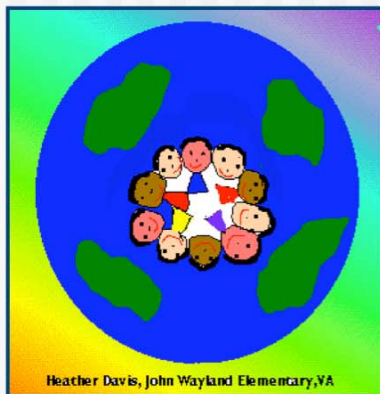


Learning Circles

The Project

The Course



iEARN

Barry S. Kramer
Learning Circles Coordinator



Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles Objectives

- **What Are Learning Circles?**
- **What Is the Schedule for Learning Circle?**
- **What Kind of Projects Are Found in Learning Circles?**
- **What Are the Educational Benefits of Learning Circles?**
- **How Do I Become a Participant?**
- **What Is the Learning Circles Course?**



Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles

A Brief History

Timeline:

Margaret Riel

1987 - Inter-Cultural Learning Network

1989 - AT&T Learning Network

1995 - iEARN Learning Circles

Barry Kramer

2004 - Coordinator



Evropski
Socialni
Sklad

Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles

What Are Learning Circles?

Authentic Audiences For Students

A number of research studies show same effect: Writing in the context of meaningful projects leads to skill development that is higher than is achieved with routine drill and practice methods.

- **Emphasis on Writing across the Curriculum**
- **Focus on Multi-Disciplinary Themes**
- **Support for Collaborative Learning**



Evropski
Socialni
Sklad

Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles

What Are Learning Circles?

What Is Involved In Meaningful Writing Projects?

- **Connecting learning to people, places and activities**
- **Understanding the values and perspectives of different groups**
- **Communicating ideas and attitudes through writing using language appropriately**
- **Developing identity**

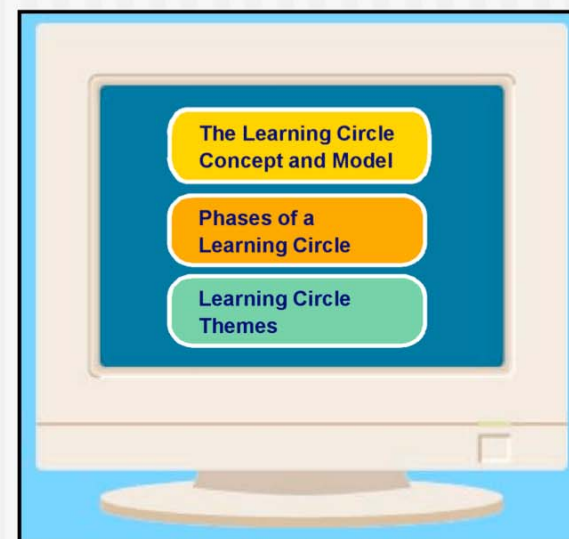


Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles

What Are Learning Circles?

- Learning Circles promote **theme-based project** work integrated with the classroom curriculum
- Working with Learning Circle partners from around the world helps students develop important **interpersonal skills**
- Learning Circles also **encourage interactions among teachers** providing a very different model of professional development



Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles

What Are Learning Circles?

Cross-Classroom Collaboration To Create A Circle Publication

- Group Investigations within Classrooms.
- Group Investigations across Classrooms.

One of the best ways to learn something is to agree to teach it to someone else!

