



Downloadable Reproducible eBooks

Thank you for purchasing this eBook from

www.socialstudies.com or www.teachinteract.com

To browse more eBook titles, visit

<http://www.teachinteract.com/ebooks.html>

To learn more about eBooks, visit our help page at

<http://www.teachinteract.com/ebookshelp.html>

For questions, please e-mail access@teachinteract.com

Free E-mail Newsletter–Sign up Today!

To learn about new and notable titles, professional development resources, and catalogs in the mail, sign up for our monthly e-mail newsletter at <http://www.teachinteract.com/>

Book Mountain Expeditions 1

An independent reading program
exploring mystery, biography,
animal stories and realistic fiction

Grades 4–5

Also available: *Book Mountain Expeditions 2*, featuring fantasy,
general nonfiction, poetry and sports fiction.



About the Author:

Diane Findlay has worked with children's and young adult literature for fifteen years and was the Director of the Waukee (Iowa) Public Library for six years. She is the author of the Exploring Children's Literature series from UpstartBooks and a regular contributor to *LibrarySparks* Magazine.

Special Thanks to:

Jill Pickell and her fifth grade students at Grimes Middle School in Dallas Center, IA, for putting these materials to the test.

Fran Lyons Sammons, former teacher and educational consultant and writer, for reviewing and contributing to this title.

©2005 Interact

10200 Jefferson Blvd • P.O. Box 802 Culver City, CA 90232

Phone: (800) 359-0961 • www.teachinteract.com

ISBN 1-57336-408-8; ISBN-13 978-1-57336-408-9

All rights reserved. Interaction Publishers Inc. grants permission to reproduce activity sheets and student handouts for classroom use. No other part of this publication may be reproduced in whole or in part, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise—without prior written permission from the publisher.

Welcome to ***Book Mountain Expeditions 1!***

Your students are about to embark on a most wonderful adventure! As their Travel Agent you will guide the Navigators, Explorers and Adventurers in your class to the top of Book Mountain!

Book Mountain Expeditions is an independent contract approach to developing language arts skills through reading and literature for students in grades four and five. With these materials, you and your students can customize reading and activities to fit individual student needs and interests. This contract approach works for those students who need extra help with reading and language skills, and those who need additional challenges. Use with specific students or engage your entire class!

This title contains four separate Book Mountain Expeditions. Each is a separate contract that explores a specific genre of children's literature, offering a wide range of recommended titles and activities related to the genre. Once you complete your first Book Mountain Expedition, you will be able to manage the entire program with little additional investment of time and energy. Encourage your students to broaden their reading by working in several, if not all, of the genres during the school year.

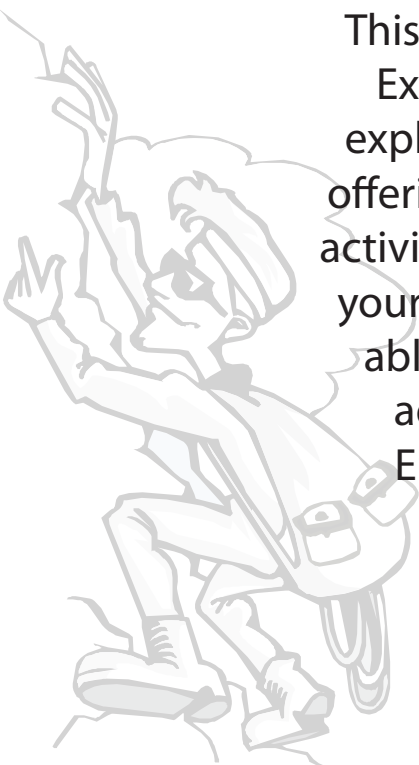
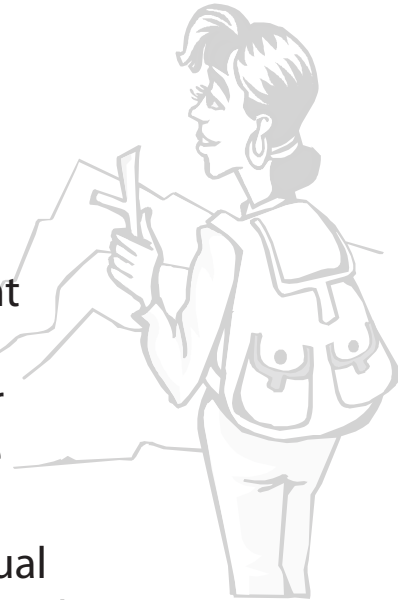


Table of Contents

Purpose and Overview

Who is this unit for?	5
What do students learn?	6
How are students organized?.....	8
How much time is required?.....	8
How is learning assessed?.....	9
Why use <i>Book Mountain Expeditions</i> ?	10

Components	12
-------------------------	----

Getting Started

Decisions to Make	16
Additional Materials Required	17
Preparation and Set Up	17

Lesson Plan

Day One	19
Week One	20
Ongoing Review and Final Evaluation.....	22

Dossier Cover	23
----------------------------	----

Student Map	24
--------------------------	----

Bookmarks	25
------------------------	----

Map Markers	26
--------------------------	----

Rubrics	27
----------------------	----

Activity Card Form	30
---------------------------------	----

Mystery

Introductory Essay	33
Travel Agreement	35
Recommended Reading List.....	36
Vocabulary List	41
Vocabulary List Dictionary Definitions	42
Vocabulary Activity Cards	46
Comprehension Activity Cards	49
Writing Activity Cards	53
Challenge Activity Cards	57
Master Worksheets.....	62



Biography

Introductory Essay	81
Travel Agreement	82
Recommended Reading List	83
Vocabulary List	89
Vocabulary List Dictionary Definitions	90
Vocabulary Activity Cards	94
Comprehension Activity Cards	96
Writing Activity Cards	100
Challenge Activity Cards	104
Master Worksheets	108

Animal Stories

Introductory Essay	121
Travel Agreement	122
Recommended Reading List	123
Vocabulary List	128
Vocabulary List Dictionary Definitions	129
Vocabulary Activity Cards	133
Comprehension Activity Cards	136
Writing Activity Cards	140
Challenge Activity Cards	144
Master Worksheets	148

Realistic Fiction

Introductory Essay	157
Travel Agreement	159
Recommended Reading List	160
Vocabulary List	167
Vocabulary List Dictionary Definitions	168
Vocabulary Activity Cards	172
Comprehension Activity Cards	175
Writing Activity Cards	179
Challenge Activity Cards	184
Master Worksheets	188

Standards	198
------------------------	------------

Teacher Feedback Form	202
------------------------------------	------------

Purpose and Overview

Who is this unit for?

Book Mountain Expeditions is an independent reading program for fourth and fifth grade students that develops language arts skills, an understanding of literary genres and other curricular skills. Designed as a contract approach, this unit reaches all kinds of learners with its broad range of activities and variety of reading options. It provides a consistent approach that can be used to create a customized language arts program for one or more students. Reading level, activity selection and even effort required can be adapted to best fit the needs of each student. Use the unit with one student or your entire class. Incorporate it into your regularly scheduled language arts time or use it as an independent study alternative.

Acting as their “Travel Agent,” you guide student travelers as they select a journey into mystery, biography, animal stories or realistic fiction. Use the Navigator, Adventurer or Explorer Recommended Reading List to find a book at, above or below the grade level that best fits each student’s interest and ability. Then select a variety of Vocabulary, Writing, Comprehension and Challenge activities from more than 50 choices provided in each genre.

Each student begins their personalized journey by reading the chosen book and completing the individually selected activities. Travel points are earned each time a student successfully completes an activity or presentation. These points move the student along the path of the Expedition Map toward the final destination—the top of Book Mountain.

To reinforce the verbal communication skills of speaking and listening, each student selects at least one activity that can be shared with the class. Or you might ask each student to present a summary of his or her journey to the class and then conduct a brief awards ceremony. This is a way to recognize individual achievements and creativity while students practice presentation and listening skills. Verbal sharing allows students to learn from and motivate each other. Hearing about a fun project might get other students excited about pursuing their own Book Mountain Expedition.

The journey comes to an end when the student earns enough travel points to reach the top of Book Mountain and earn a Genre Sticker to commemorate his or her experience. The student is then ready to embark on another expedition using another of the four literary genres to create a new personal reading adventure. The combinations of books and activities are endless!

What do students learn?

We use national standards to identify and communicate learning objectives for each Interact unit. In the back of this Teacher Guide you will find the national standards as determined by McREL, Mid-continent Research for Education Learning, the NCTE Standards for the English Language Arts and the California Applied Learning Standards that apply to this title. These standards detail what students will learn as well as how they will demonstrate their new knowledge.

Although your students may choose different titles and different activities, they will all gain and experience the following:

Knowledge

- Recognize characteristics of subgenres of mystery literature found in murder, "hidden treasure," "catch the criminal," ecological, logic, horror and Gothic mysteries.
- Understand vocabulary associated with mystery literature, such as "alibi," "larceny," "red herring" and "scenario."
- Recognize characteristics of subgenres of biography found in individual and collective biographies, autobiographies, memoirs and biographical anecdotes.
- Understand vocabulary associated with biography, such as "anecdote," "destiny," "legacy" and "stereotype."
- Recognize characteristics of subgenres of animal stories found in animals in the wild, a kid and his or her pet, ecopolitical, animal rights/welfare, animal/human partnership and animal hero stories.
- Understand vocabulary associated with animal stories, such as "extinct," "feral," "habitat" and "predator."
- Recognize characteristics of subgenres of realistic fiction found in family life, friendship, school life, romance, adventure or survival, growing up/coming-of-age and personal problem or social issue stories.
- Understand vocabulary associated with realistic fiction, such as "compromise," "diverse," "personality" and "reputation."
- Learn the key differences between genres (when more than one expedition is completed).

