

**Junior Great Books Grant Writer's Kit:
The Nine Components of Comprehensive School
Reform**



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Introduction

This packet is designed to help you plan and write a proposal for a Junior Great Books Comprehensive School Reform (CSR) project or other grant-funded project at your school.

Here are some tips as you begin developing your proposal:

1. Base your proposal on your specific school needs. Start by reviewing your evaluation results and needs assessments and by setting goals for your school.
2. State your goals in terms of measurable outcomes. Although it is often difficult to quantify the changes you wish to achieve in your school, your proposal must set verifiable targets for results.
3. Apply early to make Junior Great Books your CSR model. You will then have ample time to work with your Great Books consultant to tailor a plan to meet your school's needs. We will assist with your staff development plan, including a timeline and a clear and accurate budget for staff development and learning materials.
4. Use this packet only as a guide. Proposals that look like "cut and paste" projects will be summarily disqualified by most state departments of education. Write a proposal that reflects your unique goals and plans.

We look forward to assisting you in a successful project.

Component 1. “Innovative strategies and proven methods . . . that are based on reliable research . . . and have been replicated successfully.”

A. Methodology and strategies of Junior Great Books

Shared inquiry is the core of the Junior Great Books program. In shared inquiry, the teacher engages students in interpretive discussions focused on a major question about the meaning of a reading selection. The question and the teacher’s subsequent follow-up questions challenge students to think critically, develop their own interpretations, and support these with evidence from the text. Recall of factual information and association with personal experience are not emphasized as ends in themselves; however, students call upon both as they develop their ideas about the meaning of the selection.

In a shared inquiry discussion, the teacher actively guides students toward developing their own text-based interpretations by posing provocative, open-ended questions for which there may be several reasonable answers. Because the answers are not stated explicitly in the text, students must grapple with and support their ideas about the author’s meaning. Throughout the discussion, the teacher nurtures thoughtful dialogue by asking questions to develop and build on the students’ responses.

The students’ search for meaning begins with at least two readings of the selection, guided by close analysis of the author’s use of language, development of character, and other key aspects of the piece.

Interpretive reading activities guided by the teacher involve students in activating prior knowledge, asking questions about the meaning of the text, taking notes on major issues in the text, and developing concepts that are important to the text. All of these activities involve reading, speaking, listening, critical thinking, and note taking or brief writing. All activities call for the teacher’s use of shared inquiry questioning strategies, since all are focused upon an open question about the meaning of the text, and students’ responses are developed by the teacher’s subsequent probing questions.

Shared inquiry discussion provides the forum for students to present, support, and develop their individual interpretations, based on their own reading and on the ideas and evidence offered by their peers. Students are encouraged to further develop and support their responses in persuasive, personal, and creative writing assignments following discussion.

Unlike many other Socratic approaches, Junior Great Books provides a classroom-ready literature base and a structure of supporting strategies. Teachers are equipped with the means *to apply theory and to produce results*.

B. Research on Junior Great Books

Junior Great Books has been the subject of numerous scientific studies. This body of research has been reviewed in a variety of studies of curriculum design and effectiveness that recognize Junior Great Books as a model program. You will be able to find among these studies and reviews several that address your school's needs.

For scientific research and curriculum reviews of Junior Great Books, see the Great Books Foundation web site (www.greatbooks.org) Junior Great Books Research and Evaluation

C. Replication

Junior Great Books is used in approximately 9,500 schools nationwide.

The summaries of scientific research on Junior Great Books show successful use of the program in a variety of settings. In addition, case histories of schools and districts that have used Junior Great Books show that the program meets the needs of diverse students and teachers.

Your Great Books consultant also may be able to provide you with references to schools or districts near you that successfully use Junior Great Books.

For case studies, see the Great Books Foundation web site (www.greatbooks.org) Junior Great Books Research and Evaluation.

Component 2. “Comprehensive design for . . . instruction, assessment, classroom management, professional development, parental involvement, and school management . . . to enable all students to meet . . . standards and address needs.”

