

Plan a circle: “The Secret Garden”

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911) · public-domain novel (selected chapters or whole) · grades 5–7 · ~2–3 weeks.

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Kit section 5 (group agreement & calendar), scaffolded for this text. Students fill the group, calendar, and roles.

Preview note: Preview colonial attitudes and racist language toward Indian servants, the disability portrayal of Colin, and deaths (cholera, parents); plan context and support.

Text, group, and target

Text / author / edition	“The Secret Garden” — Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911). _____ (edition)
Group / period / dates	
Grade / TEKS target (p. 3)	Grade 6 · §110.22 — 7(A): multiple themes within/across texts; 6(C,D): support inferences, summary; 1(D): student-led discussion.
Learning intention	We are learning to explain how Mary’s and Colin’s changes reveal a theme about renewal and belonging.
Success criteria	I bring one open question, cite two details with chapter/page, respond to a peer, and name how my thinking changed.

Reading map & calendar

Chunk	Read through	Meeting date · leader
1	Ch. 1–8: Mary orphaned in India → Misselthwaite → finding the key and the garden.	
2	Ch. 9–20: reviving the garden, meeting Dickon, discovering Colin.	
3	Ch. 21–27: Colin’s recovery, the garden restored, Mr. Craven’s return.	

Members & first-meeting jobs (p. 7 roles)

Member	First job	Rotates to (next meeting)

Text-specific discussion questions (open — more than one answer)

- **Predict:** A sour, lonely Mary arrives at a house of secrets — what might the locked garden change in her?
- **Question:** Why might Burnett tie the garden’s revival to the children’s health?
- **Clarify:** What does “Magic” mean to Colin — supernatural, or something else?
- **Summarize:** Trace Mary’s change from the opening to the garden’s bloom, without opinion.
- **Interpret the theme:** How do the garden and the friendships reveal a theme about renewal or belonging? Use two details.

Optional Jigsaw lenses (p. 4): *Character* (Mary and Colin) · *Symbol* (the garden) · *Theme* (renewal and nature) · *Plot* (secrets revealed) · *Context* (Edwardian England — preview colonial attitudes).

Reading notes: "The Secret Garden"

Name: _____ · Home group: _____ · Section: "The Secret Garden," _____ · Expert lens: _____

Everyone prepares. Read the whole assigned section. Write or draw three important ideas, two supporting details with locations, and one summary in your own words. Keep interpretation separate from summary.

Questions

What needs clarification?
What could the group explore?

3 · Important ideas

Character choices, conflicts, themes, or central ideas.

1.

2.

3.

Vocabulary

Word + location + meaning or clue.
Mark anything still uncertain.

2 · Supporting details

Short quote or accurate paraphrase + page/paragraph + what it shows.

1.

2.

1 · Summary in my own words

Bring to the circle

My interpretation: These details suggest _____

Synthesis (connect two lenses): _____

After discussion: My thinking changed / became clearer because _____

TEKS evidence: 6(C,D) supported inference; 7(A) theme through characters/events; 1(D) response to a peer.