How - To Teach Literature Circles for

_Rain Reign_ by Ann M. Martin
(Grades 4-6)

Curriculum Designed By:
Amy Toll
Ashley Mancuso
2015
Summary of *Rain Reign*:

Rose Howard has Asperger’s syndrome, and an obsession with homonyms (even her name is a homonym). She gave her dog Rain a name with two homonyms (reign, rein), which, according to Rose’s rules of homonyms, is very special. Rain was a lost dog Rose’s father brought home. Rose and Rain are practically inseparable. And they are often home alone, as Rose’s father spends most evenings at a bar, and doesn’t have much patience for his special-needs daughter.

Just as a storm hits town, Rain goes missing. Rose’s father shouldn’t have let Rain out. Now Rose has to find her dog, even if it means leaving her routines and safe places to search. Rose will find Rain, but so will Rain’s original owners. (Taken from [http://www.goodreads.com](http://www.goodreads.com))

How to Use This Guide:*

This guide was created to be used for a literature circle with students that have experience working with literature circles. The guiding theme of this resource is character traits. *Rain Reign* was divided into seven sections of reading that will be discussed over three weeks in nine sessions. Each week, students should meet Monday, Wednesday, and Friday with their groups. Prior to the groups meeting, the students should have completed the reading and assignment from the previous session. The pages in the book will be broken up as follows:

**Pages:** 1-27 (read for S2), 28-63 (read for S3), 67-104 (read for S4), 107-133 (read for S5), 134-160 (read for S6), 163-203 (read for S7), 207-223 (read for S8)

Each of the nine sessions should be approximately 40 minutes long. Students will typically spend 25 minutes working together as a group to complete the activity for that day. The remainder of the time will be spent reading independently and working on any additional assignments. Changes to this schedule can be made to fit your class needs, but students should receive class time to complete tasks. Directions for each session should be given to students or posted so that they can see. This guide can be adapted based on a classroom’s individual needs.

**Literature Circle Roles:** Students should be in groups of approximately 4-5 students. There will be two roles during each session, the facilitator and the recorder. The facilitator is responsible for keeping the group on task and focused. The recorder will be responsible for taking notes during the group meeting and completing the discussion sheet with key points from their discussion. Students will rotate roles each session and all student will complete each of the roles 1-2 times during the three week period.

**Student Assessment:** Students will individually assess the group with the attached rubric at the very end of each session.


*This guide was designed for use with students that have previous experience with literature circles.*
On-going Projects:

- **Character Map**: Beginning in Session 2, students will create a character map about Rose. This will be worked on as a group and individually. Students will record characteristics of Rose that they witness throughout the text. This should be added to periodically while reading. As a final assessment, students will individually create a character portrait of Rose.

- **Homonym Journal**: Beginning in Session 3, students will individually identify homonym sets from the reading. For each section of reading, students will select at least two homonym sets, record them in their journals and explain the significance of the set. At the end of the text, students should have 10 homonym sets/pairs in their journal. When meeting with their groups, students should be encouraged to share interesting homonym sets that they recorded.

**Session 1**

**Objective** - Students will be able to identify characteristics of the main character and plot of the book.

**Beginning**: As a whole group, introduce the book. Discuss characters and setting. Explain to students that Rose has autism and she is different from her classmates. Provide some information on what autism is.

**Middle**: Have students break into their small literature circle groups (groupings should be heterogenous but are at the teacher’s discretion). In groups, students will begin reading pages 1-27.

**End**: After working together for 25 minutes, the students will complete the reading individually. Students will independently write about their first impressions of Rose and her actions.

**For Next Session**: Students should have read pages 1-27 and written a description of their first impressions of Rose.

**Session 2**

**Objective** - Students will be able to discuss characteristics of a character.

**Guiding Question**: What characteristics have you observed in Rose so far?

**Beginning**: Discuss pages 1-27 as a group, paying particular attention to Rose’s character and what is already known about her. Students will share what they wrote about Rose and their first impressions.

**Middle**: Students will create a character map, listing characteristics of Rose’s that they have witnessed so far. They will complete the map as a group the first time but also each have a copy to add to individually. This will be added to throughout their reading of the book.

**End**: With the remaining 20 minutes, they will begin reading pages 28-63 independently. Students will journal about 3-5 of Rose’s actions that are not “typical” behaviors and discuss how they would respond if they observed it.

