

**EFFECTS OF LITERATURE CIRCLES AND SCAFFOLDING  
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES ON SENIOR SECONDARY  
SCHOOL STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT AND ATTITUDE TO  
PROSE LITERATURE IN ENGLISH**

**BY**

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**A THESIS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION,  
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE  
DEGREE OF**

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**OF THE**

**UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN**

**MAY, 2012.**

## ABSTRACT

Literature indicates that students' poor command of English language, unwillingness to engage in reading tasks and lack of engagement with recommended texts cause poor performance. Previous studies have been carried out on the use of basic literature circles, literature circles with roles and scaffolding strategies to enhance students' reading and writing achievement. However, the use of these strategies in studies conducted in Nigeria especially in the area of prose literature in English is not common. This study therefore investigated effects of these student-centred and socio-cultural strategies on senior secondary school students' achievement and attitude to prose literature in English. It also determined moderating effects of verbal ability and gender on the dependent measures.

The study adopted the pretest-posttest, control group quasi-experimental design using a 4x3x2 factorial matrix. Three hundred and eighteen Senior Secondary II students in intact classes from eight senior secondary schools purposively selected from four local government areas of Ogun State were randomly assigned to treatment (basic literature circles, literature circles with roles and scaffolding) and control groups. Three response research instruments: Verbal Ability ( $r = 0.82$ ), Prose Literature in English Attitude Questionnaire ( $r = 0.77$ ), Achievement Test in Prose Literature ( $r = 0.88$ ) and four stimulus instruments: Basic Literature Circles Instructional Guide, Literature Circles with roles instructional Guide, Scaffolding Instructional Guide and Conventional Method Instructional Guide were used for data collection. Seven hypotheses were tested in the study at  $P < 0.05$  level of significance. Data collected were analysed using Analysis of Covariance and Multiple Classification Analysis was used to examine the magnitude of the differences among the various groups while scheffe post-hoc was used for pair-wise comparison to explain the significant main effects observed.

There was a significant main effect of treatment on students' achievement scores in prose literature ( $F_{(3,293)} = 36.11$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ). The students exposed to Scaffolding had the highest mean achievement score ( $\bar{x} = 16.84$ ) followed by Basic Literature Circles ( $\bar{x} = 16.30$ ) then Literature Circles with Roles ( $\bar{x} = 15.25$ ) and the Conventional Method ( $\bar{x} = 9.93$ ) in that order. However, treatment had no significant main effect on students'

attitude to Prose Literature in English ( $F_{(3,293)} = 33.74$ ;  $P > 05$ ). In addition, verbal ability and gender had no significant effect on students' achievement and attitude to prose literature in English. There were also no significant interaction effect of treatment and verbal ability; treatment and gender on students' achievement and attitude to the subject. In the same vein, there was no significant three way interaction effect of treatment, verbal ability and gender on students' achievement and attitude to prose literature in English.

Student-centred and socio-cultural strategies (literature circles and scaffolding strategies) enhanced students' active engagement with texts and were more effective in promoting students' achievement in prose literature in English. It is, therefore, recommended that teachers of literature especially prose should be encouraged to use these strategies in their lessons.

**Key Words:** Basic Literature Circles, Literature Circles with Roles, Scaffolding, Achievement and Attitude

**Word count:** 470

## **DEDICATION**

The thesis is dedicated to the evergreen memory of my beloved father, **Chief Jerome Okafor Ifedigbo**, who died on 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2005; and to the memory of all students who died in the struggle to obtain their PhD from the University of Ibadan. May their gentle souls rest in perfect peace. Amen.

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# CERTIFICATION

I certify that this thesis was written by  
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My eternal gratitude goes to the Almighty God who spared my life and made it possible for me to complete this thesis.

I have no words with which to appreciate my supervisor, Dr. F.O. Ezeokoli, for his steadfastness throughout the duration of this study. His diligence, meticulous supervision and fatherly advice were pivotal to the success of this study.

I appreciate Dr. B.O. Ogunleye for helping me through the process of analysis as well as Dr. J.O. Ajiboye, their honesty, diligence and constructive criticism helped me to put things into perspective. I cannot forget Dr. B.O. Lawal for his concern, encouragement and moral support.

I also appreciate the support of Prof. C.O.O. Kolawole. His insightful suggestions contributed to the success of this work. My profound gratitude also goes to Dr. A.A Adeyinka, Dr. D.O Fakeye for their contribution to the success of this work. I also express my appreciation to Prof. F.A. Adesoji, the head of department of Teacher Education and to all lecturers in the department for their contributions to the success of this work.

I express my profound appreciation to Dr. Oha, my internal external, for taking time to painstakingly go through this work and add his insight on the subject of literature circles. My gratitude goes to Dr. Adams Onuka of the Institute of Education. His suggestions, encouragement and moral support helped me to keep going.

My greatest support came from the source of my strength and happiness---my family. My husband's support, kindness, patience and understanding was more than I ever could have imagined. My sister, Chinwe proved to be more than a sister. She was always there to take the pressure off me. Words cannot quantify the role she played in my life. Without her, the pressure would probably have killed me. Her support and counsel kept me sane on the craziest of days, and there were many crazy days! My four wonderful children: Chi-chi, Obim, Ify and Ije gave me the reason to keep on working in order to be the perfect role model and a super mom. My siblings, especially Nnamdi and Obianuju, contributed in no small measure to what I am today. You both will always have a special place in my heart. And my mother, Elutum, God will keep you for me. To my in-law, Elo, your contribution to the success of this work cannot be quantified. Thank you.

I will not forget my wonderful friends -those who know the meaning of friendship: Dr. Chi-Chi Maduabuchi, Dr. MSC, Dr. B.S. Ige, Dr. Y.A.A Jimoh, Dr. Chris Ojukwu, Bar. And Mrs.Pat Iwu, Mr. & Mrs. Calistus and Modupe Ajala, Mrs. Alaba Olawale, Mrs. M.D. Esene, and Mrs. Ngozi Edobor. Thank you. I also wish to express my gratitude to those who made school run an easy task for me: Mrs. J. Ezike, Mrs. Neche and the Ighekpes.

This journey would not be complete without those whose prayers sustained me throughout the constant travels to Ibadan. My very special thanks go to my spiritual Fathers and friends: Very Rev. Fr. Yemi Akinlotan, thank you for the love you have for my family and for those very useful books on literature circles and scaffolding; Rv. Fr. Peter Nanga, Rev. Fr. Mike Adenigba and Rev. Fr. Stephen Ibitokun.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Language is an important means of communication and cultural transmission. The potentials of language are utilized in discourse by humans to satisfy their quest for expression, understanding and control of the world. Language is first and foremost oral and secondarily, written. As a vehicle for communicating thoughts, feelings, ideas, knowledge, information and imaginative products of the writer, language becomes a potent tool in the hands of the literary artist who is endowed with the noble responsibility for transmitting the cultural experiences of his/her people through generations. Therefore literature is communicated through language making language and literature two sides of the same coin. However, literature is a more elevated form of language used in a more special and beautiful manner to express views, feelings, ideas, beliefs and emotions (Lawal, 2000). Based on the above, literature may be described as an imaginative creation of human experience, expressed orally or in writing. Reeves (2004) asserts that literature launches readers into a voyage of discovery, exploring ways of seeing and being as well as clarifying their own worlds.

Literature is the window through which readers see the world; their knowledge of that world provides the basis by which they assess the worth of their own lives and come to a better understanding of themselves and their society. Literature is a useful tool in the socialization and education of the individual because a literary text is a compendium of information and knowledge about humans and their social experiences. Proficiency in reading literature text is as important as being proficient in the use of language. Language and literature are important aspects of culture. They are also means of communication, though their foci differ in some ways. While literature is concerned with the literary aspect of communication, language is concerned with all forms of person to person relationships and interactions in the conduct of human affairs (Ayebola, 2006). By this submission, the study of literature does not only bring learners into contact with functional varieties of English which they need in actual communicative situations, it demands that learners apply their knowledge of language to read, understand and appreciate literature (Wilmott, 1979; Ogunsiji, 2003).

Proficiency in the language of the text is required for learners to enter into the imaginative world of the author, understand that world and react to it. The author's creative manipulation of language in literature creates a sense of beauty, wonder and pleasure in the reader. Besides exposing students to the uniqueness of language, literature is studied for the vicarious experiences it offers readers. Literature enriches and develops the mind. It also widens readers' horizon as they are exposed to the various human conditions presented in the text. In her explication, Klages (2006) asserts that literature, as part of humanism, 'is supposed to foster the intangible, immeasurable values of life, the benefits and forms of art without which life would be lifeless equations and bare facts'. This submission implies that studying literature exposes students to the important ideals and acceptable ways of behavior within the society that make life and living meaningful. In the same vein, Applebee, Bermundez, Blau, Capla, Dorn, Elbow, Hynds, Langer and Marshal (1997) assert that literature gives one insight into different worlds and different cultures, into oneself and helps one to understand oneself and the world in which one lives better and makes one a better person. It is for these profound experiences which literature inculcates in the learner that literature is studied in schools.

Some literature researchers Aluko (1990); Ogunsiji (2003); Reeves (2004) Anyaniyi (2009) found that the study of literature enhances not only the development of language skills; it gives readers insight into themselves and their social experiences. This is why the study of literature is of utmost importance at both the junior and senior secondary schools. Literature is taught as an elective subject in the senior secondary school while at the junior level, it is designed as an integral part of the English language curriculum. The objective is to promote integrated English studies stated in the National Policy on Education (NPE) issued in 1977 and revised in 2004. The idea of integrating literature within the English syllabus at this level is based on the view that English performs both 'service and educative functions' therefore, it is needed everywhere (Adeyanju 1979).

Moreover, teaching prose literature as well as other genres of literature in Nigeria is geared towards achieving the following aims and objectives contained in the senior secondary school literature curriculum. These are to:

- i. Give students a rich and well rounded humanistic education. This can be achieved through broadening the cultural horizon of students by exposing them to works that are varied in perspective and yet universal in application;
- ii. Reinforce the English language skills already acquired by the students by showing them language in action in literary texts or works;
- iii. Expose students to healthy human values and attributes;
- iv. Expose students to the beauty and potentials of language;
- v. Equip the students to develop the capacity for independent thought and judgment;
- vi. Encourage attempts at creative writing as a means of understanding the creative process and appreciating the principle of creativity, especially for those who can benefit from it.
- vii. Develop the student's ability to respond appropriately and independently to literary works;
- viii. Inculcate in the students the entertainment and instructive values of literature as a follow-up to the literary skills learnt in the junior secondary school;
- ix. Prepare the students to pass literature in the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination and also to prepare them for work.

From the above, some important points are noted about the study of literature especially prose literature, which justifies its being taught at the senior secondary school (Lawal 2000). They are:

1. There is a close link and continuity between what was learnt at the junior level and at the senior level.
2. Literary appreciation is emphasized; hence, the study of literature at this level is expected to develop literary knowledge and understanding in students;
3. The study of literature enhances the acquisition of moral values and character development. This is why literature is didactic;
4. Literature is expected to fortify the language skills already acquired at the lower level;
5. Literature is expected to develop students' creative ability;
6. Literature is expected to develop students' linguistic and literary competence;
7. Prepare students for Senior Secondary Certificate Examination

- 8 Literature, most importantly, is studied for the purpose of enjoyment;
- 9 Literature systematically develops a lifelong love for reading in the reader.

The literature studied and examined at the senior secondary school level comprises the three genres (prose, poetry and drama). Success in each of these genres contributes to the overall success of students in the examination. However, there are certain attributes or characteristics of the prose text that make it distinct from the others. According to Williams (1990), prose sharpens students' awareness of life as they share in the imaginative experience of the author. Secondly, it is believed that prose is simple and easier to read because its linguistic structure is closer to the language of everyday life. Prose makes students aware of the possibilities of language use (Lawal 2000) and provides them a greater opportunity for reading due to its simplicity of language. One implication of this is that some teachers of literature in Nigeria assume that students can read and understand prose even when they are not taught. Based on this assumption, some literature teachers in Nigeria do not employ effective teaching methods (Ogunaike 2002). Such teachers focus on story narration, vocal reading and treatment of past examination questions. Meanwhile, effective instructional procedure is aimed at helping the Nigerian child who has chosen to study literature to achieve desired expertise and independence in the reading of a text; build up a lifelong love for reading as well as achieve improved cognitive and affective skills in literature and reading.

Second language learners lack the basic language skill needed to appreciate literature (Chief Examiners' Reports 2004, 2005, 2007). Thus, they are predisposed to becoming resistant readers; lacking both literary and linguistic competence to read and understand prose literature texts or texts in other genres. Research has shown that when students encounter texts written in a language that is not familiar to them, they tend to struggle with the linguistic problems associated with such texts and Nigerian students are not an exception (Elliot 1990; Lawal 2000). Chamot and O'Malley (1994) also assert that the most critical task facing second language learners is learning to read a text written in a language in which they have limited proficiency. The researchers observe that the second language learners whether learning to read for the first time or trying to transfer reading skills already learnt in the native language encounter an inordinate amount of



unfamiliar language even in beginning texts. Lawal (2000) posits that part of the problems that students encounter in reading and understanding written literature in Nigeria are twofold, first is the complex and subtle nature of the English language itself; second is that the English language learners are exposed to is 'limited in scope and function to specific purposes, which are educational. Emphasis is on linguistic competence to the detriment of literary competence. Therefore, they lack exposure to the creative use of language needed to understand and interpret literature texts in English. These problems can frustrate the actualization of the objectives of teaching literature in schools.

In spite of the objectives and the profound values of literature, its teaching and learning in secondary schools have continued to undergo setbacks, resulting in the recurrent poor performance of students in the subject as indicated in the 2004, 2005 and 2007 May/June SSCE Chief Examiners' Reports. Most often, these reports reveal that students display absolute lack of knowledge of the texts, understanding of the questions asked and good mastery of the English language needed to respond to the texts. There is also the indication that students do not read the set texts. For instance, the SSCE Chief Examiners' Report for May/June 2004 noted that 'candidates could not adequately interpret the questions due to lack of expected in-depth knowledge of the texts. As a result, when they had points to deliver, they were mostly vague and shallow' (Pg. 42). To further support this, the Chief Examiners' Reports for May/June 2005 literature in English papers 2 and 3 respectively states:

The texts were not read by most of the candidates. It was evident in their answers that they relied on notes and other summaries. This resulted in their presentation of inappropriate answers to questions since they lacked full comprehension of the content of the texts (p. 36)

It was very glaring that candidates merely registered for the subject without actually possessing any interest in it. A few candidates who were able to glean a few facts on the content of the texts were not able to do justice to the questions because they did not have the ability to put their points across in concise English (p. 41)

The Chief Examiners' Reports for May/June 2007 also lends credence to the above observation by equally noting that:

The performance of candidates was poor... but it was obvious from the answers of the candidates that, the texts were not studied for the examination as is expected.... The poor knowledge and usage of the English Language was exhibited by most of the candidates. (p.48)

It is inferred from the above reports that most literature students in Nigeria have little or no interest in the subject; do not purchase and read the actual texts but depend on 'study guides and teachers' notes'. Moreover, poor linguistic background also contributes to students' unwillingness to read the recommended literature text. Consequently, many learners of literature are not exposed to independent literary reading and personal appreciation of literature texts. This possibly, accounted for the repeated poor students' achievement in the SSC examinations over a period of ten years. Although the WAEC results for a period of ten years (1999-2009) reviewed in this study show an improvement in the percentage of candidates who obtained credit passes in literature from 2006-2009 contrary to what obtained between 1999 – 2005, the increase is negligible and unpredictable because the table shows a drop in percentage rise in 2009. Moreover, the percentage in credit passes has remained below 50%, which is not quite encouraging. The statistical analyses of the results are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Statistics of the entries and students' performance by grade and percentage for May / June SSCE (1999 – 2009)**

Year	Total No, Sat	Total Credits & above	Passes		Failure
			1-6	7	
1999	250805	23588 9.40%	21765 8.67%	32472 12.94%	163020 64.99%
2000	192764	15704 8.14%	18477 9.58%	28193 14.62%	130390 67.64%
2001	351582	21915 6.23%	28566 8.12%	48520 13.80%	252581 71.84%
2002	287626	19263 6.69%	29896 10.39%	1313 17.84%	187154 65.06%
2003	287178	23734 8.26%	33362 11.61%	550990 19.81%	169359 58.97%
2004	251015	38284 15.25%	33104 13.18%	64426 25.66%	115201 45.89%
2005	285211	39729 13.29%	31003 10.37%	40717 30.35%	123762 41.40%
2006	353404	113739 32.18%	74074 20.96%	66511 18.82%	74427 21.06%
2007	357511	133122 37.23%	71436 19.98%	58667 16.40%	82114 22.96%
2008	384129	160664 41.82%	79124 20.59%	61496 16.00%	72818 18.95%
2009	401890	160788 40.01%	88194 21.94%	66353 16.51%	61811 15.38%

**Source:** West African Examinations Council, Yaba, Lagos

The result in the table confirms the submissions of other scholars (Aluko 1990; Ogunaike, 2002; Ezeokoli, 2002; Anyaniyi 2009) on the negative trends in the

performance of students in Literature-in-English examinations. Judging from the Chief Examiners' Reports and the result in table one it may be inferred that either candidates who register for literature in the SSCE hardly read the recommended texts or that literature is not properly handled in schools, hence, students fail to do the critical and analytical reading which literature texts demand.

Sometimes teaching prose literature, especially at the senior secondary level, can be a challenging task, not only because teachers are dealing with students whose linguistic background differ from the language of the text, but also because as Lawal (2000) observes, learners at this level have a poor background in reading. Some of them have not been exposed to extensive reading at the junior level and this constitutes a barrier to their reading and understanding of the novel at the senior level. These are in addition to other individual differences which students bring to the learning context. Second language learners of literature need assistance through student-centred and socio-cultural instructional strategies to actively engage with the texts they are reading, appreciate and interpret the text, understand the plot, identify with the characters, figure out the theme, appreciate the author's style, the social-cultural background of the text and author's point of view (Elliot 1990). They also need assistance to make personal connections with the text and understand how the various elements of the prose text and students' personal characteristics affect the overall comprehension of the text.

Besides problems associated with the nature of the literary text, methods and instructional strategies have also been identified as being responsible for the recurrent failure of students in literature examination (Uwaifo 1979; Bisong 1996; Okedara 1992; Ogunaike 2002; Anyaniyi 2009). The prevalent conventional strategies used in teaching literature in Nigerian classrooms today emanate from the transmission of knowledge approach to teaching. Beach, Appleman, Hynds and Wilhelm (2006) assert that transmission of knowledge as an approach to teaching literature focuses on how best to impart knowledge to students assumed to be empty vessels, dutifully waiting to be filled up with the knowledge the teacher provides through lectures or presentations.

Consequently, the teacher is believed to be the custodian of knowledge whose duty it is to impart this knowledge to students who do not question his/her authority. In the context of African culture, this situation becomes more significant because it is

considered impertinent for children to question the authority of their elders. Naturally, students accept whatever information the teacher passes across, leaving the former no option than to assume a dependent role in the prose literature discussion while all classroom activities revolve round the teacher as the centre of instruction. The traditional literature classroom is characterized by much of teacher-centered instructional approaches and strategies than student-centred ones. Elliot (1990), Langer (1995), Beach, Appleman, Hynds and Wilhelm (2006), Bagherkazemi and Alemi, (2010) note that traditional text-based approaches such as linguistic analysis, stylistics, structuralism, critical literary approaches and transmission of knowledge approaches have been criticized for their inability to promote learners' active engagement with the texts, independent reading and personal creation of meaning. In these approaches, focus is on knowledge of facts, right answers and pre-determined interpretation, hence meaning of text is imposed on learners.

Besides, these approaches emphasize knowledge of formal grammar and the development of linguistic and communicative skills (Elliot, 1990; Stockwell, 2007; Bagherkazemi and Alemi, 2010). For instance, Van (2009), cited in Bagherkazemi and Alemi (2010), notes that the stylistic approach focuses on the relationship between learner's linguistic knowledge and literary experience; structuralism emphasizes knowledge of the linguistic code without any regard for meaning and reader's response; the critical literary approach centres on the relationship between language use and social power while the new criticism as a traditional approach to literature teaching conceives literature as a self-contained whole, independent of the author's intention, the reader's response and the social, political and historical background of the text. On the other hand, Van (2009) argues in favour of the reader response and language-based approaches. According Van, the reader response predicates on the transactional relationship between the reader and the text while the language-based approach provides opportunity for students to read literature and at the same time acquire the four language skills. It facilitates students' responses and experiences with literature through a variety of classroom activities such as cloze procedures, brain storming, summarizing, jigsaw reading which are believed to enhance collaboration, independence, interaction, peer-teaching and motivation.

In line with current criticism against the use of traditional literature teaching approaches that promote linguistic and communicative language skills, Tseng (2010) observes that using literature in English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom is mainly for the purpose of linguistic development hence, Van's (2009) language-based approach may not completely solve the problem of students' lack of active engagement with the literary text. The language –based approach would be appropriate when the emphasis of the literature instruction is on language development. Teaching literature goes beyond analysis of the linguistic elements of the text or a simple narration of the events in the story for the purpose of examination instead, literature is taught and learnt for literature sake as an art worthy of appreciation. For this reason, contemporary approaches such as the student-centred and socio-cultural learning approaches that have been found very effective in promoting students' active involvement in the text and enhancing personal construction of meaning have become the focal point of contemporary research in literature teaching.

According to Elliot (1990), Beach, Appleman, Hydns and Wilhelm (2006), innovative teachers are moving away from teacher-centred approaches where meaning is imposed on students to the student-centred approaches which expose students to activities that encourage personal response to the text. Crandall, Jaramillo, Olsen and Peyton (2002) believe that learning strategy is very important in the learning of concepts and teachers can employ various strategies to help students see how ideas or concepts relate to one another and help them develop a well structured mental picture about the content they are learning. Exposing students to effective learning strategy helps to deepen their understanding of the content. Chamot and O'Malley (1994) asser that students who have a storehouse of strategies to draw from consciously or unconsciously monitor their own learning and do better than students who do not have such strategies. Therefore, teachers can use a variety of strategies to ensure students' active engagement with the prose texts they are reading and make personal responses to the texts too. Allington and Cunningham (1996) advocates for strategies which offer students opportunities to read literature that appeal to them and their interest and to which they will respond in unique ways. Stringer, Reynolds and Simpson (2003) emphasize strategies that allow children to learn by doing and take ownership of their learning through opportunities that lead to freedom of choice

and social interaction. By inference, researchers are advocates of child-centred and socio-cultural strategies that promote students' active participation in the learning process.

Unfortunately, as research indicates learners are not exposed to these student centred strategies probably because teachers lack knowledge of these approaches and strategies or they do not consider their use of any importance (Uwaifo 1979; Ogunaike 2002). Teachers resort most often to the easiest strategy of "take your book and read", making literature teaching in secondary school a teacher-centred activity. One way to enhance students' performance in prose literature is by the use of instructional strategies that promote students' active engagement with texts and provide opportunities for sharing what is read with others which the prevalent teacher-centred strategies used in the teaching of literature have not been able to achieve (Ogunaike 2002; Anyaniyi 2009). Teachers spend more time reading and narrating the story without much of students' participation in meaning construction. Hence, some researchers, Martinez-Roldan and Lopez-Robertson (2000); Fountas and Pinnels (2001); Daniels (2002); McElvain (2005); Marshall (2006); Sanusi (2010) favour the use of student-centred and participatory strategies to improve students' achievement in literature. Such strategies include literature circles and scaffolding instructional strategies. This justifies the use of literature circles and scaffolding strategies in this study.

Literature circle is not a new practice, it originated from the 'reinvented' adult book club of the 1980's in the United States of America, but Daniels's first book in 1994 launched literature circles into limelight and increased its popularity among teachers and educational researchers (Rutherford, Carter, Hilmer, Kramer, Parker and Siebert 2009). According to Daniels (2002), the term 'literature circles' was first coined and used by Kathy Short and Gloria Kaufman to refer to contemporary school-based book clubs and kid-led groups which exhibit real features of cooperative learning and student-centeredness. Since then, literature circles has been called by many names such as Grand conversations (Brabham and Villaume 2000); literature study groups (Fountas and Pinnel 2001); Literature circles (Daniels 2002); Literacy clubs (Moller 2004); School based book clubs (Daniels and Zelman (2004); Collaborative reading groups (O'Brien 2007). These variations in terminology has resulted in what Daniels (2002) describes as

undue divergence in the implementation of the strategy. This perhaps has led to the different definitions given to literature circles.

Literature circle has been described as ‘a group which brings students together for an indepth discussion on a work of fiction or non-fiction’ (Fountas and Pinnell 2001); ‘a group of connected, competent readers who read for a personally meaningful purpose (Moller 2004) or ‘a small temporary collaborative literature group where students meet to select, read, discuss and share ideas on self-selected literature texts (Daniels 1994; 2002). Daniel’s definition appears to be more detailed because it aptly depicts the characteristic features of the ideal literature circles. In literature circles, students are placed in small groups and are encouraged to read with focus, share and discuss what they have read and determine what is significant in what they are reading and why they consider such significant. The use of roles which are re-assigned at intervals provides a structured framework for sustainable focus during the discussion. Literature circles may be structured in various ways depending on what model best suits the needs of the students as well as the type of text being studied, in terms of fiction, non-fiction or content area text (Brown 2001; Chandler 2004). Besides the face-to-face structure, teachers and researchers are experimenting with virtual or online literature circles. The essence of virtual or online literature circles is not to replace the face-to-face classroom structure but to re-enforce it. The basic concepts and elements of literature circles are maintained while students are provided more opportunity to extend their interactions and sharing beyond the classroom space (Moreillon et al 2009; Kitsis 2010; Petko 2011).

Literature Circle is the major instructional strategy used in all English classes at the Chicago Best Practice High School. According to Daniels, Bizar, and Zemelman (2001) and Daniels (2002), students at Best Practice High School outperform most other schools in city wide reading scores. In spite of the widespread use of literature circles in American classrooms, there is a paucity of empirical research on its use as a teaching strategy (Marshall 2006). Most often, publications on literature circles are mainly qualitative pieces of action research reported by classroom teachers Dupuy (1997) Klinger, Vaughn, and Schumm (1998); Roberts (1998) Martinez-Roldan, and Lopez-Robertson (2000), Finke, & Edwards (2002); Stringer, Reynolds, & Simpson (2003). However, Daniels (2002) observes that professional literature and research base on



Literature circles are gradually developing. In line with Daniel's observation, Wilson (2004), McElvain (2005), Marshall (2006), Snyder, Coffey and Kolawole, (2007) Sanusi (2010) investigated the effects of literature circles strategy on students' reading and writing achievement scores. These studies, most of which were conducted in the first language based American classrooms, found that Literature circles was effective in promoting students' overall reading and writing achievement score as well as their active engagement with and enjoyment of texts read.

In the same vein, scaffolding instructional strategy has been found to enhance students' performance in prose literature. Scaffolding is credited to the works of Bruner, Woods and Ross (1976); Wood & Middleton (1975). These researchers first introduced the metaphor 'scaffolding' to describe the type of assistance offered by a teacher or peer to support learning. However, scaffolding is a much popular term in the area of science and science education. Heber and Heber (1993) describe scaffolding as a teaching strategy named for the practical resemblance it bears to the physical scaffolds used on construction sites. The teacher provides supports to the students at every step of the learning process using the scaffolding techniques such as modeling (think aloud and performance modeling), explanations, inviting students' participation, verifying and clarifying students' responses.

According to Lange (2000), these techniques which are more or less verbal in nature may be used in conjunction with graphic scaffolds such as character web, story map, Venn diagram and Concept mapping forms of graphic organizers to enhance learning effectiveness. Research indicates that instructional scaffolding has been effectively applied across content areas such as Sciences, Mathematics, Social Sciences and the Language Arts. Lepper, Drake, and O'Donelli-Johnson (1997), Cheng and Sung (2002), Fournier and Graves (2003), Cumming-Potvin, Renshaw and Kraayenoord (2003), Clark and Graves (2005) Isiugo-Abanihe, and Maduabuchi, (2005), Seng (2007) investigated the use of instructional scaffolding and found that it enhanced students' learning achievement in the content areas.

Both strategies (literature circles and scaffolding) provide well structured discussion patterns that help teachers and students to move away from the traditional classroom discourse pattern which has not yielded much benefit to literature instruction

over the years. The advantages of these strategies would therefore provide solutions to the identified problems associated with prose literature teaching in a second language context like Nigeria.. It is expected that the use of these strategies, scaffolding and literature circles, in teaching prose literature would address the problem of students' unwillingness to read prose texts, encourage students' meaningful participation in the discussion of the literary texts as well as provide students the avenue to collaborate with others in the creation of meaning from the prose text. Therefore if properly applied, these strategies would improve students' performance in prose literature because they improved performance in other places they were used, though in the L1 context

Besides instructional strategies, attitude is another variable that influences students' performance in prose literature in English. Kolawole (1997) and Akey (2006) believe that attitude is the most important factor in effective language learning. It is an integral part of learning and an essential component of the second language pedagogy because it is believed to influence behavior. Akey (2006) equates attitude to engagement and as engagement, it is associated with motivation, positive learning values, enthusiasm, interest and pride in success. Learners who exhibit positive attitude to learning tend to seek out activities inside and outside the classroom that lead to success, display curiosity, a desire to know more and positive emotional responses to learning. Awang and Kasuma (2010) believe that certain intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors can influence attitude. For instance in a study to investigate the attitude of secondary school students towards English Literature, they found that inability to comprehend the text resulted in frustration and building of negative attitude towards literature. On the other hand, students exhibited positive attitude to literature because they believed it would assist their English language acquisition. They also found that factors like teacher behaviour, peers, materials and teaching strategies can also influence attitude to literature. Kush, Watkins & Brookhart (2005) attribute attitude to success or failure in achieving a specific learning goal, so attitude towards reading develops through repeated success or failure with reading activities. Students with well developed reading skills are likely to exhibit positive attitude towards reading while students with poor reading skills will struggle to improve their reading skills.

When students exhibit a positive attitude towards the concept being learnt, there is a tendency for such students to achieve high competence and when their attitude is negative, they tend to achieve marginal competence (Ezeokoli 1986; Lawal 1988). Students will fail to critically read, analyze, interpret, evaluate meanings and organize ideas gained from a prose text to future problem solving when they lack positive attitude to reading literature. Elyilodrin and Ashton (2006) cited in Awang and Kasuma (2010) assert that teachers' instructional strategy could influence students' attitude to language learning and Ezeokoli (2005) identifies language used at home and the community as a determinant of students' attitude to language learning because it is believed that parental attitude to literacy affects the way children respond to reading and writing. However, research findings on the influence of attitude on academic achievement is inconclusive therefore, this study further sought to establish the place of attitude in students' academic achievement.