A. Junior Great Books program design—instruction

Junior Great Books is a literature-based program designed to develop critical thinking and reading comprehension for students in grades K–12. The Junior Great Books method and materials work together to move students beyond decoding and literal comprehension to a rewarding process of finding meaning. Junior Great Books is a strong literature and comprehension program that includes a balance of oral and written language.

The program addresses five critical instructional needs:

- Reading comprehension strategies
- Critical analysis, synthesis, and support of ideas from challenging texts
- Meaningful vocabulary in context
- Purposeful speaking and listening
- Critical thinking

The literature in Junior Great Books is essential to achieving the learning objectives above. The selections have been carefully selected to challenge readers, sparking and sustaining rigorous examination and discussion. The selections (usually short stories and novellas) raise genuine questions and address age-appropriate concerns. They are limited in length to allow in-depth reading and response. None of the selections has been modified to contain controlled vocabulary. The literature base provides a context of stimulating and purposeful reading that motivates students to adopt strategies and practice them intensively.

Teacher’s editions and leader’s guides outline for each reading selection a sequence of interpretive strategies designed to help students explore texts from their own points of view and develop and support their interpretations in oral and written contexts. Readings and activities are configured differently to meet the varied needs of learners in the primary, elementary, middle, and high school grades. The teacher’s very active and distinctive role as a leader of learners remains constant through the grades.

The Junior Great Books program includes the following materials:

- Teacher’s guide to the shared inquiry method (included in the initial workshop)
- Complete teacher’s editions (K–6) or teacher’s resource books (7–12)
- Student literature anthologies (K–12)
- Student activity books (grades K–6)
- Audiotapes of the literature selections (K–6)
- Spanish/English literature anthologies and teacher’s editions (grades 2–3)
- Perfection Learning *Literature & Thought* thematic selections with Great Books Discussion Guides (grades 5–8)
- Student guides to full-length masterworks (appropriate for grades 11–12)

Student anthologies of readings in science (appropriate for grades 11–12)
Student anthologies of readings in social science (appropriate for grades 7–12)

You might also consider including in your project activities to transfer shared inquiry strategies to content-area reading and to additional literature selections, including novels, plays, poetry, and biographies.

B. Junior Great Books assessment

Assessment in Junior Great Books focuses on comprehension and critical thinking. It will be supplemented by assessments of reading fluency, word knowledge, and writing mechanics that your school already practices.

Your Great Books consultant will introduce assessment strategies and instruments gradually in the course of the project, so that they are tailored to current practices in the school and to the instructional strategies teachers are developing. Strategies and instruments for student self-assessment will be included.

For Junior Great Books assessments, see the Great Books Foundation web site (www.greatbooks.org), Junior Great Books Teacher Resources.

C. Junior Great Books professional development

For professional development design, see Component 3: “High quality, continuous teacher and staff professional development.”

D. Design for school management

As a Reading/Language Arts model, Junior Great Books is not required to provide a design for school management.

E. Meets state standards

Your Great Books consultant will provide you with an explanation of the alignment between Junior Great Books and your state’s reading and language arts standards.

F. Addresses needs

Following are examples of assessed needs for student learning and curriculum improvement that Junior Great Books addresses:

Student learning:

Low reading comprehension

In Junior Great Books, teachers use text specific activities that lead students through a process of reading and critical thinking. Students activate prior knowledge, monitor comprehension, ask questions about passages in which comprehension breaks down, identify issues in the text, take notes, look back into the text, synthesize whole-text understanding in discussion, and finally, apply text ideas to other situations in writing.

The teacher asks follow-up questions at each step of interaction with the text, so students are guided in probing more deeply and relating different passages to each other.

As a result of these guided interactions with reading, students learn to comprehend much more challenging texts than they are usually offered and to use comprehension strategies in a fluid, problem-solving way.

Low critical thinking

In many reading programs, there is a resting point between literal and inferential comprehension and critical thinking. Students sometimes think, “I got the answer right, so I don’t have to think about it anymore.”