**For Next Session**: Students should have read up to page 63. They should each have a journal entry about Rose’s behavior and how they may respond.
Session 3
Homonyms, Discuss pages 28-63

Objective - Students will be able to identify sets of homonyms from the text.

Guiding Question: What role do homonyms play in the telling of this story?

Beginning: Students will share and discuss their journal entries about Rose’s behavior from the previous session. Students will add any new characteristics/behaviors to their character map about Rose.

Middle: Discuss pages 28-63 as a group. Students will be introduced to homonyms. As a group, they will read and discuss the supplemental reading on homonyms (http://www.enchantedlearning.com/english/homonyms/). Students will begin to identify homonym sets from the text and discuss them as a group.

End: After the 25 minute discussion period has ended, students will individually make predictions about what may happen during the hurricane and then they will begin reading pages 67-104. In their journal, they will write 2 homonym sets and explain their significance to Rose.

For Next Session: Students will have read pages 67-104. They will add 2 homonyms to their journals and discuss their significance (this will be completed as an assignment for each session). Before reading, students will write a prediction about what happens during the hurricane in their journals. Students will continue to add to their character map.

Session 4:
Predicting, Discuss pages 67-104

Objective: Students will be able to determine if they made accurate predictions. Students will be able to create a plan on how to find Rain.

Guiding Questions: Was your prediction accurate? Did you find anything surprising?

Beginning: Students will discuss the homonym sets that they selected and their significance to Rose (Ex. Rain, Reign, Rein is important because that is the homonym she named her dog after).

Middle: Students will discuss pages 67-104. Students will share the predictions that they made prior to reading pages 67-104 and determine if they were correct or incorrect. As a group, students will discuss and come up with a strategy for how to find Rain.

End: After 25 minutes, students should independently begin reading the next session and working on their task. This includes reading pages 107-133, recording 2 homonyms in their journals and predicting how Rose will get Rain back.

For Next Session: Students will read pages 107-133. They will add 2 more homonyms to their journal and discuss the significance. Students will also write a prediction in their journal about how Rose will find Rain. Students will continue to add to their character map.

Session 5:
**Objective:** Students will be able to create a 5 step plan on how to search for a missing pet, using transition words in their writing.

**Guiding Question:** What steps would you take to find a missing pet?

**Beginning:** Students will review their work from the previous session and determine if their predictions from the previous session were accurate.

**Middle:** As a group, students will discuss if they have or had a pet that went missing and what they would do if they were in Rose’s situation. Student will come up with 5 steps that they would follow to locate their missing pet. Review transition words as a group. Students will be provided with a list of possible transition words and would be expected to use 3 of them in their writing. Students will review their plan for how they would find Rain and modify it if necessary.

**End:** Students will begin their independent work. This includes reading pages 134-160 in the text and recording 2 homonyms in their journals. Students will add to their character maps if possible. Students can also continue to work on their 5-step plan if it is incomplete.

**For Next Session:** Students will read pages 134-160 for next session and make one connection to the text. They will add 2 more homonyms to their journal and discuss the significance of the homonyms. Students will continue to add to their character map.

---

**Session 6:**

**Objective:** Students will be able to make text-to-text or text-to-self connections.

**Guiding Question:** What connections did you observe between *Rain Reign* and yourself or another text?

**Beginning:** The group will check in with the character maps and homonym journals. Students are encouraged to share interesting characteristics of Rose that they recorded or important homonyms that they found.

**Middle:** Students will share and discuss their connections with the text. The recorder will write down key points on the group’s discussion sheet. As a group, they will create a “connection puzzle” where each student writes inside of a puzzle piece to describe their connection to the text.

**End:** Students will complete their individual puzzle pieces and connect them together to show how they each connected to the story. Students will begin their individual work for the next session including reading pages 163-203, recording 2 homonyms in their journals, and updating their character maps.

**For Next Session:** Students will read pages 163-203. They will add 2 more homonyms to their journal and discuss the significance of those sets. Students will add to their character map if they determine anymore character traits/characteristics of Rose.
Session 7  
Character Development, Discussion pages 163 to 203

**Objectives:** (1) Students will be able to describe how Rose has changed since she first got Rain until she gave Rain back to the family that lost her. (2) Students will be able to use information from Ms. Perlman interview of Rose and their own knowledge of Rose’s search for Rain’s owners to create the newspaper article discussed in the book.