In addition to attitude, verbal ability is another variable in this study that may influence students' engagement with text and consequently affect their achievement in prose literature. In this study, verbal ability refers to the level of students' language development reflected in their oral or written communication skills which they require to effectively express their views and thoughts after reading a prose text. Verbal ability therefore has to do with the level of an individual's intelligence or language development and his/her ability to carry out abstract reasoning (Nwosu 2002; Odiaka 2002). Research shows that students with high intelligence and abstract reasoning ability exhibit higher academic achievement than students with low intelligence and abstract reasoning skills (Duncan 1994, Odiaka 2002, Udosen 2002). Olaboopo (1999) indicates that verbal ability can be employed to predict learners' performance in language skills. Maduabuchi (2002) and Fakeye (2006) note that students' verbal ability significantly influenced students' performance on standardized achievement test in English. However, learning environment can influence verbal ability. This is why Michael (2002) emphasizes the importance of family background on children's verbal ability and also stresses the need for parents to encourage good vocabulary reading and mathematics ability while Elder (1998) asserts that habit formed during childhood can influence students' verbal ability.

The present researcher believes that learners are likely to encounter problems when the language they learn in school is at variance with the language spoken at home.

Amongst other factors that have received the attention of researchers in students' achievement in language and literature is gender. Gender is seen as a social construct with important theoretical and pedagogical implications in second language learning. Different researchers (Ezewu, 1980; Ayodele, 1986; Sadker and Sadker, 1994; Adepoju, 1996; Olaboopo, 1999; Sipe, 1999; Oden, 1999; Mead, 2000; Freedman, 2004; Maduabuchi, 2008; Ayanniyi, 2009) have reviewed the place of gender in learning outcome and in the area of literature discussion. Their findings seem inconclusive because while Scholars like Ezewu (1980), Ayodele (1986), Olaboopo (1999), Sipe (1999), Mead (2000) Freedman (2004) and Maduabuchi (2008) found significant differences in the achievement scores of students in terms of gender, others like Adepoju (1996), Oden (1999) and Ayanniyi (2009) found that gender is not a significant factor in students' academic achievement in language tasks. Specifically, Makinde (2004) found no significant difference in achievement and attitude scores of students' in Yoruba composition in relation to gender. Wavo (2005) found that the males and females in the study differed in their attitude to English Language with females having a higher positive attitude than males. Similarly, Bidin (2009) found a significant difference in the attitude scores of male and female undergraduates in Malaysia towards English language learning. In a similar study in Kenya, Tella and Othuon (2011) found no significant difference in the male and female students' attitude to English language.

The effect of gender on students' achievement in English language and literature is still a major point of debate among researchers due to the conflicting nature of results from researches that focus on gender and language. Therefore, it is necessary to further establish in this study whether or not gender has any significant effect on students' achievement and attitude to prose literature. It is the belief of this researcher that besides instructional methods, other variables either in isolation or in combination with gender and attitude can influence students' academic achievement when students of different verbal ability are brought together to collaboratively read and share ideas on the prose literature text within the ambience of the use of literature circles and scaffolding instructional strategies.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Literature is expected to promote reading for pleasure and encourage the development of reading skills. However, many students in secondary schools do not possess the necessary cognitive and affective skills needed to read and understand texts in literature. Hence, students' performance in WAEC literature in English examination has not been much to reckon with. Several factors affect students' performance in literature. They include factors associated with learners' home background, low level of interest in reading, poor language proficiency, poor comprehension skills and the instructional strategies used by teachers. Although Previous studies have been carried out on student-centred strategies like discussion, reading-questioning techniques, outlining and advance organizers with regards to enhancing students' performance in literature but much empirical studies have not been carried out on literature circles and scaffolding instructional strategies in Nigeria. This study, therefore investigated the effects of basic literature circles, literature circles with roles and scaffolding instructional strategies on senior secondary school students' achievement and attitude to prose literature in English. It also determined the moderating effects of verbal ability and gender on the two dependent variables.

## 1.3 Hypotheses

For the purpose of this research the following null hypotheses were tested:

**Ho1.** There is no significant main effect of treatment on students'

- (a) Achievement in and
- (b) Attitude to prose literature.

**Ho2** There is no significant main effect of verbal ability on students'

- (a) Achievement in and
- (b) Attitude to prose literature.

**Ho3** There is no significant main effect of gender on students'

- (a) Achievement in and
- (b) Attitude to prose literature.

- Ho4** There is no significant interaction effect of treatment and verbal ability on students
- (a) Achievement in and
  - (b) Attitude to prose literature.
- Ho5** There is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on students'
- (a) Achievement in and
  - (b) Attitude to prose literature.
- Ho6** There is no significant interaction effect of verbal ability and gender on students'
- (a) Achievement in and
  - (b) Attitude to prose literature.
- Ho7** There is no significant interaction effect of treatment, verbal ability and gender on students'
- (a) Achievement in and
  - (b) Attitude to prose literature.

#### **1.4 Scope of the study**

This study was basically concerned with senior secondary II students while eight senior secondary schools drawn from Abeokuta South, Abeokuta North, Odeda, and Obafemi/Owode local government areas in Ogun state were used for the study. The study made use of two modes of literature circles (basic literature circles and literature circles with roles) and scaffolding instructional strategies in the six experimental classes while the conventional teaching method was used for the two control groups. The two prose texts used were Earnest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* and Asare Konadu's *A Woman in her Prime*. The dependent variables are: achievement and attitude to prose literature while the independent variables were gender and verbal ability which were manipulated at three and two levels respectively.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The fundamental roles of literature in the making of the enlightened and educated mind and exposing readers to important human values and human condition cannot be fully achieved without qualitative instruction in the teaching of prose literature. Hence,

the findings of this study would be useful to students and teachers of literature, curriculum planners, textbook writers, policy makers and other individuals interested in the teaching of literature-in- English. Specifically, it is hoped that the study would improve the way literature is taught and learnt through the strategies employed. This would in turn influence students' interest in reading and increase achievement in literature. It would also help to foster independent reading skills in students. It would likely make teachers who participated in the study aware of alternative and more effective instructional strategies for teaching literature, especially the ones used in this study.

Again, the findings would equally be useful to textbook writers who may wish to incorporate these instructional strategies into their texts so that schools, individuals and interested groups may adopt them for schools and for private study. The result of this study would probably be beneficial to the general public because it would enable learners and teachers to see reading as a fun-filled activity, through the atmosphere of play pervading the classroom during literature circles discussion, thereby raising the reading interest of students which is presently considered to be low. This will also help to improve the low literacy level being experienced among students. The study would serve as basis for further research on the use of other child-centered strategies in the effective teaching of literature in senior secondary schools.

## **1.6 Definition of Terms**

**Scaffolding Instructional Strategy:** This is a teaching device/technique through which assistance is given to learners to enable them perform tasks which otherwise, they would not be able to carryout on their own without assistance.

**Zone of Proximal Development:** This is the area in a learning continuum between what children can do without help and what they can do with competent assistance from either the teacher or the peer.

**Literature circles:** These are students' study groups which teachers appropriate as teaching method. Thus, it involves small groups of students coming together to read and share ideas on the text(s) they have read.

**Instructional Strategies:** These are the various purposeful activities designed for the purpose of this study to enable students effectively read, comprehend, and interpret the prose literature texts used in this study.

**Attitude to prose literature:** This involves learners' disposition in terms of their feelings, opinions, and beliefs about prose literature.

**Achievement in prose literature:** This is what the student has learnt after undergoing a course of instruction as determined by the score of a test designed to measure what has been learnt. In this study, the achievement would be determined by the pre and posttest scores.

**Gender:** In this study, gender is used biologically to mean sex of students who participated in the study.

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## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter, literature relevant to the study is reviewed and focuses on the following themes:

- i) Theoretical Framework
- ii) Literature and its Nature
- iii) Objectives of Teaching Literature
- iv) Characteristics of Prose Literature
- v) Prose Literature Instruction in Nigeria
- vi) Relationship between Language, Literature and Reading
- vii) Literature Circles, models, Uses and effectiveness in Academic Achievement
- viii) Scaffolding Instructional Strategy, Types, Uses and effectiveness in Academic Achievement
- ix) Attitude to Literature
- x) Verbal Ability and Achievement in Literature
- xi) Gender and Achievement in Literature
- xii) Empirical studies on the strategies of Literature Teaching
- xiii) Appraisal of Literature Review

#### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study has a strong base in three learning theories, namely:

- i. Constructivism
- ii. Social cognitive theory.
- iii. Reader response theory

Various scholars have discussed the concept of constructivism in students' learning. Huitt and Hummel (2003) observe that "the writings of Piaget (1972, 1990); Vygotsky (1978, 1980, and 1986); Dewey (1976, 1997); Bruner, (1966, 1974) and Neisser (1967) form the basis for constructivist theory of learning and instruction. The core idea expressed in constructivism according to Hein (1991) has been enunciated by Dewey, the great philosopher and educationist. His basic argument is that learning is

based on the child's own experiences and interest; that curriculum topics should be integrated rather than isolated from each other.

Constructivists believe that children learn by connecting new knowledge to previously learned knowledge. Each learner, individually and socially constructs meaning as he or she learns. Learners are therefore not expected to regurgitate and recite what they have been told, heard or read about, they have to reflect and construct their own personal meanings and take control of their learning (Hein 1991). In Beck, MacKeown, Hamilton, and Kucan's (1997) submission, understanding within the field of constructivist philosophy cannot be extracted from a text and put into a student's head, nor can it be delivered to a learner; instead, understanding involves being able to explain the information being learnt, connect it to previous knowledge and use the information subsequently.

Though Dewey is considered the father of constructivism, other constructivist theorists in the field of cognitive psychology whose works have been influenced by Dewey include: Piaget, whose research in constructivism is based on his theory of cognitive development. Piaget believes that children have biological limits that influence when and how they learn (Wilhelm, 2001; Huitt and Hummel 2003). According to Brooks and Brooks (1993), Piaget believes that learning is an "individualistic enterprise" and that knowledge is a natural product of development; certain biological factors determine a child's cognitive development. These biological factors are also responsible for more complex behaviour as the child gets older. Piaget emphasizes internal development to the exclusion of the learner's social and historical contexts... and the ...learning environment as determinants of learning. Another theorist in this area is Brunner (1966) who developed the discovery learning theory. Brunner argues that learning is an active, social processes in which students construct new ideas or concepts based on current knowledge. The third pro-constructivist theorist whose work is quite relevant to this study is Lev Vygotsky (1978, 1986) whose work focused more on social interaction as the primary source of cognition and behaviour. Therefore, the basic tenets of Vygotsky's social interaction theory and its significance to this study would be fully discussed below.

Vygotsky (1978) in his concept of social cognition known as social development theory and the cognitive zone of proximal development contrary to constructivism believes that learning is, at its core, largely. Constructivism believes that learning is an individual activity but Vygotsky asserts that learning is both individual and social. He therefore theorized that children's learning must be guided and supported by adult modeling and corrective feedback. Vygotsky's (1978) claim is that learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that operate only when the child is interacting with people in his/her environment and in co-operation with others. Therefore, human learning is mediated through others in that knowledge is socially constructed through collaborative efforts to learn, understand, and solve problems (Johnson and Johnson 1999; Seng 2007). A child develops his or her intellect through internalizing concepts based on his or her own interpretation of an activity that occurs in a social setting. The communication that occurs in this setting with more knowledgeable and capable others (parents, teachers, peers, others) enables the child generate understanding which is then internalized as individual knowledge and capabilities (Afflerbach, 2000; Branford, Brown & Cocking, 2000; Lange 2002).

Crucial to Vygotsky's view of social interaction in the learning process is his notion of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). To him, the ZPD is considered to be very important to the study of learning and development. For learning to be effective, two levels of development must be identified in the child. The first level is what he calls the actual developmental level which is concerned with the problems the child can solve independently while the second is the child's potential level associated with the level the child can attain in solving problems with assistance from others. This level, Vygotsky claims can be achieved under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable others. Therefore, Vygotsky (1978) defines the zone of proximal development (ZPD) as "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable others".

In the concept of the ZPD, academic tasks are classified into one of three categories: those that the student can perform independently, those that the student cannot perform even with help from others, and those that the student can perform with help

from others (Wilhelm 2001; Lange, 2002; Reyhner, 2003). Learning is seen as the development of higher-level psychological processes occurring first on an interpersonal level through social interaction and later internalized and becomes part of an individual's evolving knowledge base. Instruction and learning, therefore, would be possible only in the learner's zone of proximal development through collaboration with an adult or more knowledgeable peer in actual, concrete, situated activities (Vygotsky 1978; Wilhelm 2003).

Against this background, Seng (2007) notes that instruction should be organized where social interaction can and should be structured to bring about desired changes in the individual. In the light of this, scaffolding instructional strategy becomes relevant in providing such an organized instructional structure that assists students' learning. The assistance given in the ZPD is an important component of the teaching activity which researchers refer to as the support that guides the learner or the child towards his or her potential level of development (Roehler and Cantlon, (997;Seng 2007). Seng (2007) observes that the metaphor of scaffolding is used to characterize the forms of assistance provided by the more knowledgeable adult or peers to help student bridge the gap between their current abilities and the intended level. Heber and Heber (1993) note that the assistance offered through scaffolding is temporal because once the child internalizes the content or the instructional process, he/she begins to assume full responsibility for controlling the progress of the task given and the scaffold is gradually removed to see how far the child has been able to understand the concept. It is possible to infer from the above assertions that the use of scaffolds is only meaningful within the student's ZPD where he or she cannot proceed alone, but can proceed when scaffolding is provided. In essence, when children are exposed to scaffolding instructional activities such as coaching, modeling desired behaviour, offering explanations, asking leading questions, making comments, having dialogic conversations etc with more capable others, they would be able to reach levels of mastery that might be almost impossible for them to achieve.

Using scaffolding instructional strategy in the present study is important because it explores the Vygotskian idea of education which lays emphasis on the importance of the assistance provided learners not only in the adult-child interaction but also in the peer

group interaction. The present study would be focusing on the two aspects of interaction because it is believed that in addition to the expert assistance provided in the adult-child interaction, peer interactions can promote sustained achievement for less competent students thereby producing cognitive growth. In the collaborative activities that would occur in this study as students engage in the reading and discussion of the prose literature texts, expert assistance or support may be provided by the students themselves depending on their familiarity with the text, their level of proficiency and understanding of the concept as well as their level of confidence.

Another Vygotskian perspective useful to this study is the importance accorded speech in the learning process. Vygotsky (1986) views speech as an important mediating tool for human mental development. In social interaction, the speech that is used when experts and novices or peer group collaborate to solve problems, mediates the movement from one level to a higher level in the learners' ZPD (Seng 2007). In essence, during the interaction that would go on in the reading of the prose text, speech would be used to support students' reading as they become more independent in using important strategies that would be modeled by the teacher and expert peers.

According to Seng (2007), this speech is 'overt in form and social in function' different from what Vygotsky refers to as 'the egocentric speech' of a child and 'the inner speech' of an adult. According to him, it is the egocentric speech of a child that develops into the inner speech of an adult. As the child matures, the egocentric speech (talking aloud to oneself) disappears in terms of verbalization, it does not weaken or degenerate, it goes underground and becomes the inner speech (verbal thought). Though both the egocentric and the inner speech are similar and function as speech for oneself, different from the social speech, which functions as speech for others, the difference between the two is in the amount of articulation and degree of elaborateness. The inner speech of an adult is seen to be richer and more elaborate than the egocentric speech of a child. Vygotsky (1986) and Lee (2000) emphasize the importance of the inner speech in the development of cognition and its application to the reading instruction. Thus, Vygotsky found in his study that children use egocentric speech initially to accompany problem solving strategies and later to direct problem-solving strategies. Therefore, the notion of inner speech and the value of social interaction when experts and novices attempt to

verbalize their inner thoughts as they collaborate to solve problems in a second language prose literature discussion through various scaffolding instructional techniques such as modeling, inviting students' participation, offering explanations, verifying and clarifying understanding is very relevant to this study.

Constructivism and Vygotsky's social-cultural theories have profound implication for this study as both support the knowledge construction and knowledge sharing that occur when the teacher/more knowledgeable others interact with students to construct meaning from a reading text. These theories were considered important to this study due to their focus on independent and collaborative learning structures that characterize scaffolding and literature circles strategies. In both scaffolding and literature circles strategies, students would learn by connecting new knowledge to previously learned knowledge. They would learn to read, discuss and share ideas about their reading, not just as individuals but also as a group or community of readers (Afflerbach 2000; Fournier and Graves, 2002; Seng, 2007). In this way, students would be given support to think critically and take ownership of their own learning. This is contrary to what happens in previous strategies where the teacher takes absolute control of the literature instruction while students passively depend on the teacher as a resource. Beach, Appleman, Hynds and Wilhelm (2006) argue that:

In socio cultural theory, the primary focus is not simply on the teacher or on the student but on creating social activities or communities in which students acquire various practices and tools constituting learning literature. Student motivation and learning is no longer an individual matter, but now is a function of the quality of the activity or community created in the classroom. (p. 9)

The Reader Response theory has its origin in the 1920s and 1930s with the writings of Richards (1929), who pioneered the investigation into actual readers' response, and Leaves (1948), who claims that reading is that process of creation in response to the poet's words. Rosenblatt (1938) is credited with the modern Reader Response theory and she claims that the writer and the reader both do creative work. Rosenblatt (1978) believes that the literary work of art comes into being through the readers' attention to what the text activates within him. Reader Response theorists focus on the individual reader's social and psychological disposition during the reading process

(Holland 1975; Rosenblatt 1978; Coen 1994). The mental phenomenon which readers generate and experience as they read is central to the meaning they construct from the text (Reeves 2004).

Rosenblatt (1978), making distinction in the ways people read, designates two types of reading: efferent and aesthetic reading. The former is primarily concerned with what the reader gets out of the reading experience; the end product; the information he acquires without any attention to the responses the text evokes in him. Therefore the reader in this context is more or less detached or impersonal. The latter is the reading of literature for aesthetic and artistic experience. Here, 'the reader's primary concern is with what happens during the actual reading event... paying attention to the associations, feelings, attitudes, and ideas that the words of the text and their referents arouse within him. Rosenblatt emphasized that 'during aesthetic reading, the readers attention is centered directly on what he is living through during his relationship with that particular text'. Hence, Rosenblatt pointed out that 'the text is merely an object of paper and ink until some reader responds to the marks on the page as verbal symbol' The literary work of art comes into being through the reader's attention to what the text activates within him. Different readers come to the reading experience with different background experiences and psychological dispositions which influence the way they read and respond to a text. Thus, as researchers in the reader response criticism observe, each individual creates a personal meaning through a transaction with the text based on 'personal association' and 'mental phenomena which individuals generate and experience as they respond to the text' (Holland, 1975; Rosenblatt, 1978; Coen, 1994; MacQuillan, 1999; Raphael, Florio—Ruane and George 2001). Therefore since Probst and Rosenblatt agree that there are better and worse readings of a text, there are equally no wrong ones because every work of literature is a confrontation or collaboration between a reader's prior experience and the words of the author.

Based on the above assumptions, Reeves (2004) believes that one of the difficulties readers encounter in school is that the difference between reading for an aesthetic experience and reading for information is rarely explicitly addressed. Most students are not explicitly taught; consequently they do not understand that learning what the text says is not all there is to reading'. Students are taught to see the text as a sole

custodian of meaning which is in line with the New Critic's belief that meaning is text-based. Rosenblatt debunking the New Critics, believes that there is no one correct interpretation of the text, what occurs are multiple interpretations which are equally dependent on the prior experience which each reader brings to the reading experience. The Reader Response theory therefore lays greater emphases on the importance of the reader's personal response in the interpretation of text.

An important area of criticism against Reader Response Theory is in the diversity of interpretation emanating from the individual readers. The different background experiences each reader brings to the text result in multiple interpretations of the text. Many factors such as personal experiences, historical and cultural situations, gender, race and class, age, sexuality, education, environment, social conventions, a particular physical condition, memories of past events, present needs and preoccupation, and in fact, everything that makes up the individual influence the way the individual reads a text and the meaning produced (Rosenblatt, (1978); Brown and Gifford (1989); MacQuillan, (1999). This implies that many people may read the same text but may come up with different meanings and interpretations. To avoid variations in interpretation, Fish (1980) and Iser (1993) advocate the concept of the reading community so that readers would not be allowed to run wild with their interpretations but should be checked through what they call the community of the 'informed readers'. The researchers argued that the community of readers whether large or small helps to prevent readers from ranging too widely in their interpretations. Fish, as MacQuillan (1999) notes, accepts that, 'all readers are part of the interpretative communities which train the reader into a shared set of expectations about how a text should be read and what it might mean'

Literature instruction, from the perspective of the Reader Response, is no longer dominated by what Langer (1995) refers to as 'text-based approaches that focus on right answers and predetermined interpretation' which is a feature of the traditional classroom, instead meaning becomes a group goal, collaboratively produced by the community of competent readers. Reader Response theory is relevant to this study since it emphasizes both the personal and the social as it highlights the importance of interactive activities which occur in collaborative small groups as students read, reflect, and share their



responses to what is read, with the teacher as facilitator. In fact research shows that the Reader Response theory is widely accepted by language arts teachers as they apply instructional strategies that support this theory in classrooms across the United States (Artwell 1981; Raphael, Florio-Ruane and George 2001; Daniels 2002; Daniels 2006; Clark and Holwadel, 2007).

The theory is relevant to this study because it promotes the interaction of information provided by the author, the prior knowledge, and language experience and world view of the reader and the context in which the text is read with the process of meaning making. This is why students are made to engage in the text, play roles and share what they read in collaborative small groups, meaning making therefore becomes the responsibility of the students.

## **2.2 Literature and its Meaning**

The word Literature is derived from two Latin words ‘Litera’ meaning written expression and ‘orature’, which means oral expression. According to Osinsowo (1991) and Chiegeonu (1999), Literature is both oral and written expression. As written expression, Onukaogu and Ohia (2003) refer to literature as whole text which includes both the conventional literary genres and ‘all kinds of print matter that promote information sharing and message transactions’. Thus, they categorize literature text into four: Fiction, Fact, Textbook, and Newsreel (such as newspaper, journals, letters, magazines, notes, lists etc). It is likely that these researchers see literature from the perspective of being an input material required for the enhancement of the reading instruction and not as an art meant to be appreciated and enjoyed. Literature therefore, is an encompassing word viewed from different perspectives. For instance, Moody (1971) considers literature as a literary creation by the community designed to give pleasure to readers hence he posits that literature is:

a branch of human activity distinct from agriculture or science without consideration of culture, race or nation – as something which certain people in every community throughout the world have exerted themselves to produce and which others in even greater numbers have striven to ‘consume’ whether by listening personally or by the reading of manuscripts, pamphlets, magazines, or printed word (p.1).

Moody's definition also implies that literature is a body of writing produced by members of a given race or nation to function as a critical lens allowing us insight into the historical experiences of such people, describing the specific historical periods and the peculiar human situations of such people, hence we talk of English literature, African Literature, American Literature as well as Elizabethan Literature, Romantic Literature, Twenty-First-Century Literature, Renaissance Literature respectively. In another instance, Pearse (1981) sees literature as oral or written composition deriving from and nursing a society and the historical experiences of that society and its people. However, the definition of literature relevant to this study is that given by Uwaifo (1979) which states that 'Literature after all is life, for it deals with man in every conceivable relation with others, his joys and woes, his tragedies and comedies, his fears and hopes'.

Further definitions abound. Ogden (1997) sees literature as 'imitation', as a form of expressing one's feelings and as containing explicit didactic elements'. Kennedy (1983) argues that 'literature is a kind of art usually written, that offers pleasure and illumines'. As an imaginative art, Chiegeonu (1999) defines literature as 'created or imagined human experience expressed in written form in a language that attracts' while Ezeokoli (1986) opines that 'literature denotes an imaginative literary experience which is part factual and affective but reality based'. In his view, Ukoyen (1980) points out that literature transcends mere description, it penetrates the surface of social life and reveals the ways in which human beings experience and perceive life in society. This confers on literature its unmistakable stamp as an imaginative recreation of objective and subjective experiences.

Lye (2003) presents literature from a functional perspective, describing literature in terms of what it does, he argues that:

Literature explores the texture and meaning of human experience in a complex, compelling way, and leads us to insight and rich reflection . . . concerning our lives and the nature of human experience. . . creates 'possible worlds', imagined dramatic embodiments of experience which allow the artist to explore basic 'rules' of human nature and of the structure of the world. . . represents 'reality', 'nature' or the way things are. . . through its aesthetic devices and powers. . ., literature re-presents and explores the way in which the world is viewed and experienced by

people in that society or social group; that is, it tells us a great deal about how the world is actually understood by the society to which the artist belongs, understood, not only intellectually but symbolically and emotionally . . . (p. 1-5).

The various definitions confirm that literature has no single watertight definition. Literature is an umbrella term encompassing a whole range of activities. It is seen as a field of study distinct from other fields. The idea here is to reflect literature as a subject of study in schools, a form of imaginative art which gives insight into both the real and imagined lives and experiences of people within our society and other societies, a creative work of art which reflects various historical periods/time, race and culture. One salient fact stands out from all these definitions, this is that literature is seen as a literary work of art by which readers gain insight into the human condition, real or imagined. In this study therefore, literature is conceived as a recreation of human experiences or the human condition in prose, poetry and drama and it is in this sense that literature is studied in schools.

Against this background therefore, literature comprises three genres: prose, poetry and drama and these three genres form part of the senior secondary literature curriculum. Ogunaike, (2002) describes prose as a literary medium distinguished from poetry by its greater irregularity and variety of rhythm, its closer correspondence to the patterns of everyday speech, and its more detailed and factual definition of idea, objective or situation. Prose is divided into prose fiction and prose non-fiction. Prose fiction is literature about imagined people, places, events and situations. The purpose of prose fiction according to researchers (Uwaifo, 1979; Kennedy 1983; Williams 1990; Ogunaike, 2002) is to stimulate the reader's imagination and communicate the author's perception or view of the world. As the reader enters into the imaginary world of the writer, he becomes either negatively or positively influenced. On the other hand, prose non-fiction involves real people, their perceptions, lives and times. Non-fiction could be as exciting as fiction, read for the same pleasure people experience when reading novels.

Williams (1990) points out that prose fiction is private, reflective, sharpening the readers awareness of life and enables students share in the writer's imaginative experience while prose non-fiction referred to as occasional literature, deals with

important issues in a variety of styles, polemical, informative, argumentative, biographies and autobiographies. According to Attah (1996) and Akindele (1999), prose literature is a long narrative work of art; the product of the writer's creativity, meant to tell a story. There are two forms of prose fiction: the novel and the short story. Ogunsiji (2003) posits that the two distinguishing factors between the short story and the novel are length and level of character development. Despite the differences in length and character development, Okonkwo (1990) observes that both forms of prose take their subject matter from man's life and social experiences. Hence, in prose fiction, we are indirectly transported into an imaginary world depicting man's relationship with others, his fears, joys and woes as he struggles to come to terms with his social, cultural, religious and political environment.

Another important genre of literature is the 'poetic form' or poetry which has other sub-genres: lyric, ode, epic, sonnet, etc. (Kennedy, 1983). The major distinguishing factor between prose and poetry according to Brimberg, Davies, McGee, Messing and Nicholson (1991) is the fact that poetry is a more concentrated form of literature than prose. In poetry 'every moment, every word, and every syllable count'. Another difference is at the level of structural arrangement, while prose runs from margin to margin down the pages and written in the pattern of ordinary everyday speech, each line of poetry stops in a particular place for effect and it is written in verses and stanzas. Hornby (1962) defines poetry as a piece of writing in verse form, especially one expressing deeds, feelings or noble thoughts in a beautiful language composed with the desire to communicate an experience. In an attempt to show the interrelatedness between poetry, man and his social experiences, Mathew Arnold in Kennedy (1983) defines poetry as 'a criticism of life'. There is absolutely no singularly accepted definition of poetry as the assertions above indicate. This study describes poetry as a form of literary art utilized to communicate man's feelings and social experiences using a specialized language different from the everyday language of the prose.

Besides poetry, drama is another genre of literature presenting the human condition. According to Ogunsiji (2003) 'drama in Aristotelian model, is a representation of action', he describes drama as a recreation or invention of action or series of action on stage. It is therefore an imitation of life on stage. It is a form of art which can only be

realized through the theatre (Vincent 1979). Ezewu (1979) and Williams (1990) affirm that drama is primarily written to be performed by group of actors or persons on a stage before an assembly of spectators and audience. Drama, therefore, is a more public art than prose and poetry.

The various forms of drama are: tragedy, comedy, farce and tragic-comedy (Kennedy 1983; Ogunaike 2002). Whichever form drama takes, its functions and objectives remain the same. For instance, Vincent (1979) opines that drama educates by helping society to face its problems and boring issues, by suggesting alternatives, as a means of reflection on the human condition and by urging social cohesion. Apart from its didactic function, drama also serves as a means of entertainment, satirizing and correcting the ills of society.

### **2.3 Objectives of Teaching Literature**

Considering the numerous functions of literature and the unquantifiable value one stands to acquire from studying literature, it is not an overstatement to say that literature like education aims at the total development of man. It is on this premise that Cobin (1996) states that any man without the knowledge of literature is an intransitive vegetable. Going by this assertion, literature opens up a door of opportunities for the individual's development in the three domains: Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor domains, hence, the need for its full and effective inclusion in the school curriculum.

According to Culliman (1989), literature is used as a window into the lives of others and as a mirror into our own lives and identities. Thus, Peterson and Eeds (1990) opine that literature illuminates life. In an earlier study, Uwaifo (1979: 196) contends that 'unlike other subjects such as music, history, mathematics, science and philosophy which contribute to the complete education of man, the study of literature has traditionally been felt to have a unique effectiveness in opening the mind and illuminating it, purging the mind of prejudices as it makes it free and active'. The primary function of literature is to provide entertainment and pleasure (Adeyanju 1979; Uwaifo 1979; Ohia 2002). Going by these, literature appeals to the reader's emotion and intellect, thus, if literature fails to touch you on a deep emotional or intellectual level, despite its

technical perfection, then, it fails to achieve one of its primary aims ( Kirszner and Mandell 2000).

Literature leads to the development of the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains (Williams 1990; Ohia 2002). This is because literature enhances an individual's intellectual and linguistic ability, heightens the individual's feelings and attitudes; provides the individual opportunity for the exercise of judgment about man and his condition. In literature, therefore, readers see a reflection of themselves and their problems and are directly or indirectly affected by the characters' actions and the events they encounter in texts, readers are thus able to see how people in the past or in other cultures have grappled with various human problems plaguing individuals and groups in various societies (Giorgis and Johnson 1999; Freedman and Johnson 2002).