Skills

- Work independently to complete tasks by specified deadlines.
- Read mystery, biography, animal stories and realistic fiction literature with understanding.

- Complete writing activities based on the characteristics of one or more of the subgenres they read.
- Complete writing activities using correct spelling and punctuation.
- Prepare and share a presentation, display or oral report about one or more of the activities completed.
- Listen politely as a member of an audience and ask relevant questions of the speaker.
- Work cooperatively as they share resources and gain support to complete activities.

Attitudes

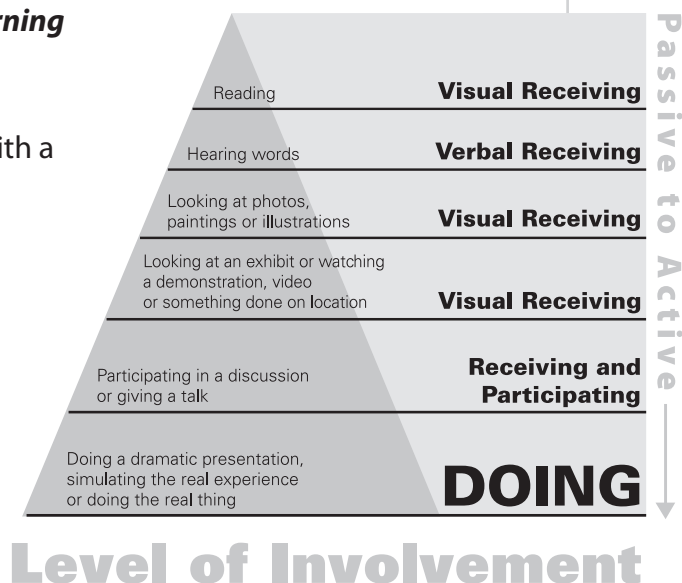
- Appreciate the importance of personal responsibility and time management when completing independent contracts.
- Recognize the value of being an independent reader.
- Appreciate the richness of different genres of literature.

Experiential Learning

Students learn best through experience. Research shows that student retention and understanding increase as students become more involved and engaged in the learning process, regardless of whether they are high achievers, reluctant learners or second language learners. That's why this unit requires students to choose their own activities and monitor their own progress. They will complete some tasks alone and they will need to work cooperatively to complete others. They will control their learning and will sometimes teach others.

Multiple Styles of Teaching and Learning

Because you have the sometimes overwhelming task of helping every student learn, this unit is designed with a great deal of flexibility so you can customize not only how you will use the unit with each student but what each student will do. He or she will read a book and might say and spell words or complete traditional worksheets like word webs, but he or she might also become an animal rights activist, a movie critic or a caricature artist.



Adapted from Edgar Dale's "Cone of Experience"

How are students organized?

Book Mountain Expeditions uses an independent contract approach. You might use this unit with one student, a small group of students or your entire class. The student will work alone to complete the reading and many of the activities. Some activities will require a student to work with a partner or a small group. Other activities require cooperation to complete the task. Other activities require a demonstration or some other method of sharing what was created or learned.

While the unit is designed for individual student use, students can contract in pairs or small groups to fulfill many of the goals of traditional reading groups. You can arrange for two students to work as a team to read the same book and work together to complete the activities they select as part of a single contract. Or you might encourage two or more students with individual contracts to partner for the completion of a particular activity built into each of their separate contracts.

How much time is required?

How much class time you take will depend on how you use the program. You can create a structured or unstructured program that takes anywhere from four hours of class time (reading one book and completing one or two activities) to 70 hours of class time spread throughout the year (two hours of class time per week). Here are some timing options:

With individual students or small groups:

- Complete one genre in approximately one month of class time by allowing students two weeks to read the book as homework and having them complete an average of two activities per week. Students can work on activities during class time or at home as needed.
- Use at designated class times throughout the school year, allowing students to move from genre to genre.
- Use odd moments and spare time during the day for students to work independently at their own pace. Students can then complete as many expeditions as time allows.

With your entire class:

- Schedule a regular reading workshop twice a week for four to six weeks.
- Schedule specific times each day for students working on the same genre.
- Schedule specific times each day for students working on individual genres, substituting genre groups for traditional reading groups.

How is learning assessed?

The process for assessing student work is flexible, as the broad range of activities lends itself to a variety of evaluation methods. We have included three standard rubrics so your assessment can include not only written work, but also assessment of demonstrated skills, oral exchanges, individual and cooperative group behavior, application of strategy and process and evaluation of other student work such as projects or displays. Use of these rubrics will uncover evidence that the student has learned the targeted content or skill and can apply what he or she knows. Answer keys are not provided for activities as many are tied to specific books and answers vary. For your convenience, dictionary-style entries are provided for vocabulary words.

What do Rubric Scores Mean?

- 4 Exceeds Expectations**—This rating describes work that exceeds the standard. The descriptor includes words such as “consistently,” “complete,” “with detail,” “actively” and “willingly.” Students who earn a “4” demonstrate leadership and knowledge during participation in the unit activities. Their performance and/or product are significantly better than what was required or expected.
- 3 Meets Expectations**—This rating describes work that meets the standard with quality. The descriptors lack some of the positive adjectives of a “4,” but this student has mastered the content or skill and can demonstrate his or her understanding in an application setting.
- 2 Nearly There**—This rating describes work that almost meets the standard. Sometimes inconsistent effort or a misconception of the content will result in a “2” rating. This student needs to try a little harder, or needs to revise his or her work in order to meet the standard described.
- 1 Incomplete**—This rating describes work that has not yet met the standard in content and/or skill. This student will require more instruction and another opportunity to demonstrate a knowledge or skill, or will require alternative instruction and assessment.

Use the tools provided to create an assessment approach that works for you. You might use the rubrics along with more traditional forms of assessment for vocabulary definitions and completion of worksheets. Review project work with students in an individual or group consultation. Assign letter grades or award travel points if appropriate for each category of activities and/or each completed contract. Be sure to make student project files available to parents during conferences or open house programs.

Why use *Book Mountain Expeditions*?

Book Mountain Expeditions is written to be extremely flexible and user-friendly for both you and your students. Here are some other advantages to using this program:

Differentiation

Like all Interact units, *Book Mountain Expeditions* provides differentiated instruction through a broad range of activities and assessment options. Students learn and experience knowledge, skills and attitudes through all domains of language (reading, writing, speaking and listening). Activities offer students opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge through several of Gardner's Multiple Intelligences including Interpersonal, Intrapersonal, Visual, Kinesthetic and Verbal. Adjust the level of difficulty or challenge through book and activity selection or by assigning different values or different point totals for different students. Assist special needs students in selecting books and activities that leverage their interests and strengths and allow them to succeed. Work with your Librarian, Resource Specialist, Gifted and Talented Coordinator and other specialists to coordinate instruction.

Here are some ways to differentiate using this unit:

- Using the same material, create individual contracts that are as simple or as challenging as you require and that fit the needs of different kinds of learners.
- Choose activities that reinforce basic skills like spelling, encourage creativity and individual expression, exercise research skills, flex critical thinking muscles or a mix of all of the above.
- Invite motivated students to propose original activities in the four categories for your review and assignment of travel points.
- Adjust total travel points required or assign different Activity Card point values to adjust expectations for different learners or different goals.

Motivation

- Involving students in choosing their genre, book, vocabulary words and activities gets students to “buy into” the experience and enhances their enthusiasm and motivation.
- Students practice initiative and responsibility as they manage their time and self-direct their way through their contracts.

Flexibility

- *Book Mountain Expeditions* can be used intensely over a short period of time, spread out over an entire term, used throughout the year or anything in between.
- Activities do not have to be completed in order. While most of the Comprehension Activities and some other activities require responses to the chosen book, and therefore must be completed after reading, other activities do not. Students can start on their Vocabulary Activities as soon as they have selected their vocabulary words, and may work on other activities that do not relate specifically to their book at any time in the process.
- Adjust the amount of independent work to group interaction by providing more or less time for students to collaborate on activities and present or share their work in various formats.

Ease of Use

- Once you and your students work through one genre contract, you will be familiar with the expedition format. Students can easily move on to other genres with little guidance beyond the initial consultation.
- Motivated students may complete extra activities or read additional titles within a genre without extra guidance from you.

Components

The *Book Mountain Expeditions* Package

The *Book Mountain Expeditions* package consists of this Teacher Guide, a set of Student Travel Guides, an Expedition Map and a set of Genre Stickers. This Teacher Guide includes all the information you need to run the program, including genre activity cards and reproducible worksheets for students. The Student Travel Guide introduces students to the program, how it's structured and how it works. The wall-sized Expedition Map and Genre Stickers are tools to help you turn this learning experience into a true adventure.

Book Mountain Expeditions 1 is organized as four separate chapters. Each chapter is a complete expedition that explores one of four genres—mystery, biography, animal stories and realistic fiction.