Junior Great Books puts comprehension in the context of understanding the deeper ideas of a piece of literature. Recalling facts, understanding word meanings, linking cause and effect, and summarizing passages are all used in solving a problem of meaning. Students are continually asked to generate hypotheses, seek out evidence, explain how it supports their hypotheses, and weigh alternative ideas and evidence. They become accustomed to considering how convincing a piece of evidence really is and how logically it fits with other evidence. This kind of thinking is both *synthetic*, developing students’ own unique ideas, and *critical*, weighing and testing ideas.

Lack of engagement with reading and learning in general

The following three elements in Junior Great Books strongly address students’ lack of engagement with reading and learning:

An active learning role. The shared inquiry method asks the teacher to concentrate on asking questions and gives students the role of generating ideas. For most less-proficient learners, this is a new role. Many disengaged students are accustomed to offering guesses and then being corrected, without seeing how they can figure out an answer themselves. Junior Great Books gives them a new experience. When they offer their initial ideas, they immediately receive help from the teacher (through questions) and their classmates in developing these ideas. They see that their ideas are valued and that they can improve their ideas themselves. They begin to form habits of initiative and perseverance as learners.

Motivating literature. A second source of motivation lies in the nature of the ideas they gain from Junior Great Books literature. Much children’s literature is enjoyable but simplistic. Junior Great Books stories are drawn from many cultures, exploring universal themes in striking and deeply imaginative ways. Students and teachers are intrigued and moved by them. Understanding them gives students a sense of wider awareness of the world around them.

Collaborative learning. The student collaboration that occurs in shared inquiry strongly supports less-confident learners. Once students understand that discussion is a forum for developing ideas, not just reciting right answers, they find it stimulating to state their opinions to their peers. Classroom give-and-take provides instant feedback that can seem more real than a teacher’s comments. Also, observing first hand classmates’ strategies for reading and thinking is another source of learning. Teachers often comment that reluctant or shy students shine unexpectedly in Junior Great Books.

Low performance in speaking and listening

Throughout work on a text, students state their ideas and respond with comments or questions to each other's ideas. Students are asked to focus on the content of what they say, to clarify and explain their ideas, and to relate them to others' ideas in a constructive way. Students gain confidence in speaking in a formal classroom setting and learn to use exchanges with others as a learning strategy.

Curriculum organization:

Lack of consistency in instruction and alignment from grade to grade

Because Junior Great Books features the shared inquiry method and similar reading process throughout grades K to 12, it can give a consistent structure to reading and language arts within each classroom and throughout the grades. Junior Great Books cannot provide the whole reading/language arts curriculum, but it will form a core of reading, writing, and speaking focused on comprehension and critical thinking.

Teachers as well as students will find the consistent expectations supportive. Transferring shared inquiry skills to content areas and to other reading selections is one curricular goal of many Junior Great Books implementations.

Lack of integration in reading and language arts

Literacy skills complement and reinforce each other when they are taught together. The expressive skills of writing and speaking must have purpose and content; asking students to write and speak in order to convey their original ideas about a story gives them both strong content and strong purpose. The receptive skills of reading and listening also must carry through to meaningful consequences; when students use their reading and listening skills to exchange ideas in discussion and written work, they use and value these skills even more.

Junior Great Books uses reading, writing, listening, speaking, and critical thinking in a thoroughly integrated fashion, usually with all students involved in the activity for a single class period.

Lack of challenging reading materials and literature

The literature featured in Junior Great Books is challenging. The selections are folktales and literature by famous authors or retellers. Their imaginative and powerful language and syntax have not been simplified. Exposure to complex syntax and to a wide range of vocabulary is itself valuable for students' language ability.

Language arts programs in which students never encounter challenging materials but continually work with materials near their own level of mastery doom students to only slow language growth. For many students, this really means remaining behind throughout their school years. Junior Great Books introduces the necessary high-level challenge while providing teachers and students with a reading process that will enable them to learn without frustration.

Teacher development:

Limited use of whole performance, integrated literacy tasks; overdependence on worksheets and isolated skills

When faced with the need to teach students reading comprehension skills and vocabulary, teachers are often at a loss how to do this comprehensively. Often they fall back on isolated skills instruction, through artificial tasks and worksheets. Especially when students have a weak grasp of the overall project of making meaning from a text, the “skill and drill” approach does not result in real mastery in practice. In fact, students most want to learn strategies when they need them to solve a problem, not just to arrive at an answer.