Through exposure to literature, students acquire knowledge of other people's culture, (both past and present) thereby enlarging their experiences as well as gaining insight into the lives of others – dead or living (Lazar 1994; Kizner and Mandell, 2000). This is why literary works of centuries ago can still find relevance in our world today. By studying literature, students encounter the world depicted in the texts, see how people grapple with various human problems across time and space, and then, become strengthened and empowered to solve their own problems. There is no end to the functions that literature performs in the overall development of man – physical, emotional, cognitive and psychological – it permeates every aspect of man as a living being, from the cradle to the grave.

The functions and values of literature enunciated above provide the basis for studying literature whether at the primary or secondary school levels of education. Specifically, Adeyanju (1997) divides the objectives of teaching literature into two: long term and short term objectives. According to him, the long term objectives include:

- (i) The development of an appreciation (and perhaps, a love) for literature, sometimes vaguely referred to as the 'enjoyment' of literature.
- (ii) The formation of a civilized character through the modification and enlargement of values, or more specifically, the development of the ability to think intelligently, maturely, and responsibly.

The short-term objectives which a teacher of literature in English must have at the back of his mind comprise:

- (a) To provide students with vicarious literary experiences;
- (b) To reinforce language learning.

Expanding further on his proposed objectives, Adeyanju (1997) posits that literature teaching is necessary because it provides students with the cognitive and affective development needed for civilized living in the modern world.

The senior secondary school literature curriculum makes a list of the goals which literature teaching intends to develop in the beneficiary thus:

- (i) To appreciate the creative use of language as found in the works of literature.
- (ii) To appreciate with critical sense literary materials in English.
- (iii) Produce their own literary and creative materials and
- (iv) Be culturally and intellectually aware of their environment as well as the world beyond.

At whatever level it is being studied, literature is very crucial because knowledge of literature acts as a catalyst in an individual's development in the three domains – cognitive, affective and psychomotor. It gives the individual an all round education, developing in him/her a sense of well-being and self-worth which will give the recipient the confidence needed to function effectively in the society.

Williams (1990) believes that the link between language and literature acts as a key factor in studying literature. Inclusion of literature in the curriculum makes the study of language simpler for the second language learner. Ogunaike (2002) feels that literature teaching in Nigeria secondary schools should include understanding of the text; deriving personal enjoyment from that understanding; training the critical faculties, exposing students to experiences which may contribute to their total moral, social, emotional and personal development; improving student's proficiency in spoken English and satisfying examination requirements in literature study. Speaking on the aims of teaching A - level literature, Brown and Gifford (1989) say it is to 'encourage an enjoyment and appreciation of English literature based on an informed personal response and to extend this appreciation where it has already been acquired'. It can be argued here that literature is much more than a means of facilitating language learning, appropriate and effective

literature study cannot be complete without focusing on reader's personal enjoyment and response to the literature text read.

#### **2.4 Characteristics of prose literature**

Prose literature is both fictional and non-fictional. As a fictional narrative it springs from the writer's imagination, though it could have some basis or relations to actual situations and people. Prose narrative is categorized into two major forms: the novel and the short story. Prose developed rapidly during the 17<sup>th</sup> century as a medium for the expression of ideas and events relating to ordinary people while the first novel came around the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Kirzner and Mandel (2000) observe that the novel, the most recent form of literature, developed from diverse sources- from the epic to the romance. Its development dates back to around the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century with Daniel Defoe credited to have written the first realistic novel in 1719. The short story came earlier from the old oral story telling tradition. The novel is described as 'an extended narrative' which appeals to readers as a result of its ability to present a wide range of characters in realistic settings and to develop them in depth. According to the Glenco/McGraw-Hill literature (1991), the novel is an extended fictional prose narrative about an imaginary world with realistic characters and events, presenting a particular vision of life or the world. This implies that in the novel, the human experience is conveyed through the narrator who tells the story. The short story on the other hand is a form of brief fictional narrative in prose that could be read in one sitting and develops one major conflict.

It is evident that the short story is limited in length and scope unlike the novel which is highly devoted to a great deal of space. This is why the novel has the ability to represent life in greater perspective, and present larger number of characters (both major and minor) more than the short story. Thus, the novel is noted for its complexity of plot structure, detailed description of setting and an in-depth character development. These attributes as well as its ability to realistically portray characters and their actions in what is recognizably everyday life is an important distinctive feature that sets the prose literature apart from other genres of literature.



Another distinctive feature of prose fiction is its narrative mode. As a literary medium, its pattern of correspondence is closer to the pattern of everyday speech, contrary to poetry (Lee 1996; Kennedy, 1983). While prose is presented in logically linked words, sentences, paragraphs and chapters, poetry, with the exception of free verse, is arranged into lines and groups of lines known as stanza (Boulton 1954). What this implies is that prose is noted for its clarity of language more than poetry; poetry makes special use of language to create effect, but in prose, language is used for meaning. The language of prose therefore, is familiar to readers; hence, prose appeals even to a 'simple but literate audience'. However, Boulton (1954) pointed out that though prose fiction makes for more reading and students are more responsive to prose than to poetry, it is more difficult to study prose critically than poetry because the techniques are less definable and the concentration less intense.

Besides, the subject matter of prose makes it an appropriate literary genre in secondary school classroom. Ogunsiji (2003) noted that the subject of prose centres on man and his social experiences. Prose, whether the novel or the short story, generally draws its subject matter from man and his experiences as he relates with others in his social environment. The unfamiliar cultural background of a text is one of the characteristics that may interfere with students' reading and interpretation of the text. Through the teaching of prose, precisely the novel, students are transported into the imaginative life of the text with its 'nuances and contradictions'. Thus, they need assistance to understand and situate the events and experiences encountered in the text within their own socio-cultural context. In dealing with the problem of unfamiliar cultural background, Lazar (1990) notes that the cultural background of a text is not limited only to the historical, political, and economic facts which may form the background to the novel, it includes also the complicated set of social and literary values underlying the text.

Other features of the prose text, especially the novel which may have serious implications for the teaching of the prose text according to Lazar (1990), include: the length, the complicated plot structure, the unfamiliar language in which the text is written, understanding the characters and point of view. A lengthy text can be particularly boring to students especially when it is not within students' linguistic ability. Reeves

(2004) opine that students who get disengaged with reading fiction blame their lack of interest on the length of the books, the incomprehensibility of the vocabulary and events in the text. There is also the problem of inability to decipher the author's world view or beliefs which he/she intends to communicate. This is particularly problematic when students are unable to differentiate between the author and narrator; hence they find it difficult to infer author's meanings. The complex plot which results from the frequent distortion in the chronological presentation of events of the text constitute problem to student's understanding of the text too.

In addition to the above, the complexity of the language used in the text demands that students be given assistance to be able to make meaningful interpretation of the text. Language in this case involves both the linguistic and the literary. As second language learners, students may lack both linguistic and literary competence required to interpret the novel and this may influence their overall understanding of the narrative pattern, the themes, the plot, the characters, the point of view, the setting and the style. Reading and understanding the prose text i.e. the novel, demands that these elements of the novel be intricately interwoven to achieve the desired meaning and moral significance of the text (Lawal 2000). So, in teaching the novel, the teacher should endeavour to show the relationship between these literary elements in the overall understanding of the text. Exposing students to prose teaching in secondary schools is a rewarding exercise because it enhances linguistic and cultural awareness as well as the acquisition of problem solving skills, however, the inherent characteristics of the prose text identified above, to a greater extent, affect how the text is read and understood, therefore, students need assistance in form of individual and small collaborative group activities to read and understand the text.

## **2.5 Prose Literature Instruction in Nigeria**

Method of teaching is an important area to be considered in any activity involving effective teaching and learning. According to Crandall, Jaramillo, Olsen and Peyton (2005) 'teachers can employ various methods to help students see how ideas and concepts relate to one another and fit into a larger picture'. This is because when students understand the relationship among concepts, they would be able to quickly and

effectively grasp and develop well-structured mental pictures about what they are learning. However, Crandall, Jaramillo, Olsen and Peyton (2005) indicate that, students fail to make this connection between concepts due to poor teaching method. Johnson and Johnson (1993) also identify method of teaching as one of the factors that create problems for students in the appreciation of literature. This necessitates the need to look at some of the methods teachers employ in the teaching of prose literature in schools. There is conflicting evidence on method of teaching literature in Nigerian schools. For instance, Uwaifo (1979), in a study on methods of teaching prose literature, finds that the methodology of prose teaching in the schools studied is basically the same, the 'bring out your book and read approach'. In a different study, Tomlison and Ellis (1990); Ogunaike (2002) echo similar views. In this particular method, as Uwaifo observes, most teachers usually start prose teaching with:

- (i) Silent reading followed by vocal reading (in which some students are asked to read few sentences aloud in the class).
- (ii) Asking questions as the lesson proceeds or at the end of each chapter.
- (iii) Calling students' attention to the author's style; and
- (iv) Discussion of some past questions (particularly in upper classes).

The above view is supported by Ogunsiji (2003) who maintains that prose is badly taught in secondary schools. Teachers' focus is on 'story narration, treating past examination questions, and engaging students in vocal reading of the text'. It can be inferred that most teachers of literature in the secondary school model their teaching on the knowledge transmission approach. This practice which enhances teacher dominance to the detriment of students' active participation in classroom instruction has some cultural connotations. It is believed that elders are the custodians of knowledge, thus, their views cannot be contested. Since teachers are elders; they are therefore, looked upon as custodians of right answers to what a literary text could mean. Researchers (Lawal, 1981; Ezeokoli 1986; Tomlison and Ellis 1990; Ogunnaike, 2002) have equally expressed dissatisfaction with the conventional method of prose teaching which is dominated by teacher talk in which lesser skills of recounting incidents and summarizing events are developed at the expense of those higher skills central to literature appreciation such as critical, creative and inferential reading skills. In this kind of classroom, there is little

student participation because students only listen to teachers' explanations and are expected to recall the facts of the story for examination purposes. Ezeokoli (2002) therefore observes that the poor learning outcome experienced in literature, results from the fact that teaching is more or less examination oriented.

To curb the problem of poor method of teaching literature to a minimal level, researchers (Aluko, 1990; Ogunaike, 2002; Ogunsiji, 2003) advocate the use of discussion method as an effective strategy of teaching prose literature. It is believed that discussion method provides avenue for the use of expressive activities capable of eliciting desired response from students; this will probably eliminate the question of monotony resulting from much teacher dominance. Buttressing this fact, Freedman and Johnson (2000) note that, it is not only the reading of the book that causes readers to grow, it is also the social act of discussing the literature with peers and adults that makes for a greater understanding.

Owoeye (2003) identifies improvisation, demonstration, dramatization and activity method as important methods of teaching prose literature. Making prose teaching effective and interesting requires that teachers take students through varied classroom activities that are capable of sustaining their interest. It means that part of the problem of underachievement in literature is that of poor methodology. One undeniable fact of students' effective performance in literature remains their active engagement with the text. Strategies and methods that promote individual and group engagement with the text are likely to ensure that students interact and transact with the prescribed texts. In this respect, the use of literature circles and scaffolding strategies in this study would seem very appropriate in enhancing students' active engagement with texts.

Classroom research in the area of literature teaching indicates that one of the major problems confronting the teaching of literature in secondary schools stems from the ineffective and improper handling of the subject by teachers (Uwaifo, 1979; Bisong, 1976; Ezeokoli, 2002; Ogunaike, 2003; Ogunsiji, 2003). In most cases, there are no qualified literature teachers to do the job, while the available ones not only lack knowledge of the method to employ (Bisong, 1996) but also lack knowledge of the subject matter. They take the literature lesson as an avenue to teach reading skills and grammatical structures (Peterson and Eeds (1990). Ubahakwe (1979) observes that

teachers tend to teach actual information and rarely encourage close reading and analysis of the text. According Hymes, (1974); Uwaifo, (1979) Lawal, (1982); Ezeokoli, (1986); Aluko, (1990), Ogunaike, (2002), teachers of literature hardly read the literature texts, and so hardly prepare for the lesson. Those who do, focus mainly on making students understand the content; learn the facts of the story and be able to recall them for the purpose of examination.

Bisong (1996) looks at the problem of teaching the novel in Nigerian secondary schools from three angles: First and foremost from the teacher's perspective. According to him, teachers of literature perceive themselves as authorities who freely hand out interpretations of texts and expect learners to accept such interpretations unquestioningly; learners at the secondary level on the other hand lack the linguistic tools to carry out any meaningful interpretation of literature, their poor mastery of the English language makes it difficult for them to read the literature texts recommended. Hence they depend solely on teachers' notes and the readily available literature guides in the market. As a result, students are not taught, according to Pugh (1988) and Ezeokoli (2002), to personally connect to literature; so they fail to make close analytical and critical reading of the prose text. Learners are denied opportunity to make personal responses to literature. This trend negates what Lewis (1961) refers to as 'reader meets text' where students as readers are expected to interact with the text to get meaning from it. Lack of direct experience of the literary text portrayed here also contributes to students' lack of interest and poor performance in literature.

Method of teaching cannot be effectively applied without certain structures being put in place like the availability of teaching materials such as appropriate reading texts. Effective teaching of prose literature cannot be achieved if prose texts are not available for students to read. The problem of text availability has received considerable attention among researchers in the teaching of prose literature because lack of suitable textbooks for use in the literature classroom negates the idea of teachers encouraging extensive in and out of school reading (Ezeokoli 1986; Aluko 1990; Ogunaike 2002; Onukaogu 2002 and Adegbite 2005). They condemn the apparent lack of material resources in prose literature teaching. Students in literature classes hardly buy recommended texts and where they do, they rarely read at their leisure, thus, they fail to see literature as an art

worthy of appreciation. Some literature researchers; Aluko (1990), Ogunaike (2002), Onukaogu (2002) believe that the lack of literature texts contributes to poor teaching and learning of literature in schools. Lack of recommended literature text is not only a student-related factor; it is also school and teacher-related factors. Most often the teachers and schools do not make attempt to make the recommended texts available and accessible to students. If this is done, the problem of students not purchasing these texts or not doing extensive (in and out of school) reading will be reduced.

Similarly, curriculum issues related to method constitute further problem to the teaching of prose literature in school. Adebite (2005) identifies two major problems plaguing literature in English teaching at present. The first is what he terms the unproductive dichotomy made between language and literature in the English language curriculum at the senior secondary school level and the second is the improper evaluation of the subject in the literature examination. For examination purposes, teachers only emphasize intensive literary appreciation of few texts to the detriment of extensive literary reading of the many texts contained in the syllabus. As a result, students are only being spoon-fed to pass examination while the main objective of ensuring a wider reading of literary texts by students is defeated. Ezeokoli (2002) points out that instructional goals rather than examination should determine the content of what to teach in literature and how to teach it. In essence, as teachers work towards covering curriculum content, they must not lose focus of why they want students to study literature and why students need to read specific literature texts and not others. Teachers need to be aware of both the long and short term goals of teaching literature as well as set achievable goals for themselves. According to Beach, Appleman, Hynds and Wilhelm (2006), goals teachers set reflect their beliefs about the value of teaching literature and this will also influence how they teach literature.

## **2.6 Relationship between Language, Literature and Reading**

Today, values of literature are viewed from different perspectives. In the first instance, literature is viewed as an agent for language development and improvement . . . thus, the study of literature is fundamentally a study of language in operation (Williams 1990, Langer 1999; Onukaogu 2002). According to the Junior Secondary School

Curriculum, literature is the laboratory where students go to practice their theories and ideas of English. In this capacity, literature serves to deepen and reinforce the knowledge acquired through formal English studies. Researchers believe that studying the language of literary texts as language in operation enhances learners' appreciation of aspects of the different systems of language organization. Hence, Onukaogu and Ohia (2003), Adegbite (2005) advocate the integration of literature in the English language curriculum at all levels of secondary education to achieve a balanced language curriculum. Onukaogu (2002) posits that the language students read, hear and dialogue on in fiction enhances their fluency and accuracy in language use. Oamen (2004) also emphasizes that literature is an effective input material in English language acquisition.

Vincent (1979) equally argues that mastery of language is a pre-requisite for adequate understanding, enjoyment and appraisal of literature. Through literature, language helps the child to understand himself and define his world, always expanding his awareness by being in contact with new ideas and concepts. Akporobaro (1994) notes specifically that prose works by means of the figurative use of language, in poetry; figurative language is employed beyond the limit and level of prose. Prose is bound up with the rational use of language, and poetry is bound up with the emotional use of language and its resources. Literature provides avenue for the use of language in an elevated and special forms such as figures of speech and imagery like simile, metaphor, personification, irony, apostrophe, hyperbole, oxymoron, onomatopoeia, as well as such literary devices as proverbs, allegory and symbols. In spite of the above findings, language teaching cannot be substituted for literature teaching. They are different but related concepts in the sense that knowledge of one enhances the acquisition of the other; Language is a tool of literature and through literature, language finds expression. Therefore, both subjects are subsumed within the same English studies curriculum at the lower secondary but separated as different subjects with different but related goals at the Senior Secondary school level.

Though reading (an important language skill) is as natural to literature as breath is to life, integrating literature into language under the practice of 'reading skills' as Adegbite (2005) suggests will reduce literature lesson to a mere reading comprehension lesson, contrary to the essence of teaching literature which according to Serafini (2000)

is to get students actively engaged in quality piece of literature, enjoy the text, generate, share ideas and negotiate meaning with other engaged readers. Literature should not be taken as an entire reading programme; otherwise, it becomes a technical event where reading skills dominate. Meanwhile, reading and literature are interrelated; hence McQuillan (1999) believes that without the reading process or the reader, there would be nothing like literature. It is only by reading that one can explore the world of the text. On the other hand, literature offers man the opportunity to engage in the act of reading.

For further clarifications, Onukaogu (2002) notes that literature enhances students' ability to become voracious readers and as Hume (1996) points out, reading literature improves greater reading comprehension; enhances broader vocabulary acquisition and improves positive attitude to reading. The WAEC Chief Examiners' Reports (2005 and 2007) blame students' poor performance in literature on their inability to read recommended texts. These reports indicate that the major weakness of students who wrote the prose literature examination is lack of in-depth knowledge of the recommended texts. Many of the students did not show evidence of having read the text because majority of them merely wrote scanty answers memorized from short notes. Thus, students' performance in literature over the years, as presented on table 1 has consistently been poor, necessitating the need for the present study

## **2.7 Literature circles, models, uses and effectiveness in Academic Achievement**

Literature Circle is not a new instructional strategy, but little is known about its use in teaching second language literature in English in a second language context like Nigeria. The term was first coined by Short and Kauffman (1986) influenced by Rosenblatt's (1978) Reader Response theory. Emphasis is on independent and collaborative reading and discussion of student self-selected, unabridged, unexcepted children's literature with school age children (Edelsky, 1988; Peterson and Eds, 1990). It is therefore better used with whole text.

Drawing from the works of theorists like Dewey (1916); Rogers (1969) and Piaget (1947), Stringer, Reynolds and Simpson (2003) suggest that 'learning takes place best when children are allowed to learn by doing, take ownership of their studies through opportunities that lead to freedom of choice and when social interaction abounds in the



learning environment'. Hence, in the view of the researchers, literature circles is 'a process through which students meet in a small collaborative setting to read, discuss and reflect on what they have read' with the teacher acting as a facilitator. According to Short and Kauffman (1986) literature circles are mere flexible discussion groups that support readers in thinking critically about texts. The participants read and then come together to talk about what they have read, to extend and deepen each participant's understanding by sharing thoughts and ideas that might not have otherwise been explored.

Two basic ideas about literature circles are that: they give students the power to self-select what they want to read and discuss; secondly, they offer students opportunities to interpret their reading in cooperative groups (Long and Gove, 2003). Finke and Edwards (1997) noted that 'though reading is an isolated act but literature circles enables students take this isolative experience and connect it to other people who have had similar experiences. It opens up your world to them and their world to you'. They further explained that two people may read the same book and receive two different gifts because people bring to the written page their own background experiences and sense of the world. Long and Gove (2003) note that literature circles focus on students' centered dialogues generated from individuals having previously read and reflected upon self-selected texts. In a more comprehensive definition, Daniels (2000) writes:

Literature circles are small temporary peer-led discussion groups whose members have chosen to read the same story, poem, article or book. While reading each group assigned portion of the text (either in or outside of class) members make notes to help them contribute to the upcoming discussion, and everyone comes to the group with ideas to share. Each group follows a reading and meeting schedule, holding periodic discussion on the way through 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 other finishing groups, select more reading and move into a new circle. (p. 2)

Literature circles groups are not permanent, they may be changed at the end of each novel and each student's specific role also changes at the end of each group meeting. Thus, there is fluidity in group formation. Therefore, students can easily be regrouped because groups are not by ability level but by choice of text selected. The most

important thing here is to form and maintain small functional discussion groups of students reading the same material.

In ideal literature circles classroom according to Long and Goves (2003), discussions are student-led and authentic in the sense that children learn to respect each other's opinion about the themes within the text and deliberate on one another's ideas as they engage in critical response to the text. Students also engage in high-level thinking and reflection by encouraging collaboration and construction of meaning with other readers. Daniels (2002) reports that most of the kid-run literature discussion groups in their studies exhibit distinct features of true collaboration such as students initiated enquiry, choice, self-direction, mutual interdependence, face-to-face interaction, self and group assessment.

On this basis, Short and Kaufman (1986); Daniels (2002); Tierney and Readence, (2000); Hill, Noe and King (2003); Long and Gove (2003) point out that literature circles meeting should take place in a conversational, fun-filled collaborative environment that fosters students' ability to read and interpret a literature text from more than one perspective and point of view; become more purposeful and reflective, question one another's opinion, change their minds and push one another's thinking as they discuss actions that could be taken in relation to the issues at hand.

Literature circles is an instructional strategy that transcends age and grade-level. Brown (2001) points out that literature circles can be used successfully for students of all ages, from primary grades through college. The only difference is in the depth of discussion and analysis of the books read. Everyone enjoys the benefits of literature circles which according to Brown (2001) is mainly on 'building a personal connection with and deeper understanding of literature in collaboration with others'. This is why literature circles Instructional Strategy is considered an appropriate and effective strategy for the teaching of prose literature to Senior Secondary School Students in second language context like Nigeria. It is therefore, expected that the use of this strategy will enhance students' attitude to and achievement in prose literature in English.

## Literature Circles Models

Literature circles is a highly adaptable instructional strategy, so there are as many ways of structuring literature circles as there are teachers and students eager to try Brown (2001). Therefore, Chandler (2004), in her online literary lessons, identifies the following literature circles models which teachers can try out in their classrooms: Basic literature circles modified literature circles, literature circles with roles, non-fiction literature circles and structured literature circles.

- (1) **Basic literature circles:** This model, designed by Daniels (1994; 2002), is a very flexible model which does not require extensive handouts and assignment booklets. Below are the basic steps in this model:
  - (i) Choose 3-4 books (within students' ability level)
  - (ii) Give a book talk and allow students to select. Based on their selection, create a reading group.
  - (iii) Make a response journal for each student.
  - (iv) Have students read the self-selected texts alone, with a partner or in small groups and let them assign pages to be read to themselves.
  - (v) As they read, they mark discussion points in their books or write in their response journals. They bring their notes and questions to the meeting. Once a week they write a full response in their mini-journal.
  - (vi) On meeting days, the teacher meets with one group at a time or move from group to group.
  - (vii) They can read from the response journals or be involved in activities such as creating graphic organizers.
  - (viii) At the end of a book, students evaluate their participation by using an evaluation form. The teacher then grades them by using their journals and the literature circles evaluation form.
- (2) **Modified literature circles:** The essence of the modified literature circles model, according to Chandler (2004), is to meet the needs of the slow learners. This model requires the help of an assistant who may be a teacher, a student-teacher or a parent volunteer. In this model:
  - i) Students are assigned easier and shorter books to read

- ii) Students are required to meet everyday
  - iii) teacher or ( the assistant) is expected to read one or two chapters aloud and discuss what is read with students.
  - iv) teacher assigns students the chapter(s) to be read for homework
  - v) Students are given response slips on which to write one or two sentence as summary of the chapters read.
- (3) **Literature circles with roles:** In literature circle with roles model, teachers assign specific roles to students, design temporary role sheets to start students off with literature circle discussion. This model which involves both individual and group work is designed by Daniels (1994:2002). In this model:
- i. Students are assigned specific roles
  - ii. These roles rotate for each meeting
  - iii. Each student is given a copy of the literature role description sheet.
  - iv. Assign each student in the group one role at a time
  - v. As they read, they prepare their response logs based on their roles, which they bring to each discussion.
  - vi. Students keep rotating their roles until they finish their book.
- (4) **Non-Fiction literature circles:** This model is mainly used for basal and for non-fiction reading materials. Daniels designs the non-fiction response question to enable students keep their reading response log. Students read together and take notes on the 'reading day' while they meet on another scheduled day to discuss the material used. Students also have to make entries in their response log prior to the meeting day. On the meeting day, they read their responses and discuss their view of the book. The teacher meets with each group for a few minutes, designs different types of question for each group and completes the non-fiction evaluation sheet.
- (5) **Structured literature circles:**
- i) It does not involve use of roles.

- ii) Each group meets once a week with the teacher in a small group setting.
- iii) Students read independently and prepare for the literature meeting.
- iv) Meeting takes place once or twice a week till the book is completed.

(6) **Virtual /online literature circles**

The idea behind virtual/online literature circle is to extend discussion beyond the classroom space and keep students connected even outside the classroom. New technologies, such as computer, the internet and web 2.0, are changing the face of teaching and learning in the present millennia, hence Palfrey and Glasser (2008) have challenged teachers to either embrace the power of the new technology or continue to react with fear and suspicion towards it, leaving students to navigate the waters on their own. Reacting to this challenge, some literature circles practitioners are investigating the connection between technology and literature circles (Petko 2011). Incorporating technology into literature circles is to strengthen the weekly face-to-face classroom discussion and not to replace it (Moreillon, Hunt, & Ewing, 2009).

The virtual literature circles structure is basically the same with the face-to-face structure. The only difference is that students connect to group members online, post their comments, share ideas and carry out other tasks on the particular blog or learning site created by the teacher. This is done in between the weekly face-to-face meetings.

For the purpose of this study, the basic literature circles model and the literature circles with roles model were used within the ambience of the face-to-face structure in reading and discussing the prose literature texts selected for the study. This is because both models are basically meant to be used with fiction texts and also have the tendency to:

- i. Enhance students' full participation in the literature discussion.
- ii. Enhance students' active engagement with texts read.
- iii. Encourage individual and collaborative group work.
- iv. Enhance students' critical and reflective thinking skills.
- v. Develop students' social skills of turn-taking and respect for others' views and opinions.

- vi. Improve students' sense of responsibility and decision making.
- vii. Develop in students the skills of long life reading and writing i.e. literacy skills.
- viii. Develop the skills of literary appreciation and content analysis of texts.

In literature circles with roles, the teacher assigns roles to students, 'designed to create positive interdependence by giving group members clearly defined and interlocking but very open-ended tasks' (Daniels 2002:99). These roles embody different kinds of cognitive skills (connecting, questioning, illustrating, visualizing etc) that enable students 'engage with, understand and remember what they have read'. In addition, role sheets are designed to help students record their responses and provide support structure for students' discussion. Meanwhile in the basic literature circle model, instead of the roles and role sheets, students are simply taught the thinking or cognitive skills while they record their responses in reading logs to make literature discussions more natural and sophisticated. According to Daniels (2002; 2006), there is a serious debate over the use of role sheets in literature circles. While some school of thought believe that children should engage in whole, real activities instead of splitting complex activities into component parts, others believe that it is better to separate whole complex activities into sub-parts. Hence, literature circles with role sheets is becoming unpopular among teachers, not only for its tendency to restrict students to a mere reading of their role sheet entries, but also because it restricts students just to the particular roles assigned to them for each discussion, instead of venturing into open-ended discussion of the text. As a result of the above, the researcher observes that many teachers are abandoning the use of role sheets for reading logs.

This researcher therefore submits that this controversy notwithstanding, literature circles can still be used with or without role sheets. To address the identified weakness in the use of role sheets, this study restricted the use of role sheets to the beginning of every discussion and for the purpose of illustrations and clarifications. Besides, successes are still being recorded with the use of roles and role sheets in literature circles discussion groups especially in advanced book clubs rather than beginning ones. It therefore implies that the debate over the use of role sheets or reading logs for effective literature circles

discussion is inconclusive; hence, the need for further research in the use of the two models for effective reading and discussion of prose literature texts in a second language context.

### **Essential elements of literature circles**

Literature circles is not a time when students sit back, listen to and reproduce whatever the teacher thinks is the interpretation of the text it is a time for collaborative activity with their peers. Collaboration is therefore at the heart of literature circles (Brown, 2001).

Prior to literature circles meeting, the teacher gives a book talk on the books selected. The texts selected according to the Eric Digest (2004):

1. Must be within the readability level of students
2. Must reflect students language needs
3. Must be made available and accessible to students.

However, the students make the final choice of texts to be studied.

Daniels (1994) and Tearney and Readence (2000) give the following as important elements of every literature circles discussion group:

1. Students choose texts they want to read
2. Small temporary groups are formed based on choice of text.
3. Different groups may read different texts or different parts of the same text.
4. Groups schedule regular time to meet and discuss what they have read.
5. Students use notes or study guides to guide their discussion.
6. Discussion ideas and questions come from students.
7. Discussions are open ended and take place in an environment that foster natural conversation about books so personal connections, digressions and open-ended questions are welcome.
8. The teacher's role is that of facilitator.
9. Students play rotating roles in the group.
10. When books are finished, groups share their reading with other members of the class (through artistic creation, music, poetry, etc)
11. Evaluation is by teacher observation, portfolios and students self-evaluation.
12. A spirit of fun and playfulness pervades the room.

## **Roles and Responsibilities in Literature Circles**

Daniels (1994); (2002) believes that using literature circles with pre-defined roles that students take turn fulfilling allows the group to function effectively. He noted that the role sheet is the most important ingredient in the literature circles process. However, Brown (2001) criticizes the over dependence on role sheets and suggests that as soon as the formal use of roles have become internalized and students have become comfortable with the literature discussion, the roles can be discontinued because roles have the potential of undermining students natural conversation.

The major roles assigned to students in a literature circles discussion, according to Daniels (1994); (2002); Tierney and Readence (2000); Hill, Noe and Johnson (2001) include;

- 1) **Discussion director/moderator/questioner:** This is the moderator of the group. Prior to discussion meeting, the director or questioner writes about 5 questions that will set off the discussion. The questions asked must centre round the portion of the text read. She/he must have also written the answers to assess if the members are correctly answering the questions or not.
- 2) **Literary luminary/passage master:** His duty is to point out important literary devices in the text, interesting or important passages within the text, literary elements like plot, theme, setting, characters, and style.
- 3) **Capable connector:** The student who performs this role is to find connection between experiences within the text read and outside the text i.e. connecting the events in the story to real life situations or to personal experiences, to movies/films, to another literature text read and/or to a topic studied in the class.
- 4) **Word wizard/vocabulary enricher:** The student assigned this role picks and presents about 8-12 unusual or difficult words from the portion of the text read; she/he asks other members of the group to find the words in the text and suggest the meaning as used in context or get the meaning from the dictionary.
- 5) **Illustrator/skillful artist:** This student paints or draws a picture, sketches or employs any other form of artistic work to represent an important or significant idea or scene from the story read. At the meeting the artist describes the picture explaining why he or she decided to draw it.