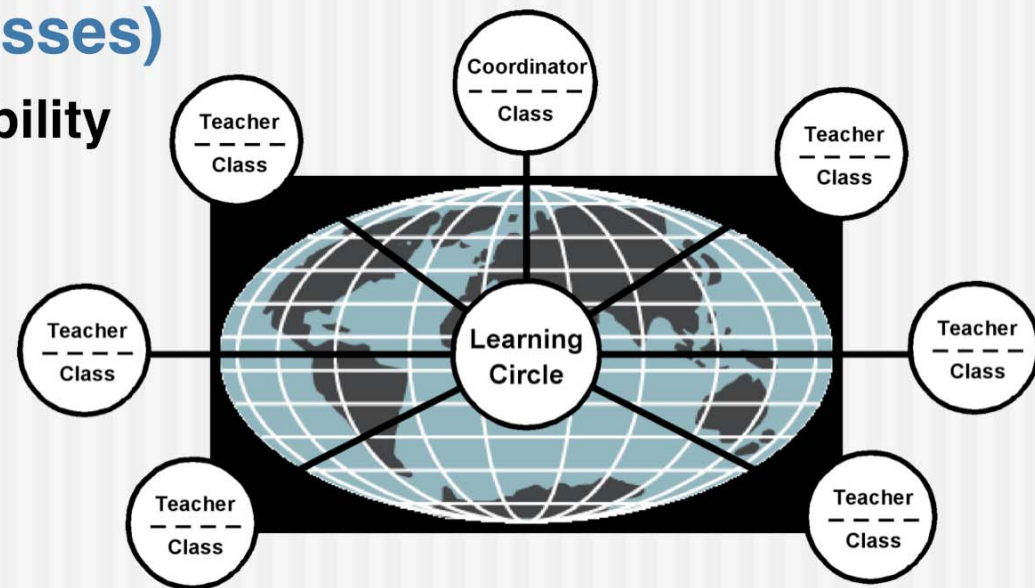


Learning Circles

The Learning Circle Model

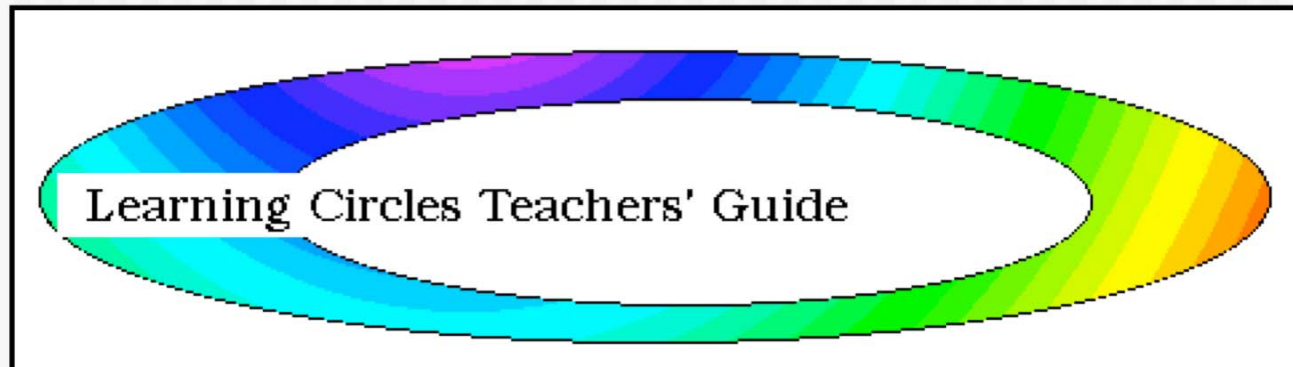
Learning Circle Partners (A Group of 6-10 Classes)

- **Grade Level Compatibility**
- **Geographic Diversity**
- **Common Timeline**
- **Task Coordination**
- **Individual Creativity**
- **Responsibility to the Group**



Learning Circles

Support for Learning Circles



Overview

The Learning Circle Teacher Guide provides a structural approach to promoting cross-classroom collaboration with telecommunications. The first chapter provides an overview. If you want to understand this model of online teaching and learning, it is a good place to begin



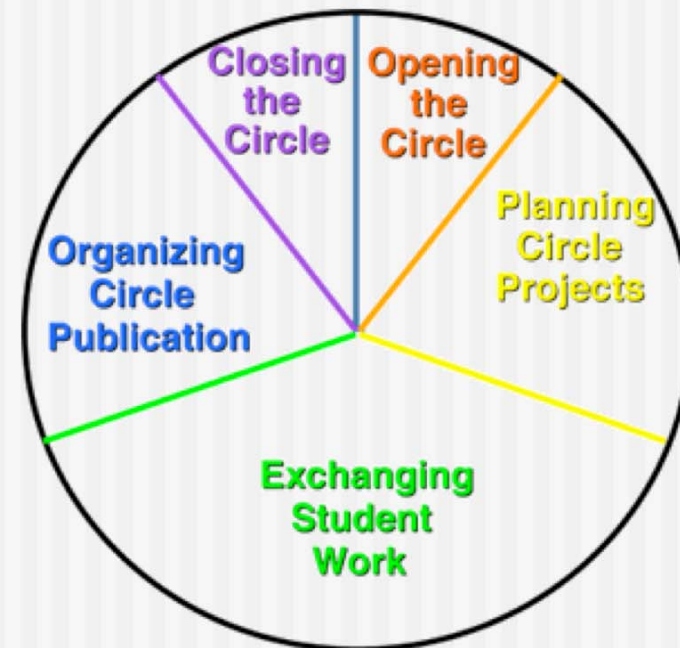
Evropski
Socialni
Sklad

Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles

Phases of a Learning Circle

1. Getting Ready for Learning Circles
2. Opening the Learning Circle
3. Planning the Learning Circle Projects
4. Exchanging Student Work on Learning Circle Projects
5. Organizing the Circle Publication
6. Closing the Learning Circle