In Junior Great Books, students are continually working to resolve a large problem of meaning. Individual strategies, such as skimming and scanning, summarizing, or drawing inferences, are introduced through the teacher’s questions as ways to resolve that problem. Thus students are prompted to employ these strategies in an integrated way, as skilled readers do.

Limited skill in encouraging higher-order thinking

Higher-order thinking is often presented abstractly, as a list of different kinds of thinking. While teachers can model the different kinds of thinking and even remind students to use them from time to time, they usually find it very hard to continually coach students in their thinking.

Junior Great Books sets up a context of problem solving, and Great Books professional development teaches teachers how to guide students to synthesize ideas, to find and develop support for an argument, and to meet the questions and objections of others. Just as shared inquiry starts with students’ own ideas about a story, Great Books professional development starts with the teacher’s own questions, as well as the students’ own responses, and shows teachers how to use their curiosity to model sound and flexible thinking for their students. This questioning skill is transferable to all content areas and to many aspects of teaching.

Limited use of collaborative learning

Managing collaborative learning is a challenge in most classrooms, especially in those with less-proficient learners. It is difficult to make collaboration harmonious while ensuring that every child is learning at a high level. This is particularly true when the product of the collaboration must be a consensus. The goal for shared inquiry, however, is not consensus but the further development of each student’s ideas. Interchanges among students are structured by the teacher’s questions to remain on topic and provide modeling or input for all participants. As students learn the process, they can work together—in brief or long periods and small or large groups—sharing responses to activities. New possibilities for grouping and for helping students learn from each other become available to teachers.

Component 3. “High quality, continuous teacher and staff professional development and training.”

Your Great Books consultant will help you propose a plan and timeline for high quality Junior Great Books professional development. Your plan should include instructional support and development provided by the Great Books Foundation, roles and responsibilities for your current school personnel to support the project, a project outline showing major goals and activities to achieve them, and a timeline showing the sequence of these activities.

Below are descriptions and samples of the main elements of a plan for continuous teacher development.

A. Instructional support and development

Teacher learning follows a logical and effective instructional pattern in which strategies are introduced and reinforced in workshop and classroom settings. Teachers move through a planned sequence of scaffolded learning that includes the following:

Level I workshop—Teachers are introduced to basic elements of shared inquiry and to the range of strategies at their grade levels. The two-day workshop is required for all teachers who plan to implement Junior Great Books and their administrators.

Level II workshops—Teachers participate in an in-depth demonstration and explanation of related sets of strategies, such as questioning, writing, and assessing. Each half-day or full-day workshop will include a session of reflection and troubleshooting. Implementations will include one or more workshops per year, depending on the availability of teacher release time and school needs.

Level III workshops—Teachers explore more difficult strategies, such as transferring shared inquiry strategies to content-area reading or novels, and extending writing activities. Level III workshops will take place in the second or third year of an implementation.

Classroom sessions (consultation day)—Teachers work with the Great Books consultant to actualize strategies in the classroom. Consultations are staged to scaffold the teacher’s mastery:

- Classroom modeling of strategies by the consultant, with the teacher as observer
- Team teaching by the teacher with the consultant

Coaching and feedback from the consultant as the teacher applies the strategies
The consultant debriefs the classroom teacher after each session. When possible, several teachers observe classroom-modeling sessions. During the classroom sessions, benchmarks for student performance are established and reviewed. Implementations will include three to six classroom sessions per teacher per year. Four classroom sessions can be scheduled per day.

Team meetings (consultation day)—Grade-level teacher teams, led by the school project coordinator, plan lessons applying the new strategies and reflect on progress

and problems. The Great Books consultant will colead the first few team meetings. Monthly teacher meetings are recommended, depending on availability of teacher meeting time.

Mentor development (consultation day)—The school project coordinator or staff developer works closely with the Great Books consultant to become a shared inquiry coach. During the first year, the school project coordinator shadows the Great Books consultant in modeling and coaching sessions. During the second and third years, the school project coordinator increasingly leads team meetings and carries out classroom modeling and coaching. The Great Books consultant can also help the school project coordinator identify mentor teachers or teacher team leaders for shared inquiry.