Each genre includes:

- A brief **Essay** introducing the genre
- A reading contract called a **Travel Agreement**
- A **Recommended Reading List**
- A **Vocabulary List** of words related to the genre
- A set of reproducible **Activity Cards** for each of these four categories—**Vocabulary, Comprehension, Writing** and **Challenge**
- Reproducible **Masters**

Essay

Each expedition begins with an **Essay** that introduces the genre by identifying basic terms, typical elements and subgenres. The essay will help students get the most from their reading and prepare for the activities to follow. When new or challenging literary terms are introduced, they appear in boldface type and are accompanied by a definition in italics. This treatment of vocabulary words is applied through all activities.

Travel Agreement

The **Travel Agreement** is the actual reading contract that you and each student will fill out together to begin any Book Mountain Expedition. Here you will document the student's chosen book, vocabulary words and activities and due dates. Both you and your student will sign this agreement.

Recommended Reading List

Each **Recommended Reading List** is divided into three reading levels. "Navigator" titles are a grade level or two below the program's target grades (four and five), and are chosen to engage reluctant or less-skilled readers. "Explorer" titles fall within the target grade range. Titles on the "Adventurer" lists are selected to challenge more advanced readers. The grade level for each book is noted in the margin so you may omit it if you copy the lists

for student use. You might direct students to the appropriate grouping or suggest other titles from your own favorites.

Each of the three reading level lists includes a variety of styles and subgenres; each combines perennial favorites with fresh new titles. When we suggest titles that are included in a series, we usually list the first book of the series. We hope students who enjoy these books will go on to read the entire series in sequence. Exceptions to this practice are found in the mystery genre. Because so many series in this genre are written for children over long periods of time, we have chosen to use more recent titles for the sake of quality, availability and freshness.

You'll notice there are a few picture book titles included in each reading list. The range and quality of picture books lend themselves brilliantly to use in classrooms from kindergarten into middle school. They can be read aloud to introduce or summarize conceptual units of study, or used to stimulate interest in visual learners or reluctant readers or to supplement basic curricula. Some picture books, like classic fairy tales or the James Herriot animal stories, were not originally written for children, but are sophisticated and ageless stories with lush illustrations added as "icing on the cake." No picture book is appropriate for every student in every fourth or fifth grade classroom, but some may be just right for some students in your class.

Students may think of picture books as "baby books," and may transfer that stigma to readers who enjoy them. Assess your students' attitudes toward picture books and introduce their use accordingly. Help your students appreciate the lifetime value of picture books. Using picture books occasionally to introduce concepts or summarize lessons, and explaining why they are appropriate, might minimize the stigma of choosing picture book titles for independent reading.

Some students will focus their reading within one genre. Help these students use their subjects of interest to make bridges into other genres. For example, a student who only reads nonfiction sports books might be convinced to try a biography of an athlete or a realistic novel about a character who is active in sports. We've made an effort to cross-pollinate the Recommended Reading Lists with titles that relate to other genres for just this reason. Look for links between genre lists as you guide students in their genre and title choices.

Each **Vocabulary List** contains 50 words that relate to the genre. We have included words that represent various parts of speech, which will help students when completing vocabulary-related activities. Some genres are very broad and offer endless vocabulary options. Feel free to add words to or remove words from any vocabulary list. New words might relate to the genre or the particular book your student or students are reading. Dictionary-style entries for vocabulary words, as required in Vocabulary Activity #2, are included for your convenience.

Vocabulary List

Activity Cards — Each genre features a set of **Activity Cards** in each of the four categories—**Vocabulary, Comprehension, Writing** and **Challenge**. Activity Cards are valued at 5, 10, 15 and 20 points and arranged in ascending order of difficulty, based on Bloom's Taxonomy, the combination and complexity of skills involved and time required. Each genre features activities that accommodate a variety of learning styles. Vocabulary Activities help students learn to define, spell, understand and use new words associated with the genre. Comprehension Activities allow them to demonstrate understanding of their book's plot, setting, characters and themes, structure and style. Writing Activities use ideas from students' reading to practice different kinds of writing. Challenge Activities provide opportunities to extend ideas from the reading into creative expression, research and cross-curricular activities. You may remove cards or use the blank cards provided to add your own activities to any category.

You decide how many travel points a student must earn to complete the expedition based on your educational goals and the time you want to use. You might allow students to choose any activities within any category as long as they reach the required total. Or you might require students to earn a particular number of points per category. Use the same approach with all students or change your expectations based on student need or ability. For example, you might require a gifted student to complete more Challenge activities while instructing a reluctant reader to focus more on vocabulary building or writing skills. You might require all students to reach the same point value or assign different goals for different students. Or you might require students to complete a certain number of activities per category to earn a Genre Sticker and ignore the point values and Expedition Map all together.

Masters — All documents that may be reproduced from this teacher guide are labeled as **Masters**, including the Essays, Travel Agreements, Recommended Reading Lists and Activity Cards. Most activities can be completed on regular notebook paper or require common classroom or craft materials. Some activities require students to use a worksheet, graphic organizer or other information that is also provided as a reproducible Master. Master worksheets are located at the end of each genre chapter and are organized by activity card number (found in the lower left corner of each card).

Answer Keys

You will not find answer keys for the activities as many are tied to specific books and answers vary. Starting points, examples or sample responses are provided as needed.

Expedition Map

Students earn travel points by completing activities. As points are earned, they move their individual marker along the Expedition Map to track their progress. Each student can also record progress on his or her individual map.

Earning points and moving a marker along the map will motivate the student to continue working toward his or her goal.

Each completed activity card is worth 5, 10, 15 or 20 points, with more complex and time-consuming activities valued higher. Students also earn up to 20 points for their presentation. The Expedition Map is marked with 100 dots, ideal for contracting with students for 100 points. But the Expedition Map can be used with any contract with some slight modifications.

Options for Awarding Travel Points

- Increase the number of dots moved for each travel point earned (move two dots for each point, for a total of 50 points) to reduce the number of activities and the amount of time a student will spend on an expedition.
- Decrease the number of dots moved for each travel point earned (each dot is worth two points for a total of 200 points) to increase the amount of time a student will spend on an expedition.

Map Markers

Each student will need a Map Marker to keep his or her place on the Expedition Map. Students can choose one of six styles of markers provided in this Teacher Guide or create their own design. Use tape or other removable adhesive to attach these markers to the map. If you are using *Book Mountain Expeditions* with your entire class, you may want to use smaller markers. Try using different colored Post-it® flags or dry-erase markers.

Genre Stickers

Each student earns the appropriate Genre Sticker by successfully completing the entire expedition for a particular genre. The sticker is placed on the student's travel dossier to commemorate each successful journey.

Student Travel Guide

The Student Travel Guide introduces the program and serves as the student's reference during each journey. It includes information on beginning an expedition and organizational and motivational reminders. There is also a travelogue the student can use to record the books he or she reads, the activities completed and travel points awarded for all the genres he or she explores.

Bookmarks

Each student will receive a bookmark that corresponds with his or her reading level. Have the student decorate the bookmark and write his or her name on the back. The student can also use the back of the bookmark to record the titles he or she reads. Award a new bookmark as a student advances from one reading level to the next.



Teaching tip

Adjust the number of travel points based on rubric performance. Increase points earned if the student exceeds expectations, and decrease points earned if improvements are needed. Reassign or average points for work that is redone and resubmitted. Consider awarding points for good behavior or highlighting specific activities by assigning double point values.

Getting Started

Read this Teacher Guide and the Student Travel Guide to get an understanding of how the program works and how to prepare. Then you will be ready to decide how you want to use the program.

Decisions to Make

1. Identify the student or students who would benefit from personalized, self-directed reading contracts. You can use *Book Mountain Expeditions* with one student, a few students or your whole class.
2. Decide how much time you expect each student to spend on a particular genre, how many activities each student should complete and whether you will award travel points or use another method.
3. Decide when each student will read and complete project work. Will work time occur during regularly scheduled class time, as homework or some combination of scheduled class time, free time and homework?
4. Decide whether you will assign a particular genre to all students or whether you will let them select their own genre.
5. Assess the needs of each student who will participate. Consider the student's specific learning styles, strengths and weaknesses, and develop goals that you hope the student will accomplish through one or more contracts.
6. Determine the appropriate reading level for each student who will participate. Will the student travel as a Navigator, Adventurer or Explorer?
7. Review information about assessment options and decide how you will assess individual student performance.
8. Plan class time to introduce *Book Mountain Expeditions* to participating students as well as about 10 minutes per student for individual consultations.
9. Work with your school or public librarian to determine which books will be available for your students. The Recommended Reading Lists are provided to help get you started, but feel free to add your own titles as you see fit. Plan time for students to access the library or arrange to have a collection of books in your classroom. Students should have access to their chosen book through the duration of their expedition.
10. Consider what expectations you have for student presentations and when the presentations will be scheduled. Will each student present one activity and/or a summary of the entire expedition? Also determine how you will award travel points for the presentations.

Teaching tip

Work with only one genre the first time you use *Book Mountain Expeditions*. Using one genre will reduce the number of copies you need to make and limit the range of activities and questions you can expect as you and your students learn how to use this approach.