Other roles apart from the major ones above which members of the discussion group may be assigned include: summary director, character captain, travel tracer, or scene setter and selection director (Terney and Reedence (2000)

However, two other students may be assigned the roles of secretary/recorder and a leader. The secretary /recorder keeps general records of the meeting such as taking notes of which student performs which role, keeps record of the days of meeting, names of group members present, volume of material to be read at a time, collects students written responses to hand in to the teacher at the end of the meeting. The leader/facilitator on the other hand ‘orients the group to discuss one idea to the next, one role at a time, makes sure that members of the circles share equally and that the circles is focused and functions smoothly’ (Hill, Johnson and Noe (1995); Bailey, online article, 2004). Both the secretary and the leader still take part in the literature circles roles; the role of the secretary and leader may also be rotated among group members

### **The Importance of Literature Circles as an Instructional Strategy**

One may wonder why literature circles in the classroom. What is so special about literature circles that make it so different from other forms of group discussions? To answer these questions, Zeiger (2002:4) identifies the following reasons why she employs this strategy in her reading classroom:

- (1) It engages and challenges her students, making them accountable for their reading.
- (2) Literature circles encourage collaborative discussion of the text read as well as enhance students’ understanding and appreciation of the story read.
- (3) Through Literature circles, students develop important time management skills.
- (4) Students acquire the opportunity to become successful readers.
- (5) As students are offered the opportunity to take part in performing all the five roles each week, they learn to internalize strategies for text comprehension.

More specifically, literature circles strategy is very important because through that students will develop the following skills:

- a) Develop vocabulary by reading independently.
- b) Develop vocabulary by listening to reading and discussing both familiar and conceptually challenging selections.

- c) Understand how conflicts are resolved in a story (including but not limited to problem, solution or resolution).
- d) Students make inferences and draw conclusions regarding story elements of a grade level or higher level text (e.g. the traits, actions, and motives of characters; plot development; setting).
- e) Students know that the attitudes and values that exist in a time period affect stories and informational articles written during that time/period.
- f) Students identify and use literary terminology appropriate to their grade level (including theme, simile, metaphor, alliteration, personification, etc).
- g) Students understand how the author's choices of language (e.g. sensory words, vocabulary choice) and story structure (e.g. rhymes, story patterns) contribute to the overall quality of a literary work.
- h) Students respond to literature by explaining how motives of the characters and the cause of events compare with those of their own life.
- i) Develop the skill of alternative listening
- j) Develop the skill of responding to speaker such as asking questions, paraphrasing to confirm understanding, summarizing, making contributions and offering feedback.
- k) Develop discussion strategies e.g. acting as participant, leader; organizing information for a group; using evidence to support ideas (Zeiger, 2002: p. 5).

Above all, literature circles is important because it enables students to develop a general love for literature; read books that interest them; and meet weekly in student-led groups to share ideas with peers on the novels they have read.

### **Empirical Studies on Literature Circles**

Literature circles instructional strategy has proved to be of immense benefits to students and even to the teachers who make use of it. Though there is no documented evidence of empirical research work on this strategy by local researchers, it has been extensively documented by foreign researchers. The strategy has proved effective in improving the reading skills and enjoyment of at risk students such as ESL students, poor readers or reluctant readers. According to Chandler cited in Brown (2001), many aspects

of literature circles such as choosing books with real characters, working their way through real lives, reading books with support from partners, volunteers, a recording of the book, or a resource teacher; talking about book with other readers . . . , confirming what you understand and adding your own insights; writing about books and extending understanding through artistic response offer natural support for at risk students.

The above assertion indicates that literature circles make readers engaged and active as they respond passionately to the books they have read; offering both personal insights and well-supported evidence from the text. Corroborating Brown's (2001) assertion, Peralt-Nash and Dutch (2000) note that literature circles provide a low risk learning environment for children who are learning English as a second language. They assert that when the teacher selects both English and non English text to reflect the needs and abilities of the learners in the same circle, students from both English speaking and linguistic minority background benefit. This is possible because they are able to make use of the linguistic resources and knowledge they possess in order to make sense of the text, to relate it to their life experiences and to participate in the group discussion.

Literature circles strategy has also been found to enhance the classroom climate. Burns (1998) observes that what makes literature circles unique is that it incorporates features that can change (even traditional) classroom to be more cooperative, responsible and pleasurable while encouraging the growth of reading. Such features include choice, groups of mixed ability, student management of small group and independent reading time. Through the power of choice, Burns went further to say that students are motivated to make decisions on what to read; when to read and what will be discussed in their group. The social interaction which literature circles discussion promotes enables students to listen to other modes of thinking; verbalize content and hear other perspectives which contribute to deepening their understanding; heightening their enjoyment of the literature text and enhancing a stronger reader-text-relationship (Brabham and Villaume (2000); Stein and Beed 2004). Therefore, this researcher agrees with Roberts' (2002) view that literature circles help students develop a broader understanding of what they read as they interact with themselves, the book and the teacher in an ongoing dialogue.

One of the areas of focus in the reading classroom is in the area of gender differences. Therefore, researchers have tried to explore gender behaviour in literature circles group. For instance, Benjamin and Irwin (1998); Johnson (2000) studied the 'girls only' literature circles in the middle school. The study reveals that adolescent girls in such discussion groups sustain their voices and maintain their sense of self compared to the traditional classroom in which according to Orenstein (1994) boys often dominate the discussion as well as draw attention from the teacher. In essence, literature circles strategy helps to promote gender equity and the problem of gender differences in reading classroom. It gives the 'silenced' adolescent girls the opportunity to be self-expressive and participate effectively in the literature discussion.

According to Daniels (2002), empirical research on the use of literature circles in classrooms across the United States is growing quickly. Research indicates that literature circles improve students' achievement scores. Thus, Daniels (2002) pointed out that between 1995 and 1998, research indicates that the use of literature circles by teachers in a group of struggling Chicago schools show that in reading, these schools outstripped citywide test scores gains by 14% in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, 9% in 6th grade and 10% in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. In writing, the schools topped citywide gains by 25% in grade 3, 8% in grades 6 and 27% in grades 8. Therefore, literature Circles not just help Kids become readers but prove that they are readers on the mandated measure of proficiency. Kinger, Vaughn and Schumm (1998) in their study found that students in peer-led groups made greater gains than controls in reading comprehension and equal gains in content knowledge after reading and discussing social studies material in peer- led groups.

Martinerz-Raldan and Lopez Robertson (2000) studied the effect of literature circles in a first grade bilingual classroom and the result shows that young bilingual children, no matter their linguistic background, are able to have rich discussions if they have regular opportunities to engage with books. The study also reveals that many Spanish and Hispanic children in the study made personal connections with stories than the English-speaking children. The result of this study infers that the use of literature circles in the teaching of prose literature in English would be beneficial in enhancing students' achievement. Daniels (2002) went further to list a catalogue of the research documenting the benefits of literature circles to various categories of student/learners. For

instance, literature circles proved beneficial when used with inner city students (Pardo, 1992); incarcerated adolescents (Hill and Van Horn, 1995); 'resistant' learners (Hauschildt and McMahan, 1996); homeless children and children living in poverty (Hanning, 1998); second language learners (MacGillivray, 1995); and English as a foreign language (EFL) learners (Dupuy, 1997).

Morocco, Hindin, Mata-Aguilar and Clark-Chiarelli (2001) in a study to find out whether significant difference exists in the mean scores of students with disabilities, high achieving students and normally achieving students in a measure of writing fluency using literature circles, find that the scores of normally achieving students and students with disabilities did not differ significantly from one another. The Mean scores of students with disability, normally achieving class and high achieving class were 1.13, 1.56 and 2.24 respectively. Thus students with disabilities perform comparably to the other students. Result of the study carried out by Maduabuchi, (2006) to determine the effect of literature circles on second language learners' comprehension of poetry reveals that posttest achievement scores of students exposed to literature circles increased compared to students in the control group.

The use of literature circles helps to build students' self-esteem; hence, Stringer, Renolds and Simpson (2003) studied effects of collaboration between classroom teacher and a school councilor through literature circles on students' self esteem. The study shows that though there is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test measures of self-concept over a two month period, the self-concept scores between the two teachers were found to be significant in the area of identity only. This implies that students taught in literature circles group acquired a high self-view, identity being a measure of self-view is associated with change in the area of self-concept. This of course collaborates Reynolds (1997) view that self-concept correlated with mathematics and reading achievement and once students lack in their ability to read low self-esteem sets in.

There is no doubt, therefore, that research supporting the use of literature circles as an effective instructional strategy is gradually building up. It would not be presumptuous then to infer from the studies above that literature circles enhance students' participation in conversations about text; improve critical responses to the texts read and equip students with the skills needed to connect texts to their life experiences. Thus, not

only do students enjoy the literature text(s) read in the context of the collaborative small group discussion provided by literature circles strategy but also become effective readers.

Apart from being beneficial to students, literature circles is also useful to teachers. According to Daniels (2002), the boom in children's literature circles in classrooms across America has actually led to a change in teachers' negative attitude towards reading, thus: the researcher asserts:

It has always been one of the great ironies of reading instruction in America that so few teachers actually read themselves. Indeed very few of us habitually read books – novels, biographies, history, current events – as a steady and routine part of our lives . . . But now more and more teachers are coming back to books . . . In many school districts, such teacher book clubs and study groups have become an official and encouraged form of staff development, offering a more personalized and peer-driven kind of growth experience (p. 6).

The above assertion indicates that teachers have equally gained from this collaborative book-sharing. As teachers give book talk and prepare students to choose, read and discuss texts that are of interest to them and take responsibility for their learning, they too (teachers) are increasingly becoming more involved in reading books of different category – great books, classics, adult books, professional books, children's books or young adult books. They did not stop at just reading books but they also gather with other colleagues to share what they have read.

The success of literature circles as an instructional strategy is strengthened by it meeting the standard of the National Council of Teachers of English and International Reading Association (NCTE/IRA) which encourages literature-based collaborative classrooms where students take increasing responsibility for choosing, reading and discussing books. The popularity of Literature circles as an instructional strategy is not only limited to America, but also to Australia, Asia, and all corners of Europe. In all these places, teachers have recorded a general improvement in reading instruction as reported by Daniels (2002). For the sake of emphasis, Daniels (2002) asserts that:

In spite of the notorious and energy sapping reading wars which have pitted phonic fans against literature advocates for the past few decades, reading instruction has generally improved. Kids are reading much more good

literature than they were generations ago. . . In classroom, having kids read aloud and answer factual recall questions no longer passes for good instruction. Teachers now ask kids to engage text at higher levels of thinking, drawing inferences, forming hypothesis, making judgments and supporting conclusions about what they read (p. 5).

Building appropriate responses to literature text is lacking in the traditional literature classroom (Pugh, 1988; Ezeokoli, 2002). Hence, this study intends to investigate the effect of this strategy in teaching prose literature in English at the senior secondary school level.

### **Problems Associated with Literature Circles**

In spite of the benefits and the various empirical research findings on the effectiveness of literature circles, Brown (2001); Daniels (2002) identified some minor problems associated with literature circles. Such problems include the assessment mania; terminology drift and the jeopardy of the role sheets.

(a) **Assessment Mania:**

(b) According to the Daniels (2002), the essence of assessment is to maintain standard and ensure accountability in learning. Over-emphasis on assessment measured through standardized tests distorts instruction and measures kids' knowledge of the content wrongly. Therefore the traditional form of assessment does not work perfectly with literature circles because literature circles is not designed for that kind of assessment. This does not mean that students are not assessed in literature circles group but excessive testing threatens effective implementation of the strategy and diverts attention away from actual reading of text, thus students spend more time on studying text-coaching booklets and filling out sample test instead of reading anything.

Teachers should not be tied rigidly to the traditional testing method because the testing frenzy is misdirecting the school system from top to bottom and puts pressure on teachers to grade everything. The most important thing is that when kids join literature circles over an extended period of time, they acquire vocabulary, build concepts, practise inferring and a dozen other key reading skills. The effects are therefore indirect.

**(a) Terminology Problem:**

Daniels (2002) points out that one of the major problems facing any innovation or a new pedagogical practice is what he termed 'terminology drift'. Such new invention becomes popularized and everybody wants to experiment with it whether wrongly or rightly. Thus, the author asserts that:

Today it seems that any time you gather a group of students together for any activity involving reading, you can go right ahead and call it a literature circles. It doesn't matter if the teacher has picked the story, if the book is a basal (or a science textbook) if the teacher is running the discussion, if the kids have no voice – it's just cool to call it a literature circles . . . (p 12)

It can be deduced from the above that literature circles is not just like any other group reading; for any form of group reading to be considered literature circles, such reading group must exhibit the characteristic features of literature circles: students' self-selection of texts, reading and discussing the text in peer led collaborative groups, students' choice of discussion ideas. However, due to the peculiar nature of the classrooms to be used in this study, students would be exposed to teacher pre-selected WAEC texts. Besides, selecting from WAEC recommended prose texts would be of immense assistance to the participants as they prepare for their WAEC examinations.

**(c) The Limitations of the Role Sheet:**

Brown (2001) and Daniels (1994), Keene and Zimmermann (1998); Hill, Noe and Johnson (2001) attest to the importance of role sheet as students prepare for literature discussion. Keene and Zimmerman (1998) observe that the reason behind the use of role sheet makes sense at the beginning of the discussion. Many teachers find it helpful to offer some intermediate support structure to ease the transition. The role sheet offers supportive collaborative learning by giving students a clearly defined inter-locking and open-ended tasks. It also supports key assumption about reading – that readers who approach text with clear-cut conscious purposes will comprehend more. The role sheet therefore has dual purpose – helps learners to read and discuss better.

However, the role sheet has some limitations. Daniels (2002) observes that there is an increasing 'role sheet backfire syndrome'. Some teachers who use role sheet complain that learners tend to go around the circle reading their role sheet one after the



other instead of getting into real conversation about the books they have read. Daniels therefore notes some comments by children on the use of role sheet thus:

I think we had better conversations without the sheets in our hands. We were able to say what we were thinking right then instead of what we wrote when we thought of it as an assignment. Another kid has this to say: 'I think without it because it's more natural and when you finish going around the circle you keep things going with things that aren't from the sheet. ( p.25)

Serafini (2000) also criticizes over dependence on role sheets. He points out that a teacher does not need to impose roles on readers to be able to direct their focus to what the teacher wants them to attend to in a text. With roles, 'the focus shifts from making connections and interpretations to searching for vocabulary, asking questions, keeping group on task and summarizing, not talking about literature'. Roles should not be substituted for learning about literature. This is necessary so that learners will have the time and support they need to become effective members of a quality literature discussion group (Peterson and Eds, 1990; Serafini, 2000; 2001).

From the above observations, it is obvious that a rigid dependence on roles and role sheets would destroy the natural conversations that characterize the environment of literature circles discussion. Thus, the use of roles and role sheets in this study would be limited to the initial stage as supportive tools while learners would be encouraged to enter their responses in their individual reading journals so that they can collaborate naturally as they read, interpret, discuss and share ideas effectively without the monotony of roles and role sheets.

#### (d) **Class Organisation and Management**

One of the most frequently mentioned setbacks in conducting literature circles is managing the groups to help every student remain on task. Serafini (2000) blames this concern on the dominance of direct instruction characteristic of the traditional classroom. This means that teachers have got so used to spending too much time in front of the students dishing out factual information without actually helping students learn how to make independent decisions on what to do when they are finished with a particular project.

Naturally, literature circles groups are small learning groups. However, Morocco, Hindin, Mata-Aguilar and Chiarelli (2001) observed that some teachers believe it will be

more manageable to break the class into two or three discussion groups instead of the peer circles of five to seven students while some preferred the whole class discussions. To manage her literature circles groups, Zeiger (online) believes that breaking students into smaller groups is more manageable, it only takes time to meet them group by group within the allotted time every day. Meanwhile, Serafini (2003) observes that managing smaller groups is quite easy as long as teachers read and participate in the discussion. From the ongoing, it can be deduced that the success of the literature circles discussion depends on the teacher's ability to manage the groups hence; teachers are important part of the literature circles groups. Their job is to facilitate the interactions, help students remain more focused while reading and take discussion to a more sophisticated level. They are tour guides in the world of literature, and can't guide very well when they haven't read the book. Thus, even in a second language classroom situation, literature circles will be relevant as long as teachers who use them are able to adapt them to suit the situations in those classrooms. Teachers in this context must take cognizance of the infrastructural situations in Nigerian classrooms as they break their students into manageable groups.

## **2.8 Scaffolding Instructional Strategy, Types, Uses and Effectiveness on Academic Achievement**

Scaffolding, according to Roehler and Cautlon (1997); Hogan and Pressley, (1997); Byrnes (2001), Englert, Zhao, Dunsmore, Collings, and Wolbers (2007), is assistance given to the learners by more knowledgeable person within their zone of proximal development such that the learners gain control of the task that are initially beyond their capability. As the learners gradually gain control of the task, they take over more of the responsibility and the scaffolds are removed. Rogoff (1990) views scaffolding from the perspective of inculcating intelligent behaviour on the learners, thus, 'scaffolding is seen as those supportive situations which teachers create in order to help students extend their current skills and knowledge to a higher level of competence. In the school setting therefore, Peterson and Fielding (1991), describe scaffolding as what teachers say or do to enable children to complete complex mental tasks they could not complete without success. Scaffold may be in form of step by step classroom activities

that promote interaction between the teacher and students or between students themselves. Through these activities which may be verbal in nature, students are pushed beyond their present cognitive level to a higher cognitive level.

Scaffolding hinges on the social constructivist model which assumes that all knowledge is social in nature. Learning, first and foremost, occurs through social interaction with others as they engage in problem – solving activities which are guided and controlled by the teacher and later internalized by the learner (Vygotsky, 1978; Martin, 1985; Roehler and Caintlon, 1997; Raymond, 2000; Byrnes 2001; Hartman 2002). Vygotsky (1978) emphasizes that ‘the support which adults give children help them to develop higher psychological functioning’. This implies that adult support allows children to operate in their zone of proximal development, described as the area between what a child can accomplish without assistance and what that same child can accomplish with assistance.

Bransford, Brown and Cocking (2000) posits that modern theories on how people learn new contents and processes are based on the idea that learners construct new knowledge based on their previous knowledge. Scaffolding, being an offshoot of this theory depends heavily on the idea that children come to any educational setting with a great deal of pre-existing knowledge. Some of this knowledge might be immature or incorrect, but it is the process of building on what a student already knows that makes scaffolding an effective instructional strategy.

The primary goal of instruction is to lead children from their immature understandings of spontaneous concepts to mature understandings of concepts through social interaction with both adults and other children within the confines of the classroom. On this note, Gaskins, Rauch, Gensemer, Cunnicelth O’hara, Six and Scott (1997); Roehler and Cantlon (1997) suggest that scaffolding should take place in a convivial, collaborative, environment, where children’s contributions are accepted as worthy of consideration and where their understanding is frequently assessed. These assertions imply that scaffolding is effectively applied in learning situations where the learners are given opportunities to communicate their thoughts through conversations with the teacher or peer. Thus, scaffolding instructional strategy is not only used to foster

understanding of content knowledge but also of strategies and dispositions, that aid understanding through the process of conversational dialogue.

Roehler and Cantlon (1997) speaking on the structure of scaffolding notes:

. . . Initially, the teacher or more knowledgeable person controls and guides the learners' activities. Eventually, the teacher and learners share the responsibilities, with the learners taking the lead. The teacher continues to guide the learners emerging understanding, providing assistance as needed. Finally, the teacher gives the full range of responsibilities to the learners by removing the assistance (P.8).

As soon as the learner internalizes the information being learnt and is now able to connect new materials to previously known information; he is given the opportunity to take responsibility for his learning. At this juncture, he has only been assisted to go beyond his zone of proximal development.

Scaffolding students learning can take various ways. There are two types of scaffolding used in special and regular education classrooms: directive and supportive scaffolds. Cazden, (1988) observes that in directive scaffolds, the primary role of the teacher is that of knowledge transmission and assessment. There is much of teacher control and it is designed to assess students' content knowledge in accordance with a predetermined standard for acceptable participation. Meanwhile, the supportive scaffold derived primarily from the works of Palinscar and Brown (1984) is in line with current research in learner-centered and social cultural instruction. It provides opportunity for responsive feedback, and views the educational process as occurring within a community of learners. Under this, we talk of the different techniques which an instructor or teacher/peer can use to assist learning. Roehler and Cantlon (1997) identify these techniques to include: modeling of desired behaviour, offering explanation, inviting students' participation, verifying and clarifying students' understanding, and inviting students to contribute clues.

- (1) **Offering Explanation:** It is considered important for the teacher or 'instructor' to offer explanations, in form of explicit statements during direct instruction, adjusted to fit the learners' emerging understandings about what is being learned, why and when it is used and how it is used (Roehler and Cantlon 1997; Lange,

2000; 2002). Explanation is known to improve comprehension and memory for material being learnt. Lange (2000; 2002) points out that at the beginning of instruction, explanations are thorough and may be repeated but as the learners gain experience, explanations consist of only hints or key words, which are to prompt learners to recall important information. Then the teacher gradually removes or stops the explanations altogether.

- (2) **Inviting Students' Participation:** Here students are given the opportunity to join in the learning process by participating in the task at hand. (Hogan and Pressley, 1997; Lange, 2001). As learners are called to take part in the learning process, they begin to assume ownership of their learning experience. Participation might be in form of verbal comments from students or by writing on the chalkboard; this may also be in the form of providing clues and ideas to which the teacher can also add his ideas to guide the discussion; it might also be in form of asking questions or giving feedback to questions asked. Even when the learner is wrong, the teacher can correct her/him and tailor her/his explanations based on whatever knowledge the learner has brought to the discussions (Roehler and Cantlon, 1997).
- (3) **Verifying and Clarifying Students' Understanding:** Feedback is very important to a child's understanding of the learning process. Students understanding of the new material needs to be constantly assessed and feedback offered (Lange, 2000). Therefore, 'the teacher assesses students' emerging understandings; if they are reasonable, the teacher verifies students' responses, if otherwise, the teacher offers clarification' (Roehler and Cantlon, 1997; Hammond, 2001).
- (4) **Modeling:** Duffy, Roehler and Harman (1988); Gaskins, Rauch, Genesemer, Cunicelli, O'hara Six and Scott (1997); Harman (2000; 2002) identify modeling desired behaviour as one of the key ways of scaffolding students learning. Modeling is defined as a teaching behaviour that shows how one should feel, think or act within a given situation. There are three ways a teacher can model desired behaviour. The first step in modeling is 'think aloud' which has to do with demonstrating to learners the thought processes associated with learning a task;

through this the teacher verbalizes his thought i.e makes his thought known or visible to learners by saying aloud what he is thinking. Another step in modeling is talk-aloud which has to do with the teacher showing students how to act by talking through the steps of the task as it was being completed; and the third aspect of modeling is the performance modeling which involves simply showing students how to carry out a task without think-aloud or talk aloud. Example of this form according to Roehler and Cantlon (1997) is uninterrupted sustained silent reading. In performance modeling, the teacher physically demonstrates reading and enjoyment of the reading material by laughing, smiling, nodding, etc. In fact, Taylor, Pearson, Clark Peterson and Rodriguez (2000) observe that effective teachers of reading use modeling and explanation to teach students strategies for decoding words and understanding texts than ineffective teachers.

- (5) **Inviting Students to Contribute Clues:** According to Roehler and Cantlon (1997); Turnbull, Shank and Heal (1999); Bransford, Brown and Cocking (2000), inviting students to contribute clues is a technique used to encourage students to offer clues on how to complete a task. Thus, the teacher and students together verbalize the processes involved in learning a task. Inviting students to contribute clues is considered as part of teacher provided scaffolds. Lange (2000) observes that as learning moves from teacher provided scaffolds, it gradually leads to having students engage in cooperative learning which provides an environment where students help one another in small group learning through questions and comments, but still with the teacher's assistance. In this case, the teacher moderates and even censors students' questions and comments that can hinder effective discussion and kill the natural conversation going on between students and the teachers or students and their peers.

These techniques of scaffolding strategy can be used individually or in integration, depending on what material one is teaching (Lange, 2002); whichever way they are used, the degree of use is gradually reduced as learners gain control of their learning. In educational setting, Hartman (2000) points out that teacher provided scaffolds specifically include the use of modeling, cues, questions, hints, comments, partial solutions, and direct instruction. Therefore, scaffolding from the submissions of

researchers is not restricted to any one specific instructional technique, but it is an encompassing term incorporating various useful and thoughtful techniques that allows the teacher to break down learning tasks into smaller, more manageable parts that will assist students to understand the content. For the purpose of this study, the scaffolding techniques discussed above would be adopted as step by step classroom activities the teacher will use to scaffold students' reading and discussion of prose literature texts. This is in line with Vygotsky's view of reading and writing as higher psychological functions that can be socially constructed or mediated. Therefore, teachers need to guide students' reading by modeling the use of questions, comments, hints, incomplete sentences (written or verbal) to help students connect their previous knowledge to new information and move from being at the peripheral to being full participants in the literature discussion. Scaffolding therefore involves teacher participation.

### **Empirical Studies on Scaffolding Strategy and Academic Achievement**

Through various empirical researches, scaffolding has proved to be an effective instructional strategy used to enhance students' academic achievement in both individualized, small group, and whole group instruction. Lepper, Drake and O'Donnell - Johnson (1997) investigating the effects of scaffolding techniques of expert human tutors on the academic achievement of some students with varying degree of learning difficulties report that, elementary – level mathematics students initially identified as having great need of remediation ( indeed who seemed completely unable to solve the simplest addition problems involving carrying) have progressed to solving a variety of much more complex problems (involving multiple addends, multiple and interspersed carries, verbal presentations requiring the alignments of addends of different sizes, and the like) without assistance from the tutor. The researchers observe that particularly low achieving students became transformed at the end of the tutoring session into interested and active learners.

Chang, Chen and Sung (2002) investigated the effects of three concept mapping method (graphic scaffold) on students' text comprehension and summarization abilities. Their studies reveal that students in the map correction group (with constant and highest degree of scaffold) had a higher posttest scores than students in the other groups. In

addition, students in the scaffold – fading group (with gradual removal of scaffold) performed better than students in map – generation group (having less scaffolding) and control group. They attribute this difference in posttest achievement scores to the scaffold instruction given to students in the first two groups. In another context, Fournier and Graves (2002) investigating the effect of scaffold on adolescents' comprehension of story books, note that the two scaffolding reading experience framework implemented had more significant positive effect on students' comprehension of the story in the two experimental groups than control. The treatment also had significant effect on students' attitudes towards reading the two stories used in the study.

The multi-tiered scaffold that occurred in a study conducted by Cumming-Potvin, Renshaw, and Van Kraayenoord (2003) in which students engaged with various partners to co-construct knowledge in a bilingual classroom using questions, comments, prompts, cues etc, reveal that the scaffolding environment enhanced bilingual students comprehension of text in the second language. In scaffolding the writing of students with disabilities using teacher provided scaffolds in the internet based technology environment, Englert, Zhao, Dunsmore, Collings and Wolbers (2007) discover that students exposed to the web-based scaffolding condition produced lengthier pieces and received significantly higher ratings on the primary traits associated with writing quality than students in the control group who were exposed to the traditional paper and pencil print format. The researchers therefore, assert that building teacher provided scaffolds such as questions, prompts, hints and cues in technology based environment help to enhance the writing performance of struggling writers.

Investigating the effects of think-aloud in a collaborative small group environment to improve students' comprehension of L2 texts, Seng (2007) observes that students exposed to think-aloud scaffolding instructional technique, obtained a higher posttest scores than students in the control. Other researchers who have worked with think – aloud and recorded enhanced cognitive achievement in students' reading comprehension include: Bereiter and Bird (1985); Thurmond (1986); Pressley, El-Dinary, Gaskins, Schuder, Bergman, Almasi, and Brown (1992); Anderson and Roit (1993) and Klingner, Vaughn and Schumm (1998).



Petsangsri (2002) studied the effects of embedded scaffolding strategy in a cognitive based computer learning environment and found that there were no significant differences in the achievement scores between experimental and control groups. However, significant differences in achievement scores were found among subjects of different schools. In addition, there was no significant difference in subjects' posttest scores in terms of levels of experience in hypertext environment. Though research in the use of scaffolding strategy is not quite robust, the findings recorded above are pointers to the immense benefits students stand to gain when they are taught to read and interpret prose literature texts in a dialogic, conversational scaffold learning environment.

## **2.9 Attitude to Literature**

According to Oyebola (2002), attitude has to do with the specific way we respond to a person, an object, an event, a situation or an idea. Therefore, attitude involves the totality of what a person knows about an object that affects the way the person feels about the object which may be manifested in the acceptance or rejection of the object and anything to do with the object.

Researchers argue that attitude towards a subject affects achievement in that subject (Okpala, 1985; Abe 1995 and Olagunju 1996). Students' positive interest in a particular subject actually gears them up to devote more time to studying that subject. Subsequently, their performance in such a subject will be enhanced, but when the contrary is the case, students' performance becomes poor. Thus, this researcher believes that if students are favorably disposed to reading literature, their performance in literature will be enhanced if not, their attitude towards everything about literature will likely be in the negative. Okpala (1990) believes that attitude to literature could be a factor of students' involvement in text selection. When students take part in selecting literature texts and organizing literature instruction, their attitude may be positively patterned. Attitude therefore, is relative, in the sense that methodological issues can affect students' attitude to literature. Okpala therefore found that when students were offered opportunity to participate in text selection and take charge of their own learning, they exhibited a high positive attitude to literature. Awang & Kasuma (2010) believe that certain variables such as teacher, peer, language, culture, school location, text comprehension and text

availability can affect students' attitude to literature. Therefore in a study to determine secondary school students' attitude towards the learning of English literature, the researcher found that students' exhibited more positive attitude towards literature learning because it assisted their English language acquisition while they exhibited a negative attitude towards difficulty texts. Adeosun (2004) found that attitude had no significant positive effect on students' achievement in composition writing. Fakeye (2010) found that though there was no significant difference in the attitude of male and female students towards English language learning, the study indicated that generally, students had a positive attitude towards English language.

Hence, despite previous findings on the influence of attitude on achievement in language and literature (Ezeokoli 1986; Ayodele 1988; Aluko 1990; Araromi 1999; and Ogunnaike (2002), there is need for further research to further determine the influence of attitude on students' achievement in prose literature.

