**Mahjong Meetings**

**Purposes:**

Literature study provides opportunities to discuss how authors create and craft quality literature. By choosing the literature and by recording their responses and insights as they read, you will take ownership of your learning. You will participate in reflexive discussions about literature within your literature circle. Through the use of mahjong meetings you will:

* apply your life experiences and develop personal responses and reactions to a text
* experience peer sharing of understandings, interpretations, and comments about a text
* extend your thinking past the pages of the literature you are reading

Throughout this unit, you will hold mahjong meetings for a period of time during class on **FRIDAYS.** You and your circle members will need to prepare for your role **before** coming to class that day. Every week, we will switch roles. After every mahjong meeting, you will turn in your reports. This will be a FORMAL grade for Q1.

**Roles: Discussion Director, Literary Luminary, Historian & Travel Tracer, Connector & Symbol Sleuth, Diction Detective**

**Discussion Director (East):** The role of the director is to develop a list of five or six thought-provoking questions about the section of text assigned. Questions should be open ended and **prompt discussion** amongst the mahjongers. Directors should encourage their mahjongers to support their opinions with **quotations from the text**. Directors guide the meeting by asking mahjongers to present their material and making sure that everyone is on task and the meeting stays focused. **Order of the meeting: director, historian, luminary, seeker, connector, director.** Every role should prompt discussion and every role should force the members to open the book and find answers and examples. **Please do not rush to answer the questions or to tell your opinion; make the members of the circle think. Silence is expected for thought.**

Sample questions:

* What is the author’s purpose in this section? Why do you think that? Explain.
* What are some themes that you see developing? How is the author developing this/these theme/s? Word choice? Tone? Voice? Symbolism? Imagery?
* What do you think about this author’s style? Explain.
* Discuss the characterization in the text. How does the author develop his/her characters? Are they believable? Explain.

**Literary Luminary (East):** The role of the luminary is to **locate at least three or four special sections** of the text that will benefit the mahjongers to **hear and read aloud again**. The idea is to help members to remember some interesting, powerful, puzzling, funny, or pivotal sections of the text. The luminary will decide which passages are worth hearing and how they should be shared. The passage does not need to be lengthy, but **should be thought provoking** in some way. The luminary can read the passages aloud, ask someone else to read them, or have mahjongers reread them silently then discuss. For each reading, give the page numbers of the selection, read, and then the luminary **should guide a short discussion of each.** Discussion should be led with **open ended questions** about the section so that members have to respond. Depending on the skills that we are learning at the time, the teacher may give the luminary/director a certain topic for their questions/discussion that day (for example, if we are learning about characterization, the teacher may tell the luminary to ask questions and choose passages that demonstrate characterization in some way). **Please do not rush to answer the questions or tell your opinion; make the members of your mahjong table think. Silence is expected for thought.**

**Historian & Travel Tracer (South):** The role of the historian is to make sure that members are **aware of the settings** found within the text. This is especially important as characters move from place to place and change scenes. The job is to track where the action takes place and describe each setting in detail, either words or with a map. It is important to give **page numbers and discuss** even if a map is used in explanation. A map or written explanation is needed for EACH meeting. Settings are not just cities or countries. They can be homes or beaches or offices, etc. **Sometimes, small settings are incredibly significant.** Sometimes settings are archetypal; sometimes they are not. **Setting also includes time.** This novel jumps around in time a great deal. The historian should put together a rough timeline for chapters. **Please do not rush to answer questions or tell your opinion; make the members of your mahjong table think. Silence is expected for thought.**

**Connector and Symbol Sleuth (West):** The role of the connector is to find **connections between characters and chapters.** This means asking yourself, how does what happens in a mother’s story connect to her daughter’s story? What elements or experiences or lessons appear to be related? (Example: how do An-mei’s weaknesses become Rose’s weaknesses?) You must also look for connections between the mothers’ stories and experiences. (Example: How do An-mei and Suyuan use language similarly? What concerns for their daughters do they share?) Look for connections between the daughters’ stories and experiences. (Example: How does each daughter feel as though she has failed her mother?) The other role for the connector is symbol sleuth. Find the elements that function symbolically in the text, as well as mythic elements. Sometimes these symbols are confined to one chapter, while at other times they stretch across the chapters to connect the mothers and the daughters. (Example: how does the garden serve as a symbol in Rose’s story? Example: How does silence become symbolic in both Rose’s and An-mei’s story? Example: How does myth mingle with reality in Ying-ying’s story?) **Please do not rush to answer the questions or tell your opinion; make the members of your mahjong table think. Silence is expected for thought.**

**Diction Detective (North): Analyze the use of language in this section. Determine the tone and mood of the section you are reading.** Make sure you point out the specifics of the text that make you feel the way you do. **ou will also pick out at least pieces of figurative language (imagery, similes, metaphors, personification) and explain their meanings in the text.** Ask yourself, why did the author put this here? Prompt discussion that requires the group to ponder the tone, mood, and figurative language and as the novel progresses, discuss how these things change or take on a new meaning. Questions should be open ended and do not have to be answered by the meeting’s end, but should be discussed at length. How does the tone, mood, and figurative language that you see in the text influence other elements of the narrative? **Please do not rush to answer the questions or tell your opinions; make the members of your mahjong table think. Silence is expected for thought.**

**Product:**

Each member will hand in a typed page or two for each meeting. It is **DUE** at the **END** of **EACH** meeting. Please do not ask me to go print on the day of the mahjong meeting. Please have your role report typed and printed out **BEFORE** each meeting.

You will find the template for this report in Google Classroom, along with this handout.

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| Your Name Meeting #\_\_\_\_  Teacher/ English II  Period of Class  Date of Meeting  Name of your Role   1. Page # Name of the first topic of discussion/literary element/symbol/significant setting/question (this one is for the DD)   Reasoning for bringing this particular piece to the circle.  Why your group members will benefit from this.   1. Page # Name of the first topic of discussion/literary element/symbol/significant setting/question (this one is for the DD)   Reasoning for bringing this particular piece to the circle.  Why your group members will benefit from this.   * Continue this format until all points of your role are covered. * Provide other pages of information as required by your role with the heading of the page the same as this one. * If you have multiple pages, please staple them together, with the reflection page you work on during your discussion, before turning them in * Use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and syntax. |