I. Introduction

Many teachers have difficulties selecting an effective method that encourages and motivates students to read and respond critically to reading materials used in the EFL classroom. An effective method should enable students to think by themselves without total guidance of the teacher. Some methods are effective, but do not challenge students to participate actively in group reading discussions. How can teachers provide a method that challenges students to participate actively in reading discussions? There are many methods that teachers can adopt to increase their students’ critical capacity that gives them a competence that enables them to read and interpret beyond the superficial interpretations about what they are reading. Literature circles of short stories are an excellent strategy to challenge and involve all students in reading discussion. Short stories are fun and they have situations that students identify with their life. Short stories also have the power to grab students deeply in the process of reading discussion leading them to critical thinking.

Literature circles are small reading groups, which provide a specific framework allowing EFL students to have real, meaningful discussions about literature in English. The reading materials used in literature circles are biographies, non-fiction novels, adventure tales, eyewitness books, magazines, newspapers, and historical novels. I chose literature circles of short stories because teachers in the EFL classroom can more easily use short stories. Literature circles also have the power to involve all students personally and emotionally in the process of reading. They also have the ability to give students the opportunity to work as autonomous learners who are skilled and competent to work cooperatively in group reading discussion. By doing this, students will know that they can stand on their own two feet. It means that, they are capable of reading and extracting their own understanding from the short story that they have read. This paper will address the question: Are literature circles an effective method to promote critical reading and thinking in Cape Verdean secondary schools?

Literature circles were first implemented in the United States of America and they have been successfully used in many countries. In Cape Verde, they are something almost unknown in our educational system. Teachers are always looking for new strategies to make reading discussion more attractive to students, but they often have huge difficulties in choosing something that attracts their students to participate cooperatively in the lesson. Literature circles are powerful because they transform unmotivated and passive students into students who are eagerly interested in the reading discussion group. It is time to change old and traditional teaching methods that focus on students as mere passive receivers. We should instead focus on a method that creates students who read and respond according to their own understanding about what they are reading. Literature circles can
transform passive and unmotivated students into curious and self-confident students; this means that they will become capable students, who make their own judgments about their learning process. Literature circles are not only a group of students gathered in a group discussing short stories, but they are a group of students joined in cooperative group work in order to share their own opinions and thoughts about what they have been reading.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Taking into account the CapeVerdean reality, Capeverdean students sometimes feel bored and passive in the classroom. One of the reasons for this kind of passive behavior is that teachers use the same reading strategies in the classroom. From my observation during internship and my own experience as a secondary student, I can state that these kinds of strategies do not challenge students to read beyond a superficial text interpretation. These kinds of reading strategies are: silent readings to respond to multiple-choice exercises, superficial comprehension questions, fill in the gaps exercises, true-false statements, vocabulary, and dictionary work. These kinds of activities do not require students to read deeply to answer the questions because they only have to find the correct answer.

Teachers must bring something new to EFL classrooms that challenge and engage their students in reading activities that encourage them to express and share their opinions; thus making them more confident to share their opinions with teachers and colleagues. By doing this, their students will become better thinkers and better readers. Teachers are always asking, why their students have difficulties sharing their opinions in the classroom and also what they can do to increase their motivation toward reading materials. Literature circles are an excellent strategy to help students share their feelings, thoughts and opinions. These circles offer teachers innumerable opportunities to help students feel more motivated to participate in group reading discussions, taking into account that one of the goals of literature circles is to create an informal environment where students do not feel fear of being judged or laughed at. I am aware our students are not often exposed to literature, but it is time to make this reality disappear in our EFL classrooms. Teachers can do this by organizing literature circles in the EFL classroom. Literature circles are a good strategy to be used by teachers if they want to change the passive behavior of their students to behavior that is more active. This means that they will feel more passionate to engage in literature circles because they create an open environment where students feel comfortable to discuss what they have been reading. This is one of the problems that I have been observing, students feel pressured and ashamed to share their opinions with their colleagues and teachers. I think that, this lack of self-confidence is because students feel afraid of being wrong or being judged. This is one
good point of the literature circle, there are no correct answers, all students can give their opinions and all will discuss it in the classroom.

Literature circles can be an effective tool for teachers if they can maintain a good management of them in the classroom. They are not only fun for students, but also make students conscious that they are responsible for their own process of learning. They also give students the opportunity to evaluate their own development in the literature circle. I do not state that the strategies used by teachers that I have observed in our EFL classrooms are not good or they are ineffective, what I state is that they do not invite students to think and read critically. Taking into account that all answers are in the text, they only have to locate them. This is what makes literature circles different. In literature circles students must read beyond the text and make their own judgment to find the correct answers and sometimes what is believed to be the correct answers.

1.2 Purpose of Study

My purpose for choosing this topic is because of my observation and experience as a secondary school student, I could observe that Capeverdean students have a lot of problems when they are asked to read, analyze and interpret the text or questions that require some level of critical thinking, analyzing or interpreting. They face this problem even when they go to a university; however, I think it is not the students’ fault. They are not trained to deal with questions that require problem-solving and critical analysis of text. For this reason, it is important to create a method that challenges students to read, interpret and analyzing beyond simply interpretation of the text. This is important because students gain a critical capacity which will be useful for them not only in high school, but when they come to university where they will need critical skill to their success as academic student. For this reason, I chose literature circles of short stories. It has the power to involve students deeply in the critical process of thinking and reading, making students curious and participative in the reading discussion process. It also has another advantage: it reduce students’ level of anxiety making their learning process more natural and easier.

I am aware that it is something new to our educational context, but if teachers want our students to acquire academic skills that will help them in higher levels of education, they should help their students to work on their critical thinking skills to organize their thoughts, ideas and feelings. This critical capacity of reading and thinking is not only important to them because they will need it in the university, but it will help them to understand how to work in cooperative and demanding environments that require from them a complex capacity to analyze and criticize what they have been reading. This means that they will not be voiceless students but active students that question and criticize the author and the article that they are reading.
2. Literature Review

2.1 Definitions of Literature Circles

There are many concepts about literature circles, but every concept has one basic point in common: the student is responsible for most of their learning. All definitions also focus on students working cooperatively in order to help each other in their learning achievement. Authors also focus on students who lead most of their learning (Daniels 1994; Furr 2005; Hempel 1995). From these definitions, I can that state literature circles are cooperative approaches that give students the opportunity to control and manage their own learning.

According to Harvey Daniels (1994) literature circles are small, peer-led discussion groups whose members have chosen to read the same story, poem, article, or book. While they are reading, each group-assigned portion of the text (either in or outside class), members make notes to help them contribute to the upcoming discussion, and every one comes to the group with ideas to share. Each group follows a reading and meeting schedule, holding periodic discussion through the reading of the book. When they finish a book, the circle members may share highlights of their reading with the wider community. Then they trade members with another finishing group, select more readings, and move into a new cycle (as cited in Pheifer & Chase 2002, p13).

Mark Furr (2005) gives another definition not significantly different from the one given by Daniels. Taking into account that both focused on the concept of students meeting with specific purpose of reading for pleasure and self-improvement. According to Furr (2005), “literature circles are small reading groups that meet in the classroom to discuss texts, these groups should be student-directed, but at the same time students need some tools in order to have interesting, fun discussion about the stories they have been reading” (n.p.). If we analyze those definitions above we notice that all of them focus on student centred learning.

According to Kathy Hempel (2005), a literature circle is a group of students gathered to discuss a book or books in depth. The discussion is led by students rather than the teacher. Students are encouraged to talk about characters in their books and compare them to each other, as well as their own personal connections to the stories by their own experience. This kind of discussion will develop in students a critical capacity of thinking while they are reading (np).

To summarize the definitions given by these authors, literature circles can be defined as: a discussion group where member readers gather in complex reading discussion not only for pleasure of reading but to develop critical capacity of thinking and reading. These reading discussions create a cooperative environment that provides the people involved a huge opportunity and to develop and explore their ideas, thoughts and develop a critical capacity of analyzing and responding critically to the reading materials that they have chosen.
2.2 Background and History of Literature Circles

According to Daniels (2002), literature circles were not invented in the United States of America. But the first model of literature circles was recorded in 1634 by Anne Hutchinson, during her voyage to America. The renowned Puritan figure gathered a women’s study group to discuss each Sunday’s shipboard sermon (p.30). Literature circles were probably not invented by Americans, but undoubtedly they were the re-inventor of literature circles and responsible for bringing them to schools.

According to the same author (Daniels, 2002), one of these re-inventors was Karen Smith an elementary school teacher in Phoenix, Arizona. She first implemented them in her school in 1982 when some of her fifth grade students found a box of books and they got interested. They approached Ms. Smith and asked permission to read these books. She gave them her approval because she was assuming that they were for independent reading. Ms. Karen Smith was surprised with the way her students were organizing themselves. They established groups around their choice and assigned themselves pages to read. They also were regularly meeting to talk about their books. She participated in some group discussion with her students and was amazed by the degree of their engagement with the books and the complexity of their discussion. She realized that students had just invented their own literature circles (p.32).

According to Daniels (2002) this humble model of group book discussion developed into what we know today as literature circles. The name is new and Kathy Short and Gloria Kaufman are credited with giving the name “literature circles” to these contemporary school-based book clubs, student-led groups that combine the genuine features of cooperative learning and student centeredness (p.32-33). Today all over the world, many students are taking part in literature circles. Today literature circles combine practice and theory from collaborative learning, independent reading, and student centered learning and reader-response criticism. But the main concept is still the same: students are responsible for their own learning. From what I have already said in the literature review, literature circles can be seen as a very effective method but every method has it strong and weak points which will be discussed in the next chapter.
2.3. Advantages and Disadvantages of Literature Circles

2.3.1. Advantages

Because of their features, literature circles are strong motivators to students and they influence students` motivation toward the use of English in the EFL classroom. Chi Ling (2008) states that group reading discussion motivates students to speak in the foreign language classroom. This gives them the opportunity to use language in real life and express ideas and thoughts with their colleagues (p.31). Literature circles can increase student’s motivation, turning passive learners into an active learner who produce thoughts and knowledge. Ling (2008) states that in literature circles students are not passive learners who just receive knowledge, but active learners who produce ideas and knowledge (p.31). Literature circles can increase student’s motivation, turning passive learners into an active learner who produce thoughts and knowledge. Ling (2008) states that in literature circles students are not passive learners who just receive knowledge, but active learners who produce ideas and knowledge (p.31).