Additional Materials Required

- Hanging file box or bin to hold travel dossiers, blank worksheets and forms.
- 3" x 5" card box for Activity Cards
- File folders (one for each participant and 30 to 40 additional folders for organizing blank forms, depending on how you organize your forms)
- Tape or other removable adhesive, Post-it® flags or dry-erase markers for marking the Expedition Map
- General classroom and craft supplies including a stapler, scissors, glue and a variety of craft paper

Optional:

- Colored card stock and lamination supplies to create durable Activity Cards
- Oversized flat file

Preparation and Set Up

1. Make copies

Reproduce all Masters for each genre you are using. Make sure to return Masters to your Teacher Guide or file them in a different location so a student doesn't accidentally use your last copy! You will need the following:

- **One Dossier Cover and one Student Map for each participant**
- **One Bookmark for each participant**
Make at least one copy of each style for each participant to be sure you have enough. Save the unused Bookmarks for future use. Use heavy paper for durability.
- **One Map Marker for each participant**
Make enough copies for each participant to have a choice of style. Include blank markers for students who wish to create their own marker.
- **One of each rubric for each participant**
You may make additional copies to post in your classroom.
- **One Activity Card Form**
Make one copy to post for students to use as a reference. If you choose to give students copies to write on, make at least 10 copies for each participant.
- **One Essay and one Travel Agreement for each participant**
- **One of each Recommended Reading List and Vocabulary List**
Make one copy of each to post for students to share. Or make copies for each participant if you prefer the student keep copies of the lists.

- **One of each Activity Card**

Color-code your cards by genre. For example, all fantasy cards might be blue and all sports fiction cards yellow. Use heavy paper and laminate your cards for durability.

- **Multiple Worksheets** (at least 10 of each)

Make enough copies of each worksheet and reproducible so you won't need to run to the copier each time a student needs one. You might color-code your worksheets to coordinate with the Activity Cards.

2. Organize materials

- Create a travel dossier for each student by stapling or gluing a Dossier Cover to the front of a file folder. You will hand these out on Day One.
- Cut the Bookmarks and Map Markers apart. You will hand these out on Day One. Store extras in folders for future use.
- Cut the Activity Cards apart and organize them by activity type and card number (found in the lower left corner of each card) using labeled dividers. Use a 3" x 5" card box to store Activity Cards. If using multiple genres, try using separate card boxes for each genre to stay organized and provide easier access for students.
- Create folders to store copies of worksheets and other reproducibles. You might color-code your folders to coordinate with the Activity Cards. Use a separate folder for each worksheet or group worksheets by activity type. File alphabetically.

3. Set up a project area

- Set up an area in your classroom where all *Book Mountain Expeditions* materials will be kept. Students can then independently access their materials as needed throughout the day.
- Use a hanging file box or bin to hold travel dossiers and extra copies of worksheets and other reproducibles.
- Use an oversized flat file or set aside extra shelf or table space for storage of student projects that will not fit in the travel dossiers.
- Keep blank index cards and/or scrap paper near the Activity Card file for student use.
- Find a place to display the Activity Card Form, Recommended Reading Lists, Vocabulary Lists and any other reproducibles you might decide to post.
- Find a place to display the Expedition Map. Hang it on a prominent wall in your classroom or near your project area.

Lesson Plan

Gather together all student travelers who are starting *Book Mountain Expeditions* for the first time so you can introduce the program and explain how it works. You'll also explain the time frame and when you expect students to read and work on their projects. If you are introducing this program to only one student, combine the activities listed in Day One and Week One.

Day One

Introduce Book Mountain Expeditions to Participating Students

1. Introduce yourself as the Travel Guide who is about to take student travelers on a learning adventure through the world of literature.
2. Hand out a copy of the Student Travel Guide to each student and build excitement about participating. Make special note of the travelogue that can be used to record books read, activities completed and points earned.
3. Explain the purpose of the program, the goals you have for the group and your expectations for student performance.
4. Require each student to read through the Student Travel Guide carefully before his or her individual consultation.
5. Hand out a travel dossier (project file with Dossier Cover attached) to each student. Encourage each student to write his or her name on and decorate the dossier before his or her individual consultation. Explain that all expedition-related papers must be kept in the dossier. This includes all notes, worksheets and projects the student creates during his or her expedition.
6. Hand out Map Markers. Allow each student to choose or create his or her own Map Marker. Encourage each student to write his or her name on the back of the marker and decorate it before his or her individual consultation.
7. Hand out and explain the Student Map. Describe how the student can track progress as travel points are awarded for each completed activity. Also explain the Expedition Map. Describe how you want the student to mark both the Expedition Map and the Student Map.
8. Introduce the genre you selected. If students are selecting their own, introduce each genre by highlighting a few key elements from each Essay. Encourage students to read one or more of the Essays and select a genre before their individual consultations.
9. Explain how students will select and access a book to read. Show the Recommended Reading Lists and point out the area of the classroom where books are organized or tell students how they will get books from the library.



Teaching tip

If all students are being assigned to work with the same genre, hand out the Essay and Travel Agreements as part of this introductory meeting. Read the Essay to the group, highlighting key elements. Or encourage independent reading of the Essay before individual student consultations.

10. Explain the project file area, including the Activity Card file, the storage space for travel dossiers and the area for oversized projects. Be sure to explain how you want the dossiers organized (alphabetically by first or last name works well).
11. Explain how Activity Cards are organized and used. Show the box and explain how you want each student to use the cards, maintain the file and record information about the activities they choose.
12. Encourage students to look through the Activity Cards and make a list of the activities they are interested in before their individual consultations. Explain your general expectations for the type and mix of activities you would like students to complete. Include expectations for the number of travel points required to complete one expedition.
13. Explain the presentation piece of the expedition. Tell students they can choose to share a favorite activity or project or they can present a summary of their entire journey.
14. Show a sample copy of the Travel Agreement. Explain how you will work with each student to complete the form and how the form is used to track progress.
15. Clarify what resources the student may use and how the student might access them. Make sure to cover use of the classroom (including classroom supplies and materials), library, Internet, home and/or public library.
16. Hand out the Activity Card, Presentation and Expedition Rubrics and explain how you will assess student behavior and performance.
17. Tell each student when you plan to hold his or her individual consultation so he or she knows when to be prepared.

Teaching tip

If participating students have already completed one or more expeditions and are familiar with the process, provide the Recommended Reading Lists, access to books and activity options for a new genre so each student can suggest what he or she wants to read and do.



Week One

Individual Student Consultation

1. Meet with the individual student to consult on book and activity selection, complete the Travel Agreement and answer questions.
2. Explain your goals for this particular student in using this program. Include your specific expectations for the number of travel points the student must earn to complete his or her expedition. Detail how many points you expect per category and what types of activities you would like this student to work on.
3. Discuss the student's chosen genre, reviewing key elements from the Essay. If the student is still undecided, help choose an appropriate genre based on your goals and the student's interests. Then provide the essay and review the key elements.

4. Help the student choose an appropriate book within the genre. You might allow the student to choose any book from the Recommended Reading List, including any titles you may have added. Even though you have already assessed the student's reading level and determined whether he or she will be traveling as a Navigator, Explorer or Adventurer, you might allow the student to choose any book from any of the reading lists or the entire collection you have assembled for the genre. Provide the student with his or her book, or plan a time for the student to retrieve the book from the library. Make sure the student will have access to the book throughout the expedition.
5. Using the Vocabulary List and selected book for the chosen genre, work with the student to pick 8 to 12 vocabulary words that are new to the student and appropriate to his or her reading and comprehension levels.
6. Use the Activity Card file to review the activity options with the student. You may also need to refer to the worksheets that accompany some activities, as these worksheets offer more detailed instructions. Together, choose activities from the four categories—Vocabulary, Comprehension, Writing and Challenge—to accomplish your goals and meet your student's needs. Encourage the student to challenge him or herself by selecting a variety of activities. Make sure to select a combination of activities that meets or exceeds the required number of points. The point value of each activity is shown on the Activity Card.
7. Work with the student to record the activity categories, numbers and point values on the Travel Agreement. Activity categories and numbers appear in the lower left corner of each card.
8. Help the student identify and locate any blank worksheets and instruction pages that accompany the selected activities. Worksheet names appear in bold type on the Activity Cards.
9. Work with the student to fill in the remaining blanks on the Travel Agreement. Detail the activities to be done and set a date for completing the contract. Be sure to record when the student may work on his or her activities, both in and outside of school.
10. Have the student write down the directions for his or her chosen activities on index cards, on blank sheets of paper or in a notebook, using the Activity Card Form as a guide. He or she may do this now or write down a new activity each time one is completed.
11. Clarify what resources the student may use—classroom, library, Internet, home and/or public library.
12. Remind the student to keep all expedition-related papers in his or her travel dossier when not actively working on them, so papers don't get lost and you can spot-check the file for progress from time to time.

**Teaching tip**

You might choose to adjust the number

of travel points awarded for activities, based on the skills of your student and the time available. You might choose to award points for other completed tasks, such as reading the Essay, decorating the Dossier Cover, Bookmark and Map Marker, or for exceptional independent or cooperative work.