**Guiding Questions:** How has Rose changed since she was first given Rain until she gave Rain back to the family that lost her? Why has she changed? Is the change for the better? Why?

**Beginning:** Students will discuss pages 163-203. Discussion will focus on the guiding question.

**Middle:** Students will then collectively create the newspaper article that was written about Rose’s quest to find Rain’s owners. Student should look over Chapter 39 to review what Ms. Perlman asked Rose. Students will be given a template that they can use or they can create their own newspaper design for the article.

*Because of the added group activity for this session, students will spend more time working in their group and less reading independently this session.

**End:** Student will write in their journals a prediction for how they think the book will end prior to reading the final pages. They will begin reading pages 207-223 if time allows.

**For Next Session:** Students will read pages 207-223. They will add 2 more homonyms to their journal and explain the significance these homonyms have to the reading they did. Students will write their reaction to the end of the book and explain if their prediction was right or if they were surprised by the ending. Students will continue to add to their character map.

Session 8  
Character Relationships & Connections, Discussion pages 207 to 223

**Objective:** Students will evaluate the characters’ actions and their impact and on others in the story.

**Guiding Questions:** How could Rose’s father’s decision to leave Rose with her Uncle Weldon affect her? How could Rose’s father’s decision affect Uncle Weldon? Was this the right decision to make?

**Beginning:** Students will share their reactions to the end of the book. They will discuss if they were surprised by the ending and if they liked the ending or if they did not like the ending.

**Middle:** Students will discuss pages 207-223. Discussion will focus on how Rose and Uncle Weldon could be affect by Rose’s fathers decision and whether it was the right decision to make.

**End:** Students will each take out their character maps and add to it as needed. As a group students will share some of the things they have recorded.
Session 9:
Final Activity: Character Portrait

Objective: Students will be able to write a character portrait of Rose using their character maps.

Writing Prompt: Write a character portrait of Rose, using information from the text.

Using their character maps and details from the text, students will individually write a character portrait of Rose. Students should write 2-3 paragraphs and include information about who Rose is, how she is unique, what she does throughout the text that tells us about her. Students should also include their impressions of Rose. Once they have completed their writing, students will create an illustration of what they visualize when they think of Rose.

* This guide and its contents can be adapted based on the needs of your classroom and students. It is meant to be a starting point when using this book.
## Group Discussion Sheet

Session: ________
Facilitator: ________________________
Recorder: _________________________

(Insert Guiding Question)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Points from Discussion:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interesting Information From The Section (optional):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Name: ____________________  Session: ___________

Complete the rubric based on how your group worked during the specific session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>1 point</th>
<th>2 points</th>
<th>3 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Few students are participating and contributing to the group discussion.</td>
<td>Some people are participating and contributing to the discussion.</td>
<td>Everyone is actively participating and contributing to the discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness</td>
<td>Few students prepared for discussions and follow up work.</td>
<td>Some people prepared for discussion and follow up work.</td>
<td>Everyone is prepared for discussions and follow up work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Few students are listening to their groupmates and taking turns speaking.</td>
<td>Some students are listening and taking turns sharing ideas.</td>
<td>All students are respecting their groupmates by listening and taking turns speaking.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What did your group do well?
Transition Words

Transition words are used in writing in order or to connect ideas and create flow in writing. Different transition word do different jobs. These words can show similarities, differences, cause and effect, and order/sequence. For this assignment you will be using transition words that help create order in your writing. This is a list of transitional words that can be used for this assignment below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First</th>
<th>Next</th>
<th>Then</th>
<th>After</th>
<th>Later</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Once</td>
<td>Finally</td>
<td>Eventually</td>
<td>Last</td>
<td>Now</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instructions for Finding a Missing Pet

Directions: As a group write five steps that a person could follow in order to find a lost dog. You should write in complete sentences and include three transitional words for the table above. Remember, you should use these words at the start of your sentences. Look back to pages 119-120 to see how Rose’s list include these words in writing her instructions.

1. ___________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________

2. ___________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________

3. ___________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________

4. ___________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________

5. ___________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________
Session 6: Puzzle Pieces

Directions: Individually, students will write their connection to the text on the puzzle piece provided. After each student has completed a piece, they will be joined together as a visual representation the group’s connection to Rose.