Literature circles give students opportunity to participate actively in their learning process, making students conscious that they are capable to contribute to a part of their learning. Ling (2008) says that in literature circles students learn by themselves from, each other, instead of being dependent on their teachers (p.31). Literature by structure, they engage students cooperatively in the reading discussion process, which create a collaborative environment that helps students to overcome classroom conflicts. This idea is supported by Ling; according to this author literature, circles create a cooperative and collaborative environment that allows learners to acquire skills which enable them to overcome classroom problems such: as: Language barrier and the conflict of ideas (p.61). Literature circles create an informal environment that makes students feel easily integrated into literature circles. Ling (2008) claims that literature circles reduce student apprehension, which creates an environment that challenge students to communicate in foreign language and develops their communicative skill (p.61).

2.3.2. Disadvantages

Students are accustomed using their mother tongue in their daily lives and sometimes in the classroom. For this reason they transfer the use of mother tongue into the literature circles. Ling (2008) found that students have problems to express in English and use the mother tongue to express and support their thoughts and opinions (p.60). Some students have more knowledge than their colleagues and for this reason they are more active role in the literature circles than their colleagues. According to Ling (2008), in literature circles, students who have higher content knowledge are always more participative and talkative, while those who have lower content knowledge may stay quiet or only use some insignificant words (p.60). Literature circles work out better if all students read at home because they will come with some understanding about what is going to be discussed in reading discussion. Ling (2008) claims that some students do not prepare
for reading discussion. For this reason they come to group reading discussion without a clear understanding of what the reading text is about (p.60). Another disadvantage is related to language knowledge. Some students can not express in the target language so they have problems to keep a track of the topic discussed in the literature circles. Ling (2008) affirms that as students have difficulty to express in target language, they can stray from the topic in discussion, which results in the failure of the purpose for each lesson (p.60).

2.4 The Importance of Literature Circles in EFL Classrooms

The body of research on literature circles has been proving that literature circles are an effective strategy not only for student achievement but also for the whole classroom environment. Daniels (2002) conducted research with Chicago teachers that linked literature circles to improve student achievement. Daniels and his colleagues helped teachers implement literature circles as part of a reading-writing workshop. Training involved summer institutes and school-year support delivered through peer consultants, veteran teachers who had used the strategy in their own classrooms. Results from citywide assessment showed that schools using literature circles out performed those that did not in both reading and writing. In third grade, the literature circle schools made gains of 13 percent in reading and 25 percent in writing. In eighth grade, the literature circle schools made gains of 10 percent in reading and 27 percent in writing. The teachers in these schools were convinced that literature circles were working to help students become better readers (p8).

According to Daniels (2002), other researchers have found similar results. (Klinger, Vaugh and Schulmm) found that students in peer-led groups made greater gains than control groups in reading comprehension. There were equal gains in content knowledge after reading and discussion of social studies material in peer-led groups. The affect was confirmed through standardized measures of reading and through a social unit test (P.8).

According to Bonnie Burns (1998)”literature circles incorporated features that can change the classroom climate to be more cooperative, responsible and pleasurable while encouraging the growth of reading”. Many students enjoy small group readings because they allow for more opportunity to participate. Working with smaller numbers of people, students may begin to increase sharing their thoughts and ideas. Literature circles do not only provide an opportunity for students to read during the school day, but also gives them the opportunity to outside the classroom (np). This chapter will focus on the importance of literature circles in the EFL classroom. It will give the reader broader knowledge about how the reading circles can contribute to student development in the EFL classroom. The next chapter will focus on benefits of the short story in EFL classroom giving the reader deeper knowledge about how it can be important to student development.
2.5. The Benefits of Short Story in ELF Classroom Context

Short stories by their features and structure, they can be highly motivating to students. Odilea Erkaya (2006) states that short stories the structure of short stories: have a beginning, middle, and end. This factor challenges students to keep reading to find out how the conflict is resolved (p9). This idea is shared by Roger Elliot (1990), he affirms that, literature is motivationally effective if students can genuinely engage with its thoughts and emotions and appreciate aesthetics qualities” (as cited in Arkaya 2006, p5). Stephanie Vandrick (1997) states that one of the benefits of literature in the classroom is that through reading short stories, students can find situations that they can identify with their own life (as cited in Erkaya 2006, p9). Erkaya (2006) claims that among the advantage of using short stories in student development is that they are a benefit for all levels. By reading and analyzing short stories, students automatically start to think critically (p8). According to Andy Young (1996) short stories have advantages over traditional content. First because of the fact that they are entertaining. They reduce the student’s anxiety, because they are enjoyable. They decrease the student’s apprehension and they learn beforehand that critical thinking is a natural process and familiar (as cited in Erkaya 2006, p8). Carole Hamilton and Peter Kratze (1999) state that the good of a short story is its being short. For this reason it is an excellent method to engage students who are resistant toward reading materials. They also stress that they have an advantage in relation to novels because they can be read in just one sitting instead asking students to read many assigned chapters for reading class. They also stress that all elements analyzed in a novel can be easily and efficiently analyzed in a short story (as cited in Kimberly Cambel 2007, p.43). In this chapter I presented the benefits of short story for student development and how they can help the development of their critical reading skills. In the next chapter I will show how critical thinking and reading work out in the teaching context.
2.6. Critical Thinking and Reading in Teaching Context

Vicent Ruggerio (1984) defines critical thinking as “close examination of a proposed problems or issue’s solution to determine both it strengths and its weakness” (as cited in Kreis 2003, p.142-143). Linda Flynn (1989) defines critical reading as “an interactive process using several levels of thoughts simultaneously” (as cited in Kreis 2003, p.142). Analyzing both definitions of critical thinking and reading, we can notice close similarity between them. Suter Newton (1985) claims that for students to read critically they first have to think critically (as cited in Kreis 2003, p.142-143). Simplifying what Newton said, critical thinking is a process of gathering, and processing information to interpret what they have read. This point of view is shared by Philip Holden (2003) who sates that to challenge students to think critically, first students should be allowed to learn that in texts there are contradictions and they should ask many questions about what they read instead of trying to find out immediately the solution of what they have been reading. Holden also stresses that through reading students start to learn how their lives are connected and related to characters in the text that they have been reading (np).

According to Kreis (2003), many teachers have in their mind that students develop their critical thinking and reading as they become matured in different areas of knowledge and through reading at school (p143). This point of view is contradicted by Russell Stauffer (1997) who thinks that schools have responsibility to build in student’s critical thinking that will help them in future. Stauffer (1997) state that schools have responsibility to develop in their students critical skills, which will develop their students into future citizens who are competent enough to think and read critically and participate in society more fully (as cited in Kreis 2003, p.144).

Other authors advocate that critical thinking and reading should be developed in early grades. According to Linda Thistlethwaite (1990) who state “focusing on critical thinking reading should not wait until presumably lower level reading skills have been mastered” (as cited in Kreis 2003, p144). On the other hand, there are authors who strongly defend that critical thinking and reading should be worked out in junior high school. According to (Kreis 2003), there are some authors (Ericson, 1987, Hubler, Bean, Smith and McKenzie, 1997; Frager and Thompson, 1994). They defend that junior high school offers ideal conditions to develop critical thinking and reading skill in students. They support their point of view in the following statement: Schools ought to develop student critical think and reading in that stage. The rational reason behind this is that in their academic career a high level of autonomous learning and critical capacity of thinking and reading are indispensable. They also need skills to interpret a huge variety of literature and support their ideas and skills. These skills include: distinguishing differing facts from reality, summarizing information from various sources, making their own judgment from what they read.
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contrasting, comparing and identifying an author’s culture. These skills are essential conditions for students. This chapter showed that critical thinking and reading are fundamental to helping students to develop their critical thinking and reading skills. In the next chapter, I will present models that teachers can use to develop and help their students to develop their critical skills.

2.7. Model of Improve Critical Thinking and Reading in EFL Classroom

Carol Barnes (1997) describes a model to develop critical thinking and reading in EFL classroom. This model is defined as ‘Barnes’ questioning classification system’. This lesson is supported in class discussion, which has as role to help students to organize, develop, and express their ideas. They are classified into four categories: cognitive memory questions; convergent questions; divergent questions; cognitive questions. Cognitive memory questions that, requires students to memorize facts or answer yes or no questions. Convergent questions, this model requires students to express their opinions not from what they memorize, but from their own point of view; divergent questions, this model to make their own question, questioning what they read, make their prediction of what they have read, make hypothesize and solve problem; evaluation questions, this model requires students to make their own judgment about they have read and support their opinions, choice or solution. Barnes strongly advises teachers to use a questioning sequence. The rational reason behind this is that according to Barnes, if students are not able to relate the facts of the story it is impossible for them to tell the story from their own point of view and make their own judgment (as cited in Kreis 2003, p148).