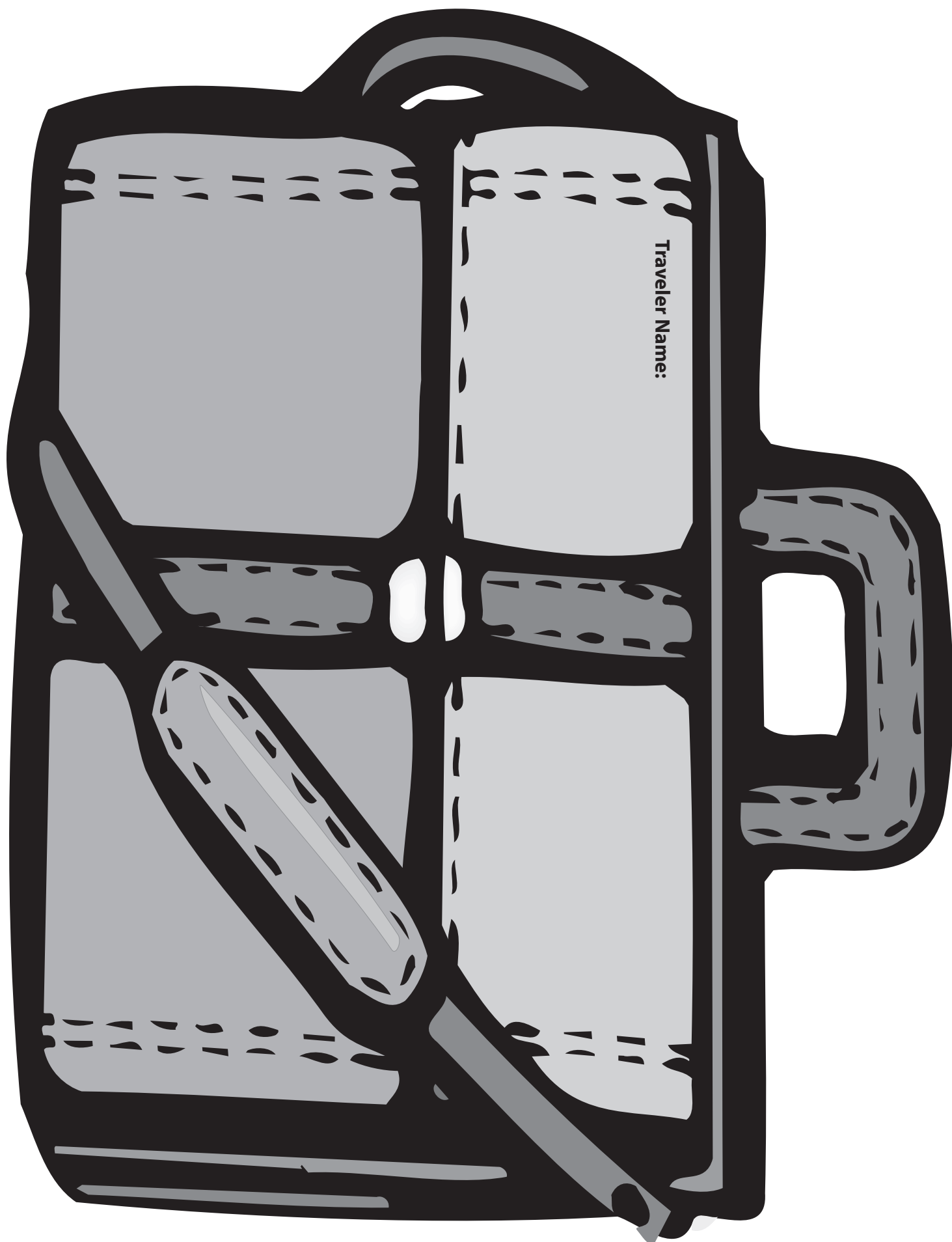
**Teaching tip**

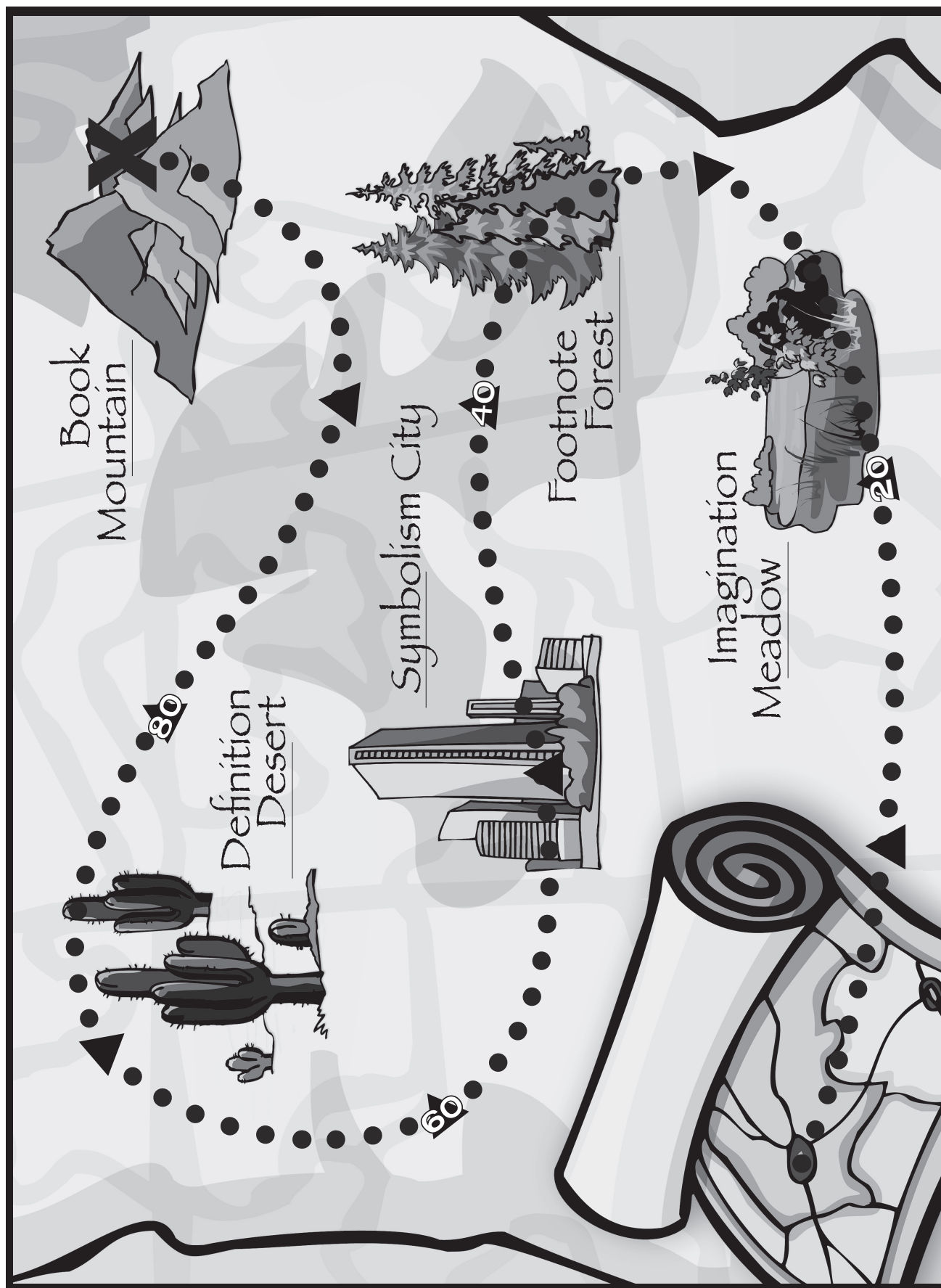
Set up separate benchmark dates for each category of activities with a student who has trouble taking initiative or budgeting time wisely.

13. Remind the student that as activities are completed and travel points earned, he or she will mark progress along the map all the way to the top of Book Mountain.
14. Plan to meet with the student toward the end of the expedition to discuss and schedule his or her presentation.

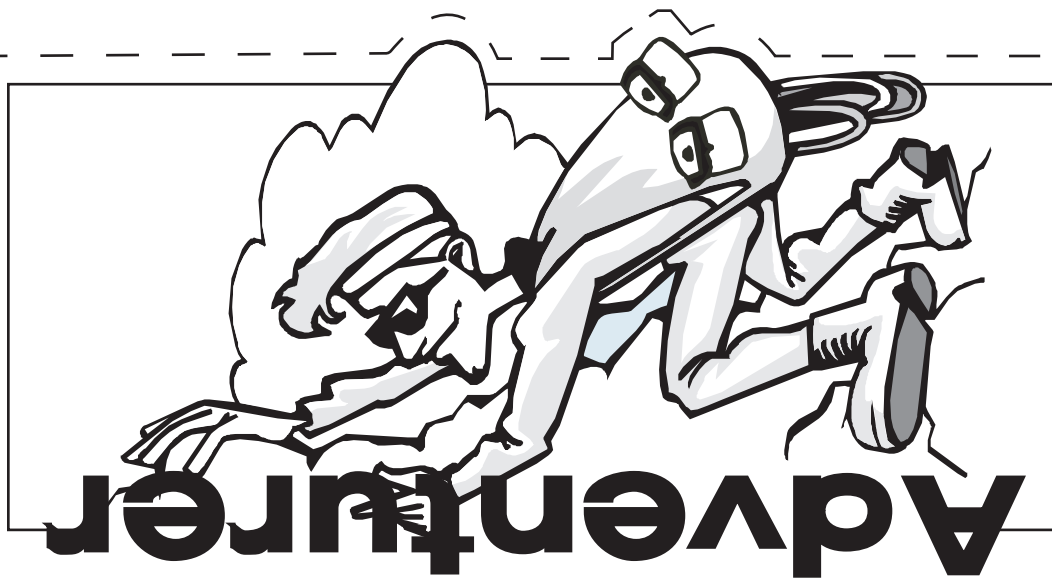
Ongoing Review and Final Evaluation

1. Encourage the student to work as independently as possible, but offer guidance as needed. Students using the program for the first time and not used to self-directed learning may need more support and guidance from you.
2. Start with weekly check-ins. Evaluate work as it is completed. Consider evaluating each category of activities separately, if you want to focus attention on both strengths and weaknesses. Provide feedback and suggestions for improvement as required.
3. Return unsatisfactory work to the student to be redone. Because the Activity Card tasks and the concept of self-directed learning may be new, you might allow students to redo unsatisfactory work without penalty for the first few weeks.
4. Award travel points as the student successfully completes each activity so the student can move his or her individual Map Marker along the Expedition Map and mark his or her Student Map as points are earned.
5. Remind the student that he or she is required to present at least one completed activity to the class. Refer to the Presentation Rubric to detail your expectations. Work with the student to schedule a class time for the presentation. Provide coaching as needed.
6. On the Return/Completion Date agreed upon and recorded on the Travel Agreement, conduct a final review and evaluation of the student's dossier using the Expedition Rubric.
7. When the student completes one genre (one Book Mountain Expedition), award the associated Genre Sticker so the student can mark the front of his or her travel dossier. Encourage the student to begin another expedition to collect more stickers.