Planning meetings (consultation day)—Instructional leaders review objectives and progress assessments with the Great Books consultant. Initially, the planning group formulates objectives and instruments to assess progress; later, they review progress toward the original objectives, reformulate objectives, and revise plans. The Great Books consultant may also lead planning meetings with teachers. Implementations include year-end planning meetings for each year, as well as an initial planning meeting before implementation begins.

For each school, the Great Books consultant will plan with the school project coordinators a sequence of workshops and classroom sessions to address the school's identified needs and integrate them with the school's present staff development structure.

B. Project roles and responsibilities

The following is one school's description of roles and responsibilities to support a Junior Great Books CSR project. It will give you some idea of the tasks that will need to be done. You should tailor roles and responsibilities for your school to your staff's abilities, organization, and culture.

Project teachers are viewed as experts on their students' achievements and needs and on classroom conditions for instruction. They are expected to

- Adopt the plan for instruction and energetically apply the new strategies
- Assess their students' learning and their response to the new strategies for ongoing project planning
- Communicate progress and concerns as they arise to the school project coordinator and the Great Books consultant
- Collaborate with the school project coordinator and the Great Books consultant in classroom sessions, workshops, and meetings

The school project coordinator is an expert on the progress and concerns of the teacher team as a group and the school curriculum and reform plan. He or she is expected to

- Participate with the Great Books consultant and the principal in planning the implementation
- Serve as contact to coordinate workshops and classroom sessions with teachers

Lead teacher teams in team meetings to plan lessons, assess progress, and select materials

Mentor and coach project teachers using JGB methods and evaluation instruments (Initially the school project coordinator will shadow the Great Books consultant and gradually the school project coordinator will take over responsibility for coaching)

The school project coordinator should be available a minimum of a half day per week to meet these responsibilities.

The principal/project supervisor is an expert on schoolwide learning objectives, calendar, personnel, funding, and time allocation. He or she is expected to

Set the school's full curriculum plan and the role of JGB within it

Participate with the Great Books consultant and the school project coordinator in planning the JGB implementation

Supervise the school project coordinator and allocate time for project participation

Arrange for appropriate materials to be ordered

Set expectations for teachers' full participation in the project and allocate time for project participation for the project teachers, including team meeting time and release from class to observe classroom modeling sessions

Lead planning sessions to review evaluation data, set objectives, plan curriculum, and finalize the project timeline

The district administrator is an expert on district and state learning objectives and priorities and on evaluation of teacher and student learning. He or she is expected to

Oversee and evaluate the project at the district level

Consult with the Great Books consultant on issues of project facilitation and evaluation

The district administrator may also participate in planning sessions and observe workshops and classroom sessions.

The Great Books consultant is an expert on shared inquiry reading, discussion, writing, and assessment strategies. He or she is expected to

Provide a draft plan, including objectives and a timeline of project activities

Participate in planning sessions to review evaluation data, set objectives, plan project activities, and set timeline

Conduct workshops, classroom sessions, and teacher meetings

Provide worksheets, instruments, and other materials as needed

Adapt activities to the needs of the teachers and students

Develop the school project coordinator's ability to support teachers in implementing JGB and shared inquiry

Consult with the principal and school project coordinator on teachers' participation and progress

Remain on-call via phone or e-mail to the principal, school project coordinator, and project teachers to answer questions as they arise

One or two consultants will be assigned to a school, and except in special circumstances or if the principal requests a change, the same consultant will continue with a school through the school's project.

C. Project outline

Below is one school’s project outline. It shows major goals and the activities to achieve them of the Great Books consultant, the school project coordinator, and the teachers. Your project outline will be based on your school’s major goal and the kinds of activities most appropriate to your staff. Once the outline is developed, it should be reevaluated and may be revised from time to time. It will help all the stakeholders keep a clear sense of the direction of the project.