A second model for teaching critical thinking and reading is defined as 'Cunningham’s two phase’s lessons’. According to James Cunningham (1980) ’the teacher often confuses comprehension (understanding meaning) with critical reading (evaluating meaning) and creates in this way a dilemma’. Cunningham stresses that even if the teacher motivates students to give individual response and use different questions in the classroom, generally teachers will get negative feedback from their students. For this reason, teachers will make a false assumption that their students have a lower level of critical thinking. For this reason teacher will accept any answer in the classroom, even if they are thoughtless. This has as a consequence the lower assessment of reading. For this reason Cunningham proposed his ’two phase lesson’. The objective of this model is to help teachers to understand that teaching comprehension and critical thinking are dissimilar, but they are intrinsically connected (as cited in Kreis 2003, p148). The next chapter will show how literature circles contribute to develop student’s critical thinking and reading skills.
2.8. Literature Circles in Student Critical Development

Literature circles are an excellent strategy to promote the development of critical thinking in students. According to Melissa Bernier (2008) literature circles allow students to read beyond the book and separate what they think is good and bad for them (np). Janice Almansi (1996) conducted a study to compare student–led and teacher-led discussion groups. This study found that student–led discussion groups provide more active role for students during group discussion and the students demonstrate more interaction with the text. The students in this group discussion were categorized as more active in group discussion, those who presented higher level of critical thinking, were more participative and more cohesive in group reading discussions (as cited in Bernier 2008, np).

Barnier (2008) stated that all classrooms are composed of students with different learning styles, but all of them have a natural capacity to think critically. For this reason teachers should promote a classroom environment, which enable students to explore and develop their critical thinking capacity. Barnier (2008) also stressed that literature circles explore students’ critical thinking and reading capacity instead of being dependent on the teacher to answer to support their ideas (np). According to Bernier literature, circles give students the possibility to develop critical skills, which enable them to build up their own answers and opinions instead of being dependent on their teacher. Blum, Lipett and Yocum also share this idea (2007). They state that, “literature circles encourage students to develop in metcognition of these works for them and can help them understand what they read” (as cited in Barnier 2008, np).

Critical thinking is not developed spontaneously; it is a learning process that works out gradually in student development. Barnier (2008) said that literature circles offer an excellent opportunity for students to model their thoughts, observe, and talk about what they have experienced. Through talking about what they have experienced, students will develop their critical thinking skills. Bernier also states that students will not be perfect group members of reading discussion at first try. It is a gradual process that students will get accustomed to as long they become experienced with them (np). According to Shaheera Jaffar (2004) teachers should create an environment which challenges students to exchange their point of view. He also stated that, when literature circles work out as a vehicle to teach students how to solve problems, students will learn autonomously without finding evidences in the text to support their ideas and opinions. They also will be able to separate what they believe is true and not true. By doing this, students will become critical thinkers and readers, who do not accept everything they read as true (p.16-17). Another author supports this idea; Bernier (2008) claims that students are used to thinking that, teachers are masters with all the correct answers. For this reason ,they express their ideas supported with what their teacher say instead of finding answers in what they believe is true. For this reason they do not
remember that they have their own point of view and their own capacity of analyzing. She also stresses that literature circles motivate students to express their ideas without fear of being considered thoughtless (np).

2.9. Conclusion of Literature Review

The conclusion is an overview about all topics discussed in my literature review. It allows the reader to have a broad understanding of the main aspects discussed in the literature review. It has a list of different concepts of literature circles. These lists of definitions give the reader a clearer understanding of literature circles. To prove the effectiveness of literature circles this literature review section presents many studies conducted by different researchers that prove that literature circles are an effective strategy to be used in the classroom. This has a section that proves the effectiveness of literature circles in the classroom, but also presents a section that is about the benefits of literature circles on student development. Taking in account that, this thesis is about critical thinking and reading in the classroom, this literature review shows the relation between them and how they work into teaching context. It also presents some models that teachers can use to improve critical thinking in the EFL classroom.

In order to demonstrate, that there is a strict relationship between literature circles and critical thinking. The literature review section presents several studies that prove that literature circles and critical thinking are strongly connected. From my literature review I can say that literature circles really develop critical skills in students, but this is what I expect to found through my observation and analyses.
III. Methodology

I conducted a case study with students of the twelfth grade from Escola Secundaria Manuel Lopes. I chose Manuel Lopes because I had been doing my teaching practice at this high school and this fact gave me opportunity to work and build rapport with the students that I had been observing since the first trimester. For this reason I knew the different kinds of motivation of each student and their level of motivation in relation to learning English. This factor also gave me the opportunity to observe their personal development in the classroom and in the literature circle. But before I started the reading group discussion I wrote a letter asking for permission and collaboration in my action research (Appendix 1). The reason I did it, was I wanted the director to give me a space that would be used for the project that would benefit the students and school. I also wanted to make the director aware about the nature of my project, and let him know that my project as the main purpose to develop and contribute to students intellectual development. They promptly gave me a space; it was a good space which created a good teaching environment. The space was big, this was important because I could have students organized in circles that made them face each other, and also face the instructor when he was talking to them. This also was a good place because it had a blackboard that would be useful if the instructor wanted to write something on the board.

The purpose of this classroom observation was to observe and collect data about how students respond to reading materials used in the classroom. It means that, I observed how students responded to questions from the text which required some level of critical thinking skills. I also wanted to have enough information that enabled me to make further comparison between how students develop from one stage to another. I collected data of each observation in order to observe if students developed from one point to another and to see if their way of thinking, the way they analyze and interpret reading materials, changed after I used literature circles in EFL classrooms. After finishing, I organized the data that I collected during my observation. The data was organized according to the measurement tool (See Appendix 4) I created to conduct my observations. I used that information to compare later with the information that I obtained from observations from literature circles. The observation tool was created taking into account the following criteria. First it evaluated how students developed during the reading discussion process. It also had some tools that enabled me to evaluate how the reading discussion was going and also be able to know what should be improved. I also wanted to have a tool that would allow me to compare each group discussion in order to have a knowledge that would enable me to compare how far the volunteers had been developing.

I asked students to volunteer for my reading group, first I explained to them that it is part of my thesis project and that it would be very important to them because it would help them later in
their academic career. I also explained to them that I needed a certain number of students. I gave them a sheet and the students who were interested wrote their names on it. I decided to work with these students from this classroom. The reason for this is because I have been working with them during my internship. For this reason I knew beforehand their different ways of thinking and their levels of motivation in relation to reading materials. I also wanted to observe how different students from the same classroom with different levels of learning comprehension developed their critical capacity of reading, interpreting and analyzing short stories.

I chose to work with sixteen students because this number of students allowed me to manage better the reading group discussion. Burns (1998) suggests that four to eight is the ideal number of students to be worked with in literature circles. However, he also suggests that more groups of fewer students can contribute to effectiveness of literature circles (np). I decided to organize my reading group discussion according to what I thought was going to fit better in my case study purpose. I did not organized students into groups, but I worked with the number of sixteen students. I did this because I knew beforehand that during the reading discussion some students were going to give up and for this reason it would be impossible to have divided them into groups because the groups would constantly be changing.

After I selected the students, I gave them a permission slip (See Appendix 2) for them to give to their parents. I did this because I wanted the permission from the responsible adult for their education and to know if they were allowed to participate in reading discussion. Another reason that I gave the permission slip is because I wanted the parents to know that the students were going to be involved in something that is important to their personal and intellectual development. I also wanted the parents to be aware of my purpose; it meant making them aware that my thesis project is beneficial for the students’ education.

I also designed a simple survey (See Appendix 3) for students. I did this because I wanted to better understand the students background, their level of English, their experience in relation to other kinds of reading materials (such as short stories), and if they intended to study English in their future career and to know how they started to learn English. In the survey, I asked students if they had ever studied this kind of reading material (short stories). The reason for this question was to check the students’ previous knowledge of literature circles and their implementation in the classroom. This information allowed me to better know the students that I worked with.

Before starting the case study of literature circles of short stories, I gave two tests (See Appendix 5 & 6). I designed these tests for the students that I had selected. Test A (See Appendix 5) focused more on questions that required a higher level of critical thinking and Test B (See Appendix 6) focused more on questions that required reading comprehension capacity but this also
included some questions that required some level of critical thinking. I did this because I wanted to evaluate students’ capacity in analyzing texts that required a different capacity of analyzing texts. I also wanted to observe what are the problems that students had in analyzing the different tests, it enabled me to know better the students’ main difficulties in relation to text interpretation. The reason for giving a pretest is because it is an important tool that enabled me to evaluate students’ development during their learning process. The test allowed me to measure students’ level of knowledge and also enabled me to compare later how students developed their critical capacity of thinking and reading. Another important factor of the test is that the test gave me the opportunity to compare individually the performance and improvement of each student before, during and after I started to use literature circles of short stories in an EFL classroom. Objectively, I wanted my test to be valid and reliable.

According to John Heaton (1998), “the validity of test is the extent to which it measures what it is supposed to measure and nothing else.” He also stressed that it should measure the skill that teachers intend to measure. According to the same author J.B Heaton) reliability is a test that if administrated to the same candidate on different occasions should have the same result. First, it should be valid because it measured the knowledge of students in relation to the reading material used in the classroom and their ability to read and interpret short stories. The test should be reliable, which means that the test that I administered in another group of students in the same level should have the same results (p.159). My text included reading comprehension questions and critical thinking questions. I designed my test this way because I wanted to know how students would respond to those different kinds of questions. This also allowed me to measure their level of understanding in relation to critical reading questions.

After that I designed lesson plans for each lesson that I was going to teach (See Appendix 7-13). I began with easier and shorter short stories. The reason for adopting this strategy is because for what I had been observing in the classroom, students from this classroom were not used to long and complex texts. They had difficulty in analyzing long and complex texts that require some critical thinking. I chose easier and shorter short stories. As the students got used to analyzing them I planned on moving to longer and more complex short stories that required a higher thinking capacity of analyzing.

