

Classroom Connection Circles Introduction for Students

Each week (or however often you want to have circles), we will have what is called a connection circle. It is a circle where we either sit in chairs or on the floor without desks between us.

Circles are not for lecture and they are not a place where someone stands over you in authority. They are a place where we are all equal. We get to know one another in a different way.

We will use a talking piece. This can be something that is symbolic of our class, something that is important to us and we can use different talking pieces when we decide to. We can use anything that is meaningful to us.

We use a talking piece because the person who has it gets to speak. Everyone else is a committed listener. The circle keeper will ask a question and the person with the talking piece will get to answer, then pass it to the person next to them for them to answer and so on until everyone in the circle has had a chance to answer. We want to keep our answers brief so we have enough time for everyone to have a chance to share. Everyone has the right to pass on speaking if they don't have something to say in the moment. It is okay to say that you need more time and to ask for the talking piece after everyone else has spoken.

We don't have a lot of rules...mostly they are guidelines and agreements that we make together to make the circle the best experience it can be. Some of these guidelines are:

- Whoever has the talking piece gets to talk
- We listen and speak with respect for each other
- We keep everything we say school appropriate
- What we say in the circle stays in the circle.

Is everyone comfortable with those guidelines?

Let's try it out. Since this is the first time we are doing this, let's try a round.

(You know your students best, so find an easy question you think they would like to answer, such as: If you could be any animal, what would it be?, If you were a super hero, what would be your super power...must be positive and helpful. What is your favorite food?)