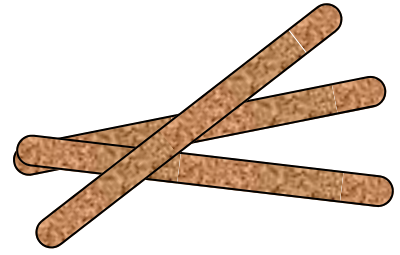


# Talking Sticks Book Discussion

Created by Laura Candler  
[www.lauracandler.com](http://www.lauracandler.com)



## Teacher Information

**Talking Sticks** is a management strategy that encourages all students to participate equally in a discussion. It can be used after reading a book aloud, as a part of Literature Circles, during small group literacy instruction, or when conducting a whole class novel study.

### How to Use Talking Sticks:

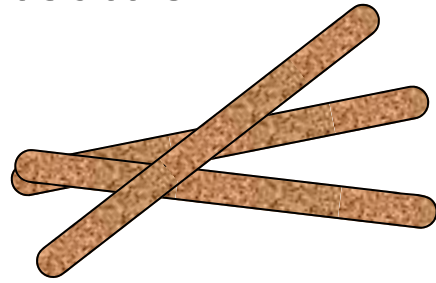
1. Place students in teams of 3 to 5 students for the discussion. (Note: Students should be reading the same book or have previously listened to the same text.)
2. Place a sturdy cup in the center of the team and put enough craft sticks in the cup so that there are 3 per team member. Designate who will be the first Leader. After each round, the role passes to the person on the left.
3. Give students a set of question cards to prompt their discussion. If the Book Response or Book Talk cards in this packet are appropriate, you can use one of those sets. If not, use the blank template to create your own. You can even let your students create their own questions.
4. Display the Talking Sticks directions shown on the next page, but review them together before allowing students to begin. You might even allow one team to model the directions while the others watch. After the students begin, circulate through the groups to monitor participation.
5. As a follow-up activity, let each student select one card to use as a journal-writing prompt.

For more literacy ideas, visit Teaching Resources at [www.lauracandler.com](http://www.lauracandler.com). You'll find a free virtual File Cabinet packed with literacy strategies, including Literature Circles, Literacy Centers, and more!



# Talking Sticks Discussion

**Materials:** 3 craft sticks per person  
1 cup or holder for sticks  
1 set of discussion cards



## Directions:

1. The Leader holds the cup and everyone takes 3 sticks. Place the sticks on the table in front of you.
2. The Leader places the discussion cards face down, turns over the top card, and reads it aloud.
3. When team members want to speak, they hold up a Talking Stick and wait to be recognized by the Leader. After they place their stick in the cup, they share their thoughts with the group. If they continue to speak longer than a minute, they need to put in another stick.
4. Remember to leave your Talking Sticks on the table until you need them! It's distracting when team members play with the sticks while waiting to speak.
5. After everyone has finished discussing the card, the Leader passes the cup to the left and that person becomes the new Leader.
6. The new Leader turns over the next card, reads it aloud, and discussion begins on the new topic.
7. When team members run out of Talking Sticks, they must wait for others to use up their sticks before contributing to the discussion.
8. When everyone runs out of sticks, the Leader passes out 3 sticks to everyone so that the discussion may continue.



# Book Talk Questions

Who are the main characters in the story?

What is the setting of the story?

What is your favorite part of the story?

Who is the author? Have you read anything else by this author?

What was the problem in this story? How was it solved?

What is one character trait that describes a main character? Explain.

What part of the story was confusing? Why?

Which character is most like you? Explain.

What genre was this story? How do you know?

Did you like this story? Why or why not? Be honest!

# Book Response Questions

Did any of the characters change in the story? What caused them to change?

Would you like to read something else by this author? Why or why not?

What connections can you make to your own life or to the world in general?

Did you like the ending of this story? Why or why not? If not, how do you think it should have ended?

If you could trade places with one of the characters, which one would it be, and why?

If you had been the main character in this story, would you have acted differently? Explain why or how.

Was there a character you didn't like? Why didn't you like this character?

How did you feel about this story? Would you recommend it to someone else? Why or why not?

What was the theme or the author's message? What events helped you figure out the message?

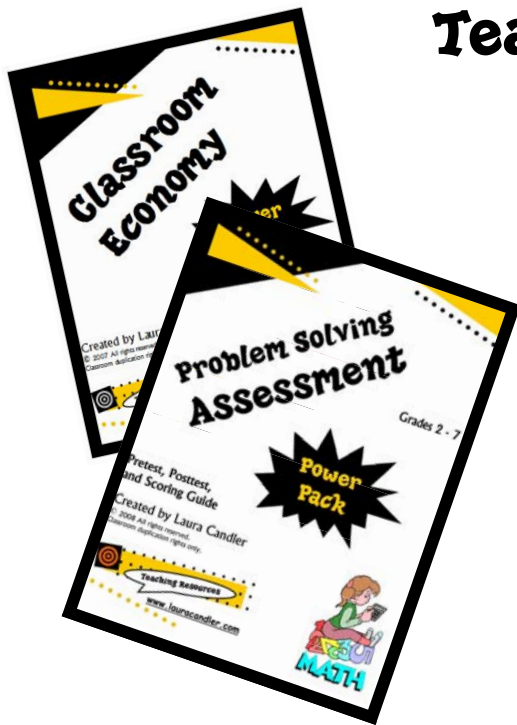
What do you think was the best part of the story? Why?

# Discussion Cards


Preview

# Teaching Resources Website

[www.lauracandler.com](http://www.lauracandler.com)



## Free Resources for Teachers!

- Blackline masters and activity sheets
- Lesson plans and teaching strategies
- Cooperative learning methods
- Classroom management and motivation
- Literacy and Literature Circle strategies
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Created by  
Laura Candler  
Milken Educator