## **2.10 Verbal Ability and Achievement in Literature**

Verbal ability is a very important variable in students' achievement in English language and language related subjects. Wallace (2003) describes verbal ability as the communicative process which students are required to possess to be able to express their thoughts either orally or in writing. The researcher identifies three modes of verbal communication: spoken language, written language and graphics. Spoken language is an image based idiom involving words used to persuade, motivate and express emotion, but written language is a word-based idiom which expresses thoughts, abstract ideas, complexity and details. For students to succeed in their academic tasks, they do not only need to remember the principles and concepts taught, but must also be able to express these concepts and principles logically, fluently and proficiently through the medium of speech and writing (Oladunjoye 2003). Besides a rich language and conceptual knowledge base, a broad and deep vocabulary, children need rich verbal reasoning ability to understand messages conveyed through print (McCardle & Chhabra, 2004) because verbal ability is consistently found to be the best predictor of later reading achievement.

Obemeata, (1992); Ajayi (1996) and Olaboopo (1999) argue that verbal ability has a considerable impact on students' academic achievement. Thus, it is expected that

students who cannot attain the required minimum level of verbal ability perform poorly in language related subjects like literature. Iyagba (1993) finds that the use of reading, writing and discussion methods is highly rewarding to students' achievement in composition writing. Ajayi (1996) in his studies finds significant differences in the performances of high and low ability students in composition writing. In this vein, Oladunjoye (2003) points out that performance in English has a lot to do with students' level of verbal ability. Fakeye (2006) found that verbal ability significantly influenced students' performance in standardized achievement test in English.

However, it is important to observe here that possession of verbal ability may not be a guarantee for improved academic achievement. Other intervening variables may account for the differences in students' achievement. Hence, Kolawole (1997) finds that verbal ability has no significant main effect on students' achievement in and attitude to composition writing. In the same vein Olaboopo (1999), in her study, observes that verbal ability has no significant effect on students' achievement in English composition. Also, Maduabuchi, (2006) finds that verbal ability has no significant effect on the performance of experimental and control groups in poetry. Makinde (2004) in a separate study also found that verbal ability had no significant effect on students' written composition in Yoruba. It seems that research findings on the influence of verbal ability on students' academic achievement in language and literature is inconclusive, thus, the need for this study to further probe into this area for more research evidence.

### **2.11 Gender and Achievement in Literature**

Apart from the problem of effective methods and strategies of literature in schools, other factors such as gender influence students' performance in the subject. Gender in this study is used to refer to the sex of the students being boys or girls. Citing Hanish (1985), Raimi and Adeoye (2002) note that a number of researches have previously been carried out on the effect of gender and the results reveal that females tended to perform better than the males in verbal tasks while males were shown to perform better than the females in special and numerical problems.

Since gender is an issue with important theoretical and pedagogical implications in second language learning, it has received some attention in language learning strategy

research and this is still a major source of debate among educators. Current research in the area of literature reveal that girls are generally considered better at collaborative small-group talk where interpersonal skills are valued (Jenkins and Cheshire 1990); Reay, (1991); Sadker and Sadker (1994). Jenkins and Cheshire attribute this to the fact that girls are 'careful listeners and cooperative members of their discussion groups'. Explaining why girls perform better in language than boys, Coyer (1964) states that girls spend most of the time in learning spinning, weaving, dying, etc and engage in household chores as ordered by their mothers. Therefore, girls are more exposed to language use while boys are much more occupied in jobs that require physical strength.

Confirming the above assertion, Ayodele (1986) and Olabopo (1999) in different studies found that females perform better in language tasks than their male counterparts. A study by Maduabuchi (2006),<sup>1</sup> reveals that girls perform better than boys in the comprehension of poetry, though; the difference is not significant. Ezewu (1980) asserts that girls perform better than boys in practically all aspects of language. In support of the above findings, Sipe (1999) in a study to find out the influence of school and teachers of literature on achievement in literature indicates that gender of students was consistently an important factor in accounting for differences in literature achievement with girls outperforming boys. In a similar vein, Mead, (2000) reports that the result of the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) test conducted by the U.S Department of Education over a period of five years indicates that girls outperformed boys in reading at three grade levels and girls also outperform boys in writing at all grade levels. Freedman (2004) also gave a similar report. Similarly, the result of data collected between 1994 and 1998 to determine the academic achievement of boys and girls in Wales indicate that differences exist in students' performances with regards to gender. These differences are most evident in English and Welsh language and literature. Results indicate that girls at both the lower and higher grade levels, scored higher than boys in reading and writing achievement (ERIC Digest, 1999). This goes to confirm the assertion that girls perform better than boys in language-related tasks.

From the above submissions, it is evident that girls seem to do better in language related tasks while the boys outperform girls in science related tasks. Though, this seems to be the case, but findings by Spender (1982); French and French (1984); Sadker and

Sadker (1985); negate the above views as they observe that boys dominate the linguistic space in literature discussion. However, Okoye (1981); Adepoju (1996) Oden (1999) observe that no significant difference exists in the performance of the male and female subjects in Mathematics and English. They conclude that apart from gender, there could be other intervening variables that may in isolation or in combination with gender influence students' academic achievement. It therefore appears that research findings on the effect of gender in academic achievement is inconclusive, hence this study further investigates the effect of gender on students' achievement in prose literature.

## **2. 12 Empirical studies on Literature Teaching**

Much research has been carried out in literature either in the area of literary appreciation, literary criticism and literature education. For instance, Izebaye, (1968) Adeniyi (1990) Odebunmi (1992) Ako (2000) Okunoye and Odebunmi (2003) focused on the textual analysis of specific literature texts. Scholars in the area of literature teaching have written extensively on methods and strategies that enhance literature teaching and learning in secondary schools. They have also focused on factors that affect the teaching of literature among college students as well as the relationship between literature and language learning. These scholars found that literature when used as input material enhances language learning (Uwaifo, 1979; Vincent, 1979; Lawal, 1981; Ezeokoli, 2002; Okedara 1992; Ohia, 2002; Onukaogu, 2002; Onukaogu, and Ohia, 2003 Oamen 2004). However, these studies are not empirically documented. The documented empirical studies in literature teaching in Nigeria are not quite as robust (Ezeokoli 1986; Aluko, 1990; Ogunaike, 2000; Ayanniyi 2009).

Ezeokoli (1986) investigated the effect of teacher classroom behaviour on students' motivation and achievement in Literature in English. The study reveals that teacher positive attitude is a determinant of students' motivation and achievement in literature generally. Aluko, (1990) investigated the effects of activity, discussion and lecture methods on the teaching of poetry and found that the activity and discussion methods lead to improved achievement in poetry. Ogunaike, (2002) studied the relative effects of discussion and reading-questioning techniques on students' achievement in prose literature and found that these strategies lead to improved performance on students'

achievement in prose literature. Meanwhile, Ayanniyi 2009 finds that the use of three modes of expository advance organizers facilitated the achievement of students in poetry in the experimental group more than those in the control. With the exception of Ezeokoli (1986) who focused on the influence of teacher classroom behaviour on students' motivation to learn the three genres of literature, other scholars focused on specific genres of literature. Meanwhile, none of these scholars focused on the interactive effects of gender and verbal ability on students' attitude to and achievement in literature. Equally, none of the studies focused on the use of literature circles and scaffolding strategies to improve students' achievement in literature.

The use of literature circles as an instructional strategy is not new. It is a popular approach used by classroom teachers in America in the teaching of reading and literature. Its popularity centers on the belief that reading is transactional and meaning is not just found in the text or a reader's head but also in the transaction between the text and the reader (Clark & Holwadel, 2007). It also promotes social interaction and discussion among readers. Though explored by action researchers and used by classroom teachers, literature circles has not been fully explored empirically especially in Nigeria.

Empirical studies using literature circles have been conducted in the first language based America classrooms. For instance, Short (1986) found that literature circles enhanced students' active involvement and enjoyment of literature. Day (2002) found the use of literature circles effective in enhancing pre-service and children's engagement with literature. Wilson (2004) and McElvain (2005) Dupuy (1997) discovered that literature circles was very effective in increasing FL students' comprehension and enjoyment of literature texts; Morocco, Hindin, Mata-Aguilar and Clark-Chiareli, (2001) found that literature circles help middle grade students with learning disabilities to build a deep understanding of literature; Daniels (2002), reported that a group of struggling Chicago schools, where literature circles forms part of the classroom best practices, topped citywide reading test scores in third grade, sixth grade, and eight grade while in writing, the schools outstripped other schools in the same grades. Literature circles promote students' enjoyment of texts, active engagement with texts and promote critical response to literary texts (Williams and Owens, 1997; Killingworth, 1998; Whitin, 2002; Finkes and Edwards 2003; Long and Gove 2003; Stein and Beed 2004).

Empirical studies involving the use of scaffolding instructional strategy has also been used in the teaching of literary texts with promising results, especially in first language based schools. Fourmier and Graves (2002) investigated the use of two scaffolding reading experiences (SRE) on adolescents' comprehension of story books; they found that the two SRE frameworks had significant positive effect on students' comprehension of story books in the two experimental groups more than the control. Cook (2002) cited in Mary (2008) examined the impact of scaffolded reading experience on students' comprehension of multicultural fictional stories using a quasi experimental design. He found that students in the treatment group demonstrated significantly greater comprehension of the stories than those who received non-treatment instruction. Based on this Cook concluded that scaffolding reading experience had positive impact on students' deep thinking about short stories, aiding them in developing a more in-depth understanding of the text. In a related study, Liang (2004) investigated the impact of scaffolding reading experience on 85 mixed ability, sixth grade students' comprehension of stories in four classrooms using cognitive oriented and response oriented instructions over a period of three weeks and found that the students in the two treatment groups had a higher understanding of the stories than those in the control. However, students in the cognitive oriented instruction showed a slightly higher comprehension level than students in the response oriented instruction group. In a similar study, Liang, Peterson and Graves (2005) investigated the effect of scaffolded reading experience (SRE) framework involving cognitive and response oriented instructions on 54 third grade students' comprehension of literature across two classrooms, but without a control group. Results indicated that both orientations fostered students' comprehension of short stories.

These studies have some limitations that may have influenced the result, thereby affecting their being generalized to other populations. For instance Cook's study focused on a white dominated urban classroom and had no control group; Liang, Peterson and Graves (2005) used the strategy on a small population and provision was not made for control group, however, the results obtained from these studies show that scaffolding instruction has great potential to promote students' comprehension and achievement in literature.

### **2.13 Appraisal of Literature Review**

Literature review in this study extends to the foreign and local authors and to the theoretical and empirical studies in the teaching of literature. Theoretical studies show that traditional teacher-centred strategies in which teachers merely read and explain literature texts to students are gradually giving way to more interactive strategies which are highly student-centered (Elliot 1990; Lange, 1996; Ogunsiji, 2003; Beach, Appleman, Hynds & Wilhelm 2006; Marshall 2006). The researchers emphasize that the traditional strategies in which the teacher dominates the classroom instruction have not yielded the desired result in terms of improved student achievement; hence they advocate the use of innovative strategies like literature circles, scaffolding strategies, literature discussion groups, peer reading-writing groups that promote students' active engagement in the study of literature texts.

Available literature reveals that teachers of literature in Nigeria lack adequate knowledge of the student centered strategies that promote students' active involvement in reading literature texts. The review of literature also shows that literature teaching in Nigerian secondary schools is hindered by a lot of problems ranging from a general poor reading habit among students to poor methods of teaching on the part of teachers, students' lack of interest in reading literature texts, lack of reading materials, lack of abundant research in literature teaching, negative teacher attitude and inconsistency in curriculum implementation. All these culminate in the consistent poor performance of students in literature at the senior secondary school certificate (SSC) examinations (Ezeokoli, 1986; Aluko, 1990; Ogunaike, 2002; Chief examiners' reports 2004-2007; Lawal, 2002; Adegbite, 2005; Anyaniyi, 2009).

The review of literature indicates that studies on literature teaching in Nigeria have focused on such themes as textual analysis of literary texts, the use of literary texts as input materials in language learning, factors affecting literature teaching in secondary schools, teacher classroom behaviour as a motivating factor in students' achievement in literature, use of different modes of advance organizers in literature teaching and use of lecture methods and reading-questioning techniques in literature teaching.

The recent trend in studies that involve student-centred and socio-cultural strategies of teaching literature such as literature circles and scaffolding have been more



substantially carried out more by foreign researchers than local researchers. For instance, some studies on literature circles have specifically focused on students' achievement in reading and writing, pre-service and childrens' active engagement with the text, students' personal response to literary texts, students' independent reading skills, reading achievement of students'with reading disabilities as well as gender balance in literature discussion. In addition, studies on scaffolding instructional strategy have equally focused on students' comprehension of expository and narrative texts, adolescents' comprehension of story books and multicultural fictional texts.

Here in Nigeria, available literature indicates that much empirical studies have not been carried out in the area of literature circles and scaffolding. Thus, research on literature teaching in Nigeria has not focused much attention on strategies that promote students' independent reading and personal response to literature. Consequently, this study investigated the effects of literature circles and scaffolding instructional strategies on senior secondary II students' achievement and attitude to prose literature.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a pretest, posttest, control group quasi-experimental design.

The schematic representation of the design is shown below.

O <sub>1</sub>	X <sub>1</sub>	O <sub>2</sub> ...	E <sub>1</sub>
O <sub>3</sub>	X <sub>2</sub>	O <sub>4</sub> ...	E <sub>2</sub>
O <sub>5</sub>	X <sub>3</sub>	O <sub>6</sub> ...	E <sub>3</sub>
O <sub>7</sub>	X <sub>4</sub>	O <sub>8</sub>	C where

O<sub>1</sub>, O<sub>3</sub>, O<sub>5</sub> and O<sub>7</sub> represent pre-test observations for the experimental groups 1, 2, 3 and control

O<sub>2</sub>, O<sub>4</sub>, O<sub>6</sub> and O<sub>8</sub> represent post-test observations for experimental groups 1, 2, 3 and control

X<sub>1</sub> represents Basic Literature Circles

X<sub>2</sub> represents Literature Circles with Roles

X<sub>3</sub> represents Scaffolding

X<sub>4</sub> represents conventional teaching method (i.e. the modified lecture method)

E<sub>1</sub> represents experimental group 1

E<sub>2</sub> represents experimental group 2

E<sub>3</sub> represents experimental group 3

C represents the control group

The study made use of a 4x3x2 factorial matrix for the purpose of data analysis, which consisted of instructional strategy at four levels of treatment (three experimental groups and one control group), moderator variables of verbal ability at three levels (low, medium and high) and gender at two levels (male and female) The factorial matrix is shown on table 2.

**Table 2: A Representation of the 4x3x2 factorial matrix**

TREATMENT	GENDER	VERBAL ABILITY		
		LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
E <sub>1</sub> (Basic Literature Circles Treatment)	MALE			
	FEMALE			
E <sub>2</sub> (Literature Circles with Roles Treatment)	MALE			
	FEMALE			
E <sub>3</sub> (Scaffolding Instruction Treatment)	MALE			
	FEMALE			
C (Conventional Teaching Method)	MALE			
	FEMALE			

### 3.2 Variables in the Study

The following categories of variables were used in the study. They include: Independent, moderator and dependent variables.

**3.2.1 Independent variable:** This is the instructional strategy which was manipulated at four levels in this study.

- (1) Discussion of prose text using the Basic Literature Circles Model
- (2) Discussion of prose text using the Literatures circles with Roles Model
- (3) Discussion of prose text using Scaffolding instructional strategy
- (4) Discussion of prose text using Conventional teaching method

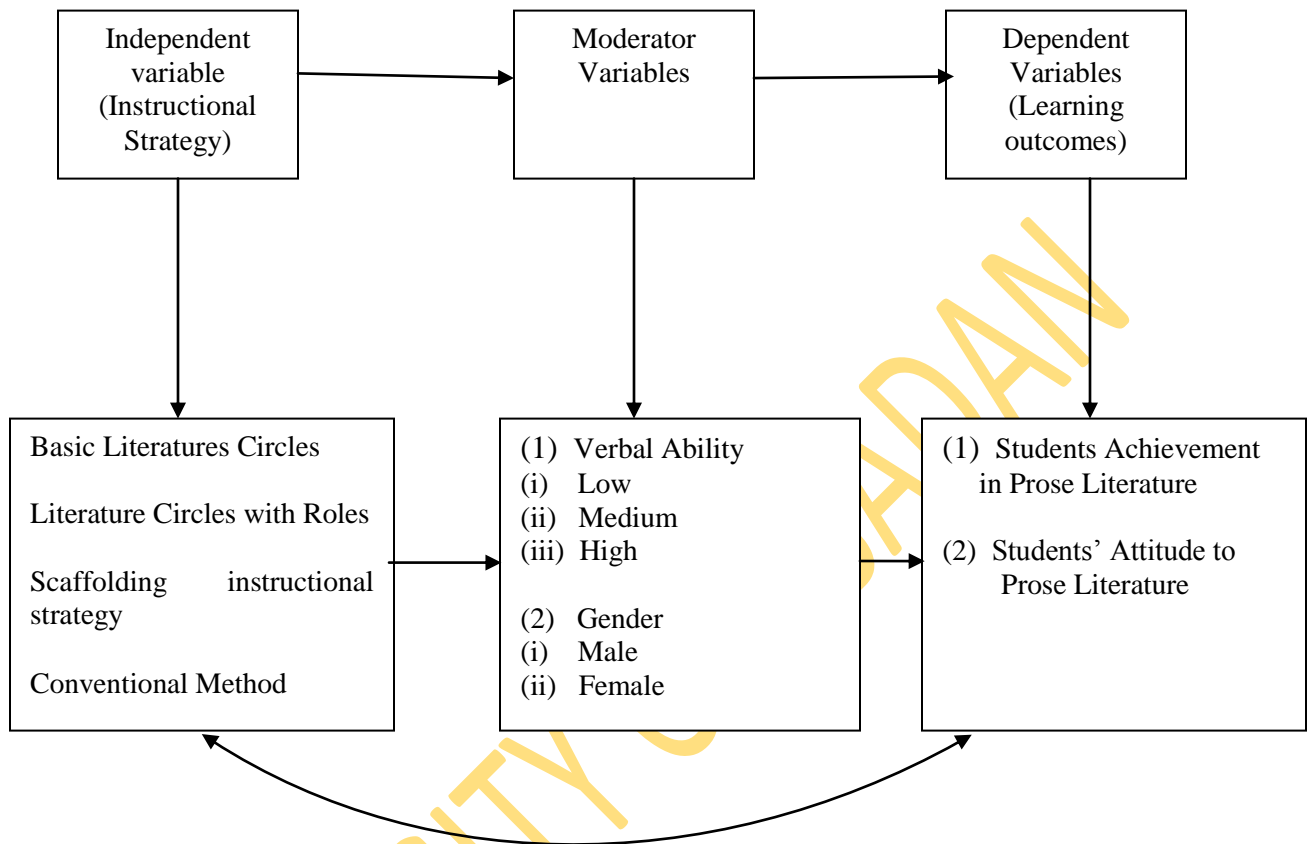
**3.2.2 Moderator variables:** These are :

- (1) Verbal Ability (low, medium and high)
- (2) Gender (Male and Female)

**3.2.3 Dependent Variables:** The dependent variables in this study are:

- 1) Achievement in Prose Literature in English.
- 2) Attitude to Prose Literature in English.

A tabular representation of variables in the study is shown in Fig.1



**Fig 1: A Graphical Representation of the Variables in this Study**

### 3.3 Selection of Participants

The population for the study consisted of all Senior Secondary II students in the public secondary schools in the twenty local government areas of Ogun State. Multistage sampling technique was used for sample selection. From the twenty local government areas in Ogun State, four local government areas were purposively selected. This was to enable the researcher have access to local government areas located within the urban and semi-urban areas, where it is expected that a good number of the students would have acquired some level of proficiency in the English language to enable them have intelligible discussion with others. Two schools were also purposively selected from each of the four local government areas, making a total of eight schools selected for the study. The purposive selection of schools was done to ensure that schools studying similar WAEC texts were selected for purpose of uniformity and also to ensure that schools

where students possess the texts to be studied were selected. Thereafter, two schools each were randomly assigned to each of the three treatment and control groups. An intact class from the stream of SS II classes was randomly selected from each of the eight schools selected for the study.

The criteria for the selection of schools include:

- 1) Schools which have qualified literature- in – English teachers who have taught Literature – in –English consistently in that school for at least two years;
- 2) Schools where students have been presented for senior secondary school certificate examination (SSCE) for at least ten years.
- 3) Schools which are not close to each other in order to avoid undue interaction among participants of the different schools used for the study;
- 4) Schools owned by Ogun State government (i.e. public schools), using the same text for literature.
- 5) Schools that are co-educational and have reasonable number of literature in English students.
- 6) Schools where the school authority, teachers and students are willing to participate.
- 7) Schools where students possess/ed the recommended texts

In addition, SS11 students were selected due to the following assumptions:

- a) SS 11 students will likely be more receptive to the experimental studies because they would not be having the immediate problem of the usual anxiety that characterize the preparations for SSCE.
- b) Since these strategies involve deeper interaction with the literature texts selected, it was hoped that SS11 students would benefit from the experimental study because they were likely to be better prepared to face the challenges of the promotion examinations to SS 111 as well as the SSCE that will come in the following year.

### **3.4 Research Instruments**

Six instruments comprising three response instruments and four stimulus instrument were used. They are as follows:

## **Response Instruments**

- 1) Verbal Ability Test
- 2) Prose Literature in English Attitude Questionnaire (PLAQ)
- 3) Achievement Test in Prose Literature in English (ATPLE)
- 4) Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

## **Stimulus Instruments**

- 5) Literature circles Instructional Guide (LCIG)
- 6) Scaffolding Instructional Guide (SIG)
- 7) Conventional Method Instructional Guide (CMIG)

### **1) Verbal Ability Test:**

The 36-item test was adapted from the Australian Council for Educational Research Test (ACER) consisting of verbal ability tests that have been proved effective in determining learners' communicative level. The test had previously been revalidated by Obemeata (1974) who obtained a reliability coefficient of 0.84. Olaboopo (2000) revalidated it using Kuder Richardson (KR21) formula and obtained 0.86. Makinde (2004) also revalidated it, obtained 0.73 and Maduabuchi (2008) in her revalidation obtained 0.88. The same test was revalidated for this study using a sample of 80 Senior Secondary School II (SSII) students from a school that was not used for the main study using Kuder Richardson (KR21) formula and 0.82 was obtained. The details of the test items are in appendix I.

Percentile ranks were used to assign students to their different verbal ability levels. Therefore, 37.1% of the lower percentiles were rated as having lower verbal ability because their scores ranged from 1 – 8. The next 35.5% of the percentiles fell into the medium verbal ability level having scored from 9-11 in the test. The upper percentiles of 32.0% of the students fell into the high verbal ability level because they scored between 12 and 20 in the test.

### **2) Prose Literature in English Attitude Questionnaire (PLAQ)**

The questionnaire for this study entitled PLAQ sought to elicit information on students' attitude to prose literature in English. The instrument comprised two sections: A and B. Section A sought to elicit students' personal information such as: name of school; gender, age and class; while section B consisted of items that sought to get information

on students' personal feelings i.e. interests, perceptions and attitude towards literature in English as a subject as well as its utility.

Items were graded on the four point attitude scale and weighted thus for positive items.

SA	Strongly Agree	4
A	Agree	3
D	Disagree	2
SD	Strongly Disagree	1

For negative items the reverse was the case.

The table of item distribution for PLAQ is presented on table 3

**Table 3: Item Distribution Table for PLAQ**

ITEM CATEGORY	ITEM NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER OF ITEMS
Interest in Prose Literature	Items 1-8, and items 9-18	18
Utility of prose text to problem solving	Items 19-33	15
Perceptions about Prose literature	Items 34, 35, 36 and 37-42	9
Attitude to teaching of prose	Items 43-49	7
Total	49	49

The face and content validity of PLAQ was ascertained using experts in the field of tests and evaluation as well as Language Education in the Institute and Faculty of Education, University of Ibadan. They assessed the instrument based on:

- 1) Appropriateness and the clarity of the language to the target population.
- 2) The adequacy and inadequacy of the content in terms of coverage.
- 3) The relevance of the items to stated objectives.

The instrument was then subjected to field-testing. The PLAQ comprising 49 attitude statements was administered to 80 SS II students to determine its reliability. The Cronbach's alpha was used to analyze the responses to determine what each item contributed to the construct and determine the reliability of the instrument. The reliability

co-efficient of the 49 items was 0.74. Items 8 and 36 were deleted from the list because they had negative correlation with the test and a re-run of Cronbach test showed a reliability co-efficient of 0.77. The instrument is attached as appendix III.

### 3) Achievement Test in Prose Literature in English (ATPLE)

The achievement test in prose literature in English comprises short essay type questions drawn from the two prose literature texts studied. These are:

- (1) Asare Konadu's *A Woman in Her Prime* (African Prose)
- (2) Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* (Non -African Prose)

The questions were designed to test students' cognitive knowledge and covered the concepts focused on during the literature discussions in the three levels of the cognitive domain: Remembering, Understanding and Thinking. The ATPLE was used to measure the students' performance before and after exposure to the treatment. The test focused on the following aspects:

- i) Themes
- ii) Character and characterization
- iii) Style and Literary devices
- iv) Relevance of content to students' life experiences

The table of specification for the test is presented in Table 4

**Table 4: Table of Specification for Achievement Test in Prose Literature – in-English**

	Remembering	Understanding	Thinking	Total no. of items
Themes	6, 11, 16	1, 3, 5, 10, 13		8
Character and characterization		2, 18	4, 12a & b, 14	5
Style and literary devices	7a & b, 9a & b, 15		8, 19	5
Relevance of content to life Experiences			17, 20	2
Total	6	7	7	20

Twenty questions were generated from the two texts and presented to experts in Literature and test construction to ascertain the face and content validity before the



instrument was administered to eighty (80) SSII students using the test re-test procedure to ascertain the reliability of the test. The test lasted for two hours at each sitting and the scores of the two separate tests were correlated and a reliability index of 0.88 was obtained using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Details of the instrument are given in appendix III.

#### **4 Literature Circles Instructional Guide (LCIG)**

The researcher developed the teachers' instructional guide for literature teachers who participated in the literature circles groups (Basic literature circles and Literature circles with roles) to ensure uniformity in the reading and discussion activities teachers and students were involved in. The literature circles guide was adopted from Daniels (2002) model. Further details are given in Appendix IV & V

#### **5 Scaffolding Instructional Guide (SIG)**

This instrument was used to ensure uniformity in the conversational dialogue that occurred between the teacher/students and students/students as the case may be. It formed the step by step activities designed by Pressley and Hogan (1997) that enabled the teacher implement a successful scaffolding instruction. This step by step scaffolding technique was adapted in this study. Further details are shown in Appendix VI.

#### **6 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)**

This instrument was constructed to complement the findings of the questionnaire on students' attitude to prose literature. The instrument provided qualitative data to help the researcher gain insight into students' views towards the instructional strategies applied in the study. The instrument consisted of 12 focus group questions which had been given to three experts in the area of educational evaluation and teacher education to comment on its face and content validity. Based on their comments the instrument was modified and administered to a sample of 15 students in each of the three experimental groups (basic literature circles, Literature circles with roles and scaffolding) at the end of the treatment.

## 7 Conventional Method (Modified Lecture Method) Instructional Guide (CMIG)

The instrument was used to ensure uniformity in the leaching and learning activities that occurred among the teachers and students who participated in the control group. It involves the step by step teaching/learning activities prepared to guide the teachers in knowing what to teach.

### 3.5 Research Procedure

The study lasted for twelve weeks and was carried out in five stages as presented below:

**Stage I:** Visit to selected schools to brief teachers and school authorities and the training of research assistants lasted for one week

**Stage II:** Administration of pretest, verbal ability test, attitude questionnaire and achievement in prose literature lasted for one week

**Stage III:** Exposure of participants to treatment was for eight weeks

**Stage IV:** Administration of posttest was for one week

**Stage V:** Focus group discussion lasted for one week.

The time table for the study is presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Time table for the Study**

<b>Time Duration</b>	<b>Expected Activities</b>
Week 1	Training of Research Assistants
Week 2	Administration of Pretests
Week 3 – 10	Exposure of participants to treatment
Week 11	Administration of posttests
Week 12	Fo.cus Group Discussion

### 3.6. Training of Participating Teachers

The researcher visited the eight senior secondary schools selected from the four local government areas of Ogun State and obtained necessary permission from the school authorities concerned (the various principals) and interacted with the teachers of the intact classes who participated in the study. The visit was important because it provided

the researcher the opportunity to select the arms of the SSII classes that participated in the study.

Two experienced literature teachers were selected from each of the selected schools for experimental groups trained for one week while the teachers from the two selected schools for control groups did not receive such training. Thus, twelve teachers were trained for the experimental groups. However, at the final stage only 8 teachers were used in both experimental and control groups. During the training, demonstration lessons were given to the participating teachers for the experimental groups on how the strategies work. After the demonstrations, the teachers asked questions and made suggestions. The teaching guides, students' response journals, role sheets and the prose texts were made available to the teachers. The entire study lasted for twelve weeks.

### **3.6.1. Administration of Pretest**

The VAT, PLAQ and ATPLE were administered to students in both the experimental and control groups before the commencement of the treatment.

### **3.6.2. Treatment for Experimental Groups**

Provision of treatment was made to the trained research assistants who presented their instructional strategies thus:

#### **Experimental Group I (Basic Literature Circles Instructional Strategy)**

Experimental group 1 consisted of two schools purposively selected from one of the four local government areas selected for the study. An arm of SSII was randomly selected and used as intact class in each of the two schools selected. The classes were exposed to the basic literature circles model using the following steps:

**Step1:** The teacher gave a mini lesson on the elements of prose literature such as theme, character, setting, plot, and explained the literature circles procedure. The teacher also gave a brief book talk on the pre-selected text (15 minutes)

**Step 2:** Students then selected the text they wanted to read first by jotting down the title on a sheet of paper. They broke into small literature circles groups of 5-8 students per group based on the text they had chosen to read (5 minutes)

**Step 3:** Students set goals for themselves and began to read their chosen texts silently in their various groups and wrote notes into their reading logs which had already been provided by the teacher (25 minutes)

**Step 4:** Students discussed and shared ideas on what they had read while the teacher went round to observe and ensure that students were on focus (15 minutes)

**Step 5:** Teacher and students came together in a whole class where the teacher gave another mini lesson based on what was observed during the meeting and also to assess the strengths and weaknesses of groups or group members. (5 minutes)

**Step 6:** Groups then re-assigned themselves chapters/pages to be completed at home before the next circles meeting (5 minutes)

### **Purpose of Exposing Group I to Basic Literature Circles Instructional Strategy**

- (i) To enable students to acquire the ability to personally respond to works of literature without undue dependence on teachers' interpretation.
- (ii) Discussing literature through the literature circles strategy serves as a means of exposing students to various perspectives on the interpretation of literature texts.
- (iii) To stimulate students to read literature texts especially prose literature.
- (iv) To enhance students' speaking and listening skills as well as improve their stock of vocabulary.
- (v) To enable students to see the study of literature as a natural and fun-filled activity.
- (vi) To stimulate students to acquire independent reading ability.