Goals	Great Books consultant	School project coordinator	Classroom teachers
Year 1: Implement basic shared inquiry strategies	Overview of shared inquiry and interpretive reading Basic shared inquiry strategies for reading, discussion, and writing Classroom modeling for each strategy Classroom coaching for each teacher	Monthly teacher team meetings Great Books consultant makes suggestions for agenda and materials School project coordinator visits classrooms with the Great Books consultant	Prereading and reading Student questioning Directed note taking Shared inquiry discussion Follow-up questioning Journal writing about reading Paragraph writing about reading 5 class periods/story unit, minimum 18 units
Year 2: Implement assessment and adapt strategies to specific needs	Overview and modeling on assessing shared inquiry Advanced writing assignments Coaching in adapting strategies to special needs New teachers: Activities as for year 1 during first semester	Monthly teacher team meetings Develop shared lesson plans, assess student work, solve problems School project coordinator coaches teachers New teachers work with teacher partners	Full reading strategies Longer writing Ongoing student assessment Questioning applied to content areas Basic strategies and writing with one novel, play, or longer text Full JGB units (18–24), plus at least one longer text
Year 3: Infuse shared inquiry strategies into content areas	Overview and modeling on deepening and transferring strategies Coaching in applying strategies to longer texts and content area reading Writing assignments on multiple stories New teachers: Activities as for year 1 during first semester	Monthly teacher team meetings Develop individual lesson plans, assess student work, solve problems School project coordinator coaches teachers New teachers work with teacher partners	Full strategies Thematic units Minimum 20 story units, with longer selections 5–7 class periods/story unit Full strategies and writing with 2–3 novels, plays, or longer texts

D. Project timeline

This sample timeline shows the first year of project activities for a school of twenty teachers. Each teacher participates in six workshop days and five classroom consultations (a total of twenty classroom consulting days for the school). Once the basic outline for your project has been determined, we will work with you to develop a timeline and set dates for the project activities. All of the project stakeholders can then use the timeline to coordinate their efforts.

Date	Consultant Days	Project Activities
Summer	1 day	Planning meeting Principal, school coordinator, Great Books consultant
August / September	2 days	Shared Inquiry Leader Workshop Level I Teachers, school project coordinator, Great Books consultant
September	3 days	Modeling Sessions —Introduce sharing students’ questions about text and directed note taking. Classroom modeling at each grade level; teachers at each grade level will observe one modeling session in grade-level classroom. Teachers, school project coordinator, Great Books consultant
September		Pretest —Teachers give the JGB pretest (to be scored by the Great Books director of research and evaluation).
October	1 day	Strategy Workshops —Follow-up questioning with students’ questions and note taking. Teachers (in grade-level groups), school project coordinator, Great Books consultant
October	3-1/2 days	Modeling Sessions —Follow-up questioning in shared inquiry discussion. Classroom modeling or coleading with teachers Teachers, school project coordinator, Great Books consultant
October	half day	Team Meeting —Reflect on classroom progress, prepare lesson plans. Teachers, school project coordinator, Great Books consultant
October	(evening)	Presentation to Parents —Demonstration and question-and-answer awareness session. Great Books consultant, principal, school project coordinator
November	4 days	Team-teaching sessions —Sharing students’ questions about text, directed note-taking activities. Teachers team-teach with the Great Books consultant two days. Teachers, school project coordinator, Great Books consultant
December		Team Meetings —Reflect on classroom progress, prepare lesson plans. Teachers, school project coordinator

