



# Discover Writing Study Circles



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## Study Circle #1

## Putting Voice and Passion in Non-Fiction Writing

### Wacky We-Search: Humor is truth—only quicker.

**Your objective:** To know that teaching with humor is not frivolous but meets the highest of educational standards. To understand the difference between “silly,” which is totally subjective and “funny,” which is objective and shared by all.

**What you need:** *Why We Must Run with Scissors & Wacky We-Search Reports*

**Reading:** *Wacky We-Search Reports*, Pages 13-33  
*Why We Must Run with Scissors*, Pages 57-79

**Breaking the Ice:** Humor is often seen as a diversion and not necessary to curriculum. Teachers or students make jokes, and we laugh.

But can it help us with teaching key concepts and remembering them? The answer is yes, but it takes work on the part of students, and teachers must set the stage. In this lesson we will experiment with ways to see the educational value of humor and pass it on to students.



### Small group work: Flip-Flopping Rules

In your reading, you saw that one way to create ironic truth and humor is to flip-flop reality. See the backwards world and the cartoon of the Cherokee discovering Europe. In this ten minute activity, teachers will work in pairs or in threes.

Take a school rule and flip flop it. For example:

➡ “Never run in the hall” becomes “always run in the hall.”

This creates an immediate silliness which will turn to funny if we find some real reasons why we must always run in the halls. For example:

➡ “Obesity is a bigger problem than hall safety. Running in the halls burns calories.”

### Big Group Discussion

What is a common characteristic that the funniest explanations shared? How would this activity work with children of your grade level? What does this lesson teach? What pitfalls might arise teaching this lesson with a class and how could they be overcome?

#### Follow-up for next session:

*Try one of the lessons from pages 57-79 in WWMRWS and bring student examples to the next circle.*