During my case study of literature circles of short stories I collected information about students’ development during their performance in group reading discussion. My class was divided into several steps. In the first step, I was more facilitative for the group reading discussion of short stories. As the instructor, I provided students with information that enabled them to work in group reading discussion. This meant that I helped them to understand the short stories that they were
reading, and made easier questions in order that they could start to become familiarized with the short stories. The reason for doing this is because they were not used to this kind of reading strategy. In the second step, I gave students more opportunity to work on their own in the learning process. In doing this I wanted to observe one of the ideas defended in literature review section which Bernie (2008) state that, in literature circles students can work on their own and produce their own ideas and opinions from what they believe as true (np). By using this strategy used the I gave students the opportunity to formulate their own answer from what they had read.

I also had students write in their own words their feelings or what they experienced through short stories that they had read. It also gave students the opportunity to discuss in reading their opinions and thoughts in the literature circles. By doing this strategy I put into practice one of concepts of literature defended in the literature review section. Ling (2008) stated that, in group reading discussion students are not passive learners who just receive information, but active learners who produce ideas and knowledge (p.61). I could observe whether what Ling stated is true; in fact, literature circles effectively developed the behavior of critical thinking and reading capacity of students. I observed and analyzed how students developed at each stage of the study, and I scored each group reading discussion session according to the observation instrument (See Appendix 3).

This way of grading students enabled me to collect data that was useful to prove the effectiveness of literature circles of short stories. My case study also allowed me to compare and evaluate student’s personal development from using reading texts in the classroom and using short stories in literature circles.

I taught seven literature circles of short stories (See Appendix 7-13). We met always on Wednesday, in the same place. The class took one hour and a half, and we gathered in a group reading discussion and discussed the short stories proposed for each session. The strategy used was almost the same. Students were asked to read and I asked them questions of the short story that they had read. The purpose of doing this was to observe how students developed their critical capacity into group reading discussion. I also observed what their main difficulties were in the group reading discussion.
IV. Research Analysis

4.1. Pre-Test

Testing was an important tool for my action research because that allowed me to evaluate and measure the level of critical thinking in relation to reading materials. This also allowed me to know beforehand which was the best strategy to lead my reading group discussion. I administrated the same test that I had administrated before the reading group discussion (see Appendix 5 and 6). These tests are A and B. The test A focused more about the questions that require reading comprehension analyzing, but it also has questions that require some level of critical thinking. The reason I did this is to evaluate students’ capacity in relation to reading comprehension question: The test B was focused more about the questions that require students’ higher level of critical analysis. The reason I did this is to observe and evaluate student knowledge in relation to questions that require critical thinking capacity of interpretation. I noticed that the volunteers had more difficulty in relation to text B, which required higher level of critical thinking. But they also had some problems with text A. Their huge difficulty was concerned with the question that requires some level of critical thinking. Student really had problems with questions that require critical thinking capacity of analyzing, for this reason they do not answer to some questions that require critical capacity of interpretation. For example, in test B (see Appendix 6), there were the following questions: Why does Martin Luther King mention the names of so many states in his speech? The volunteers could not answer this question because it is not in the text. To answer this question they had to have the critical thinking capacity of analyzing that leads them to find their own answers. In relation to the students, grade, among 15 students that took the A test 10 had positive grades and other 5 had negative grade. In relation to test B every student failed and no one had a positive grade.

I knew through the test that I administered that students really have problems to think critically and they need to develop their critical thinking skills. I also learned through the test that students have problems reading and interpreting long texts. This may be because they are not used to long texts in the classroom. Students also presented some problems with reading comprehension texts that require them to have some level of critical thinking. To do my action research I also gave students a survey. The purpose of this was to know the students background and their motivation in relation to English. Some students’ goal was to study English language at university, but others only need English for high school courses. There were others who said that they will not need English in their future.
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life. This survey was also important for my action research because it is important to know beforehand which students you are going work with in your project.

4.2. Classroom Observations / Findings.

4.3. Class 1

I began my first group reading of a short story with 11 students. The short story discussed was “The Wisdom of King Solomon” (see Appendix 7). The first group reading was interactive and effective taking into account that it was the first reading group discussion. The students were very participatory in reading discussion demonstrating lot of interest in the discussion process. For example, they answered almost at the questions that I asked. Those questions were going to be mentioned during the development of this paper. After that, I asked them to read the short story, and after they had finished reading the short story, we started to analyze it. At the beginning I started to ask questions related to the short story such as: What is justice? Some students gave their personal opinion, but they had problems in expressing themselves in English. But during the reading discussion, students began to be more interactive in the group reading and expressed their opinion. Student 12 was the most active in answering in the questions from the short story. For example she answered this question about justice by saying that “justice is when people make a wrong judgement of us, and treat us unfairly”. She expressed her ideas in English, but she had some problems to express herself only in English. This was also the problems faced by other students, they expressed some good ideas, but the problem is that they had problems to express their ideas in English. For example she began to speak in English, but sometimes had to pause to organize her ideas. They had problems speaking in classroom, and they carried their limitations into the group discussion. This made the instructor’s task a little difficult. But the interaction was good and participative. I tried to make them express in English, but sometimes I allowed them to use their mother tongue to convey their idea. I advised them to use English in reading circles. This is one of the main problems of the reading circles, but I thought that I should let them sometimes express themselves in their mother tongue and help them to organize their ideas in English. For example, I had to translate some words they said, and ask them to say what they wanted to express in English.

The short story that I chose was easy to read and interpret. For this reason students did not have huge problems to answering the questions from it. For example they answered questions such as: Who is the main character? and Where does the short story take place? Because they are easily located in the short story students did not have many difficulties with these questions. But some questions that require a higher level of critical thinking were not easy for them, which showed that they had more problems to answer questions that require a higher level of critical thinking. The
questions that required a higher level of critical thinking were questions such as: Do you agree with the way King Solomon acted? and Do you agree with the way the real mother acted? They could answer yes/no but when I asked why they could not give me clear and well supported answers.

They also showed that they were not familiarize with this kind of reading material (short story) because they said that it is long and made more difficult to analyze. For this reason some students were not participative in the reading and discussion process. This is an important point that I had to work out in order to help all students more engage in the process of reading discussion.

During the group discussion I introduced some elements of the short story, such as character and plot. I did this because I think that if they knew the elements of a short story would understand better what they were reading. I noticed that the short story really made students discuss and show their point of view. The problem is that they express better if the teacher allows them to express in their mother tongue. I also had problems to make students to understand the questions that I asked and sometimes I had to use mother tongue to make them understand questions from the short story.

4.4. Class 2

I began the second reading discussion with 12 students. The short story discussed was ‘‘Gentleman of the Jungle’’(see Appendix 8). I began by asking them to read and analyze each paragraph that they have read. I begun with an easy question as: What was the main conflict in the short story? Students gave different answers, but was difficult for them to show clearly the main conflict in the short story. For example, they said that the main conflict is a quarrel between two animals. Others said the main conflict is that one animal in the short story was looking for a place to live. Those answers are close to correct answers, but I wanted them to answer that the main conflict was that one of animal (elephant) occupied the man’s house and refused to go away. They still had some problems in analyzing the question that required a higher level of critical analyze. For example, I asked them the following question: What is the meaning of what the man said? “You can fool people for a time, but not forever”. Students could not answer this question. For example, one student said that this means that people are always fooling each other, but she could not go deeper into this question and answer, for example, that we can always abuse or make someone a fool, but we cannot keep making this person a fool forever. They answered better the questions that are located in the text. For example, they answered questions such as: Who are the main characters and when does the short story take place? But they also answered some questions that required their own judgement. For example, when I asked the meaning of the following sentence: “Peace is costly, but it is worth the expense, and live happily ever after”. They answered that, peace is difficult to achieve, but it is worth the struggle for it and live in peace. Another answer was
“When we want to live in peace we should struggle for it because it is our right, and if we struggle for it we will live in peace.” In this reading discussion, students gave some good answers. For example, when I asked them the following question: How does the government treat people in our society? They answered that the government should treat people well, but most governments only care about themselves and did not do their best for the society; that is to provide good life conditions to its people. There was another question from which I received good feedback. It was the following question: Do you think that what happened in the short story used to happen in our society? Justify your answer. One student answered ‘‘yes’’, and he justified with the following statement: The government sometimes denies to the people their rights and puts their interest over the people’s interest. By doing this they are being unfair because the people’s need and interests should come first.

This short story was more difficult for them because it required a higher level of critical thinking than the other short story used in the last reading discussion. It was more difficult because it is a short story that had a lot of symbolism. For this reason students did not understand the symbolic element from the short story. It also showed that they are not used to this kind of reading analyzing. For example, they did not answer what the man and animals in the short story symbolize. For this reason I had to explain to them through example, what symbolism meant. I asked what some colours symbolize, they answered correctly to this question: For example they said that green symbolize hope, white symbolize peace. Next I asked them to use their answer as support to answer me what is symbolism. They answered that is something which represents some objects or things. Then I asked them who in the top in our society. They answered the politicians. Then I asked them in the short story who at the top and they said the animals. When I asked who is under the animals authority, they answered the man. Then I asked in our society, who is under government power, they answered the people. By following this sequence of thought they could get the correct answer.

Students still had problems to express their ideas in English and asked for help in their mother tongue to express their ideas. The classroom environment was interactive but less interactive than the last reading group reading discussion because some students did not participate a lot in the group discussion. For this reason some students were less participative, but some students were more active in the group discussion and showed some good level of analyzing the short story. For example, when required to analyze their own answer they could read the short story, and use what they read to answered their own question. Student 12 was still being more participative in the group reading discussion: Student n 4, who were not present in the first reading discussion, was also participative in the group discussion and showed some good level of reading and interpretation analyzing. For example she was who answered the two questions mentioned before that required
more level of critical thinking. What I think should be improved is: make all students more interactive and participative in the process of reading discussion; try to make all students participate and give their contribution to reading discussion process. I think that some students do not want to participate in group reading discussion because they had problems to express in English. I noticed that the students do not understand the general idea of the short story because it very symbolic and they do not have a higher level of analyzing a symbolic short story. What I need to do is try to engage more students in the process of reading discussion, and also increase this level of self-confidence.