Learning Circles

Sample Project Groups

Places and Perspectives High School

- Tehran, Iran
- Kumasi, Ghana
- Aleppo, Syria
- Kennesaw, Georgia, United States
- Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa
- Kocaeli, Turkey
- Minsk, Belarus
- Ganja, Azerbaijan
- Gilgit, Northren Areas, Pakistan



Learning Circles My Hero

- Janetville, Ontario , Canada
- Thies, Senegal
- Jakarta, Indonesia
- Trujillo, La Libertad, Peru
- Manah, Oman
- Port Said, Egypt
- Kharkov, , Ukraine
- Medgidia, Constanta, Romania
- Xalapa, Veracruz, Mexico
- Lynnwood, Washington, United States
- Accra, Ghana
- Warragul, Victoria, Australia
- Cleveland, Ohio, United States
- Baku, Azerbaijan
- Mississauga, Ontario, Canada
- Galati, Galati, Romania



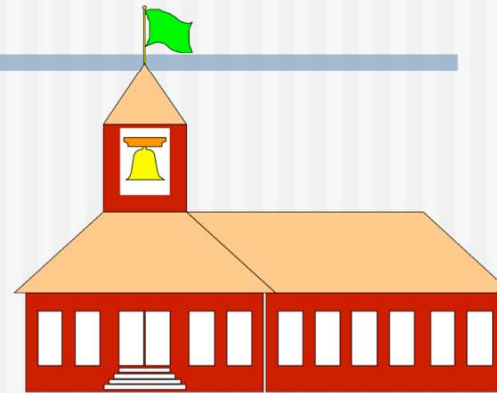
Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles

Opening the Circle

Classroom Survey (Online)

1. About the Students
2. About the School
3. About the Community



Welcome Packs (Postal Mail)

Send whatever fits in a large envelope (pictures, brochures, drawings, symbols, etc.) that will tell others

1. Who you are
2. What you look like
3. What you like to do
4. Where you live



Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles

Planning Circle Projects

Responsibility & Commitment

- Each Class as a team organizes or "sponsors" a project for the group
- Every class is responsible to send at least one response to the projects in their Learning Circle



Evropski
Socialni
Sklad

Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles

Project Idea Template

Learning Circle Group: Computer Chronicles

Sponsoring Teacher: Barry S. Kramer

Sponsor School: Franklin Township School

City: Quakertown

Country: USA

Name of Project:

- Goal Of The Project:
- Type Of Writing Requested:
- Description Of What You Are Looking For From Other Schools:
Example: (Questions, Story Prompts)
- Detailed Instructions For Collecting Information:
- Ideal Number Of Submissions From Each School:
- Preferred Length Of Articles:
- Deadline For Receiving Information (Circle deadline is April 20, 2008):



Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles

Sample Project Idea

Holidays and Celebrations

In the United States we enjoy celebrating holidays throughout the year. For our project idea we would like to know about some of your holidays, celebrations, customs, and traditions.

We would like you to choose one of the following topics and write a paragraph (or two) about the topic.

1. Choose a holiday and describe to us how you celebrate the holiday.
2. Is there a holiday that is unique to your country? Tell us about it.
3. Tell us about some of your minor holidays and how they are celebrated. When do they occur? How did they start?
4. Describe how your family celebrates a specific holiday. Do you have any family traditions that you practice every year?
5. If you could create a new holiday, which holiday would you choose? When would it be celebrated? How would it be celebrated?
6. If you could create a holiday that the entire world celebrated on one day, which holiday would you create? Why? When would it be celebrated?



Learning Circles

Examples of Learning Circle Projects

Places and Perspectives Elementary

Comparing Places
Historical City Tour
Local History Timeline
World War II Surveys
Weather
Ecosystems
1850 Simulation

Mind Works Middle School

Circle Stories
Invention Convention
Place Poetry
Cultural Stories
Predictions 2020
Environmental Projects
Teen Tales

Global Issues High School

New World Order
Economic Issues
Ozone and the Environment
Solar Power
A.I.D.S.
Oil Spills



Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles

Exchanging Student Work

Students...