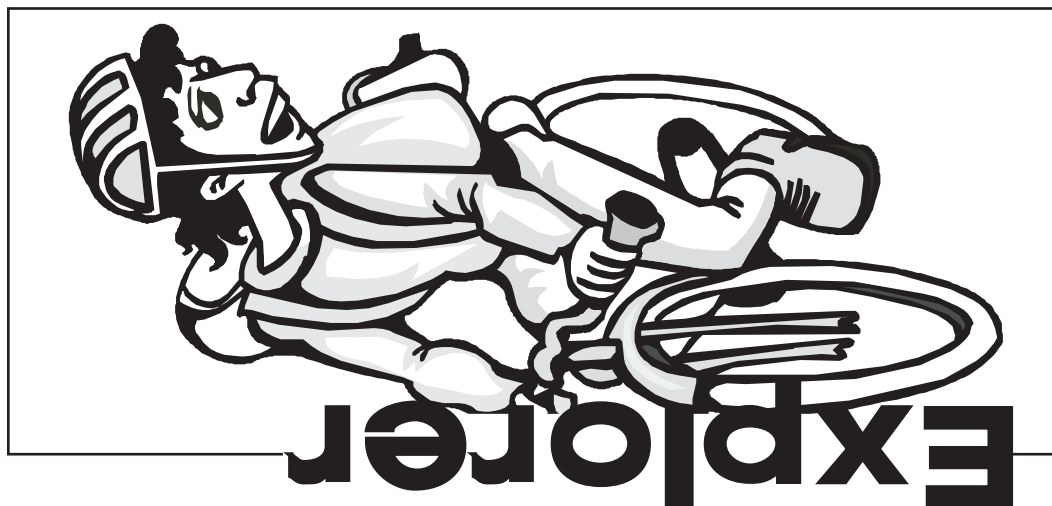




cut



cut



cut



Map Markers



Activity Card Rubric

4 Exceeds Expectations – I did a great job!

- I have followed all the directions described on the Activity Card and have gone significantly beyond what was expected.
- My work is very neat and legible.
- I have very few, if any, errors in spelling or grammar.

3 Meets Expectations – I did a good job!

- I have followed all the directions described on the Activity Card and have done what was expected.
- My work is neat and legible.
- I have few, if any, errors in spelling or grammar.

2 Nearly There – Oops, not quite ready.

- I have completed almost all the directions described on the Activity Card, but I am missing some information.
- My work is almost always neat and legible.
- I have some errors in spelling or grammar to correct.

I need to finish or correct my work as soon as possible and resubmit it!

1 Incomplete – I must correct my work.

- I have not completed the directions on the Activity Card.
- My work could be much neater and more legible.
- I have made significant errors in spelling or grammar.

I need to talk with my teacher immediately to make a plan of action for improving my work!

Presentation Rubric

④ Exceeds Expectations – I did a great job!

- My presentation was very well organized.
- I clearly explained what I did and why.
- My voice was loud and very clear.
- I maintained eye contact with my audience.
- Any visual aids I used added interest and clarity to my presentation.

③ Meets Expectations – I did a good job!

- My presentation was organized.
- I explained my work so others could understand the most important points.
- My voice was loud and clear.
- I made eye contact with my audience from time to time.
- Any visual aids I used added clarity to my presentation.

② Nearly There – Oops, I forgot something!

- My presentation was somewhat organized.
- I explained my work so others could understand a few of the most important points. My explanation was difficult to understand at times.
- My voice was sometimes difficult to hear or understand.
- I made eye contact with my audience a few times.
- Any visual aids I used added clarity to my presentation.

① Ineffective – Next time I will prepare and practice more.

- My presentation was disorganized and very difficult to understand.
- My audience could not understand my presentation.
- My voice was difficult to hear.
- I made little or no eye contact with my audience.
- Any visual aids I used were ineffective or were distracting.

Expedition Rubric

4 Exceeds Expectations – I had a successful expedition!

- I earned more than the required number of travel points within the time specified.
- I worked on my projects and asked questions during appropriate times.
My efficient use of time is evident in the quality and quantity of my work.
- I understood and followed written and verbal instructions. I worked independently and required little guidance.
- I worked quietly and courteously. I offered assistance to others appropriately.
- Overall, my work exceeded expectations for creativity, organization and completeness.

3 Meets Expectations – I was responsible for my journey.

- I earned the required number of travel points within the time specified.
- I worked on my projects and asked questions during appropriate times. I used my time efficiently most of the time.
- I followed written and verbal instructions. I worked independently and asked questions from time to time when needed.
- I worked quietly and was courteous of others.
- Overall, my work was neat, organized and complete.

2 Inconsistent – My journey had ups and downs.

- I earned the required number of travel points.
- I usually worked on projects and asked questions during appropriate times.
- I worked independently most of the time. I sometimes did not follow instructions, stay on task or ask for help when needed.
- I worked quietly and courteously most of the times. I need to work more quietly and courteously at times.
- Some of my projects were not as neat and organized as they could have been.
I usually remembered to keep my materials in my dossier. Some of my work was hard to find or understand.

1 Unsatisfactory – My work was unsatisfactory or incomplete.

- I did not earn the required number of travel points in the time specified.
- I did not complete enough projects or my work was incomplete, difficult to understand or late.
- I did not use my project time wisely. I often had to be reminded about when to work on my projects.
- I did not work independently, nor ask for help when needed.
- I disrupted others when I should have been working quietly and courteously.
- My dossier was frequently messy and unorganized. I regularly forgot to keep my materials in my dossier.

Activity Card Form

Traveler name(s): _____

Number and Title of Card: _____

Write the directions from the card in the space below:

IMPORTANT! All Activity Card work must be completed neatly, using correct spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Activity Card Form

Traveler name(s): _____

Number and Title of Card: _____

Write the directions from the card in the space below:

IMPORTANT! All Activity Card work must be completed neatly, using correct spelling, punctuation and grammar.



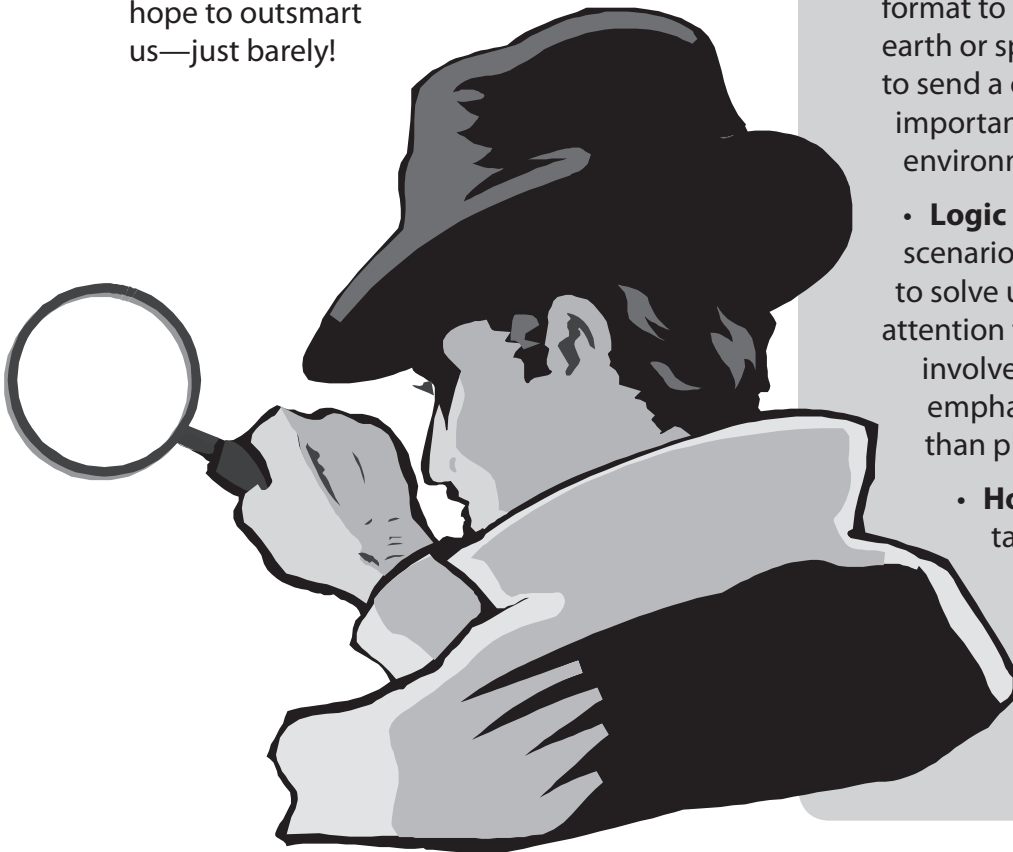
Mystery Table of Contents

Introductory Essay	33
Travel Agreement	35
Recommended Reading List.	36
Vocabulary List	41
Vocabulary List Dictionary Definitions	42
Vocabulary Activity Cards	46
Comprehension Activity Cards.	49
Writing Activity Cards	53
Challenge Activity Cards.	57
Master Worksheets	
Picture Words	62
Letter Ladder	63
Slang Expressions	64
Subject Circles	65
Suffixes	66
Basic Story Elements	67
Comprehending Characters	68
Predicting the Outcome	69
Mystery Elements Scavenger Hunt	70
The Powers of Observation Part II	71
Story Starters	72
Picture Puzzle Game	73
Memory Card Game	74
Book Code Messages	75
Real-life Crime Fighters	76
Pentomino Puzzles	77

Magical Mysteries

Who can resist a mystery? Just the word “mystery” grabs our attention. People are curious by nature. Put a puzzle in front of us and we just have to give it a try. And mystery novels are just that—puzzles for us to solve along with the book’s characters.