4.5. Class 3

In reading group discussion, the number of students was 5. The short story discussed was “Thank You Mama” by Langston Hughes (see Appendix 9). I began this reading group session asking students to summarize what they had read. I asked different students to summarize, but they had some problems to do a summary of the short because it is a complex short story. After they had finished summarizing, I asked them to give the main ideas of the short story is about, they gave many different answers to what the short story was about. This short story has many difficult vocabulary words, and used non-Standard English. For this reason, I had to help students with some the most words. However, students understand the main idea of the story because they answered the most important question; mentioned later in my paper.

This was the most difficult short story for their level because in spite of the fact that this has only two characters, it requires a higher level of understanding, but the students could understand the main points of the short story. For this reason I made a good evaluation of this reading session. Next I asked students to relate the issue in the short story to what happens in our society. They showed a good capacity of relating what happens in our society to what happened in the short story. For example, when I asked if the situation in the short story also happen in our society, they said that everyday there are boys in street that steal from people, and most of the time it is to feed themselves. But sometimes as with the boy in the short some of them steal from people just to buy superficial things.

Going deeper through the text, this short story was basically organized into dialogue. For this reason I asked students to perform the two main characters in the short story. After they finished reading each dialogue, the first question was easy, just to be aware that students tha the students understood what was the main conflict in the short story. They answered that, (main conflict) is that: A boy tried to steal a woman’s purse and was caught in the moment that he tried to steal it. As the students went through the short story, I began to ask more complex questions. For
example, I asked them to describe the social condition of the two main characters. Students gave multiple answers, but as long as we discussed them, they could give me the correct answer. One student answered that, the boy is from a lower class because their language which was presented was not a standard English. Another answered that the boy is from a lower class because he lives in the street trying to steal from people. Another student said that the woman is from a lower class because she said that, she also wanted things she could not get. There was another answer that is related to the description of her house; described it as a humble house. That shows that the woman is not a rich woman.

I asked another question that required higher level of thinking skills because they had to make their own judgment. It also required to them to relate to what they think and come to their own conclusion. I asked what is going on in Mrs. Jones’ mind when she gave Roger money. They answered that, it is because she also wanted things that she could not have. For this reason she wanted to give Roger a lesson and taught him that we do not need to steal to have what we want. Sometimes we can ask people to help us. I also made this following question: Why do you think Roger could only utter ‘’thanks’’ man an before Mrs. Jones closed the door. They answered that, he said that because in certain way she taught him an important lesson, for this reason he was grateful for what she did for him. They also answered it is because she trusted in him, and maybe this was something that no one did for him. For this reason he could only say thanks to appreciate what she did for him. This was good because they use their critical capacity to interpret according to what they read and believe was correct answer. Another important factor of this short story is that, it was an open end that made students make a prediction of what might happen next. For example, I asked them the following question: ‘’Do you think that Roger will lead a ‘’straight life’’ in the future?’’ One student answered ‘’yes’’ because Mrs. Jones had changed is life positively and taught him what he did was wrong. Another student answered no because Roger was accustomed to steal, for this reason he will spend all the money that Mrs. Jones gave him and start to steal again. Another question that ‘’Do you think that Mrs. Jones successfully taught Roger that stealing is wrong’’? One student answered ‘’yes’’, because she talked about they personal life experience to teach him a lesson that stealing is wrong. This allowed me to have an open discussion with students. This was good for them because they had the chance to give many interpretations according to what they had read and according to their own judgment. As is advocated in literature circles, it creates an open environment where everybody gave their different opinion based on their own judgment.
4.6. Class 4

In this reading group discussion, the number of students was 6. I had already decided to work with them because they were the ones who came to all reading circles. The other students missed a lot to group reading discussion. The six students are those who showed more interest in the reading group discussion. They also showed a higher level of critical thinking. This group reading group discussion was very participative and I noticed that those students showed a higher level of interpreting and presenting their thoughts in a more organized way. The short story discussed was “The Gossip“ by Jake Allsop (see Appendix 10). After I had begun the reading group discussion I wrote on the board the title of short story entitled “For Sale Baby Shoes” by Ernest Hemingway. I did this to train and analyze the level of students with easy questions, but that required some level of critical thinking. This was good because students gave opinions according to their own point of view. They also presented excellent capacity of analysing and interpreting a question. For example, I asked them what they would think if they saw the following advertisement: “For Sale Baby Shoes”. They answered that maybe they had a baby, but it grew up and did not use them anymore. Another student said that, is because the baby died and they wanted to sell those shoes. This was good because this title required to them to make their own judgement because there are multiple possible answer. After that we began to analyze the short story “The Gossip”. I began as usually by asking easy questions to check students’ superficial understand of the short story. For example, Who is the main character? Then I asked them to give their own description of the main character using as support what they were reading about him. This was important because students found their own evidence from what they read instead of finding answer from the text. For example they read that the main charcter is somenone who cares a lot about other people. They could give a description of the main character as an adviser, friendly, confident and caring. The students also presented more supportive ideas to clarify in their answers. For example, I asked them to compare the characters in the short story in relation to some character of the short story. They could compare characters because they used as support what they had read and their own knowledge about the characters in the short story. They could compare and come up with their own evidence that he was a confident of those woman who help them anytime they need.

This showed development in analyzing text in literature circles. In literature circles students using their own ideas and opinion to support what they believe is true instead of finding the correct answer from the reading text. This was important because I could observe one of the principles supported in my literature review. According to Bernier (2008) when we teach students to solve problems, they will find their own evidence to support what they read, and consequently will learn to separate what they is believe is true and not true (np). I also notice that students have been
developing their critical thinking capacity of analyzing. For example, they easily identify the main conflict in the short story. By finding out the main conflict in the short story they began to discuss and give their own opinion about what was going on in the short story. They also presented a good sequence of analyzing the short story because they could make their own judgement about if some facts in the short story were true or false. For example, when I asked if the gossip is true or false, they answered that it was false. They used the sequence from what they have from the start to the middle of the text to answer this question. For example, they said that the main character was a friendly adviser, who always gave support to those women. For this reason he could be the kind of person that hung out with those women while their husbands were away.

This short story is about a rumour about the life of the main character. Students used all information from what they read about the main character to separate what is true and false. By doing this they could read beyond the simply interpretation of the text and found out their own answer. In this short story I decided to introduce something that is used in literature circles. I asked students to write a journal to tell what they feel after their read this short story. They could also tell if this short story means something to them or if they ever lived the same situation like the main character. They could also write anything they wanted, but should be relating to the short story that they have read. Then I explained to them that they should keep the journals and read them in the next group discussion.

4.7. Class 5

In this reading group discussion, the numbers of students was 6, and they were the students that I have already made part of my action research. The short story discussed was “An Incident in the Ghobashi Household” by Alifa Rifaat (see Appendix 11). Before we started the reading discussion, I asked them to read their journals. Their opinions in the journals were good, and most of them wrote good opinions. For example, student 19 compared what she read in the short story and with her life. She said that, what she read in the short story really is always happening with her because people most of the time do not care about their life, and only are always talking lies about people’s life. Another student said that what happened in the short story is the portrait of our society. According to this student in our society, people do not care to see things the way they really are, but the way they think they are. For this reason they say many things that are not true about people. This was good because students could relate what they read to their life and to what happens in our society, as well as discusses it in the classroom with their peers. This was more positive and interactive than last reading group discussion. In this reading group, I could see one of constrains of literature circles. Students did not read at home. For this reason I gave them time to
read in order to have some understanding of the short story. After they finished reading I asked them to analyze each paragraph, and then I checked their superficial understanding of the short story. For example, I asked questions such as: Who is the main character? Where does the story take place? They could answer easily these questions. After that I explained to the students some vocabulary that they did not know. They did not know some vocabulary because there was some vocabulary from Arabic culture. It was difficult and I had to research before the reading group discussion in order to understand the vocabulary. One important factor that I noticed is that, student 17 could identify that the short story is about the Muslim culture. This showed that she connected what they read with her knowledge about what they know about Muslim culture. I could observe one of the ideas supported in my literature review section, according to Judith Muskens (1983). “When reading short stories students take a voyage from literary text to their mind to find meanings for ideas leading to critical thinking” (as cited in Erkaya 2006, p.2). After they have finished one more paragraph, I asked them to explain the relationship between the two main characters. They could answer correctly about this answer and supported their answers using as support what they have read so far. For example, I answered this following question: they answered that they are mother and daughter, but it did not come clearly in the short story, but through the reading they could find the correct answer. Then I asked another question about the two main characters and another character. The question was ‘who is Ghobash?’ But they could not answer this question at first, taking in account that this character did only appear in the short story when the two main characters talked about him. But as long that, I asked them to analyze more closely the dialogue between the two main characters they could notice that by the way that they were talking about that they were parents (husband/father).

One of most the important aspects of the reading group discussion was when I asked the students to identify the main conflict of the short story. This was important because students relate all events they have read from the beginning of the short story, through the middle of short story. By doing this students could give me the correct answers. I kept on using this same strategy, making students finding out their own answers from what they have read. This was important because I could let students know that they are capable to find out their own answer about what they have read. I also wanted to let them know that they were capable of finding their own answer from what they read without seeing the answer in the text. I also wanted to test one of principles in my literature review section. According to Bernier (2008) literature circles explore students critical thinking and reading capacity instead of being dependent on the teacher to support their ideas (np). There was a question that required students some level of critical analyzing because they had to read all the sequence of the short story to answer this question, but they had some
difficulty to answer this question. For example, I asked this following question: What is Zeinat’s plan? They could answer this question because they could link previous events in the short story to what was happening. I asked them what the main character was trying to do. They could answer that she was pretending to be pregnant. By asking this question students could answer that she was pretending that the child that her daughter was carrying was not an legitimate grandson, but an legitimate son. Another important factor of this short story is that, students were interested. The reason for this is that it was a theme that really interested them. The theme was about pregnancy in the youth. For this reason it got their interest into this short story, it also held their interest because it is an issue that happen in our society.

