



Collegial Circle Final Report

Please type in the information on this form, print it and send it to the Teacher Center along with the Collegial Circle copies in the check list below. Also, attach it to an email to Laurie Hummel to share in the Teacher Center's online Collegial Circle Library. Thank you for being a part in the effort to improve teaching and learning for our students.

COLLEGIAL CIRCLE INFORMATION

Title of Circle: Teaching Literary Devices in Epic Poetry Standards Area: English Language Arts
Facilitator: Victor Northrup School(s): SHS
Beginning Date: March 23, 2010 Ending Date: May 6, 2010 # of Hours: 6
Participants (list): Matt Davidson, Evvy Gordon, Chris Gunter, Victor Northrup, Marni Rabinowitz, Lynn Smith

Please attach copies of the following to this report:

- ✓ Collegial Circle Attendance Log (required for payment)
- ✓ Collegial Circle Meeting Log
- ✓ Log of Strategies Implemented
- ✓ Samples of implementation strategies or student work samples if applicable
- ✓ Collegial Circle Reflection Sheets (each member fills one out)

COLLEGIAL CIRCLE DESCRIPTION

(Type your answer in the grey box below the question. The size of the box will adjust to the length of your answer.)

What were the anticipated objectives of this Circle?

Participants were expected to be able to identify, explain, and synthesize devices that appear in the epic poem, *Paradise Lost*. We looked for connections that our students could make between English epic poetry and literature in a variety of genres used in English Language Arts courses in grades 6-12.

What grade level(s) and or subject area(s) would benefit from this Circle?

Grades 6-12, English Language Arts and Latin (Languages Other Than English)

FINAL REFLECTIONS

(Type your answer in the grey box below the question.)

Was the outcome/goal of this Collegial Circle met? Explain.

Yes. At each of our meetings, we discussed four of *Paradise Lost's* twelve books. During our meetings, we discussed the latest reading assignment's plot, characters, and important themes. We identified literary devices that were specific to each book and made connections between Milton's poem and works of literature that are integral to the Latin (LOTE) and ELA grades 6-12 curriculum.

How did the Collegial Circle assess whether the outcome was met?

We read the epic poem, we explored pertinent literary and curricular connections, and we discussed and designed several assessment practices and tools in both creative and analytical modes. These assessments could be used to strengthen and evaluate students' understanding of literary techniques that are not only ubiquitous in Milton's verse, but also found frequently in works of American and World literature that are integral to the ELA secondary-level curriculum. Examples include works by Virgil (in Latin and in translation), Cicero, Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Shakespearean drama, Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, the Bible, Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, and others.

How did your work impact teaching/learning? Include student work samples, lesson plans, peer reviews, etc.

As a Reader's Circle, our work focused on honing our understanding of and practice with discussion and analysis of literature modeled after the Great Books method for shared inquiry. We also developed a few sample evaluative-assessment documents that could be used to inform future lessons in grade 6-12 English Language Arts classrooms. We sought to engage in a creative and analytical model for reading, writing, and discussion in response to this epic poem with constant attention to the literary elements and

techniques that it has in common with the literature that is essential to our teaching practice. Some of the literary devices and other relevant topics that we identified were imagery, characterization, theme, mood, setting, epic simile, autobiographical influence, diction, biblical and mythological allusion, the English Renaissance, the creation myth across disparate cultures, the influence of classical Latin and Greek on English poetry, versification, popular young adult literature, reader sympathy, motif, epic poetry in the American literary canon, and others.

Comments/additional information to share.

Please see the attached Meeting Logs and the examples of documents meant to supplement and illustrate instructional focus in secondary-level Latin and English Language Arts courses.