### **Experimental Group 2 (Literature Circles with Roles Instructional Strategy)**

Experimental group 2 also comprised two schools purposively selected from one of the four local government areas selected for the study. An arm of SSII was also used as intact class in each of the two schools selected. The classes were exposed to the literature circles with roles model thus:

**Step 1:** The teacher gave a mini lesson on the elements of prose literature such as theme, character, setting, plot, and explained the literature circles procedure. The teacher also gave a brief book talk on the pre-selected text (15 minutes)

**Step 2:** Students then selected the text they wanted to read first by jotting down the title on a sheet of paper. They formed small literature circles groups of 5-8 students per group

based on the text they had chosen. Students then assigned roles to one another through balloting (5 minutes)

**Step 3:** The discussion director sets the reading goal for the group. The students began a sustained silent reading of their chosen texts. They entered their responses into their role sheets provided by the teacher (25 minutes)

**Step 4:** Students discussed and shared ideas on what they had read in line with their various roles while the teacher went round to observe and ensure that students were on focus (15 minutes)

**Step 5:** Teacher and students came together in a whole class where the teacher gave another mini lesson based on what was observed during the meeting and also to assess the strengths and weaknesses of groups or group members (5 minutes)

**Step 6:** Groups then re-assigned themselves new chapters/pages to be completed at home before the next circles meeting. They also assigned new roles (5 minutes)

**Purpose of Exposing Students to Literature Circles with Roles Instructional Strategy)**

- (i) Using roles and role sheets act as a spring board for effective discussion
- (ii) This helps students to develop specific cognitive skills.
- (iii) It enables students to actively engage in, understand, and remember what has been read.
- (iv) It helps students to remain focused.
- (v) It promotes turn taking among students during group discussion
- (vi) It exposes students to various perspectives in the discussion of literature texts read.

**Experimental Group 3 (Scaffolding Instructional Strategy)**

Experimental group 3 comprised two schools purposively selected from one of the four local government areas purposively selected for the study. An arm of SSII was randomly selected and used as intact class in each of the two schools. The two classes were exposed to the scaffolding instructional strategy using the following guidelines:

**Step1:** The teacher introduced the lesson by giving explanations on the elements of prose literature (plot, theme, character, and setting to facilitate students' understanding of the content (10 minutes)

**Step 2:** Students were introduced to the literature text to be read through pre-reading activities such as predicting what would happen in the text using the title; asking questions to prompt students' thinking about major events and actions in the text; giving brief plot summaries of the texts etc (5 minutes)

**Step3:** The teacher models sustained silent reading of the literature texts (Here, the teacher models the desired reading behaviour which may involve think aloud, talk aloud and performance modeling (i.e. expressive reading) (20 minutes)

**Step4:** Students break into groups to read silently and share what they have read. As they read, they scaffold each others' understanding of the content by modeling the desired behavior following the teacher's example (20 minutes)

**Step 5:** Both students and teachers share their reading in a whole class session while the teacher continued to model desired behaviour through questions, comments, offering clues, and prompts (5 minutes)

**Step 6:** Students were invited to participate in the classroom discussion by generating their own questions, comments, clues and prompts to facilitate each others' understanding of the content while the teacher and students continued to verify and clarify responses to questions and comments generated through direct references to the text (10 minutes)

#### **Purpose of exposing students to Scaffolding Instructional Strategy**

- I. To enable students develop independent and collaborative reading skills.
- II. To stimulate students' interest in the reading of literature
- III. It helps students develop critical and analytical thought processes
- IV. It enables students monitor and take charge of their own learning.

#### **3.6.3 Treatment for Control Group (Modified Lecture Method)**

Two schools purposively selected from one of the four local government areas made up the control group. Two intact classes of SSII randomly selected from each of the two schools were taught the same literature texts. The students were exposed to the normal conventional procedure. The teaching features include:

**Step 1** The teacher introduces the lesson by discussing elements of prose literature.

**Step 2** The teacher reads a few chapters of the text and explains to the students

**Step 3** The teacher asks few students to read some portions of the chapters.

**Step 4** The students take turns giving a summary of the chapters.

**Step 5** The teacher asks students a few questions to test their ability to recall facts from the chapters.

**Step 6** The teacher writes notes on the chalkboard for students to copy into their notes and asks students to read the next few chapters of the text at home.

#### **3.6.4. Administration of Posttest**

At the end of the eight weeks of treatment, students in both the experimental and control groups were administered the prose literature in English attitude questionnaire and the Achievement test in prose literature in English.

#### **3.7 Method of Data Analysis**

The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was employed using pretest scores as covariates. The Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA) was used to find out the magnitude and direction of differences among the groups and Scheffe post hoc analysis was used for pair-wise comparison where significant main effects were observed. The hypotheses were tested at  $p < 0.05$  level of significance.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Results

The results are presented in the order of the hypotheses formulated for the study in chapter one.

**Hypothesis 1a:** There is no significant main effect of treatment on students' achievement in prose literature

**Table 4.1: Summary of ANCOVA of posttext prose literature scores by Treatment, Verbal Ability and Gender on Students' Achievement in Prose Literature**

Source of Variance	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Covariates PREACH	20744.040	1	20744.040	1011.968	.000
Main effects (Combined)	2317.582	6	386.264	18.843	.000
Treatment	2220.777	3	740.259	36.112	.000*
Verbal Ability	63.338	2	31.669	1.545	.215
Gender	33.467	1	33.467	1.633	.202
2. way (Combined)	188.453	11	17.132	.836	.604
Interactions Treatment Verbal Ab	116.917	6	19.486	.951	.459
Treatment x Gender	43.059	3	14.353	.700	.553
Verbl Ability x Gender	18.013	2	9.006	.439	.654
3- Way Treatment x Interactions Verbal Ab x Gender	164.044	6	27.341	1.334	.242
Model	23414.118	24	975.588	47.593	.000
Residual	6006.124	293	20.499		
TOTAL	29420.242	317	92.808		

\* Significant at  $p < .05$

Table 4.1 above shows that there was a significant main effect of treatment (basic literature circles, literature circles with roles and scaffolding) on students' achievement in prose literature. ( $F_{(3,293)} = 36.112$ ;  $P < .05$ ) This indicates that there is a significant difference in the achievement of students who were taught prose literature through the



use of basic literature circles, literature circles with roles, scaffolding strategies and control. Therefore, hypothesis 1a is rejected.

Table 4.2 below presents the magnitude of the mean scores and deviations of students across the experimental and control groups

**Table 4.2: Multiple Classification Analysis of Posttest Achievement Scores of Students by Treatment, Verbal Ability and Gender**

**Grand Mean 14.56**

Treatment category	N	Predicted Mean		Deviation		Beta
		Unadjusted	Adjusted for Factors & Covariates	Unadjusted	Eta Adjusted for factors and Covariates	
Treatment						
Basic Lit	86	13.29	16.30	-1.27	1.74	.276
Lit circles	96	20.53	15.25	5.96	.69	
with roles						
Scaffolding	60	14.23	16.84	-.33	2.28	
Control	76	8.72	9.93	-5.83	-4.63	
V. Ability						
low	88	11.14	14.27	-3.43	.332	.052
Med	130	13.42	14.20	-1.15	-.36	
High	100	19.07	15.29	4.51	.73	
Gender						
Male	159	14.06	14.23	-.50	.052	.033
Female	159	15.06	14.89	.50	.33	
R =	.885					
R <sup>2</sup> =	.784					

Results on Table 4.2 show that students exposed to scaffolding obtained the highest adjusted post test means achievement scores ( $\bar{x} = 16.84$ ;  $SD = 2.28$ ) followed by those taught using basic Literature circles ( $\bar{x} = 16.30$ ;  $SD = 1.74$ ) while those taught using literature circles with roles came third in the order of magnitude of the mean scores ( $\bar{x} = 15.25$ ;  $SD = .69$ ). The last in this order is the control group with the lowest post test means achievement score ( $\bar{x} = 9.93$ ;  $SD = -4.63$ ). Therefore, the scaffolding instructional

strategy was more effective than the basic literature circles, the literature circles with roles and the control group in that order.

To ascertain the source of the significant effect of treatment on achievement, the Scheffe post-hoc analysis was computed and table 4.3 presents the summary

**Table 4.3: Pair-wise comparison of Treatment on Achievement.**

Treatment	N	$\bar{x}$	Treatment			
			Basic Literature Circles	Lit. Circles. With Roles	Scaffolding	Control
Basic lit circles	86	16.30		*		*
Lit. cir with roles	96	15.25	*		*	*
Scaffolding	60	16.84		*		*
Control	76	9.93	*	*	*	

Table 4.3 shows that the group exposed to literature circles with roles (LC) ( $\bar{x} = 15.25$ ) is significantly different from each of the three other groups (Basic literature circles, scaffolding and control). Also the control group ( $\bar{x} = 9.93$ ) differs significantly from the three treatment groups (Basic literature circles, literature circles with roles and scaffolding). These were the 2 pairs of groups that constituted to the significant effect of treatment. Indeed, only two groups i.e. basic literature circles (BLC) and scaffolding do not differ significantly from each other.

**4.4 Ho1b:** There is no significant main effect of treatment on students' attitude to prose literature

**Table 4.4: Summary of ANCOVA of posttest analysis of effects of treatment, Verbal Ability and Gender on Students' Attitude to Prose Literature.**

Source of Variance	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Covariates PREATTD	1299.512	1	1299.512	11.766	.001
Main effects					.960
(Combined)	164.748	6	27.458	.249	
Treatment	101.206	3	33.735	.305	.821
Verbal Ability	23.285	2	11.642	.105	.900
Gender	40.257	1	40.259	.364	.546
2. way interactions					
(Combined)	1287.251	11	117.023	1.060	.394
Treatment x Verbal Ab	942.522	6	157.087	1.422	.206
Treatment x Gender	220.849	3	73.616	.667	.573
Verbal Ab x Gender	174.558	2	87.279	.790	.455
3-way interactions.					
Treatment x Ver. Ab x Gender	749.669	6	124.945	1.131	.344
Model	3501.180	24	145.883	1.321	.148
Residence	32361.288	293	110.448		
TOTAL	35862.469	317	113.131		

Table 4.4 indicates that there is no significant main effect of treatment on students' attitude to prose literature ( $F_{(3,293)} = 33.735$   $P > .05$ ). This means that the students' attitude to prose literature after exposure to the different experimental groups and control is not significant; hence, hypothesis 1b was not rejected. The Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA) which presents the descriptive statistics of the post test attitude scores of students in the 3 experimental groups and control is presented in table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: Multiple Classification Analysis of Students' Posttest Attitude by Treatment, verbal Ability and Gender.**

**Grand Mean = 131.04**

Variables Category	N	Predicted Mean		Deviation		Eta	Beta
		Unadjusted	adjusted for Factors & Covariates	Unadjusted	Adjusted for factors and Covariates		
Treatment Basic							
Lit circles	86	131.72	131.24	.68	.20		
Lit circles with Roles							
Scaffolding	96	129.76	130.26	-1.28	-.78	.103	.049
Control	60	132.72	131.40	1.68	.36		
Verb. Ability	76	130.57	131.52	-.48	.48	-.463	
low	88	130.52	130.60	-.52	-.44	.038	.028
Medium	130	131.49	131.33	.45	.29		
High	100	130.91	131.05	-.13	8.26		
Gender							
Male	159	130.39	130.67	.65	-.37	.061	.035
Female	159	131.69	131.41	.65	.37		
R	=	202					
R <sup>2</sup>	=	.041					

Table 4.5 shows that the control group had the highest adjusted posttest mean attitude score ( $\bar{x} = 131.52$ ;  $SD = .48$ ) followed by students in the scaffolding group ( $\bar{x} = 131.40$ ;  $SD = .36$ ) and basic literature circles ( $\bar{x} = 131.24$ ;  $SD = .200$ ) in that order while students in the literature circles with roles had the lowest adjusted posttest mean scores on attitude to prose literature ( $\bar{x} = 130.26$ ;  $SD = -.78$ ). However, the differences between the post attitude score of the control group and the three experimental groups are not significant.

**Hypothesis 2a:** There is no significant main effect of verbal ability on students' achievement in prose literature.

In table 4.1, results show that verbal ability has no significant effect on students' achievement in prose literature ( $F(2,293) = 1.545$ ,  $P > .05$ ). Hypothesis 2a was therefore not rejected.

From table 4.2, the students with high verbal ability ( $\bar{x} = 15.29$ ) had higher achievement scores more than their low verbal ability ( $\bar{x} = 14.27$ ) and medium verbal ability ( $\bar{x} = 14.20$ ) counterparts. This difference, however, was not significant.

**Hypothesis 2b:** There is no significant main effect of verbal ability on students' attitude to prose literature.

Table 4.4 shows that verbal ability has no significant effect on students' attitude to prose literature ( $F_{(2,293)} = .105, P > .05$ ). Thus, hypothesis 2b was not rejected.

Table 4.5 further shows that the medium ability students ( $\bar{x} = 131.33$ ) had higher attitude score than the high verbal ability students ( $\bar{x} = 131.05$ ) and low verbal ability students ( $\bar{x} = 130.60$ ). These differences, were however, not significant.

**Hypothesis 3a:** There is no significant main effect of gender on students' achievement in prose literature.

Table 4.1 shows that there is no significant main effect of gender on students' achievement in prose literature ( $F_{(1,293)} = 1.633; P > .05$ ). This implies that the difference in male and female students' achievement in prose literature is not significant. On this basis, hypothesis 3a was not rejected. Table 4.1 shows that the female students obtained higher achievement scores more ( $\bar{x} = 14.89$ ) than their male counterparts ( $\bar{x} = 14.23$ ). This difference was however, not significant.

**Hypotheses 3b:** There is no significant main effect of gender on students' attitude to prose literature.

Table 4:4 shows that there is no significant effect of gender on students' attitude towards prose literature ( $F_{(1,293)} = 364; P > .05$ ). Hence hypothesis 3b was not rejected.

Table 4:5 further shows that the female students obtained a higher attitude mean score ( $\bar{x} = 131.41$ ) than the male students ( $\bar{x} = 130.67$ ). However, this difference was not significant.

**Hypothesis 4a:** There is no significant interaction effect of treatment and verbal ability on students' achievement in prose literature As table 4.1 shows, the 2-way interaction of treatment and verbal ability on students' achievement in prose literature was not significant ( $F_{(6,293)} = .951, p > .05$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 4a was not rejected

**Hypothesis 4b:** There is no significant interaction effect of treatment and verbal ability on students' attitude to prose literature.

Table 4:4 shows that there is no significant interaction effect of treatment and verbal ability on students' attitude to prose literature ( $F_{(6,293)} = 1.422$ ;  $p > .05$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 4b was not rejected.

**Hypothesis 5a:** There is no interaction effect of treatment and gender on students' achievement in prose literature.

From Table 4:1, the interaction effect of treatment and gender on students' achievement in prose literature was not significant ( $F_{(3,293)} = .700$ ;  $P > .05$ ). Based on this result, hypothesis 5a was not rejected.

**Hypothesis 5b:** There is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on students' attitude to prose literature.

Table 4:4 shows that there is no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on students' attitude to prose literature ( $F_{(3,293)} = .667$ ;  $P > .05$ ). Hence, hypothesis 5b was not rejected.

**Hypothesis 6a:** There is no significant interaction effect of verbal ability and gender on students' achievement in prose literature

In table 4:1, the 2-way interaction effect of verbal ability and gender on students' achievement in prose literature was not significant ( $F_{(2,293)} = .439$ ;  $p > .05$ ). On this basis, hypothesis 6a was not rejected.

**Hypothesis 6b:** There is no significant interaction effect of verbal ability and gender on students' attitude to prose literature.

Table 4:4 shows that there was no significant interaction effect of verbal ability and gender on students' attitude towards prose literature ( $F_{(2,293)} = .790$ ;  $p > .05$ ). Therefore, hypothesis 6b was not rejected.

**Hypothesis 7a:** There is no significant interaction effect of treatment, verbal ability and gender on students' post achievement scores in prose literature.

From Table 4.1, the 3-way interaction effect of treatment, verbal ability and gender on students' achievement in prose literature is not significant. ( $F_{(6,293)} = 1.334$ ;  $p > .05$ ). As a result, hypothesis 7a was not rejected.

**Hypothesis 7b:** There is no significant interaction effect of treatment, verbal ability and gender on students' attitude to prose literature.

Table 4.4 shows that the interaction effect of treatment, verbal ability and gender on students' attitude was not significant ( $F_{(6,293)} = 1.131; p > .05$ ). Hypothesis 7b was therefore, not rejected.

#### **4.2. Discussion of Findings**

The findings were discussed under six sub-headings as shown below.

##### **Effects of treatment on students' achievement in prose literature**

The main focus of the study was to investigate the effects of literature circles and scaffolding instructional strategies on students' attitude to and achievement in prose literature. It was also to ascertain whether students who were exposed to these strategies would perform better than students taught using the conventional, modified lecture method. The findings revealed significant differences in the achievement scores of students in prose literature across the three levels of experimental and control groups. Students exposed to these three instructional strategies – scaffolding, basic literature circles and literature circles with roles had higher achievement scores more than their counterparts in the control group in that order.

The result is in support of findings by Brabham and Villaume (2000); Roberts (2002), Stein and Beed (2004) that literature circles help students to develop a broader understanding of what they read as they interact with themselves, the text and the teacher in an ongoing dialogue. It is also in line with the findings of Short (1986); Morocco, Hindu, Mata-Aguilar and Clark-Chiarell (2001); Martinez-Roldan and Lopez-Robertson (2002); Daniels (2002); Stringer, Renolds and Simpson (2003); Lehman (2007) and Sanusi (2010) whose studies suggest that literature circles enhance students' active engagement with the text, heighten students' enjoyment of the text and improve students' achievement scores. Mashall (2006) investigated the effects of participation in literature circles on reading comprehension of eight graders and found that literature circles had a significant effect on students' overall reading achievement. The findings further confirm the views of Lepper, Drake and O'Donnel-Johnson (1997); Chang, Chen and Sung (2002); Fournier and Graves (2002); Petsansgri (2002); Cumming Potvin, Renshaw and Van Kraayenoord (2003) and Seng (2007) that scaffolding empowers learners to take

ownership of their learning as they move from teacher mediated learning to a higher psychological functioning within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

The higher achievement scores recorded in scaffolding is probably because, in scaffolding, the teachers participated actively in the teaching process unlike what happened in the two models of literature circles where the teachers' strong presence was not felt because the teachers were merely facilitators. Therefore in scaffolding, the teachers or peers provided support throughout the learning process through the use of comments, prompts, cues, hints, questions etc. to help students connect their previous knowledge to the new information being learnt. In addition, there were pre-reading questions and prompts to guide students' reading of the text. This lends credence to Fournier and Grave's (2002) assertion that the use of specific pre, during and post reading activities in a scaffolding reading experience leads to successful reading and enhanced students' comprehension of texts. Similarly, Marshall (2006) notes that students are familiar with traditional classroom strategies with already established social structure than new strategies such as literature circles. Therefore, students in the scaffolding group had a higher mean score because scaffolding was teacher-directed and students were given a purpose for reading than in literature circles where students decided and determined what they wanted to read, when they wanted to read and how they wanted to read.

The difference in the achievement scores of students in basic literature circles and literature circles with roles may be attributed to what Daniels (2002) describes as "the role sheet backfire syndrome" which has resulted in many teachers dropping the use of role sheets in favour of journals. Daniels (2002) observes that the role sheets have the tendency to restrict students to a mere reading of their role sheet entries instead of venturing in an open ended discussion of the text which basic literature circles provided. Besides, in basic literature circles, students had the opportunity of putting down their individual responses in the journals provided by the teacher without the restriction of the role sheets and the roles. This may also have contributed to the effectiveness of the basic literature circles over the literature circles with roles.

In the control group, the students were not as effective as those in the treatment groups. This can be explained on the basis of what May (1998) referred to as minimal



students' participation usually found in the traditional classroom where teachers' talk dominate literature discussion. It may therefore be reasonable to contend that the instructional strategies were effective in enhancing achievement scores because the two modes of literature circles and scaffolding instructional strategies encouraged a relatively high level of independence, free-flow of talk and collaborative discussion among students. Students were able to articulate their responses to the texts read through the use of journals and role sheets with the teachers acting as facilitators within the social dynamics of the classroom. All these contributed to a richer understanding and personal construction of meaning from the literature texts.

### **Instructional Strategies and Attitude to Prose Literature**

There was no significant effect of treatment on attitude. The finding is quite revealing because it was contrary to expectations and contrary to earlier findings on the positive impact of literature circles and scaffolding strategies on learners' attitude to reading. (Dupuy, 1997; Kilinger, Vaughn and Schumm, 1998; Daniels, 2002; Allan, Ellis and Pearson, 2005; Sanusi 2010). The result of this study in relation to the insignificant effect of treatment on students' attitude may be attributed to Stodalsky, Salk and Glaessner's (1991) assertion that students develop ideas, feelings and attitude to school subjects over time and from a variety of sources such as family background, provision of reading materials, reading habits, reading ability and poor language proficiency. The findings therefore reflect the practical situation about attitude to reading in many Nigerian schools. Many of the students exhibited very low language proficiency; they could not actually read the text or enter their responses in the role sheets and journals provided, hence, they were unable to participate actively during meetings. Meanwhile, learners have become so dependent on the traditional classroom which promotes much of teacher talk and explanation and less of learner participation that they find the introduction of a new method alien. However, the finding of this study with regards to attitude is in line with Adeosun (2004) who investigated the relative effects of prior language experience and whole language based instructional strategies on students' achievement in and attitude to composition and found that treatment had no significant effect on attitude. On the contrary, the control group had the highest adjusted mean score.

This may be attributed to the short period of the whole instruction which was not long enough to have much impact on learners' attitude since attitude is a theoretical construct developed over time. In support of the findings of this study, Marshall (2006) indicated that length of treatment could hinder the success of literature circles. Therefore, Lin (2006) exposed students to 15 weeks of treatment, and found more significant impact of literature circles on students' overall attitude to reading. In the same vein, McElvain (2005) conducted a 9 month study on transactional literature circles with at-risk English learners and found that literature circles not only increased the elementary learners' reading comprehension skill, it also increased their confidence and retention of important ideas from the text. Meanwhile, participants in the focus group discussion also indicated the need to extend the duration of the strategies to enable students acquire more familiarity with how to use it. Therefore, literature circles have the potential to improve students' attitude to literature when it is applied over time.

Another important factor that may have resulted in the lack of significant effect of treatment on attitude is choice of books. This study did not take students' specific preferences for certain types of prose texts into account. Students may find some texts engaging or more interesting than others and this may affect their general attitude to the entire instructional programme. For instance, the difference observed by Min-Hsun and Chiu-Wen (2005) in the study of boys and girls in their literature circles groups emanated from their choice of books. Boys showed more preference to the first novel, *The Call of the Wild*, which girls described as brutal while girls preferred the second novel, *Take My Hand*, which is more like a romance. The researchers emphasized that the choice of books affect attitude to literature circles, thus choosing a book that meets students' interest is important for a successful implementation of literature circles and scaffolding strategies. This is manifested in students' responses to the focus group discussion questions in which more female students indicated their preference for Asare Konadu's *A Woman in her Prime* than Earnest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* which more boys preferred. According to the boys, *The Old Man and the Sea* provided more adventure than *A Woman in her Prime* which they described as feminine.

### **Effects of verbal ability on students' achievement and attitude to prose literature**

The medium verbal ability group obtained the highest mean achievement score compared to the high and low verbal ability groups, the difference was, however, not significant. This means that students' verbal ability had little or nothing to do with students' academic achievement contrary to previous findings (Obemeata, 1992; Iyagba, 1993; Kolawole, 1997; Maduabuchi, 2008). The findings may not be unconnected with students' poor language proficiency exhibited during the course of discussion. Besides, possession of verbal ability does not necessarily guarantee good performance as Oladunjoye (2003) observed. Therefore, other intervening variables such as students' low language proficiency, learning environment, poor reading habit formed over the years may have contributed to verbal ability not having any significant effect on students' attitude to and achievement in prose literature. In line with the finding of this study is Marshall's (2006) assertion that students with low overall reading achievement levels may not respond to literature circles as positively as students with high overall reading achievement levels. The finding of this study is in line with Olaboopo, (1999), Makinde (2004) and Maduabuchi (2006) who found that verbal ability had no effect on students' achievement in written composition and poetry respectively.

### **Effects of Gender on Students' Achievement in and Attitude to Prose Literature**

Gender was found to have no significant effect on students' attitude to and achievement in prose literature. This is contrary to previous findings by Sipe (1999), Iyagba, (1993); Olaboopo, (1999); and Freedman, (2004). They assert that girls perform better than boys in areas of language and literature. The finding also negates those of Spender, (1982); French and French, (1984); Sadker and Sadker, (1985) who found that boys dominated the linguistic scene in literature discussion. This finding supports Okoye, (1981); Adepoju, (1996); Oden, (1999); Onosode, (2004) who found that gender plays insignificant role in academic achievement. In addition, Makinde (2004) investigated the effects of oral and written literature models on students' achievement in Yoruba Composition and found no significant difference on achievement and attitude scores of students according to gender. In a study to determine the relative effects of discussion

and reading-questioning techniques on students' achievement in prose literature, Ogunnaike (2002) found no significant main effect of gender on achievement. Alegbeleye (2005) also found no significant effect of gender on achievement. Thus, the findings have shown that as a moderating variable, gender has little or nothing to do with students' performance in literature. This may be attributed to the fact that given equal opportunity to participate in classroom discussion through interactive reading strategies provided by literature circles and scaffolding reading structures, the differences in boys' and girls' academic ability would even out. Besides, in instructional structures that emphasise small group discussions, Johnson (2000) found that girls sustained their voices and maintained their sense of self, contrary to what happens in traditional classrooms where boys dominate discussion.

### **Interaction Effects**

The two-way and three-way interactions of the variables had no significant effect on students' attitude to and achievement in prose literature. This implies that verbal ability and gender have nothing or little to do with the academic achievement and attitude of students in prose literature. However, the female students had a higher post mean achievement scores than their male counterparts, confirming Johnson's (2000) finding that literature circle discussions provide adolescent girls the opportunity to sustain their voices and maintain their sense of self compared to the traditional classroom where boys often dominate discussion. In the same vein, Makinde (2004) found that the two-way and three-way interactions of the variables had no significant effects on achievement and attitude of students' in composition writing. The findings of this study implies that when given opportunity of self expressiveness through effective instructional strategies that promote democratic process in a social learning context, boys and girls may likely exhibit the same attitude to learning and maintain equal achievement in academic tasks.

### **Focus Group Discussion**

The purpose of the focus group discussion was to collect relevant qualitative data on the strategies used and the views of the participants on the way the study was conducted. The participants in the FGD were the research assistants in each experimental

group and the students in the groups. Questions to stimulate discussion were based on each of the strategies used. Four questions were asked for each strategy. The research assistant for each group coordinated the discussion.

The results of the FGD are presented as follows:

#### **A. Basic literature Circles**

The participants were asked to describe what they gained by participating in the basic literature circles group. They indicated that the daily writings which occurred as they enter their responses in their reading journals helped to improve their writing skills. It also helped them to become actively involved in the classroom discussion and improved their speaking skills

They were also asked the effect the strategy had on their attitude to reading literature texts. The participants noted that participating in the basic literature circles group helped them to constantly read their books, even in the absence of the teacher. They attributed this to the fact that texts were made available to them during the programme. The participants also noted that they preferred the basic literature circles strategy more than the previous method used by their teacher in teaching literature. They requested for its continuation even after the programme.

Participants were asked to indicate which prose text they preferred reading. Many of the female participants preferred reading the African text, *A Woman in her Prime*, because of its familiarity to their socio-cultural background and the simplicity of the language. One of the female participants claimed that 'reading *A Woman in Her Prime* helped her to understand better the problems her elder sister, who has been childless for fifteen years, was going through.

#### **B. Literature Circles with Roles**

Participants in Literature circles with roles were asked to mention the benefits they gained by participating in the group. The students indicated that participation in the strategy enhanced their understanding of the prose texts read and enabled them to contribute more to class discussion. Many of the participants noted that the constant discussions in the groups improved their reading, writing and vocabulary skills. The roles assigned to them and the role sheets helped them to be focused in their reading and discussion.

On the changes they wished the teacher to make when applying the strategy next time, the participants noted that the number of students in a group should be reduced and that only students who showed seriousness would be allowed to participate in the programme because some group members could not contribute much to the discussion because they could not complete their reading at home.

Participants were asked to indicate the text they preferred reading.

Many of the female participants claimed that they preferred reading *A Woman in her Prime* more than *The old man and the Sea* because it gave them insight into the Ghanaian marriage system, which is different from the practice in Nigeria while the male participants showed more preference for *The Old Man and the Sea* than for *A Woman in her Prime*. They claimed that the old man's struggles and ordeals at the high sea were what made the text interesting and adventurous. In fact, a particular male student described the old man as 'a warrior and his struggles at sea as war'

### **C Scaffolding Instructional Strategy**

Participants in the scaffolding instructional strategy were asked to state what they liked or disliked about the strategy. They noted that they liked the prompts and cues provided by the teacher because they helped them to be focused in their reading and discussion of the prose texts. However, they felt that the strategy did not involve enough writing to provide them with notes to read.

When asked the advantages and disadvantages of the strategy, participants indicated that the strategy enhanced their reading of literature texts and improved their performance in their second term literature examinations. One major disadvantage according to the participants was that the strategy did not give room for teacher's notes. Secondly, many of the students could not express their views effectively in English so they could not contribute much to the discussion. Participants indicated that they wished to continue with this strategy after the programme because they preferred it to their teacher's previous teaching style. Many of the female participants preferred reading the African text, *A Woman in her Prime* more than the non African text, *The Old Man and the Sea* while the male participants showed more preference to the *Old man and the Sea* than *A Woman in her Prime*.

### **4.3 Implications of Findings**

This study was informed by the persistent failure of students in literature in English as revealed by the WAEC Chief Examiners' reports over the years. The findings reveal the need to incorporate student-centered instructional strategies (Literature circles and Scaffolding) in literature teaching to promote students' independent and collaborative engagement with texts. The study therefore has implications for students, teachers, parents and the government.

Students should be encouraged to have active engagement with prescribed literature textbooks. It is essentially through the engagement that they would construct meanings and share the meanings with their fellow students and teachers. Students should be made to appreciate the need to seek assistance from other sources such as their teachers, fellow students, relevant textbooks and the internet where they could not understand on their own. Students should realise that there is no substitute for the reading of the actual texts.

