Making Waves with Classroom Discussion

**Shelly K. Durham, NBCT, MEd**  
Oklahoma Writing Project Teacher Consultant  
[shellydurham@mooreschools.com](mailto:shellydurham@mooreschools.com)  
[www.mooreschools.com/shellydurham](http://www.mooreschools.com/shellydurham)

**L. Alicia Perry, MEd**  
Oklahoma Writing Project Teacher Consultant  
[aliciaperry@mooreschools.com](mailto:aliciaperry@mooreschools.com)  
[www.mooreschools.com/aliciaperry](http://www.mooreschools.com/aliciaperry)

*“People who know everything are silent; people who know nothing are silent. In between, there is talk. Literacy floats on a sea of talk.”*  
— James Britton

## Quickwrite Rules:

1. Write the entire time – as quickly as you can – anything the text brings to mind.
2. Writing time is sacred time. Ssshhh!
3. If you’re stuck, copy any phrase and write from that, wherever it may lead.

*“All learning floats on a sea of talk.”*  
— John Dewey

## C.P.R. (Copy, Paraphrase & Respond) Rules:

1. Copy the quote and the author in an opening sentence.  
**Example:** *According to John Dewey, “All learning floats on a sea of talk.”*  
*“All learning floats on a sea of talk,” said/wrote John Dewey.*
2. Paraphrase the quote – restate it in your own words.  
**Possible sentence starters:** *[I believe] this means ...*  
*[I think] he’s trying to say ...*
3. Respond to the quote by agreeing, disagreeing, or making a connection. Provide details, reasons, examples, and/or evidence.



# Three Levels of Questions

## (AKA The Cinderella Exercise)

### Level One: Recall

The answer is in the text, an explicit fact (fully and clearly expressed – leaving nothing implied). You can literally put your finger on the answer.

Examples:

- What were Cinderella’s slippers made out of?
- How did Cinderella get to the ball?

*Now you try. Write one Level One question for the assigned text:*

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### Level Two: Analysis/Inference

An answer is derived through making inferences – drawing logical conclusions based on textual evidence. This is like reading between the lines and searching for deeper or sometimes hidden meaning (understood but not directly expressed).

Examples:

- Why does Cinderella’s stepmother care whether she goes to the ball?
- Why did everything except the glass slipper return to the way it was?
- Why don’t the step-sisters like Cinderella?

*Now you try. Write one Level Two question for the assigned text:*

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### Level Three: Synthesis

The answer requires going beyond the text in the value, importance and real world application of the information presented, often dealing in universal themes.

Examples:

- Is a woman’s salvation always found in a man?
- What does it mean to live happily ever after?
- Does good always overcome evil?

*Now you try. Write one Level Three question for the assigned text:*

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*Adapted from “The Three Levels of Questions” by Kimberly Grinnel*



## STUDENT-LED CIRCLE DISCUSSION RULES

1. One speaker introduces a question and/or claim and cites the text that prompted his/her thinking.
  - ▶ If you agree, you may knock twice.
  - ▶ If you disagree, you may raise your hand and wait to be called on.
  - ▶ If you have a question, you may raise your hand and wait to be called on.
2. The current speaker selects the next by choosing a student whose hand is raised and who has spoken *the least*.
3. The next speaker must refer *explicitly* to the last speaker by repeating what he/she said before beginning the next question or argument.

*“Maturity entails, first, the recognition that you have a unique perspective and a view of the world that has value, and second, the recognition that there are different perspectives in the world and that these have value and are worth knowing about, too.”*

— Jeffrey Wilhelm

# Student-Led Circle Discussion Notes

**Instructions:** During our discussion, make sure you take notes about your own opinions and the opinions of your classmates. Include both those who agree with you and those who disagree with you. Note the topic, claim, and evidence.

<b>I have a unique perspective and voice worth sharing with others.</b>	<b>Other perspectives are also of value and worth knowing.</b>

# Student-Generated Questions for Circle Discussion over *The Giver* by Lois Lowry

*Instructions: Circle at least two (2) questions you would like to discuss. You may add additional questions as you think of them.*

Level One	Level Two	Level Three
<p>Why did the Giver give away his pain to Jonas?</p> <p>What was the Giver's daughter's name?</p> <p>Why was Jonas chosen to experience such painful and bad memories?</p> <p>Why does Lois Lowry always think about the rivers?</p>	<p>What is the significance of the color red in <u>The Giver</u>?</p> <p>Why is there a Receiver of Memory? If the people don't know about them, then why put the burden on one person instead of just living without any idea of memories?</p> <p>Why does the Community have to be so strict – to the point of basically no freedom?</p> <p>Does the community need salvation from the Giver?</p> <p>Why didn't Jonas save Lily along with Gabriel?</p> <p>Why is the Community so closed? Could our community become like theirs in the future?</p> <p>How can people not see colors, except for the Giver and Jonas?</p>	<p>Why are people so mean?</p> <p>How does music help with human emotion?</p> <p>When is it right to shelter someone from pain and not let them face it?</p> <p>Why is it, as humans, we have a great memory of something farther in our past than things that are more recent?</p> <p>Would you like to live in a world where there was no pain? Explain.</p> <p>Is a perfect world really perfect? Is it possible to have a perfect world? Explain.</p> <p>Does good always overcome evil? Explain.</p> <p>How many people have to commit suicide before bullying stops?</p>

# QUOTES for Transaction and Discussion

## Instructions:

- 1) Circle three (3) to four (4) quotes that seem significant – the significance may come from a connection, a strong agreement, or a strong disagreement with the text.
- 2) Select two you would be willing to write about and discuss.
- 3) For each selection, create a Level Three Question for your class discussion.
- 4) Write your question on the left side of the T-Chart and your thoughts about the answer before we begin.

## A

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly...”

~ *Theodore Roosevelt, from his speech “Citizenship in a Republic” delivered April 23, 1910*

## B

“All that is gold does not glitter; not all those who wander are lost. The old that is strong does not wither; deep roots are not reached by the frost. From the ashes a fire shall be woken; a light from the shadows shall spring; Renewed shall be the blade that was broken, and crownless again shall be the King.”

~ *J.R.R. Tolkien, The Lord of the Rings*

## C

“Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one’s favor all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance, which no man could have dreamed would have come his way. Whatever you can do, or dream you can do, begin it. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. Begin it now.”

~ *William Hutchinson Murray (1913-1996) from The Scottish Himalayan Expedition*

## D

“To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.”

~ *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

## E

“This above all: to thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.”

~ *William Shakespeare, from Hamlet*

## F

“The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.”

~ *Marcel Proust*

## G

“Sometimes people are beautiful.

Not in looks.

Not in what they say.

Just in what they are.”

~ *Markus Zusak, I Am the Messenger*

## H

“The cave you fear to enter holds the treasure you seek.”

~ *Joseph Campbell*

## J

“The brick walls are there for a reason. The brick walls are not there to keep us out. The brick walls are there to give us a chance to show how badly we want something. Because the brick walls are there to stop the people who don’t want it badly enough. They’re there to stop the other people.”

~ *Randy Paus*

## K

“Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear.”

~ *Ambrose Redmoon*

## L

“It is not because things are difficult that we do not dare; it is because we do not dare that they are difficult.”

~ *Seneca*

## M

“You’ve got to follow your passion. You’ve got to figure out what it is you love—who you really are. And have the courage to do that. I believe that the only courage anybody ever needs is the courage to follow your own dream.”

~ *Oprah Winfrey*