- Research topics from other classes.
- Work with community resources.
- Learn to monitor goals on schedule.
- Develop strategies to encourage others to meet deadlines.
- Store & retrieve information with technology



Picture by Heather Davis
John Wayland Elementary School



Learning Circles

Publishing Projects - Print and Web

Students...

- Work with information, analyzing, comparing, and editing to create a final presentation.
- Use technical tools to create a final presentation.
- Accept responsibility for the work, making sure that all tasks are completed within a group timeline.




Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles Sample Projects

December, 16, 2006
Shchors District
Gymnasium, Ukraine

If you want to be happy, be happy!!!



Where does happiness live?


What is Happiness?

"Happiness is not a station to arrive at, but a manner of traveling."
M.L. Runbeck

We, students of Grade 8-A of Shchors District Gymnasium decided to learn what is happiness and where it lives, what it means to people from other countries. We asked our new friends, the partners of the project "Learning Circles" to make a survey among their friends, parents, students, to write us what they think about happiness.

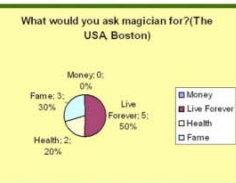
And here are the results of our common work!

What is Happiness?(Ukraine)



Category	Percentage
dreams come true	3.5%
family	21%
love	37%
health	11%
live forever	29%

What would you ask magician for?(The USA Boston)



Category	Percentage
Money	0%
Fame	30%
Live Forever	50%
Health	20%
Fame	3%

I AM HAPPY...
WHEN THE SUN IS BRIGHT
WHEN THE SKY IS BLUE
WHEN YOU LOVE ME
AND I LOVE YOU
WHEN YOUR T-SHIRT IS CLEAN
WHEN MY EYES ARE KIND
WHEN MY PARENTS ARE PEACEFUL
I WANT TO WRITE
WHEN MY FRIENDS ARE WELL
I WANT TO TELL
HOW HAPPY I AM!
By MASHA MORSKAYA
(Ukraine)



Храм Александра Невского.
Alexander Nevskii Cathedral.

Sights

Sponsored by
Russia, Novosibirsk
Gymnasium #12



Evropski
Socialni
Skład

Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles

Closing the Circle

Overall Learning Objectives

- Locate and Evaluate Information
- Research & Organize Ideas
- Creative Problem-Solving within a Team
- Understand Multiple Perspectives on Issues
- Develop Cooperative Learning Strategies
- Increase Self-Esteem and Confidence
- Accept Individual and Group Responsibility
- Use Technology Effectively



Evropski
Socialni
Sklad

Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles

Schedule for Learning Circles

Session 1 (September to January):

Begins mid-September and ends in January (16 weeks with a 2-week break in December).

Learning Circle Placement forms are due in early September

Session 2 (January to May):

Begins late January and ends in May (15 weeks with a 1-week break in Spring).

Learning Circle Placement forms are due early January



Evropski
Socialni
Sklad

Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles

Educational Benefits

- Enhances Student Learning
- Develops Reading/Writing Skills
- Enhances Teaching Curriculum
- Stimulates Teacher Creativity
- Expands Teaching and Learning Horizons
- Integrates Computer and Telecommunications Technology



Learning Circles

How To Become a Participant

To join iEARN Learning Circles, you must first be a member of iEARN and complete an iEARN Learning Circle placement form two weeks before the beginning of the session. Once you complete the placement form you will be placed in a circle for the next session.

<http://media.iearn.org/courseregic>



Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles

The Learning Circles Course

- In this online course, you go through all six phases of a Learning Circle and have assignments that correspond to the work you would normally do during a Learning Circle experience.
- Most of the work and assignments during this course and a Learning circle are student centered.
- Sign up in August/September or January/February



Learning Circles

The Learning Circles Course

As part of this course:

- You and your students will join a small group (a Circle), share cultural information
- Choose a collaborative civic education project in which to participate
- You will develop this topic for your students and make plans to research and share student work via the Internet
- You will also develop ways to teach your students to gather and organize information for publication in print and on the Internet



<http://www.learn.org/professional/learningcircles.html>



Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology

Learning Circles

More Information - www.iearn.org/circles



Evropski
Socialni
Sklad

Project has been cofinanced by European Social Fund and
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology