



About LitGroups

What is LitGroups?

Our mandate is to facilitate literary competence and excellence in the youth of Brandon through caring relationships and community partnerships.

A young person's ability to read and write enables them to continue to learn, explore, express themselves, communicate with others and expand ideas. Literacy opens the future for ongoing learning and employment for youth. It equips them with great potential and the opportunity to thrive. And when literacy is explored through caring relationships, a sense of community and belonging deepens. We want to help youth thrive in their literacy development, knowing the impact it can have on many areas of their lives.

Our approach to literacy development:

- Student-centered literacy activities tailored to individual needs, with activity options to choose from and significant adult/volunteer presence
- Access to quality literature; extending students' literacy exposure
- Exploring and sharing creative literary projects
- Supporting school initiatives for students' literacy development
- Opportunities to participate in and belong to a safe and healthy community

Our core values:

- **Safety** is foundational to creating a dynamic learning environment and sense of belonging.
- **Community partnering** allows for the wider community to contribute and for students to benefit from a variety of sources.
- **Caring for each student:** A high ratio of volunteers to students and time spent in conversation with students are important to programming, allowing for response to individual needs of students.
- **Respect** for students as being created and loved by God, with the ability and potential to learn and grow. Respect for each other and for property is expected of volunteers and students.
- A blend of **structure and flexibility** in the programming schedule gives an overall framework for both guidance and choice.

What does my child need to do to participate?

Registration

Students who wish to be involved in the LitGroups program must register online. This program is designed for students in grades 3 to 6. Younger siblings will not be allowed to attend, as we are not equipped to provide additional childcare outside of regular programming.

Conduct

Respect and commitment are expected of students enrolled in LitGroups. We take the safety of every student and volunteer seriously, and make efforts to ensure a positive learning environment.

For the best possible learning environment, the following are expectations of students that attend LitGroups:

- Respect for others and their property, including adult volunteers as leaders
- A desire to learn and grow, and willingness to participate
- Regular weekly attendance
- Timely communication of any issues that may affect attendance (illness, bereavement, etc.)

A student may be asked to go home if they instigate disruptive behavior. If disruption were to recur, they may be asked to discontinue attending the program. The following are also reasons for dismissal from the program:

- Violence or threat toward others in attendance (adult or youth)
- Damage to LitGroups, school or public property
- Significant disruption to a corporate learning environment
- Sporadic or inconsistent attendance
- Any illegal activity, including the use of illegal substances or alcohol

Students must also follow all safety measures that have been put in place to ensure the health and safety of all participants and staff. Failure to do so may result in the student being dismissed from the program.

Volunteers:

Volunteers are an essential part of LitGroups. Each person that works directly with students on a regular basis is required to go through a volunteer application process, which includes an application form, reference checks, a criminal record check and a child abuse registry check. This is to ensure the safety of students and credibility within the community and with parents.

Those who are involved on a more casual basis and/or in a group setting are not required to go through the application process – eg. Consultants; workshop facilitators, snack providers, financial contributors.

Christian beliefs:

LitGroups is part of Youth for Christ, an international Christian organization. We believe that caring for the whole person includes spiritual well-being. As we interact with students on a wide variety of topics concerning literacy, a Christian worldview and moral values may be expressed by staff/volunteers in conversations with students.