The study is also relevant to teachers if they are to improve their style of instructional delivery. Government, both at the federal and state levels, should ensure that teachers are sponsored to workshops and seminars where they could benefit from current trends in teaching and learning. In this case, teachers should be trained on how to apply literature circles and scaffolding instructional strategies to their literature lessons.

One major problem encountered during the study was students' non possession of the recommended literature texts. To solve this problem, the researcher had to improvise by supplying the prose texts because possession of texts is very important in enhancing performance in literature. Therefore, parents are to ensure prompt purchase of recommended literature textbooks for their wards/children. In this way they encourage them to be actively engaged with the literature texts.

Government needs to embark on a comprehensive rehabilitation of existing school libraries and the construction of new ones where necessary; equip these libraries with relevant literature textbooks to promote positive attitude to reading. Both parents and government need to understand that making texts available to students influences their active engagement with the literature texts. Besides provision of textbooks, government needs to make other sources of information acquisition and sharing such as the internet

available to students to enable them share what they have read with others beyond the face-to-face classroom discussion.

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary of findings of the study, the conclusion and recommendations.

#### 5.1 Summary of Findings

The results of the study are summarized thus.

1. There was a significant main effect of treatment on students' achievement in prose literature. Students in the scaffolding experimental group had higher achievement scores than those in the other three groups viz: basic literature circles, literature circles with roles and control. However, there was no significant effect of treatment on attitude towards prose literature. Students taught with basic literature circles obtained higher achievement scores than those taught with literature circles with roles. Similarly, students taught with literature circles with roles had higher achievement scores than those in the control group.
2. There was no significant main effect of verbal ability on students' achievement and attitude to prose literature.
3. There was no significant main effect of gender on students' achievement and attitude to prose literature. This shows that male and female students are not significantly different in their posttest achievement scores in prose literature. The same was also found in their attitude.
4. The 2 – way interaction effect of treatment and verbal ability on both achievement and attitude to prose literature was not significant.
5. There was no significant interaction effect of treatment and gender on students' achievement and attitude to prose literature.
6. The interaction effect of verbal ability and gender on students' achievement and attitude to prose literature was not significant.
7. There was no significant 3-way interaction effect of treatment, verbal ability and gender on students' achievement and attitude to prose literature.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

The results of the study have shown that the application of student-centered instructional strategies involving scaffolding and literature circles are effective in promoting students' engagement with text, personal responses, active participation during lessons and achievement in prose texts irrespective of their gender and verbal ability.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made

1. Teachers at both the primary and secondary levels of education are encouraged to adopt literature circles and scaffolding strategies in teaching literature in English.
2. Teachers who teach other content area subjects are also encouraged to employ these strategies in their teaching.
3. Due to students' poor language proficiency, it is recommended that bilingual approach should be adopted in using literature circles in the literature classroom.
4. Literature circles have the potential to promote students' attitude to reading over time, this study recommends that researchers and classroom teachers should increase the duration of literature circles application for it to have positive impact on attitude.
5. Schools are challenged to encourage the establishment of reading clubs in schools and communities to enable students improve their reading skills.
6. Teachers of literature should be encouraged to attend conferences, workshops, seminars and in-service training to acquire practical experiences on how to manipulate these strategies.
7. Government should address the issue of textbook availability. Texts should be made available to all levels of students or encourage parents to purchase texts for their wards.

## **5.4 Limitations of the study**

The main constraint of this study was irregular attendance by students. Consequently, some of the students who began the programme were dropped at the end. The posttests were not administered to them and this had no effect on the overall outcome

of the study. Another limitation of this study was students' general poor language proficiency which prevented some of them from participating actively in both the independent reading of texts and in the oral and written discussions that students were involved in. Some times the school programmes disrupted the groups from holding their meetings at the fixed periods.

### **5.5 Suggestions for further study**

Due to the limitations of this study, further research should be conducted in the following areas:

1. The effects of L1 (Mother tongue) and L2 (English) on students' participation in literature circles discussions.
2. The effects of virtual literature circles on students' achievement and attitude to prose literature
3. Literature circles, school location and home background as determinants of senior secondary students' learning outcome in literature
4. Comparative study of face-to-face and virtual literature circles on achievement in prose literature

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## APPENDIX I

### DEPARTMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION, FACULTY OF EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

#### VERBAL ABILITY TEST

##### GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTERING VERBAL ABILITY TEST

This is a test to see how well you can think. It contains questions of different kinds. Some examples and practice questions will be given to show you how to answer the question.

Write your answers in the **ANSWER SHEET** provided

**EXAMPLE A.** Four of the following are alike in some ways. Write the numbers of the other two in the brackets at the end of the line.

- (1) Tea      (2) Coffee      (3) Shoes      (4) Cocoa      (5) Pencil  
(6) Milo      (3 & 5)

**QUESTION 1:** Four of the following are alike in some ways. Write the numbers of the other two in the bracket.

- (1) Apple      (2) Pear      (3) Potato      (4) Banana      (5) Carrot  
(6) Orange      (3 & 5)

**QUESTION 2:** Four of the following are alike in some ways. Write the numbers of the other two in bracket.

- (1) Door      (2) Window      (3) Coat      (4) Wall      (5) Roof  
(6) Book      (3 & 6)

**EXAMPLE B:** Towel is to water as blotting paper is to

- (1) School      (2) Ink      (3) Writing      (4) Desk      (5) Pen      (2)

**QUESTION 3:** Hand is to Finger as Foot is to

- (1) Leg      (2) Arm      (3) Toe      (4) Man      (5) Ankle      (1)

**QUESTION 4:** Newspaper is to see as wireless is to

- (1) Wire      (2) Hear      (3) Dial      (4) Ear      (5) Deaf      (2)

**EXAMPLE C:** Which two of the following statements mean most nearly the same?

- 1) Too many cooks spoil the broth
- 2) Make hay while the sun shines
- 3) A stitch in time saves nine
- 4) It's a long lane that has no turning
- 5) Strike while the iron is hot      (2 & 5)

**QUESTION 5:** Which two of the following statements mean most nearly the same?

- 1) A careless master makes a negligent servant

- 2) To resist him that is set in authority is evil
- 3) Little is done when many command
- 4) When the cat is away the mice do play
- 5) Where there are seven shepherds there is no flock (3 & 5)

**QUESTION 6:** Which two of the following statements together prove that our dog bit the postman yesterday?

- 1) Our dog is the only Alsatian in the street
- 2) The postman was late yesterday
- 3) The postman is in because an Alsatian bit him yesterday
- 4) Dogs seem to dislike postmen
- 5) The postman had a sore leg last week (1 & 3)

You will be given 20 minutes to do the test. Some questions are easier than others. Try each question as you come to it. If you encounter a difficult question, leave it and go to another question but come back to the question later if there is time. Avoid spending too much time on a particular question. Try to get as many right answers as possible.

**DO NOT TURN THE PAGE OVER UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO**

Four of the following are alike in some way. Write the number of the other two in the bracket.

- (1) Table (2) Chair (3) Man (4) Bed (5) Cupboard (6) Towel

**FILTHY** is to **DISEASE** as **CLEAN** is to

- (1) Dirty (2) Safety (3) Water (4) Illness (5) Health

Four of the following are alike in some ways. Write the numbers of the other two in the bracket.

- (1) Tube (2) Artery (3) Tunnel (4) String (5) Rope (6) Wire

4) **INCH** is to **SPACE** as **SECOND** is to

- (1) Hour (2) Age (3) Time (4) Clock (5) Third

5) Four of the following are alike in some ways. Write the numbers of the other two in the brackets.

- (1) Lagoon (2) Pool (3) Swamp (4) Lake (5) Marsh (6) Pond

6) **PIN** is to **HEAD** as **NEEDLE** is to

- (1) Prick (2) Sew (3) Age (4) Point (5) Thread

7) Four of the following are alike in some ways. Write the numbers of the other two in the brackets.

- (1) Onlooker (2) Spectator (3) Critic (4) Eyewitness (5) Author  
(6) Bystander

8) **HEAT** is to **ASHES** as **CARPENTRY** is to

- (1) Carpenter (2) Sawdust (3) Chest (4) Furniture (5) Wood



- 9) Four of the following are alike in some ways. Write the numbers of the other two in the brackets.  
(1) Sponge (2) Water (3) Mop (4) Towel (5) Blotting paper  
(6) Dirt
- 10) Which two of the following statements mean most nearly the same?  
1) Time is a herb that cures all diseases  
2) Anticipation is better than realization  
3) Today is worth to-morrows  
4) To speed today is to set back tomorrow  
5) There is no time like the present.
- 11) **TELEPHONE** is to **VOICE** as **LETTER** is to  
(1) Stamp (2) Post Office (3) Writing (4) Correspondent  
(5) Envelope
- 12) Which two statements prove that “**JOHN IS A GOOD SWIMMER**”?  
(1) Bob goes to the baths every day  
(2) John and Bob are friends  
(3) Bob won last year’s swimming championship  
(4) John Beat Bob in a race last week  
(5) John has challenged Bob to a race
- 13) **MANNERS** are to **POLITE** as **MORALS** are to  
(1) Politics (2) Politeness (3) Wealthy (4) Virtuous or Virtue (5) Strong
- 14) Which two statements prove that “**MR. SMITH OWNS SOME TAMWORTHS**”?  
(1) Tamworths are better than Berkshires  
(2) One-eighth of the pigs in that pen are Tamworths  
(3) Most of the pigs in that pen are Berkshires  
(4) Most of the farmers in the district own Tamworths  
(5) All the pigs in that pen belong to Mr. Smith
- 15) Four of the following are alike in some ways. Write the numbers of the other two in the brackets.  
(1) Spire (2) Church (3) Flagpole (4) Steeple (5) Tower (6) Hall
- 16) **OCEAN** is to **LAKE** as **CONTINENT** is to  
(1) River (2) Land (3) Mountain (4) Island (5) Africa
- 17) Which two of the following statements mean most nearly the same?  
(1) Fire that’s closest kept burns farces  
(2) Set a third to catch a thief  
(3) A dog with a bone knows no friend  
(4) Fight fire with fire  
(5) Sow the wind reap the whirl wind

- 18) Three days in the week have the same number of letters. In the bracket write the first letter of the day, which of the three, comes first in the alphabet.
- 19) **“ONLY PREFECTS WEAR A BADGE”, ALL PREFECTS ARE IN FORM VI”** Therefore one of the following statement is true?  
 (1) All form VI boys may wear a badge  
 (2) A boy weaving a badge is in form VI  
 (3) All form VI boys may wear badges  
 (4) Form VI prefects do not wear badges  
 (5) All prefects in form VI wear badges.
- 20) Four of the following are alike in some ways. Write the numbers of the other two brackets.  
 (1) Blame (2) Accuse (3) Indict (4) Loathe (5) Censure (6) Ape
- 21) Which two of the following statements mean most nearly the same?  
 (1) He who follows two hares will catch neither  
 (2) To blow and swallow at the same time is not easy  
 (3) He holds nothings fast who grabs at too much  
 (4) Despise the man who can blow hot and cold with the same breath.  
 (5) It is easy to despise what you cannot obtain
- 22) A Few is to many as **OCCASIONALLY** is to  
 (1) Seldom (2) Never (3) Every (4) Often (5) Always
- 23) Few of the following are alike in some ways. Write the numbers of the other two in the brackets.  
 (1) Corrugated (2) Involved (3) Complicated (4) Intricate  
 (5) Coarse (6) Complex
- 24) Which two of the following statements together prove that **“MR. REED DOES NOT LIVE IN HUME STREET”**?  
 (1) All the buildings in Hume Street are modern  
 (2) All the buildings in Hume Street are flats  
 (3) Mr. Reed lives in comfort  
 (4) Mr. Reed does not live in a flat  
 (5) Mr. Reed lives five miles from town
- 25) If these words were re-arranged correctly to form a sentence, with what would the middle word begin.  
 Is from a molehill a Mountain A Things Different
- 26) **GATE** is to **FENCE** as **PORT** is to  
 (1) Land (2) Coast (3) Town (4) Sea (5) Destination
- 27) Which two of the following statements mean most nearly the same?  
 (1) It’s petty expenses that empty the purse  
 (2) Small gains bring riches in

- (3) Even the weak are strong when united  
 (4) Constant dripping wears away the stone  
 (5) A chain is as strong as its weakest link.
- 28) Four of the following are alike in some ways. Write the numbers of the other two in the brackets.  
 (1) Ruler (2) Heat (3) Clock (4) Thermometer (5) Rain gauge (6) Yard
- 29) Which of the following statements mean most nearly the same?  
 (1) Repentance is poor consolation  
 (2) More haste less speed  
 (3) Quick decisions often breed regret  
 (4) Haste is repented in leisure
- 30) **DRAMATIST** is to **PLAY** as **COMPOSER** is to  
 (1) Orchestra (2) Piano (3) Symphony (4) Performance (5) Concert
- 31) Which two of the following statements together prove that “**TODAY IS COLDER THAN YESTERDAY?**”  
 (1) Every Friday this month was a cold day  
 (2) Tomorrow is the first day of the month  
 (3) Last Thursday was a hot day  
 (4) The last day of each month this year has been the coldest day of the month  
 (5) Summer is nearly over
- 32) Four of the following are alike in some ways. Write the numbers of the other two in the brackets.  
 (1) Fugitive (2) Enemy (3) Evacuee (4) Escape (5) Prisoner (6) Truant
- 33) Which two of the following statements mean most nearly the same?  
 (1) A great fortune is a great slavery  
 (2) Better beans and bacon in freedom than cakes and ale in slavery  
 (3) Put a chain round the neck of a slave and the end fastens round your own  
 (4) Lean liberty is better than fat slavery  
 (5) Stone walls do not a prison make
- 34) In a certain code of English word BOARD is written CODVI. What would the English word PAT be in this code?
- 35) Which two of the following statements mean most nearly the same?  
 (1) Forewarned is forearmed  
 (2) The loss is happy that does not think so  
 (3) No man is happy that does not think so  
 (4) Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown  
 (5) Where ignorance is bliss, it is only to be wise
- 36) **BATTLE** is to **DUEL** as **CHORUS** is to  
 (1) Twins (2) Duct (3) Selection (4) Music (5) Song

**APPENDIX II**

**ACE HIGHER TESTML**

**VERBAL ABILITY TEST ANSWER SHEET**

NAME..... NO.....

SCHOOL..... CLASS.....

AGE..... SEX.....

**INSTRUCTION:** Write only the correct NUMBER not words or statements in this sheet

- |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1..... and.....  | 9..... and.....  |
| 2..... and.....  | 20..... and..... |
| 3..... and.....  | 21..... and..... |
| 4..... and.....  | 22..... and..... |
| 5..... and.....  | 23..... and..... |
| 6..... and.....  | 24..... and..... |
| 7..... and.....  | 25..... and..... |
| 8..... and.....  | 26..... and..... |
| 9..... and.....  | 27..... and..... |
| 10..... and..... | 28..... and..... |
| 11..... and..... | 29..... and..... |
| 12..... and..... | 30..... and..... |
| 13..... and..... | 31..... and..... |
| 14..... and..... | 32..... and..... |
| 15..... and..... | 33..... and..... |
| 16..... and..... | 34..... and..... |
| 17..... and..... | 35..... and..... |
| 18..... and..... | 36..... and..... |

### APPENDIX III

**DEPARTMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION,  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION,  
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN**

**Prose Literature –in-English Attitude Questionnaire (PLAQ)**

The questionnaire is designed to elicit information from students on your attitude to reading prose literature. The information from your responses will be used strictly for research purposes. Therefore, kindly respond to the questionnaire as honestly and objectively as possible. Your cooperation would be highly appreciated.

**SECTION A: Background Information**

Name of school.....

Sex            Male    [    ]    Female    [    ]

Class        .....

Age .....

**SECTION B: Attitude to Prose Literature**

**INSTRUCTION:** Please tick (√) against the option that best applies to your choice

S/N		SA	A	D	SD
1	Literature is a very interesting subject				
2	I like Literature-in-English as a subject				
3	I love reading a lot.				
4	I prefer reading prose to any other genre of literature				
5	Literature lessons are boring.				
6	I feel reluctant to attend literature lessons.				
7	I only chose literature to make up my subjects				
8	Reading novels gives me joy				
9	I am happier during prose lesson				
10	I do not like prose literature because novels are voluminous				
11	I prefer short novels to voluminous novels				
12	Novels written by African authors are more interesting than foreign novels.				
13	Novels by African authors are easier to read and understand				
14	I prefer non-African prose to African prose				
15	Prose texts are difficult to read				
16	I do not understand the English of prose texts				

S/N		SA	A	D	SD
17	Prose is written in difficult English				
18	Reading prose enhances my vocabulary acquisition.				
19	Prose texts expose me to the good use of the English Language				
20	Prose helps me to think critically				
21	The more I read novels the more I become aware of the problems of the society				
22	The characters I meet in novels help me to understand life				
23	The problems characters in a prose text encounter help me understand life better.				
24	Reading prose texts help me solve some of my personal problems.				
25	Through prose I get to know other people's culture.				
26	Prose helps me learn good behaviour.				
27	Reading prose helps me to develop my reading skill.				
28	Constant reading of prose texts does not improve English Language learning.				
29	The more I read novels the more I develop interest in reading				
30	Reading novels helps me acquire good moral values.				
31	Learning prose literature is not important.				
32	Reading prose contributes to my communicative competence in English				
33	It is difficult for me to discuss the novels I have read with other people.				
34	Prose texts are difficult to understand				
35	The most difficult aspect of prose literature is the aspect of analysing the text.				
36	It is boring to discuss author's use of literary devices..				
37	Talking about characters in texts read is easier than any aspect of analysing the novel.				
38	I like to read shorter novels more than voluminous ones.				
39	It is not difficult to analyse prose text				

S/N		SA	A	D	SD
40	Prose literature is well taught in my school				
41	I hate the way prose literature is taught in my class				
42	My teacher does not encourage me to read the novels.				
43	I prefer to buy summaries of the prose text more than buying the prose text itself.				
44	I understand the prose text better when the teacher encourages me to discuss what I have read with others.				
45	I need the teacher to organize classroom activities that can encourage me to read novels.				
46	I get more interested in reading novels when I know I will be discussing what I read with others.				

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## APPENDIX IV

### DEPARTMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

#### ACHIEVEMENT TEST IN PROSE LITERATURE

**Instruction:** The test questions are drawn from two prose texts recommended by WAEC. There are two sections to this test. Section A focused on an African prose, Asare Konadu's *A Woman in Her Prime* and section B focused on a non African prose, Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*

Attempt all the questions in both sections.

**Time: 2 hours.**

#### SECTION A: ASARE KONADU'S A WOMAN IN HER PRIME

1. Discuss briefly the theme of barrenness in *A Woman in Her Prime*.
2. In a few words, discuss the relationship that exists between Pokuwa and her mother.
3. Explain the significance of the sacrifices performed by Pokuwa.
4. What do you think made it possible for Pokuwa to become pregnant at the end?
5. Briefly describe Pokuwa as a character in the text.
6. Mention and briefly explain any other two themes in the text.
7. Give two examples each of the use (a) Flashback and (b) Irony in the text.
8. Do you think the title is suitable? Give two reasons for your answer.
9. Give two instances of conflict in the text.
10. In two sentences explain how these conflicts were resolved.

#### SECTION B: EARNEST HEMINGWAY'S *THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA*

11. Mention three important tools used in the text for fishing and state their significance.
12. Describe in few words the relationship between
  - (a) The Old man and the boy
  - (b) The Old man and the other fishermen
13. Discuss the futility of life as a theme in the text.
14. Comment on the character of the Old man using instances from the text and point out his strengths and weaknesses.
15. List and explain any two narrative techniques used in the text.



16. In a few words, narrate the old man's ordeal in the high sea.
17. (a) Describe any two incidents in the text that affect you personally  
(c) How do they affect you?
18. Does the fishing community care about the Old man? Give one reason for your answer.
19. Briefly comment on the use of language in *The Old Man and the Sea*
20. Were you pleased with the way the story ended? Give two reasons for your answer.

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## **APPENDIX V**

### **BASIC LITERATURE CIRCLES INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE**

**Aspects:** Plot, themes, character and characterization, setting and literary devices

**Duration:** 70 Minutes

**Behavioural Objectives:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

1. Read the assigned portion of the text independently.
2. Discuss aspects of the texts read using the basic literature circles procedure.
3. Identify and discuss the literary elements in the text read.
4. Connect the events of the text to real life experiences.
5. Enter personal responses to the text into their journals.
6. Share their reading with group members.

#### **Step 1**

The teacher gives students mini lesson on basic literature circles procedure as well as the content of the lesson.

#### **Step 2**

The teacher observes students as they form reading groups based on the texts they have chosen to read.

#### **Step 3**

Students read the text independently in their various groups and the teacher goes round to observe the groups as they read.

#### **Step 4**

Students share their readings in their various groups while the teacher goes round to observe.

#### **Step 5**

Students assign group members chapters or portions of the text to read for the next basic literature circles meeting.

#### **Conclusion**

At the end of the group discussions, the teacher gathers students in a whole class and presents his/her observations on each student's and groups' performance during the discussions. The teacher also gives another brief mini lesson on the basic literature circles procedure and the content of the lesson for focused on during the discussion.

## APPENDIX VI

### LITERATURE CIRCLES WITH ROLES INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

**Aspects:** Plot, themes, character and characterization, setting and literary devices

**Duration:** 70 Minutes

**Behavioural Objectives:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

1. Read the assigned portion of the text independently.
2. Discuss aspects of the texts read using the literature circles with roles procedure.
3. Identify and discuss the literary elements in the text read.
4. Enter personal responses to the text read into their individual role sheets.
5. Share their reading with group members.
6. Connect the events of the text to real life experiences.

#### Step 1

The teacher gives students mini lesson on literature circles with roles procedure as well as the content of the lesson.

#### Step 2

Teacher observes students as they form reading groups based on the texts they have chosen to read.

#### Step 3

Students assign group members roles to perform during the group reading and discussion.

#### Step 4

Students read the texts independently in their various groups and the teacher goes round to observe the groups.

#### Step 5

Students share their reading in their various groups while the teacher goes round to observe students' discussions.

#### Step 6

Students assign group members chapters or portions of the text to read before the next literature circles with roles meeting.

#### Conclusion

At the end of the group discussions, the teacher gathers students in a whole class and presents his/her observations on each student's and groups' performance during the discussions. The teacher also gives another mini lesson on the basic literature circles procedure and the content of the lesson focused on during the group discussion.

## APPENDIX VII

### SCAFFOLDING INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

**Aspects:** Plot, themes, character and characterization, setting and literary devices

**Duration:** 70 Minutes

**Behavioural Objectives:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

1. Make predictions about the text to be read.
2. Engage in sustained silent reading of the text
3. Discuss the text read using the scaffolding instructional procedure.
4. Identify and discuss the literary elements in the text read.
5. Scaffold each others' learning.
6. Share their reading in small and whole group discussions.

#### **Step 1**

The teacher introduces the lesson by explaining the scaffolding instructional procedure and the content of the lesson.

#### **Step 2**

The teacher leads students to make predictions about the text.

#### **Step 3**

The teacher leads students into sustained silent reading of the text

#### **Step 4**

The teacher breaks students into small groups to discuss their reading using the teacher provided prompts.

#### **Step 5**

The teacher brings the different groups back in a whole class to share their groups' reading using the scaffolding instructional procedure.

#### **Step 6**

Teachers and students collaborate to provide cues, hints, prompts, questions and comments to aid students' understanding of the text read.

**Conclusion**

The teacher concludes by summarizing the content of the lesson and asking students to make brief comments on the literary elements identified in the text read. The teacher also assigns students the next chapter(s) or portion(s) of the text to read before the next meeting.

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## APPENDIX VIII

### CONVENTIONAL METHOD INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

**Aspects:** Plot, themes, character and characterization, setting and literary devices

**Duration:** 70 Minutes

**Behavioural Objectives:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

1. Read and explain the assigned chapter(s) or portion(s) of the text.
2. Summarize the text read.
3. Identify and explain the literary elements in the text read.
4. Recall the events in the text read.

#### **Step 1**

The teacher introduces the lesson by referring students to the previous chapter or portion of the text read.

#### **Step 2**

The teacher leads students into silent and vocal reading of the new chapter or portion of the text

#### **Step 4**

The teacher reads and explains the new chapter or portion of the text.

#### **Step 5**

The teacher asks students questions to recall the content of the text.

#### **Step 6**

The teacher writes notes on the chalkboard on the content of the text and students copy the notes down into their exercise books.

#### **Conclusion**

The teacher concludes by summarizing the content of the lesson and also assigning students the chapters or portions of the text to read before the next lesson.

## APPENDIX IX

### LESSON NOTES FOR BASIC LITERATURE CIRCLES

#### WEEK 1

#### 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>ND</sup> LESSONS:

**CLASS:** SSII

**DURATION:** 70 Minutes

**TOPIC:** Introduction to the elements of literature

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the assigned portion of the text and make entries into their journals
- (ii) Give the plot of the texts read
- (iii) Identify the overriding theme in the portion of the text read
- (iv) Identify the major characters in the text read.
- (v) Discuss and share their entries using the basic literature circles strategy

**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher gives a mini lesson to introduce the students to the basic literature circles norms and procedures and to the content of the lesson.

#### PRESENTATION

**Step I:** The teacher explains what prose is and lists the elements of prose literature as plot, theme, setting, character and the author's style (i.e. the literary devices/narrative technique such as flashback, use of imagery, tone and figurative use of language and point of view).

**Step II:** The teacher explains the plot as the structure of the story. This has to do with the way the author presents the story either in a regular chronological order following a time sequence. Sometimes, there could be some breaks in the time sequence. A writer may sometimes introduce flashback to break the movement of the plot in order to fill the reader in on some background information necessary for the understanding of the story or for suspense.

**Step III:** The teacher explains the theme as the central message in the text: the dominant idea or thought which the author examines in the text.

**Step IV:** Character is explained as person or persons who inhabit the world of the text and around whom the actions of the texts revolve. The teacher offers information on how characters are revealed in the story. These are through:

- Authorial comments (what the author says about the character through the character's thoughts and behaviours).
- What the characters say, what other characters say about them and how they respond to other characters.
- What the reader thinks or feels about the characters.
- The teacher also explains the categories to which the characters in a text could be placed, in terms of whether they are round, dynamic, foil or static character.

**Step V:** The setting is explained as the location and time of the action in the story i.e. the place where the events took place, the season, the weather and the time period. Settings can actually influence the understanding of the plot, theme, and the motive for the main characters' actions; it also contributes to the overall meaning one takes out of the story.

**Step VI:** The teacher explains the author's style to include the author's use of figurative language such as metaphor, simile, imagery, symbols etc. to help the students visualize the events of the story and the author's use of narrative technique like flashback, foreshadowing, point of view, suspense, humour, use of dialogue etc. The point of view is explained as the perspective or position from which the author chooses to write the story. Thus, a story could be written from the first person point of view in which the main character, who is a participant in the events of the story tells the story, hence it is referred to as the limited narrator; the third person point of view or the omniscient point of view in which case the person telling the story is the central observer who knows all. Knowledge of the author's point of view is important in the understanding of the story. As flashback takes us back into experiences and events that happened before the story began, foreshadowing gives us hints about future events and occurrences in the story while the author uses dialogue to situate the characters' actions in realistic or believable situations.

**Step VII:** The teacher then gives a brief book talk on the two pre-selected texts and asks students to pick the first text they want to read.



**Step VIII:** The teacher asks students to break into groups of 5-10 depending on the number of students in the class and based on the text they choose to read first.

**Step IX:** The students fall into their various groups to read the first two chapters of their chosen text, make entries into their journals and share their entries while they assign more chapters to be read at home for the next literature circles meeting.

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## **3<sup>rd</sup>&4<sup>th</sup> LESSON: WEEK II**

**CLASS: SSII**

**DURATION: 70 Minutes**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of assigned chapters or portions of chosen text

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the Lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read their assigned portion of the text independently and make entries into their reading journals
- (ii) Identify the conflicts in the story
- (iii) Relate character's actions to the major theme(s) of the story
- (iv) Identify and explain author's use of images and symbols
- (v) Share their journal entries with group members

**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher gives a mini lesson on the norms and procedures of the literature circles strategy

### **PRESENTATION**

**Step I:** The students move into their various groups and begin to discuss the entries in their journals.

**Step II:** The students brainstorm and share ideas, draw illustrations from the text, ask questions and make connections with the text

**Step III:** The teacher goes round to observe what goes on in each group and makes his/her entry in the observation sheet.

**Step IV:** The students evaluate their individual and group performances after their discussion, reassign chapters or portions to be read for the next LC meeting.

**Step V:** The teacher gives a post discussion mini lesson based on what was observed during the day's reading and discussion.

## **5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> LESSON WEEK III**

**CLASS:** SSII

**DURATION:** 70 Minutes

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of the assigned chapters or portions of chosen text

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the assigned portion of the text independently and make entries into their journals
- (ii) Identify the relationship between the characters
- (iii) Relate the various events in the text to the central message of the text
- (iv) Connect the events and character's experiences to their everyday life
- (iv) Share their journal entries with group members

**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher gives a mini lesson on the norms and procedures of LC

### **PRESENTATION:**

**Step I:** The students move into their various LC groups to complete their reading and make entries into their journals

**Step II:** Students begin to share ideas, drawing illustrations from the text, asking questions and making connections with the text

**Step III:** The teacher moves round to observe what goes on in each group, help students to remain focused and make their entries

**Step IV:** Students evaluate individual and group performances; re-assign roles and chapters to be completed for the next meeting

**Step V:** The teacher gives further mini-lesson based on observation during the discussion

## 7<sup>TH</sup> & 8<sup>TH</sup> LESSONWEEK IV

**CLASS: SSII**

**DURATION: 70 MINUTES**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of the assigned chapters or portions of chosen text

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the Lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the assigned portion of the text independently and make entries in their journal
- (ii) Identify the relationship between language of the text, setting, the central message and characters' actions.
- (iii) State whether the conflict identified was resolved or not
- (iv) Share their journal entries with group members.
- (v) Present their group's discussion in a whole class sharing (this comes up at the end of each text reading)

### **PRESENTATION:**

**Step I:** The students move into their various LC groups, complete their reading of assigned chapter(s) and make entries into their journals

**Step II:** The students begin to share ideas based on the questions generated by the discussion director, drawing illustrations from the text, ask questions and make connections with the text.

**Step III:** The teacher moves round the groups to observe what goes on in the groups, re-direct students' focus, if need be and make her entry.

**Step IV:** Students evaluate individual and group performance and re-assign chapters to be completed for the next LC meeting.