After finished the reading group discussion, I asked students to write a journal at home about what they learnt or what is their feeling about this short story. I also said to them that we were going to discuss it in the next reading group discussion. This journals were not different from another journal, because they should write their feelings about this short story and relate it to our society.

4.8. Class 6

I began this reading group discussion asking students to read and discuss what they had written in their journals. In the journal most of them talked about their lives and what happened in society. They also showed good level of comparing and relating what they have read with their own lives. The student number 17 said that, this short story was an issue that happened in our society, but the difference is that, the culture in the short story, is harder on a girl who gets pregnant before marriage. Another student number 28 said that, this short story showed what the islamic culture is oppressive in relation to women. This student also said that, they were very traditional in relation to family.

In this group discussion the number of students were six. The short story discussed was “The Rewards of Living a Solitary Life” by May Sarton (see Appendix 12). Going through short story, I began this reading group discussion exploring the title of the short story “The Rewards of Living a Solitary Life”, students gave many different answers, but basically they gave good answers, taking in account that this was simple question. For example the student 17 said that, this meant that to live alone is not sad because we can have some benefits from it. Another student 21 said that living alone is good because you has more time from yourself and enjoy everything that life have to offer us. This was good because many students to work on their ideas and explored a question that required different analyzes.
Going through short story, it was a different short story there was one character that told the reader her story of her life condition. This was good because it gave me the chance to have a discussion in the next session. Then I asked students to explain the following sentence “Solitude is the Salt of Personhood”. One student answered that this meant that everybody has this solitude as part in his/her life, and everybody feels lonely sometimes. Another student said that loneliness is something that made part of our life condition and we can not run from it.

This was good because this sentence required to students a good level of critical analyze. But students could not always give good answers; I also had to help them to organize their ideas. What I did is explained some vocabulary. For example they did not understand the word personhood and solitude. By doing this they could get the correct answers. This short story was also good for the students because it allowed students to have their own opinion about what the character’s way of thinking and living. For example I asked this following question:” Why did the main character say that she felt solitary when she is surrounded by people?” One student answered that is because she thought that solitude is not a state of being, but a reward for her because she felt happy by living alone. Students could answer if they think if solitude is good or bad and explained from their own way of living and thinking why they think this way. For example one student said that, solitude is not good because everybody need other people to fulfill his/her life, and no one can live alone. Another student said solitude is bad because people who live alone can say that they are happy, but deep down they are sad because they do not have any body by their side to share their sadness and happiness. It was not only good because students could present could level of critical thinking, but also because they presented excellent level of comparing and relating and their own lives experiences. By doing this, I could observe one of concept advocated by the review section. Students found in the short story situation that they relate to their own life. According to Vandrick (1997) one benefits of use literature in classrooms is that through reading short stories, students can find situations that they can identify with their own life (as cite in Kreis 2006,p 5). Another important factor of the short story was that I asked students to describe the main character, using as support what they have read about her live, way of thinking and the description of her house. One student said that she is happy with her life and she did not think that solitude is something bad. Another student said that, instead solitude is defining as something not good, for the main character it is not bad because she felt happy when she was lonely because she has her job and pets that complete her.

Students were able to present their ideas using as support what they have read. They gave good answers presenting of critical analyzing. I chose one question that required higher level of critical thinking, taking in account that to answer this question students had to analyze this question.
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critically. I asked them to explain the following sentence said by the main character: ‘’Till death do us apart’’. I gave them a easy clue. I asked them when we say, till the death do us apart, they answered when we got marry, by did this the students could get the correct answer. The student number 19 gave me a close answer, he said that she marry to loneliness. But the student number 21 could give the correct answer. He said that she is marry with herself. This was important because I could notice that students were presenting more developed capacity of critical thinking and analyzing. As I did in the last reading group reading discussion, I asked students to write a journal and to bring it to the next group reading discussion. They should write anything that is related to the short story or anyithing they want, but it should be related to short story discused in the reading group discussion.

4.9. Class7

I began the reading group discussion with 6 students. The short story discussed was “The Divided House” by Alan Paton (see appendix 13). Before the reading group discussion, I asked the volunteers to read their journals. The student 17 stated her opinion about what she thought about the previous short story read in the group discussion. She said that, this short story is about a feeling that is common in all human beings, but the main character felt different than most people because she feels happy when she is alone. She also said that, she could not live as the main character because she is afraid of being alone. Another student 18 said that, this short story shows us that solitude is not a state of sadness because the main character lives alone but instead of being sad she is happy. She also stated that there are people who could not feel happy when they are with people. As the previous group discussion, students brought out many important issues related to what they had read. The idea of journal was really good idea because students sometimes did not express everything into the classroom, but at home they had more ideas and brought them into the next reading group. In this reading discussion I noticed students presented higher level critical thinking. The reason for this statement is that they had less difficulty in analyzing and interpreting the short story. They did not show as much difficulty in answering the questions. I am taking into account that this short story was very difficult to analyze. For this reason I choose it to evaluate their critical skills through a more difficult short story.

In this reading group discussion I gave students more opportunity to build their own questions from what they have read. I said to them that they were going to write just one question and I ask them to their peers. I did this to analyze if students were developing their critical capacity to develop coherent questions from reading text. They made cohesive and supportive questions showing strong relation to what they have read. Their questions are basically related to
what happens in our society and the issue in the short story. They also presented questions related to human nature. For example the student n 21 made the following question: Did they think that Jack really wanted to accomplish his dream and be a priest or did he just use it as pretext to cover his faultst. The student n 21 answered that: Jack really wanted to be a priest, but his problems with drugs did not let him achieve his goal. The student 17 asked the following question: Was at society fault for what happened with Jack? The student n 8 said that society had no fault for what Jack did. Jack was guilty for what happened to him. If he want to change he get to change first his behaviour. By did this I also had the oppurtunity to put into practice ideas discussed in the literature review section. Holden (2003) advocates to challenge students to think critically, first students should be alllowed to learn that in texts there are contradictions and they should ask questions about what they read instead trying to find out immediately the solution of what they have been reading (np). By giving opportunity to students to work on their own answers, I had the opportunity to analyze their critical thinking skills. From what I observed I can state that the students presented more constructive capacity of analyzing and retrieved critical answer from it. It also created an open environment in which all students felt confident to participate in the discussion process. For example all students participated in the group discussion and responded to most questions that I asked.

Going through the short story, I began to ask students to describe the main character based on what they had read so far. Students gave their description of the main character based on what they had read, showing good capacity of relating what they read to their own interpretation. For example student n 21 said based on what he read Jack is a confused and weak person because he can not fight for what he wants. Another students n 19 said that Jack was a good boy, but his bad side lead to e bad things. He also said that because Jack was always doing bad things, he had a bad image of himself.

The students easily identify the main conflict, but before identifying the main conflict of the short story, they made a connection with what they read from start and middle of the short story. For example, I asked them what is the main conflict, they answered that: the main character is a drug addict who wants to be a priest, but because of his drug addiction he can not achieve this goal. To did this they first used as support the negative background of the main character. Then they linked all this information to the moment that he started to tell lies and start to behave strangely. They could find the main conflict of the short story.

Now students could build good answer. As I said before this short story was not easy, but students answer correctly almost all questions, but they had some problems. As long as I helped them with some clues they could follow the logical sequence and easily get the correct
answer. For example I asked them ‘’Who is telling the story ? ‘’ At the first they could not ask to
this question, but I asked them to find in the short story who Jack used to share is feelings and
problems with . Then they could answer this question answering that the priest is who tells the
story because he knows everything that happens to the main character. Students were engaged
really engage in the process of reading discussion. For this reason they are curious while they are
reading and keep on read till the resolution of the short story.

Another important factor of the reading group discussion is the fact that, the short story has
an ending that makes the reader imagine what could happen next to the main character. For this
reason students gave different opinions about what they think based on what they know about the
main character. For example I asked them if they think that one day Jack will be priest. The student
n 17 answered that Jack will never be a priest because he is weak and he would not give up
smoking drugs . For this reason he will always pretend to be a priest, but he would not accomplish
this dream. Student n 26 answered that, Jack will be a priest because he really wanted to be a priest
and accomplish his biggest dream. The student n 19 student said that, as long he continued to
smoke drug, he will never be a priest.

This was good because I could notice something that is defended in the literature review.
Bernier (2008) stress that, literature circles explore and develop students critical thinking capacity
instead of being dependend on the teacher’s answer to support their ideas. They also will make
their own judgement of what they think is true instead of find support in what is believe as true
answer (np). Another important factor that I could notice is related to symbolic element in the short
story. I introduced to students the title of the text and asked them what it symbolize. I asked
them what the title, the divided house meant and I also said that he is related to the main character.
Using what they have read they could give good answers. And the student number 18 could
identify and related the title of the short story to main character’s nature and behaviour. He
answered that, the divided house symbolized Jack because is a divided person. There are two
parts of him; the good Jack who wants to be a priest and the bad Jack who smokes drugs and does
bad things. This was good because he showed good critical thinking capacity of analysing the
intrinsic meaning of the short story.
4.10. Post-Test/Conclusion of the Field Research.

The present conclusion in the result of the field research. After have finished my reading group discussion during two month and half, I administrated a test to the volunteers who participate in the group reading discussion. I only administrated the test to five volunteers. They are the number of volunteers, who finished the reading group discussion because I begun the reading discussion with 15 volunteers, but 10 gave up and only five continue in the reading group discussion. I administrated the same test that administrated before the reading group discussion (see Appendix 5 and 6).