January	1 day	<p>Shared Inquiry Leader Workshop Level II—Deeper questioning, assessment. Reflect on progress, introduce more advanced questioning strategies, review pretest benchmark papers.</p> <p>Teachers, school project coordinator, Great Books consultant</p>
January	4 days	<p>Team-teaching sessions—Shared inquiry discussion with questioning for support and response to others. Teachers team-teach with the Great Books consultant two days.</p> <p>Teachers, school project coordinator, Great Books consultant</p>
February		<p>Team Meetings—Reflect on classroom progress, prepare lesson plans.</p> <p>Teachers, school project coordinator</p>
March		<p>Team Meetings—Reflect on classroom progress, prepare lesson plans.</p> <p>Teachers, school project coordinator</p>
April	half day	<p>Strategy Workshop—Journal writing through the unit. Review successes and challenges. Opportunities to write; working with struggling writers.</p> <p>Teachers, school project coordinator, Great Books consultant</p>
April	3-1/2 days	<p>Modeling or coaching sessions The Great Books consultant will model or colead shared inquiry discussion and writing activities with each teacher.</p> <p>School project coordinator observes</p>
May		<p>Posttest Teachers give the Junior Great Books posttest (to be scored by the Great Books director of research and evaluation).</p>
May		<p>Team meeting—Assessing the project Reflect on classroom progress. Review posttest results.</p> <p>Teacher teams, school project coordinator, principal</p>
June	half day	<p>Strategy workshop—Planning for next year Review progress and concerns, set goals for next year, revise roles and responsibilities (outline if needed), and draft timeline.</p> <p>Teachers, school project coordinator, Great Books consultant</p>
June	half day	<p>Planning session Review teacher team assessments, student evaluation. Revise student learning objectives, teacher growth objectives.</p> <p>Principal, school project coordinator, Great Books consultant</p>

Component 4: “Measurable goals for student performance and benchmarks for meeting those goals.”

State- or district-mandated reading tests are the main measure of success for Junior Great Books CSR projects. Based on your needs assessment, your Great Books consultant will help you identify realistic benchmarks for academic and behavioral goals.

Junior Great Books makes available the following means to evaluate student learning and teacher implementation.

A. Junior Great Books pre- and posttest (optional)

The Junior Great Books test is a performance assessment of students’ interpretive thinking: their ability to generate an answer to an interpretive question, support their answer with evidence from the text, and recall and respond to other interpretations they heard during class discussion. The tests are easy to administer, and the test activity can be used by teachers as part of their ongoing instruction and assessment.

The test is given early and late in the year, using story units from each grade level. Instructions for giving the test and student test forms are provided. The tests are graded by the Great Books director of research and evaluation.

Pretests:

Teachers, the school project coordinator, and the principal receive the following:

- Graded tests, classroom score sheet showing each student’s scores, and with posttests, the change from pre- to posttest

- School’s benchmark papers and explanation for each grade level

The principal and school project coordinator receive the following:

- Report showing classroom and grade-level results and recommendations.

- There is a grading charge of \$1,500 per day for pre- and posttesting.

B. Implementation assessment

Throughout the project, teachers are asked to keep implementation logs and to share with their school project coordinator and the Great Books consultant their progress and concerns. The consultant will use a variety of instruments, such as the Junior Great Books Implementation Checklist, to measure teachers’ progress in integrating the shared inquiry method with his or her practice. These assessment instruments are designed to provide useful feedback for the teacher, Great Books consultant, and instructional leaders.

C. Other outcomes

If desired, the Great Books consultant will work with you to identify ways to measure other outcomes, such as attitudes toward reading or parent involvement.

Component 5: “School faculty, administrators, and staff support the CSR program.”

Your Great Books consultant can provide videotapes, sample units, and other materials for your review, or arrange for an awareness session at your school.

Component 6: “Provides for the meaningful involvement of parents and the local community in planning and implementing.”

Your Great Books consultant can contribute the following types of activities to your parent and community involvement effort:

Awareness meeting conducted by the Great Books consultant gives parents and community members the opportunity to experience some basic shared inquiry strategies, inspect JGB materials, and meet the Great Books consultant. The one- to two-hour meeting may take place any time before the school makes its proposal, early in implementation, or repeatedly. The school project coordinator or principal may use the meeting to present the evaluation data and rationale behind the choice of the JGB CSR model.

Parent sessions on how to support students in reading and writing, led by the Great Books consultant and teachers, are offered as part of a school open house or parent evening. The Great Books consultant will present interactive modeling sessions on how to read with children, help them ask questions about what they read, develop their own ideas, and write about what they have read. In the course of the implementation, the school project coordinator and teachers will gradually take over conducting parent sessions.

At-home sessions are an integral element of the Junior Great Books Read-Aloud program (K–1). The Great Books consultant can work with teachers to design grade-appropriate at-home sessions that respond to the needs of students and their parents.