In fact, that’s the key to the definition of a **mystery** novel. Mystery writers present us with *riddles to solve*. Who’s the murderer? Where’s the treasure? What does the ghost want? They provide clues and distract us with misleading hints and interesting yet unimportant details. They keep us guessing until we reach the last page, hoping to surprise us when the mystery is finally solved at the end of the book. Sometimes we put all the pieces of the puzzle together. Sometimes we just enjoy reading as each piece of the puzzle falls into place before our eyes. Mystery writers invite us to engage in a battle of wits and hope to outsmart us—just barely!



To keep us focused on the riddle, mystery writers use several common strategies. They often open with **exciting or suspenseful action**, to get our attention right away. The **main character** is almost always a curious,

Mystery subgenres

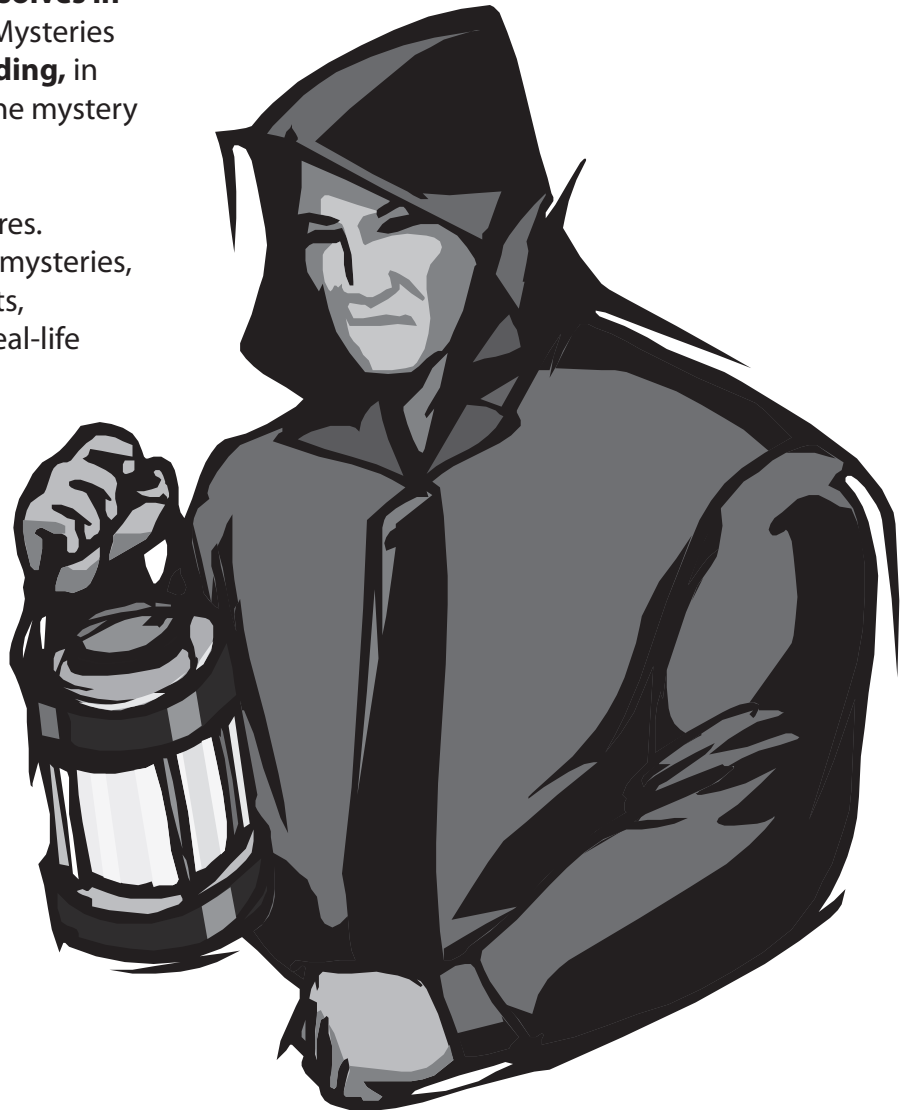
- **Murder mysteries** focus on a homicide and the detective or investigator (professional or strictly amateur) who is trying to catch the killer.
- **“Hidden treasure”** novels involve following clues to find something of value that has been cleverly hidden.
- **“Catch the criminal”** stories are similar to murder mysteries but focus on other crimes—theft, forgery, arson, etc.
- **Ecological mysteries** use a mystery format to explore threats to planet earth or specific forms of life on it and to send a clear message about the importance of caring for the environment.
- **Logic mysteries** present scenarios with problems or riddles to solve using logic and careful attention to detail. While they often involve crimes to investigate, they emphasize logical reasoning more than plot and storytelling.
- **Horror or Gothic mysteries** take place in gloomy, mansion-like settings and usually involve uncovering some dark, hidden family secret about violence, ghosts or madness.

resourceful type with the spunk and determination to get to the bottom of things. He or she is important in solving the mystery, if not the single-handed hero of the story. There is often a secondary character or **sidekick** that offers both help in solving the puzzle and often comic relief. Mystery writers usually (but not always) place the stories in **realistic settings** that limit the field of search for clues and contribute directly to the plot. They include lots of detail for us to sift through for both real clues and misleading suggestions. They may throw in **plot twists** like mistaken identity, faulty time sequences or mistaken assumptions. But they never stray too far from the **main event** that sets up the riddle, builds to a suspenseful **high point**, and **resolves in the end** with the answer revealed. Mysteries almost always have a **satisfying ending**, in the sense that the case is cracked, the mystery revealed or the riddle solved.

Mystery can overlap with other genres. There are fantasy mysteries, history mysteries, mysteries involving animals or sports, horror mysteries, and so on. Many real-life mysteries are explored in general nonfiction, though we'll stick to fiction in this Book Mountain Expedition. See the box on the previous page for subgenres within mystery.

All fiction writers try to grab our interest and involve us in the story they have to tell. The good ones succeed. They use

words to create pictures in our minds and make us care about, if not actually think and feel with, their characters. Other genres of literature may also entertain us, inspire us, stir up our emotions and stimulate our imaginations, but mystery involves us in a direct and irresistible way. It challenges us to play along in solving the puzzle—to watch for clues, see through distractions and figure out “whodunit” before all is revealed at the end of the book. As you read your mystery book, look for the elements mentioned earlier. Can you guess what game the author is playing and beat the main character to the solution? Give it your best shot!



e times:

e times:

e times:

e times:

e times:

e times:

e times:

e times:

e times:

e times:

e times:

e times:

e times:

e times:

e times:

e times:

Mystery Recommended Reading List

NAVIGATORS • Mystery

GRADES 2–4

→ ***The Barking Treasure Mystery*** by David A. Adler. Penguin Putnam, 2005. ISBN 0-14240-319-9. In this Cam Jansen series title, Cam uses her photographic memory to solve mysteries. This time she and sidekick Eric take a harbor cruise and find themselves navigating their way through more than water as they unravel clues to find a fellow passenger's missing poodle.

3–5

Encyclopedia Brown and the Case of the Slippery Salamander by Donald J. Sobol. Bantam Doubleday Dell, 2000. ISBN 0-55348-521-0. The 10-year-old whiz kid is back, using his vast knowledge of little-known facts to catch criminals. Ten clever scenarios challenge you to keep up with the spunky walking encyclopedia as he solves mysteries by applying general knowledge and simple logic. Solutions appear at the end of the book.

3–5

Funny Bananas by Georges McHargue. Dell Publishing Company, 1976. ISBN 0-44042-771-1. Ben, who has practically grown up in New York City's Natural History Museum where his parents work, thinks of it as his. So when a rash of pointless vandalism breaks out he decides to get to the bottom of things. In the process he follows clues, stalks a suspect, breaks a few rules, stumbles onto some surprises and makes some new friends. A fun, suspenseful, satisfying mystery.

3–4

Go Eat Worms! by R. L. Stine. Scholastic, 2004. ISBN 0-43967-114-0. Todd is fascinated with worms and develops a worm farm for the science fair. But then worms start to turn up in unexpected places—like in his bed and his lunch! Is he the victim of practical jokes, or are there more sinister forces at work? This Goosebumps series title is full of clues and lighthearted fun.