I could notice huge different in those five volunteers not only in relation to those volunteers who gave up, but also in relation to their personal development. The five students presented more support and logical in their answer. In relation to the their grade they present improvement. In relation to the text A students had higher grade and every students had positive grade. In relation to test B every students had positive, and comparing to the post-test they present gradual self-improvement.

I found through action research that, students had huge problems in relation to the text that, require to them a critical capacity of analyzing, this affects not only in the capacity of think critically, but also in relation to the way that they, organize and present their thoughts in an organized structure. Those problems are: to see a question and figure out by themselves why it means, and after that using their critical skills to find their own answer. Another problem is to understand without find answer on the text, the meaning of what they are require to answer.

My main purpose for why administrated the text is to found out if students develop their critical thinking capacity after group reading discussion. I can state from my results that students gradually develop their critical capacity of interpreting text. My founding was not based only in the text that, I administrated after reading group discussion. But during the reading group discussion I could notice students to develop gradually into reading circles. I state this because they present gradual difference in post and after the test, I also did that because in the last reading groups, they could give me better and more constructive answers.

For this reason I can state that students progressively develop their critical thinking capacity. Students did not only present critical capacity of analyzing, but they demonstrated higher logical capacity in interpreting texts. In relation to the test that I gave after reading discussion to the five volunteers, I notice that the volunteers present more supportive and logical thoughts in relation the way that they analyzing, organizing and presenting their opinion in a structured way. I scored each text A in a scale 0 to 20 and for the text B a use the same criteria.. The result of their tests were presented in a chart (see Appendix 1).
V. Conclusion and Recommendations.

In the literature review section, I presented many different theories, which strongly advocated that literature circles help students to develop their critical thinking and reading skills. The action research that I did in Escola Secundaria Manuel Lopes, made me better understand how literature circles operate in students' development. Critical thinking and reading definitely should be developed in Cape Verdean students if teachers want to have students, who are not mere receivers with undeveloped skills but desire to build in them a critical conscious that allows them to read, interpret, evaluate and criticize author’s points of view. Teachers cannot demand students to read critically if they do not have all their critical skills mastered. The rational reason behind this is that, critical thinking and reading can be defined as distinct concepts. However, they can not be examined separately because to read critically students should have all their critical thinking developed. But if they do not have those skills mastered it will be impossible for teachers to ask them to have a critical capacity for analyzing texts. For this reason, it is very important that teachers and schools create an environment that allows students to have critical competencies that allow them to negotiate different perspectives of analyzing and evaluating through their own understating of what they have read. Literature of short stories is one vehicle that enables teachers to achieve this goal.

During my action research, from my experience as an intern at Secondary School Manuel Lopes. I observed that students had more facility to answer questions where they just have to locate the answer from the text, but when a teacher includes questions that require of them some level of critical thinking, they face many problems to answer those questions. It can cause teachers to assume that they do not have any critical abilities, but the problem is that, they do not know how to organize those skills and consequently to present constructed responses. Teachers should think about what is wrong and why students feel blocked when they have to deeply analyze and produce what they have analyzed. The problem is that, they are not exposed to critical texts, and when they are confronted with those kinds of reading materials they do not know how to read and come up with their own conclusions that support what they believe as true.

Schools, teachers and educational authorities should make huge endeavors to help students to become competent students who can easily integrate in higher systems of education, but to accomplish this goal they should have in mind that, students should be prepared to become competent citizens capable of solving problems, evaluating and defending their point of view, instead of accepting everything passively. Taking as support what I have said, I think that everybody involved in students education should build in students critical thought because they are
preparing them for academic careers, which critical thinking is a prerequisite to their success in higher education. Literature circles would be good for Cape Verdean high schools because they can work as complementing strategies to what students learn in the classroom and into reading circles. Students will gain not in terms of reading and thinking skills, but also in terms of speaking, writing and listening skills.

My thesis project does not have the purpose to say that schools, teachers and educational authorities are to blame, but my goal is to make them aware about this important issue that has been left out in Cape Verdean secondary schools. I hope that this project can contribute to help teachers, schools and everybody involved in school education, to improve their work in the Cape Verdean secondary school system.

2. Recommendations.

a) For teachers:
I am aware that Cape Verdean students are not accustomed to literary texts in the EFL classroom, which requires of them the capacity of analyzing. But I think that this factor will be an obstacle for teachers to organize successfully their own model of literature circles in the classroom. Because literature circles offer to teachers, a good opportunity to create their own model of literature circles according to students needs. Teachers can start to organize mini lessons of literature circles into the classroom, adapting some basic concepts of literature circles into the EFL classroom. For example teachers can select easier short stories or a reading comprehension text, and ask students to organize into groups, the purpose is to make them by themselves begin analyzing and making their own questions from what they have read. Then teachers can ask them to make those questions to the other group members. After that they will discuss those questions in the classroom, teachers can ask students to write a journal about what they have read. This will be very important because students will have previous knowledge of what literature circles are, and when they come into literature circles their adaptation to literature circles will be easier.

As mentioned before this is a new approach, for this reason teachers can face some problems to manage or organize literature circles of short stories. For this reason I suggest that it is important for the teacher to have training in which they will learn what literature circles are and what the main principles of literature circles are. Schools can do this organizing training or workshop for teachers. But I think it will be not be difficult for teachers to adapt literature circles into EFL classrooms. What teachers should have in their mind is that if they want to implement literature circles into their classroom, they should trust that their students are capable learners who create their own learning
environment where they produce and share different perspectives of analyzing, interpreting and producing positive feedback to their teachers.

b). For School:

School has a responsibility to prepare students, not only to face the classroom environment, but also to prepare them for a higher level of their academic careers. But how can schools ask students to present critical thinking skills, if those skills were not developed while they were at secondary school. I do not blame schools or say that schools have been failing in this purpose. What I am stating is that, critical thinking skills have been neglected by our schools. The consequence of this factor is that, students come to university with a lower lever of critical thinking. This reflects deeply not only in their way of thinking, but also when they are required to write an academic paper. Throughout my experience as a secondary school student and a university student, I have noticed that when students come to university they come unprepared in terms of critical thinking skills. The negative consequence of this is that, they will find a huge difficultly to adapt to the university system of education because they do not have all of the fundamental skills required for university. For this reason students have lower self-confidence that hinders them from producing critical ideas and opinions. School should help students to develop their critical skills capacity and allow them to become critical readers who feel strongly confident to enter into a demanding environment where teachers do not give them total support, but let them know that they are capable to work by themselves learning by doing. By doing this, schools will facilitate the integration of students into university.
Bibliography


Appendix 1

Assunto: Pedido de sala de aula.

No âmbito de poder realizar o seu trabalho de fim de curso, Gil Barbosa Moreira, estudante dos Estudos Ingleses na Universidade de Cabo Verde, vem por este meio pedir a vossa autorização para utilizar a sala de aula (sala de opção) para realizar um circulo de leitura de contos num período máximo de 3 meses, o objectivo deste circulo de contos de leitura é comprovar na pratica que circulo de leitura de contos é um método efectivo para ser implementado nas salas de aula de inglês.

Ciente da vossa atenção pede deferimento.

Praia, 28 de Janeiro 2009

Pede deferimento
Ao Encarregado de Educação.

Assunto: Autorização dos encarregados de Educação.

No âmbito de poder realizar o seu trabalho de fim de curso, o estudante Gil Barbosa Moreira, aluno dos Estudos Ingleses na Universidade de Cabo Verde, e professor estagiário na escola Secundaria Manuel Lopes vem por este meio pedir ao encarregado de educação a vossa autorização para que o aluno(a) possa participar num círculo de leitura de contos num período máximo de 3 meses, o objectivo deste círculo de leitura de contos é comprovar na prática que o círculo de leitura de contos é um método efectivo para ser implementado nas Escolas Secundarias de Cabo Verde.

Ciente da vossa atenção agradece.

Encarregado de Educação

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Aluno(a)

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Praia, 6 de Março 2009

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Appendix 3

Questionário para alunos

1. Nome: ________________________________

2. Idade: ______

3. Sexo: □ M □ F

4. Nível de Inglês: □ 1 □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □ 5 □ 6 □

5. Morada: ________________

6. Como começou a aprender Inglês? ____________________________________________

7. Já estudou contos de Inglês: Sim □ Não □

8. O que pensa fazer depois de terminar o ensino secundário
   __________________________________________________________________________

9. Pensa usar Inglês na sua futura profissão: □ Sim □ Não

10. Vais continuar a estudar Inglês depois de terminar o Ensino Secundário: Sim □ Não
Appendix 4

Assessment Form for Literature Circles

Date: ________________________________

Check appropriate box. Provide evidence where possible

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<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<th>Evidences</th>
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<tr>
<td>Everyone participates and shares ideas and opinion in discussion</td>
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<td>process. Communication is interactive</td>
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<td>Group members often ask questions for clarification or elaboration</td>
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<td>The group discussion stays on the topic, or on directly related</td>
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<td>issues</td>
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<td>The group discussion analyzes and responds critically to questions</td>
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<td>from the short story</td>
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<tr>
<td>The group members present clarification in their answers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Every group participates in the process of discussion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Every Group shares ideas and offers suggestions</td>
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I Will Fight
No More Forever
Chief Joseph

Tell General Howard I know His heart. What he told me before, I have in my heart. I am tired of fighting. Our chiefs are killed. Looking glass. Toooolhoolhoolzote is dead. The old men are all dead. It is the young men who says yes and no. He who led on the young men is dead. It is cold and we have no blankets. The little children are freezing to death. My people some of them, have run away to the hills and have no blankets, no food; no one knows where they are—perhaps freezing to death. I want to have time to look for my children and see how many I can find. Maybe I shall find them among the dead. Hear me, my chief. I am tired: my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever.