Parent and volunteer classroom aides can prepare to assist teachers in leading shared inquiry activities in a one-day workshop given by the Great Books consultant. The Great Books consultant will also help the school project coordinator and teachers develop meaningful roles for aides.

Except for an initial Awareness Session, these activities will be scheduled for your project in conjunction with the Great Books consultant’s other activities at your school.

Component 7: “Utilizes high-quality external technical support and assistance from a comprehensive school reform entity.”

The Great Books Foundation has served as an external partner to a network of Chicago public schools in a project funded by the Chicago Annenberg Challenge. It has also provided external support and assistance to projects funded by Chicago Community Trust, Lloyd F. Fry Foundation, and Ameritech Foundation and has served as a partner to Art Resources in Teaching, Chicago, Illinois, St. John’s College, Annapolis, Maryland, and the College of the Humanities and Sciences, Phoenix and Tempe, Arizona.

Your district and area probably offer a number of colleges, universities, and other institutions that can facilitate your efforts toward effective school reform. Areas in which you might seek support are as follows:

- Analysis of state assessments and achievement tests
- Needs assessment and implementation review
- School management and leadership development
- Curriculum development (especially in science and mathematics)

Your Great Books consultant will be pleased to work with additional technical support partners in planning and carrying out your school reform project.

Component 8: “Includes a plan for the evaluation of the implementation of school reforms and the student results achieved.”

Your Great Books consultant will help you develop this plan using your district and state assessments, JGB instruments, and measures and staff available to your school.

Component 9: “Identifies how other resources will be utilized to coordinate services to support and sustain the school reform effort.”

Your school should develop a plan to sustain your use of Junior Great Books, especially in the year after the end of the CSR project. Your Great Books consultant can provide you with a timeline and cost quotation that will help you plan.

Ongoing professional development and replacement curriculum materials for your school may be provided through federal Title I funding for educational services for disadvantaged students, Title II funding for preparing, training, and recruiting high quality teachers, and many state funding programs.

Shared Inquiry Implementation Checklist

Teacher: _____ Observer: _____

Date: _____

Students' opportunities to:	Beginning, intermediate, expert levels		Comments
Practice interpretive thinking and reading	Fewer than 4 story units/ semester		
	5 to 8 story units/semester		
	9 or more story units/semester		
Do reading activities	One class period		
	Two to three class periods		
	Four or more class periods		
Prepare to interpret	Activities are treated as factual		
	Activities are interpretive but students do not share responses		
	Activities are interpretive and students discuss responses		
Participate in full discussion	Time for most students to comment briefly (up to 20 min.)		
	Time for all students to speak (20 to 40 min.)		
	Time for most students to speak several times (40 to 60 min. more)		
Build interpretation of text	Discussion questions call for story facts or personal experiences		
	Discussion questions are interpretive, but discussion is unfocused		
	Discussion remains focused on interpretive questions		
Generate and develop their own thinking	Discussion is steered toward preconceived "right" answers		
	Some answers are favored while others are accepted		
	All answers are entertained and explored		
Clarify and deepen their thinking	No or few follow-ups are asked about students' comments		
	Follow-up questions are general, or only some students' comments are followed up		
	Follow-up questions are specific and asked about most students' comments		
Support answers with evidence from the text	Students are seldom asked for evidence or support		
	Students are asked to cite evidence		
	Students are asked to explain how cited passages support their ideas		

Students' opportunities to:	Levels of implementation: beginning, intermediate, expert		Comments
Respond to others' ideas	Students are not asked to comment on others' ideas; or asked to vote or survey		
	Students are sometimes asked to agree or disagree with another's ideas		
	Students are asked to explain why they agree or disagree with another's ideas		
Revisit and reassess ideas	Students are not asked to reconsider earlier ideas		
	Students are asked generally to reconsider their own earlier ideas		
	Students are asked to reconsider specific ideas brought up earlier by anyone		
Reflect and extend their ideas in writing	No writing is assigned		
	Writing is disjunct from activities and discussion about the text		
	Writing is integrated with activities and discussion of the text		