**Step V:** The Students come together for a whole class sharing at the completion of the text

**Step VI:** The teacher gives further mini lesson based on the observations made.

**9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> LESSON: WEEK V (Students change to the second text)**

**CLASS: SSII**

**DURATION: 70Minutes**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of assigned chapters or portions of chosen text

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the assigned portion of the text and make entries into their journals
- (ii) Give the plot of the texts read
- (iii) Identify the overriding message in the portion of the text read
- (iv) Identify the major characters in the texts read.
- (v) Discuss and share their entries using the basic literature circles model.

**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher gives a mini lesson on the norms and procedures of the literature circles strategy

### **PRESENTATION**

**Step I:** The students move into their groups and begin to discuss their various entries in their journals.

**Step II:** The students brain storm and share ideas, draw illustrations from the text, ask questions and make connections with the text

**Step III:** The teacher goes round to observe what goes on in each group and makes his/her entry in the observation sheet.

**Step IV:** The students evaluate their individual and group performances after their discussion, reassign chapters or portions to be read for the next LC meeting.

**Step V:** The teacher gives a post discussion mini lesson based on what was observed during the day's reading and discussion.

**11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> LESSON**

**WEEK VI**

**CLASS:**

**SSII**

**DURATION:**

**70 Minutes**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of the assigned chapters or portions of chosen text

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the Lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read their assigned portion of the text independently and make entries into their reading journals
- (ii) Identify the conflicts in the story
- (iii) Relate character's actions to the major themes of the story
- (iv) Identify and explain author's use of images and symbols
- (v) Share their journal entries with group members

**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher gives a mini lesson on the norms and procedures of LC

**PRESENTATION:**

**Step I:** The students move into their various LC groups to complete their reading and make entries into their journals

**Step II:** Students begin to share ideas, drawing illustrations from the text, asking questions and making connections with the text

**Step III:** The teacher moves round to observe what goes on in each group, help students to remain focused and make their entries

**Step IV:** Students evaluate individual and group performances; re-assign roles and chapters to be completed for the next meeting

**Step V:** The teacher gives further mini-lesson based on observation during the discussion



**13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> LESSON**                      **WEEK VII**

**CLASS:**    **SSII**

**DURATION:**                                      **70 Minutes**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of the assigned chapters or portions of chosen text

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the assigned portion of the text independently and make entries into their journals
- (ii) Identify the relationship between the characters
- (iii) Relate the various events in the text to the central message of the text
- (iv) Connect the events and character's experiences to their everyday life
- (v) Share their journal entries with group members

**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher gives a mini lesson on the norms and procedures of LC

**PRESENTATION:**

**Step I:** The students move into their various LC groups to complete their reading and make entries into their journals

**Step II:** Students begin to share ideas, drawing illustrations from the text, asking questions and making connections with the text

**Step III:** The teacher moves round to observe what goes on in each group, help students to remain focused and make their entries

**Step IV:** Students evaluate individual and group performances; re-assign roles and chapters to be completed for the next meeting

**Step V:** The teacher gives further mini-lesson based on observation during the discussion

## **15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> LESSONWEEK VIII**

**CLASS: SSII**

**DURATION: 70 MINUTES**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of the assigned chapters or portions of chosen text

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the Lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the assigned portion of the text independently and make entries in their journal
- (ii) Identify the relationship between language of the text, setting, the central message and characters' actions.
- (iii) State whether the conflict identified was resolved or not and how
- (iv) Share their journal entries with group members.
- (iv) Present their group's discussion in a whole class sharing (this comes up at the end of each text )

### **PRESENTATION:**

**Step I:** The students move into their various LC groups, complete their reading of assigned chapter(s) and make entries into their journals

**Step II:** The students begin to share ideas based on the questions generated by the discussion director, drawing illustrations from the text, ask questions and make connections with the text.

**Step III:** The teacher moves round the groups to observe what goes on in the groups, re-direct students' focus, if need be and make her entry.

**Step IV:** Students evaluate individual and group performance and re-assign chapters to be completed for the next LC meeting.

**Step V:** The Students come together for a whole class sharing at the end of each text

**Step VI:** The teacher gives further mini lesson based on the observations made.



## APPENDIX X

### LESSON NOTES FOR LITERATURE CIRCLES WITH ROLES WEEK 1

**1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> LESSONS:**

**CLASS:** SSII

**LESSON DURATION:** 70Minutes

**TOPIC:** Introduction to the elements of literature

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the first few chapters or portions of the chosen text and make entries in their role sheets
- (ii) Identify the conflict in the story
- (iii) Identify the characters
- (iv) Identify the major idea in the text
- (v) Discuss the text using the literature circles with roles strategy

**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher gives a mini lesson to introduce the students to the literature circles with roles norms and procedures and to the content of the lesson.

#### PRESENTATION

**Step I:** The teacher explains what prose is and lists the elements of prose literature as plot, theme, setting, character and the author's style (i.e. the literary devices/narrative technique such as flashback, use of imagery, tone and figurative use of language, suspense, point of view etc.).

**Step II:** The teacher explains the plot as the structure of the story. This has to do with the way the author presents the story either in a regular chronological order following a time sequence.

Sometimes there could be some breaks in the time sequence. A writer may sometimes introduce Flashback to break the movement of the plot in order to fill the reader in on some background information necessary for the understanding of the story or to create suspense.

**Step III:** The teacher explains the theme as the central message in the text: the dominant idea or thought which the author examines in the text.

**Step IV:** The teacher explained the character(s) as person(s) who inhabit the world of the text around whom the actions of the texts revolve. The teacher offers information on how characters are revealed in the story. These are through:

- Authorial comments (what the author says about the character through the character's thoughts and behaviours).
- What the characters say, what other characters say about them and how they respond to other characters.
- What the reader thinks or feels about the characters.
- The teacher also explains the categories to which the characters in a text could be placed, for instance, characters are round, flat, dynamic, foil or static.

**Step V:** The setting is explained as the location and time of the action in the story; the place where the story events took place, the season, the climate and the time period. Setting can actually contribute to the understanding of the plot, theme, and the motive for the main characters' actions; it also contributes to the overall meaning one takes out of the text.

**Step VI:** The teacher explains the author's style to include the author's use of figurative language such as metaphor, simile, imagery, symbols etc. to help the students visualize the story events; as well as the author's use of narrative technique like flashback, foreshadowing, point of view, suspense, humour, use of dialogue etc. The point of view is explained as the perspective or position from which the author chooses to write the story. Thus, a story could be written from the first person point of view in which the main character who is a participant in the events of the story tells the story, hence, it is referred to as the limited narrator; the third person point of view or the omniscient point of view in which case the person telling the story is the central observer who knows all. Knowledge of the author's point of view is important in the understanding of the story. As flashback takes us back into experiences and events that happened before the story began, foreshadowing gives us hints about future events and occurrences in the story while the author uses dialogue to situate the characters' actions in realistic or believable situations.

**Step VII:** The teacher then gives a brief book talk on the two pre-selected texts and asks students to pick the texts to read first.

**Step VIII:** The teacher asks students to break into groups of 5-10 depending on the number of students in the class and based on the text selected. The teacher then hands the prepared role sheets to the students.

**Step IX:** The students fall into their various groups to read the first two chapters of their chosen text, make their entries depending on the assigned roles and share what they have read.

**Step X:** The students assign more chapters to read for the next literature circle meeting and assign roles to individual students.

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**3<sup>rd</sup>&4<sup>th</sup> LESSONS:**                      **WEEK II**  
**CLASS:**    **SSII**  
**DURATION:**                                      **70 MINUTES**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of assigned chapters or portions of chosen text

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the Lesson, students should be able to:

- (i). Read assigned portion of the text independently and make entries into their role sheets.
- (ii). Identify the major themes in the portion read
- (iii). Show the relationship between character's actions and central theme in the text
- (iv). Identify the relationship between characters
- (v). Share their responses with group members



**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher gives a mini lesson on the norms and procedures of the literature circles strategy

**PRESENTATION:**

**Step I:** The students move into their groups and begin to discuss their various responses from their role sheets.

**Step II:** The students' brain storm and share ideas, draw illustrations from the text, ask each other questions and make connections with the text

**Step III:** The teacher goes round to observe what goes on in each group and makes his/her entries in the observation sheet.

**Step IV:** The students evaluate their individual and group performances after their discussion, reassign roles and chapters to read for the next LC meeting.

**Step V:** The teacher gives a post discussion mini lesson based on what was observed during the day's reading and discussion.

**5<sup>th</sup>&6<sup>th</sup> LESSONS:**                      **WEEK III**

**CLASS:**    **SS II**

**DURATION:**                                      **70 Minutes**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of assigned chapters or portions of text read.

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the assigned portion of the text independently and make entries into their role sheets
- (ii) Identify Author's use of signs, symbols, flashbacks etc.
- (iii) State their cultural and interpretive significance
- (iv) State the relationship between the events in the text and the central meaning of the text
- (v) Discuss their responses with group members

**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher gives a mini lesson on the norms and procedures of LC

**PRESENTATION:**

**Step I:** The students move into their various LC groups to complete their reading and make entries into their role sheets.

**Step II:** Students begin to share ideas, drawing illustrations from the text, ask questions and make connections with the text.

**Step III:** The teacher moves round to observe what goes on in each group, help students to remain focused and make his/her entries.

**Step IV:** Students evaluate individual and group performances; re-assign roles and chapters to be read for the next circle meeting.

**Step V:** The teacher gives further mini-lesson based on the observations made during the discussion.

**7<sup>th</sup>&8<sup>th</sup>LESSONS:**           **WEEK IV**  
**CLASS:**                           **SSII**  
**DURATION:**                   **70 MINUTES**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of the assigned chapters

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the Lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the assigned portion of the text independently
- (ii) Enter their responses into their role sheets
- (iii) Identify and discuss the literary elements in the text
- (iv) The students share their response with group members.

**PRESENTATION:**

**Step I:** The students move into their various LC groups, complete their reading of assigned chapter(s) and make entries into their role sheets

**Step II:** The students share ideas based on the questions generated by the discussion director; they draw illustrations from the text, ask each other questions and make connections with the text.

**Step III:** The teacher moves round the groups to observe what goes on in the groups, re-direct students' focus, if need be and make his/her entries.

**Step IV:** Students evaluate individual and group performance and re-assign roles and chapters to be read for the next LC meeting.

**Step V:** The teacher gives further mini lesson based on the observations made.



**9<sup>th</sup>&10<sup>th</sup>LESSONS: WEEK V (Students change to the second text)**

**CLASS: SSII**

**DURATION: 70 MINUTES**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of the assigned chapters

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the Lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the assigned portion of the text independently
- (i) Enter their responses into their role sheets
- (iii) Identify and discuss the literary elements in the text
- (iv) Share their response with group members.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

**Step I:** The students move into their various LC groups, complete their reading of assigned chapter (s) and make entries into their role sheets

**Step II:** The students share ideas based on the questions generated by the discussion director, drawing illustrations from the text, ask questions and make connections with the text.

**Step III:** The teacher moves round the groups to observe what goes on in the groups, re-direct students' focus, if need be and make his/her entry.

**Step IV:** Students evaluate individual and group performance and re-assign roles and chapters to be read for the next LC meeting.

**Step V:** The teacher gives further mini lesson based on the observations made.

**11<sup>th</sup>&12<sup>th</sup> LESSONS:**           **WEEK VI**

**CLASS:**                               **SSII**

**DURATION:**                       **70 MINUTES**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of the assigned chapters

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the Lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the assigned portion of the text independently
- (ii) Enter their responses into their role sheets
- (iii) Identify and discuss the literary elements in the text
- (iv) The students share their response with group members.

**PRESENTATIONS:**

**Step I:** The students move into their various LC groups, complete their reading of assigned chapter (s) and make entries into their role sheets.

**Step II:** The students begin to share ideas based on the questions generated by the discussion director, drawing illustrations from the text, ask each other questions and make connections with the text.

**Step III:** The teacher moves round the groups to observe what goes on in the groups, re-direct students' focus, if need be and make his/her entry.

**Step IV:** Students evaluate individual and group performance and re-assign roles and chapters to be read for the next LC meeting.

**Step V:** The teacher gives further mini lesson based on the observations made.



**13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> LESSONS:**                      **WEEK VII**

**CLASS:**    **SSII**

**DURATION:**                                      **70 MINUTES**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of the assigned chapters

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the Lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the assigned portion of the text independently
- (ii) Enter their responses into their role sheets
- (iv) Identify and discuss the literary elements in the text
- (v) The students share their response with group members.

**PRESENTATION:**

**Step I:** The students move into their various LC groups, complete their reading of assigned chapter (s) and make entries into their role sheets

**Step II:** The students begin to share ideas based on the questions generated by the discussion director, drawing illustrations from the text, asking each other questions and making connections with the text.

**Step III:** The teacher moves round the groups to observe what goes on in the groups, re-direct students' focus, if need be and make his/her entry.

**Step IV:** Students evaluate individual and group performance and re-assign roles and chapters to be completed for the next LC meeting.

**Step V:** The teacher gives further mini lesson based on the observations made.

**15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> LESSONSS**                      **WEEK VIII**

**CLASS:**    **SSII**

**DURATION:**                                      **70 MINUTES**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of the assigned chapters

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the Lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the assigned portion of the text independently
- (ii) Enter their responses into their role sheets
- (iii) Identify and discuss the literary elements in the text
- (vi) Share their journal entries with group members.

### **INTRODUCTION**

### **PRESENTATION:**

**Step I:** The students move into their various LC groups, complete their reading of assigned chapter (s) and make entries into their role sheets

**Step II:** The students begin to share ideas based on the questions generated by the discussion director, drawing illustrations from the text, asking each other questions and making connections with the text.

**Step III:** The teacher moves round the groups to observe what goes on in the groups, re-direct students' focus, if need be, and make his/her entry.

**Step IV:** Students evaluate individual and group performance and re-assign roles and chapters to be completed for the next LC meeting.

**Step V:** The teacher gives further mini lesson based on the observations made.

## APPENDIX XI

### LESSON NOTES FOR SCAFFOLDING INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY

**1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> LESSONS:** WEEK I  
**CLASS:** SSII  
**DURATION:** 70 MINUTES

**TOPIC:** Introduction to the elements of prose

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the recommended prose text.
- (ii) Discuss the role of women in traditional society.
- (iii) Describe the fate of childless women their community
- (iv) Share their reading using scaffolding instructional strategy.

**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher introduces students to the scaffolding instructional strategy and to the content of the lesson.

#### **PRESENTATION:**

**Step I:** The teacher explains what prose is and lists the elements of prose literature as plot, theme, setting, character and the author's style (i.e. the literary devices/narrative technique such as flashback, use of imagery, tone and figurative use of language and point of view).

**Step II:** The teacher explains the plot as the structure of the story. This has to do with the way the author presents the story either in a regular chronological order following a time sequence.

Sometimes, there could be some breaks in the time sequence. A writer may sometimes introduce flashback to break the movement of the plot in order to fill the reader in on some background information necessary for the understanding of the story or for suspense.

**Step III:** The teacher explains the theme as the central message in the text: the dominant idea or thought which the author examines in the text.

**Step IV:** The character is explained as persons who inhabit the world of the text and around whom the actions of the texts revolve. The teacher explains how characters are revealed in the story. These are through:

- Authorial comments (what the author says about the character through the character's thoughts and behaviours).
- What the characters say, what other characters say about them and how they respond to other characters.
- What the reader thinks or feels about the characters.
- The teacher also explains the categories to which the characters in a text could to be placed, are the characters round, dynamic, foil or static

**Step V:** The setting is explained as the location and time of the action in the story i.e. the place where the events took place, the season, the weather and the time period. Setting contributes to the understanding of the plot, theme, and sets the motive for the main characters' actions; it also contributes to the overall meaning one takes out of the story.

**Step VI:** The teacher explains the author's style to include the author's use of figurative language such as metaphor, simile, imagery, symbols etc. to help the students visualize the events of the story; and the author's use of narrative technique like flashback, foreshadowing, point of view, suspense, humour, use of dialogue etc. The point of view is explained as the perspective or position from which the author chooses to write the story. Thus, a story could be written from the first person point of view in which the main character who is a participant in the events of the story tells the story, hence, it is referred to as the limited narrator; the third person point of view or the omniscient point of view in which case the person telling the story is the central observer who knows all. Knowledge of the author's point of view is important in the understanding of the story. As flashback takes us back into experiences and events that happened before the story began, foreshadowing gives us hints about future events and occurrences in the story while the author uses dialogue to situate the characters' actions in realistic or believable situations.

**Step VII:** The teacher gives a brief overview of Joys of Motherhood and asks students to write down their predictions about the text using the following prompts

- (i) Judging from the title, what do you think would be the major focus of the text?
- (ii) What are the roles of women in your society?
- (iii) How does the society treat women who have no children?

**Step VIII:** The teacher reads the first two chapters of Joys of Motherhood employing the three levels of modeling i.e. think aloud modeling, talk aloud modeling and performance

modeling. Step IX: The students go into small groups to read and discuss the first three chapters of the text based on the prompts provided.

**Step X:** The students come together for a whole class sharing of the text; the teacher evaluates students through questioning while students' answers are verified and clarified by the teacher or other student(s)

**3<sup>rd</sup>&4<sup>th</sup> LESSONS:**                      **WEEK II**

**CLASS:**    **SSII**

**TIME DURATION:**                      **70 MINUTES**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of *A Woman in her Prime*

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the selected chapters independently.
- (ii) State the significance of sacrifices as used in the text.
- (iv) Describe the relationship between Pokuwa and her mother
- (v) Mention the conflicts in the text
- (v) Share their reading using scaffolding instructional strategy.

**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher gives a brief explanation of the portion of text selected for reading.

### **PRESENTATION**

**Step I:** Through prompts, the teacher leads students into making predictions on what would happen in the next three chapters .

- (i) Do you think Pokuwa's sacrifices would help her bear a child in her third marriage?
- (ii) What would be the likely conflict between Pokuwa and her mother?
- (iii) What were you thinking as you read the text?

**Step II:** The students go into small group sustained silent reading and discussion of the next five chapters based on the prompts provided by the teacher while employing the three levels of modeling i.e. think aloud, talk aloud and performance modeling as they read.

**Step III:** After the small group reading and discussion, the students go into whole class sharing, generating questions, making comments on what was read; verifying and clarifying each others' answers and comments.

**Step IV:** The teacher and students collaborate to provide cues and hints that would aid students to answer questions asked by the teacher or other students.

**Step V:** The teacher evaluates the lesson by asking students to identify the literary techniques used in the portion read, comment on the literary elements presented.

**5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> LESSONS:**                      **WEEK III**

**CLASS:**    **SSII**

**TIME DURATION:**                              **70MINUTES**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of *A Woman in her Prime*

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the selected chapters independently.
- (ii) Describe the relationship between Pokuwa and Kwadwo?
- (iii) Mention three major themes in the text.
- (iv) Identify two instances of the use of flashback in the text and state their significances
- (v) Share their reading using scaffolding instructional strategy.

**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher gives a brief explanation of the portion of the text selected for reading.

### **PRESENTATION**

**Step I:** Through prompts, the teacher leads students into making predictions on what would happen in the next five chapters.

- (i) What type of marriage system is practiced in Ghana?
- (ii) Do you think Pokuwa would divorce Kwadwo, her husband? State reasons why you think so
- (iii) What are the major themes in the text?
- (iv) What challenge do you think Pokuwa would face in the chapters you are about to read?

**Step II:** The students go into small group sustained silent reading and discussion of the next five chapters based on the prompts provided by the teacher while employing the three levels of modeling i.e. think aloud, talk aloud and performance modeling as they read.

**Step III:** After the small group reading and discussion, the students go into whole class sharing, generating questions, making comments on what was read; verifying and clarifying each others' answers and comments by drawing illustrations from the text.

**Step IV:** The teacher and students collaborate to provide cues and hints that would aid students to answer the questions asked by the teacher or students.

**Step V:** The teacher evaluates the lesson by asking students to identify the literary techniques used in the portions read and to comment on the literary elements used in the text.

**7<sup>th</sup>&8<sup>th</sup> LESSONS;**                      **WEEK IV**  
**CLASS:**                                      **SSII**  
**TIME DURATION:**                      **70 MINUTES**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of *A Woman in her Prime*

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

- (v) Read the selected chapters independently
- (v) Discuss how the conflict was resolved at the end of the text.
- (v) Describe Pokuwaa's attitude to barrenness towards the end of the story
- (v) Describe Kwadwo as a character in the text
- (v) Share their reading using scaffolding instructional strategy.

**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher gives a brief explanation of the portion of text selected for reading.

**Step I:** Through prompts students make predictions on what would happen in the portions to be read.

**Step II:** The students go into small group sustained silent reading and discussion of the next few chapters based on the prompts provided by the teacher while employing the three levels of modeling i.e. think aloud, talk aloud and performance modeling as they read.

**Step III:** After the small group reading and discussion, the students go into whole class sharing, generating questions, making comments on what were read; verifying and clarifying each others' answers and comments.

**Step IV:** The teacher and students collaborate to provide cues and hints that would aid students to answer questions asked by the teacher or other students.

**Step V:** The teacher evaluates the lesson by asking students to identify the literary techniques used in the portion read, comment on the literary elements presented.



**9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> LESSONS:**                      **WEEK V**

**CLASS:**    **SSII**

**TIME DURATION:**                              **70 MINUTES**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of *The Old Man and the Sea* (students change to the second text)

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

- (i) Read the selected chapters independently.
- (ii) Discuss the themes in the text.
- (iii) Discuss the relationship between Santiago, the major character, and other characters in the text.
- (iv) Share their reading using scaffolding instructional strategy.

**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher gives a brief explanation of the portion of text selected for reading.

### **PRESENTATION**

**Step I:** Through prompt students make predictions on what would happen in the next three chapters.

**Step II:** The students go into small group sustained silent reading and discussion of the episodes selected based on the prompts provided by the teacher while employing the three levels of modeling i.e. think aloud, talk aloud and performance modeling as they read.

**Step III:** After the small group reading and discussion, the students go into whole class sharing, generating questions, making comments on what was read; verifying and clarifying each others' answers and comments.

**Step IV:** The teacher and students collaborate to provide cues and hints that would aid students to answer questions asked by the teacher or other students.

**Step V:** The teacher evaluates the lesson by asking students to identify the literary techniques used in the portion read, comment on the literary elements presented.

**11<sup>th</sup>& 12<sup>th</sup>LESSONS:**           **WEEK VI**  
**CLASS:**                               **SSII**  
**TIME DURATION:**               **70MINUTES**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of *The Old Man and the Sea*

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

- (v) Read the selected chapters independently,
- (v) Retell the portion of the story read
- (v) Discuss the theme in the portion of the text read.
- (v) Identify and discuss the narrative techniques used in the text read
- (v) Share their reading using scaffolding instructional strategy.



**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher gives a brief explanation of the portion of text selected for reading.

### **PRESENTATION**

**Step I:** Through prompts, the teacher leads students into making predictions on what would happen in the next three chapters.

**Step II:** The students go into small group sustained silent reading and discussion of the next few episodes based on the prompts provided by the teacher while employing the three levels of modeling i.e. think aloud, talk aloud and performance modeling as they read.

**Step III:** After the small group reading and discussion, the students go into whole class sharing, generating questions, making comments on what was read; verifying and clarifying each others' answers and comments.

**Step IV:** The teacher and students collaborate to provide cues and hints that would aid students to answer questions asked by the teacher or other students.

**Step V:** The teacher evaluates the lesson by asking students to identify the literary techniques used in the portion read and comment on the theme presented.

**13<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup> LESSONS:**                      **WEEK VII**

**CLASS:**    **SSII**

**TIME DURATION:**                              **70MINUTES**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of *The Old Man and the Sea*

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

- (v) Read the selected chapters independently.
- (vi) Discuss the characters in the portion of the text read.
- (vi) Identify and discuss the use of symbols and irony in the text read.
- (vi) Give a brief plot summary of the text read
- (vi) Share their reading using scaffolding instructional strategy.

**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher gives a brief explanation of the portion of text selected for reading.

### **PRESENTATION**

**Step I:** Through prompts, the teacher leads students into making predictions on what would happen in the next three chapters.

**Step II:** The students go into small group sustained silent reading and discussion of the episodes read based on the prompts provided by the teacher while employing the three levels of modeling i.e. think aloud, talk aloud and performance modeling as they read.

**Step III:** After the small group reading and discussion, the students go into whole class sharing, generating questions, making comments on what was read; verifying and clarifying each others' answers and comments.

**Step IV:** The teacher and students collaborate to provide cues and hints that would aid students to answer questions asked by the teacher or other students.

**Step V:** The teacher evaluates the lesson by asking students to identify the literary techniques used in the portion read, comment on the literary elements presented.

**15<sup>h</sup>& 16<sup>th</sup> LESSONS:**

**WEEK VIII**

**CLASS:**

**SSII**

**TIME DURATION:**

**70MINUTES**

**TOPIC:** Reading and Discussion of *The Old Man and the Sea*

**OBJECTIVES:** At the end of the lesson, students should be able to:

- (v) Read the selected chapters independently.
- (vi) Discuss the significance of the major character's return from the sea
- (vi) Identify and discuss the use of symbols and irony in the portion of the text read.
- (vi) Give a brief plot summary of the portion of the text read
- (vi) Share their reading using scaffolding instructional strategy.

**INTRODUCTION:** The teacher gives a brief explanation of the portion of text selected for reading.

### **PRESENTATION**

**Step I:** Through prompts, the teacher leads students into making predictions on what would happen in the last episode of the text.

**Step II:** The students go into small group sustained silent reading and discussion of the final episodes based on the prompts provided by the teacher while employing the three levels of modeling i.e. think aloud, talk aloud and performance modeling as they read.

**Step III:** After the small group reading and discussion, the students go into whole class sharing, generating questions, making comments on what was read; verifying and clarifying each others' answers and comments.

**Step IV:** The teacher and students collaborate to provide cues and hints that would aid students to answer questions asked by the teacher or other students.

**Step V:** The teacher evaluates the lesson by asking students to identify the literary techniques used in the portion read, comment on the significance presented by the carcass of the fish.



### APPENDIX XIII

#### SAMPLES OF ROLE SHEETS FOR THE LITERATURE CIRCLES WITH ROLES STRATEGY

**Role:**           **The questioner**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Book title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chapters or Page read:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Pages** \_\_\_\_\_ **to** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your duty is to:**

- ✓ Develop about five to eight questions on the portion of the text your circle would be reading.
- ✓ Base your questions on the events in the portion of the text you are reading.
- ✓ Base your questions on the important or significant words used in the reading.
- ✓ Develop questions based on the conflicts, the characters' actions, the main ideas or themes, the author's style, the narrative technique etc.
- ✓ Ask questions on what would happen next.

Jot down your questions during or after your reading

**QUESTIONS ABOUT TODAY'S READING ARE:**

**Role:** Summarizer

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Book title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chapters or Page read:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Pages** \_\_\_\_\_ **to** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your duty is to:**

- ✓ Give a brief summary of the day's reading for about 1-2 minutes.
- ✓ Concentrate on the main ideas, key points or the main highlights of the day's reading

You can use bullets to list the main ideas or events in the portion of the txt you have read.

**SUMMARY**

**Key points or events to remember in today's reading are:**

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
-

**Role:**        **The vocabulary finder or the word wizard**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Book title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chapters or Page read:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Pages** \_\_\_\_\_ **to** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your duty is to:**

- Make a list of the unfamiliar words in the portion of the text you have read.
- Jot down their meanings either from the dictionary, the context used or from another source.
- State why you picked those words which may either be because they have been repeated a lot, central to the meaning of the text, used in a very funny or unusual way or may be because they are simply strange to you.
- Lead group members to where they can find the words in the text.
- Discuss the most important one with your group members.

**Words**

**Page no or paragraph**

**Meaning**

**Plans for discussion**



**Role:**                    **The literary luminary**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Book title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chapters or Page read:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Pages** \_\_\_\_\_ **to** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your duty is to:**

Locate interesting sections, sections, sentences, figurative expressions, proverbs etc. in the text for your group members to discuss.

Lead your group members to the area of the text to find such words or expressions and state why you picked such sections.

You can read those sections aloud or ask someone else to read them or let group members read silently and then discuss.

**Page no & paragraph**

**Reasons for picking**

**Plans for Discussion**

**Role:**                    **The Artist/Illustrator**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Book title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chapters or Page read:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Pages** \_\_\_\_\_ **to** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your duty is to:**

Draw pictures, cartoons, diagrams, maps, charts etc related to what you have read.

Draw a picture of what happened in the text or what the reading reminds you of.

Draw a picture of the characters as you visualize them or make a graphic display of the scene and label if you like.

Present your drawing to your group members.

Explain your drawing or allow group members to first speculate on what your drawing means before you tell them what inspired you to make the drawing or what the drawing represents to you.

You can make your drawing on the back of your sheet or a separate sheet.

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**Role:**                    **The Character Developer**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Book title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chapters or Page read:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Pages** \_\_\_\_\_ **to** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your duty is to:**

- Make a list of the characters in the portion you are reading.
- Pick out important or specific comments and expressions made by them or about them
- Read out some of those comments and expressions or lead group members where to locate them.
- Point out specific actions of the characters and their significance.
- State the relationship between the major character and the other characters
- Point out the conflicts the characters are undergoing
- State what you like or dislike about the character (s)
- Indicate what roles the character plays in the text
- Share your jottings with group members

**Role:**                    **The Connector**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Book title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chapters or Page read:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Pages** \_\_\_\_\_ **to** \_\_\_\_\_

**Your duty is to:**

- Connect what you are reading to the world outside; to your own life, happenings in your school or community.
- Connect your reading to other peoples' lives and experiences, to other events that have happened at other times and places, to other problems that you are reminded of
- Connect your reading to other books or materials you have read that focus on the same idea.
- Share your connections with other group members.

You can continue your connections at the back of your sheets.

**Some connections I found between this reading and other people, places, events, books are**

## APPENDIX XIV

### SAMPLE OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

#### A. INTRODUCTION

The moderator welcomes the participants and briefs them on the nature importance and nature of the discussion. Participants were invited to introduce themselves, after that the moderator introduced herself.

#### Focus Group Questions

##### A Basic Literature Circles:

- i). In what two ways have you gained by taking part in the basic literature circles discussion?
- ii). What effect does this strategy have on your attitude to reading literature text?
- iii). Compare the use of basic literature circles with the way your teacher teaches literature.
- iv). Which of the two prose texts do you prefer? Why?

##### B. Literature Circles with Roles

- i). What are the benefits of using literature circles with roles?
- ii). Mention what two things you gained by participating in the literature circles with roles.
- iii). Mention two things you would like the teacher to change when using this strategy next time.
- iv). Which of the two prose texts do you prefer reading? State your reason(s)

##### C. Scaffolding Instructional strategy

- i). What do you like or dislike in using the scaffolding strategy?
- ii). What are the advantages and disadvantages of this strategy?
- iii). Compare this strategy with the way your teacher teaches literature in class.
- iv). Which of the two prose texts do you prefer reading?