After reading the text answer the following question:
1. In “I Will Fight No More Forever,” “what has happened to the leaders among Chief Joseph’s people?
2. What are the major reasons that Chief Joseph gives for his surrender to U.S forces?
3. Judging by his speech, how would you describe Chief Joseph’s relationship to his people?
4. What phrases or sentences support your interpretation?
Appendix 6

“I Have a Dream”
Martin Luther King

... I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal.”

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a desert state sweltering with the heat of injustice and oppression, will be transformed into oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day the state of Alabama, whose governor’s lips are presently dripping with the words of interpositions and nullification, will be transformed into a situation where little black boys and lack girls will be able to join hands with little white girls and walk together as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plains, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith with which I return to the south. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that will be free one day.

This will be the day when all of God’s children will be able to sing with new meaning “My country ‘tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim’s pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring."

And if America is to be a great nation this must become true. So let freedom ring this must become true. So let the freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the Heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania.

Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado!
Let freedom ring from the curvaceous peaks of California.
But not only that; let freedom ring from mountain of Georgia!
Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God’s children, black men and white men. Jews and Gentiles. Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of that old Negro spiritual, “Free at Last! Free at last! Thank God almighty, we are free at last.”
Appendix 6 (continue).

After reading the text answer the following question:
1. In your own words, briefly state King’s dream.
2. Why does King mention the names of so many states in his speech?
3. Martin Luther King Jr describes his dream using words from the Bible. For example: “every valley shall be exalted”, he wants the audience to transfer to his cause their positive feelings about the Bible.
   3a. Identify two other examples where King quotes from honored and familiar sources.
   3b. In each case explain whether King has chosen inspiring words to identify with his cause.
Literature Circles

Appendix 7

Literature Circles of Short Story
2008-2009

Date:

Time Required
90 Minutes


Learning outcomes: Group members will:

Demonstrate their critical and reading skills of analyzing and interpreting the short story.

Group members will demonstrate different point of view of analyzing and interpreting short story.

Stage 1: Warn up Group members: Instructor begins the reading discussion asking the group members to explain the title of the short story.

What is justice?

Have you ever been treated unjustly?

Stage 2 – Instructor introduce questions to explore superficial understand of the short story.

Who is the main character of the short story?

Where the short story does takes place?

Stage 3- Instructor introduces to students sentence that require group members different point de view of analyzing and interpreting

Do you agree with the way the King Salomon acted? Explain why.

Do you agree the way the real mother acted? Explain why.

Stage 4 – Students will construct critical response by answering questions that require to them to make their own judgement of what they have read.

Do you agree with the resolution of the short story?

What would happened if King Salomon had not heard the real mother of the baby and cut the baby in half, giving half to the real mother and half to the other woman who claimed to be the real mother?

Assessment: Instructor will evaluate the individual and whole development of the group members during the reading discussion.
Appendix 8

Literature Circles of Short Story

2008-2009

Date:
Time required
90 Minutes

Materials/Resources: The short story entitled ´The Gentleman of the Jungle´ by Jomo Kenyatta

Learning outcomes: Group members will:

Demonstrate their critical and reading skill of analyzing and interpreting short story.
Group members will demonstrate different point of view of analysing and interpreting short story.

Stage 1- Warn up Group members: Instructor begins asking the following questions

What would you do if someone came into our house and refuse to leave.
Have ever this situation happened to you

Stage 2- Instructor asks group members easy questions to explore the superficial understand of the short story

Who is the main character of the short story?
Where/when, does the short story take place?
How you describe the man and the elephant’s relationship

Stage 3- Instructor Introduces a questions that require higher level of critical thinking

What is the meaning of what man said: you can fool people for a time, but not for ever.

Stage -4 Students will construct critical response by answering questions that require thinking response

Instructor will introduces some literary elements such: Symbolism
What the man and animals symbolize in the society?

Stage 5- Instructor will develop in students an awareness of problems/concerned facing our society

What is the role of government in our society?
How the government treats people in our society?
What the government supposed to provide its people?

Assessment: Instructor will evaluate the individual and whole development of group members during reading discussion.
Appendix 9

Literature Circles of Short Story

2008-2009

Date:

Time Required

90 Minutes


Learning outcomes: Group members will:
Demonstrate their critical and reading skills of analyzing and interpreting the short story relate the problem of the main character to problem faced by some people of our society: E.g. Crime, poverty.

Information/Procedures

Stage 1: Warn up group members:
Instructor begins the reading discussion asking the following questions:
Have you ever wanted things that you couldn’t t have

Stage 2- Instructor introduces some literary elements which will reinforce students’ reading comprehension of the short story.
What is the main theme –conflict- of the short story?

Stage 3- Instructor introduces to students questions which will they will demonstrate different point of view.
What is going on in Mrs Jones’ mind when she gave Roger money?

Stage 4- Students will construct critical response by answering questions that require to them to make their own judgement of what they have read.
Why do you think Roger need money?

Stage 5- Students will construct critical response by answering questions tat require to them to make their own judgment of what they have read.
Why do you think Roger could only utter `´utter thank `´ ma an before Mrs Jones closed the door.

Stage 6– Instructor will asks questions which group members will relate the issue in the short story to the problems faced in our society.
Do we have this problem in Capeverdean Society?
Assessment: Instructor will evaluate the individual and whole development of group members during the reading discussion.
Appendix 10

Literature Circles of Short Story

2008-2009

Date:

Time Required

90 Minutes

Materials/ Resource: The Short Story entitled “Gossip”.

Student’s outcomes: Students will demonstrate their critical thinking capacity by analyzing and interpreting the short story.

Students will relate the problem faced by the main character in the short story with what in our society.

Stage 1: Warn up: Have you ever been victim of gossip?

What do you react when people gossip about you?

Instructor writes on the board the title of the short story: Baby shoes for sale by Hemingway, the purpose of it is to check how develop their critical answer by explain the title of the short story

Stage 2: Instructor asks question to checks superficial understanding of the short story

Who is the main Character of the short story?

Stage 3: Instructor makes questions that require students to make their own judgement about what they have read.

Do you think that the rumour about the main character is true? Justify your answer.

Stage 4: Instructor makes students questions that require to student some level of critical thinking.

Describe the main character using as support what you have read about the main character.

Stage 5: Instructor will develop in students an awareness of problems/concerned facing our society?

Does what happens in the short story happen in our society?

Assessment: Instructor will evaluate the individual and whole development of group members during reading discussion.
Appendix 11

Literature Circles of Short Story

2008-2009

Date:

Time Required

90 Minutes

Materials/ Resource: The Short Story entitled “An Incident in the Ghobashi household”.

Learning outcomes: Group members will:

Demonstrate their critical and reading skills of analyzing and interpreting the short story.

Relate the problem of the main character to the problem in our society.

Information/ Procedures

Stage 1: Warn up group members:

Instructor begins the reading discussion asking the following questions:

Have you ever have in a situation that you have to lie to hide a mistake.

Have you ever had a secret that you couldn’t tell anyone?

Stage 2- Instructor asks easy questions to check out students superficial understands from the short story.

Who is the main character of the short story?

What is the relationship between Zeinat and Nima?

Stage 3- Students will construct critical response by answering questions that require to them to make their own judgement of what they have read.

What is going on Nima` s mind

Stage 4- Instructor will ask question that require to students to make their own judgement.

Why do you think that Nima` s mother has to lie

Do you think that what she did is right Why/why not?

Stage 5-Instructor will asks questions which students will relate the problems in the short story to what happen in our society.

Do we have this problem in our society?

How does the community see this issue?

Stage 6-Instructor asks question that require students a higher level of critical thinking.

Assessment: Instructor will evaluate the individual and whole development of group members during reading discussion.
Appendix 12

Literature Circles of Short Story
2008-2009

Date:
Time Required
90 Minutes


Learning outcomes: Group members will:
Demonstrate their critical and reading skills of analyzing and interpreting the short story.
Group members will demonstrate different point of view of analyzing and interpreting short story.

Stage 1: Warn up Group members: Instructor begins the reading discussion asking the group members to explain the title of the short story.

Stage 2 – Instructor introduce questions to explore superficial understand of the short story.
Why is the most interesting thing about being solitary according to author?
When the main character feels lonely?

Stage 3- Instructor introduces to students sentence that require group members different point de view of analyzing and interpreting
Explain why the main character considers ‘’ Solitude the Salt of Personhood’’.

Stage 4 – Students will construct critical response by answering questions that require to them to make their own judgement of what they have read.

Explain the mean of the following sentence: ‘’Till the death fall us Apart’’
According to main character why solitude is a rewarding.
Do you agree with the way that the main character think? Explain why.

Assessment: Instructor will evaluate the individual and whole development of the group members during the reading discussion.
Appendix 13

Literature Circles of Short Story
2008-2009

Date:
Time Required
90 Minutes

Materials/Resource: The short story entitled ‘‘The Divided House ‘’. 

Student’s outcomes: Students will demonstrate their critical thinking capacity by analyzing and interpreting the short story. 

Students will relate the problem faced by the main character in the short story with what in our society. 

Relate the problem of the main character to the problem in our society.

Stage 1: Warn up students: Instructor begins the reading discussion asking the following questions.

Have you ever wanted to achieve a goal but there was something that did not allow you to achieve this goal?

Stage 2: Instructor asks students questions to check students superficial understanding of short story.

Who is Jack?
Where is Jack?

Stage 4: Instructor make questions that requires to students own judgment about the short story.

What is ‘‘Divided House’’?
Who lives there?
Who in this short story thinks Jacky will be a priest? Why?

Stage 5: Instructor makes questions that require to students a critical capacity of analyzing short story.

Who is the boy who wrote the letter?
What means the ‘‘Divided House’’?

Assessment: Instructor will evaluate the individual and whole development of group members during reading discussion.
### Appendix 14

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