2–3

The Green Toenails Gang by Marjorie and Mitchell Sharmat. Random House, 2005. ISBN 0-44042-063-6. In this title from the Olivia Sharp, Agent for Secrets series, Olivia rushes to the aid of her best friend Taffy. What is the secret behind the neighborhood girls' exclusive club, and why haven't they asked Taffy to join? See if you can beat Olivia to the solution.

2–3

The Missing Fossil Mystery by Emily Herman. Hyperion Books for Children, 1996. ISBN 0-78681-091-2. Liza's big brother wants to be a paleontologist. When he won't let Liza borrow his prized fossil for show and share, she takes it anyway. But during an unusually busy day the fossil disappears. As Liza scrambles to find the missing treasure she learns some unexpected lessons about a guilty conscience and the process of paleontology. A fun, believable story.

Nate the Great on the Owl Express by Marjorie Weinman Sharmat and Mitchell Sharmat. Random House, 2004. ISBN 0-44041-927-1. Our young detective finds himself on a train, guarding his cousin Olivia's pet owl. Olivia believes a neighbor is out to get Hoot and wants to smuggle her out of town. Sure enough, Hoot disappears. Can Nate the Great find Hoot and solve the mystery?

Penalty Shot by Matt Christopher. Little, Brown and Company, 1997. ISBN 0-31613-787-1. Christopher's books are favorites of young sports fans. In this Christopher Classics series title, Jeff tries to safeguard his place on the hockey team by improving his grades. Why, in spite of real progress, does he get a failing grade? And who is sending his best friend threats in his name? It looks like the work of a forger, and Jeff is determined to solve the mystery.

The Talking T-Rex by Ron Roy. Random House, 2003. ISBN 0-37581-369-1. In this A to Z Mysteries title, an old friend comes to town with a huge T-Rex model, raising money for a dinosaur museum. When the money is stolen, Dink, Josh and Ruth Rose jump into action to find the thief and return the money.

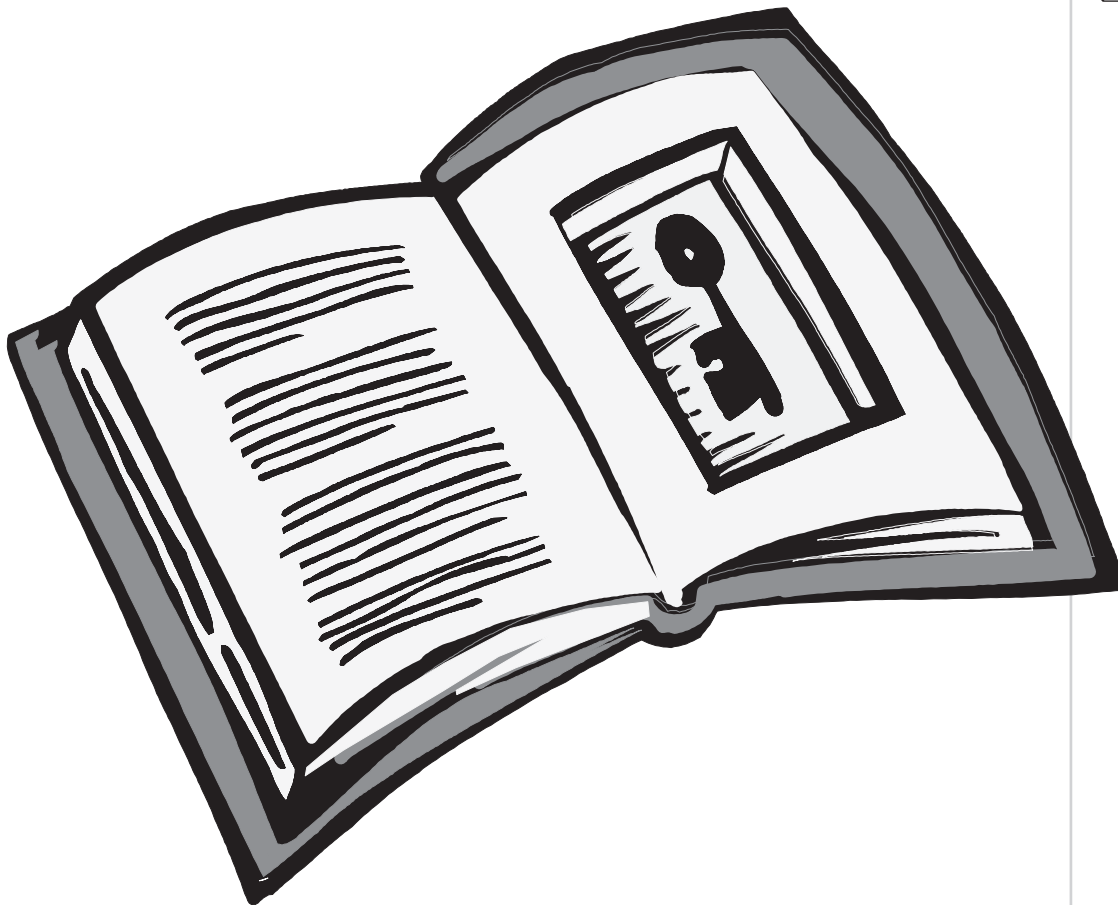
← GRADES 2-3

3-5

2-4

**Teaching tip**

If providing copies of the reading list to students, cover the grade levels in the margins before copying. Consider making a master reading list to post in your classroom instead of making multiple copies.



EXPLORERS • Mystery

- GRADES 4–6** → ***The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*** retold from the Sir Arthur Conan Doyle original by Chris Sasaki. Sterling Publishing Co., 2005. ISBN 1-40271-217-0. Seven stories about the most famous sleuth of them all are presented here. Effectively edited, they are shorter than the originals without losing the action or the puzzle-solving process. Holmes' cool logic shines through the tales told in the voice of his devoted sidekick, Dr. Watson.
- 4–5** ***Casebook of a Private (Cat's) Eye*** by Mary Stolz. Cricket Books, 1999. ISBN 0-81262-650-8. This quirky little book has it all! It's an animal fantasy mystery full of historical detail. Eileen O'Kelly is the only female feline detective, well, anywhere! Follow her around 1912 Boston as she searches out a murderer, a lucky baseball, a straying husband, a missing teen and the best oyster dish on the east coast! You'll enjoy her spunk, her clients and her surprise romance. Great fun.
- 3–5** ***The Case of the Goblin Pearls*** by Laurence Yep. HarperCollins, 1998. ISBN 0-06440-552-4. Set in San Francisco's Chinatown, this mystery pits young Lily and her colorful actress-detective-aunt against a street gang and a pair of high-society thieves. The hilarity of Aunt Tiger Lil's schemes and the chaos of the Chinese New Year contrast with the dismal picture of ill-treated laborers and terrible poverty.
- 4–6** ***The Case of the Missing Cutthroats: An Eco Mystery*** by Jean Craighead George. HarperCollins, 1999. ISBN 0-06440-647-4. Spinner loves city life and dance classes, but her father is determined to make a fisherman of her. When she lands a spectacular and rare cutthroat trout in a place where it shouldn't be at all, she sets off on a quest to discover its origins. If you enjoy fishing and wildlife, this title in George's Eco Mysteries series is for you!
- 3–6** ***The Chameleon Wore Chartreuse: A Chet Gecko Mystery*** by Bruce Hale. Harcourt, 2001. ISBN 0-15202-485-9. Wisecracking, hardboiled Chet Gecko, master sleuth of the fourth grade, and his clever mockingbird sidekick, Natalie Attired, are on the case! Classmate Shirley Chameleon offers Chet her famous stinkbug pie to find her missing brother. Chet uncovers a dastardly plot by Herman Gila Monster to get revenge on the school football team. These over-the-top mysteries are hilarious from cover to cover.
- 4–6** ***Chasing Vermeer*** by Blue Balliett. Scholastic, 2004. ISBN 0-43937-294-1. When a priceless Vermeer painting is stolen, Calder and Petra are drawn together by a series of coincidences. Can these unusual sixth graders solve a crime that has stumped even the FBI? Join them as they work through a complex maze of frogs, blue M&Ms, the meaning of art and life's unanswered questions. Multiple award winner.
- 4–6** ***The Doll in the Garden: A Ghost Story*** by Mary Downing Hahn. Houghton Mifflin, 2000. ISBN 0-89919-848-1. Why does the cat in the garden by Ashley's new apartment not cast a shadow? Who is the child she hears crying at night? And most puzzling of all, what does the doll she finds buried in the garden have to do with her grumpy old landlady? Ashley finds herself drawn back in time into a ghostly mystery. While resolving the mystery, she also finds help in dealing with grief in her own life. A dramatic, touching story.

Five-Minute Mini-Mysteries by Stan Smith. Sterling Publishing Co., 2003. ISBN 1-40270-685-5. Smith presents 25 logic mysteries, set in England and involving a group of friends with a common interest in amateur logic and criminal investigation. Each short scenario invites you to use your own powers of observation and logic to solve the puzzle. Answers appear at the end of the book.

← GRADES 5-7

From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler by E. L. Konigsburg. Simon & Schuster, 2002. ISBN 0-68985-354-8. Claudia and James decide to run away. They want to find adventure and protest against what they see as unfairness at home. They hide out in the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art, where they are caught up in a mystery. Newbery Award winner.

4-6

Ghost Light on Graveyard Shoal by Elizabeth McDavid Jones. Pleasant Company Publications, 2003. ISBN 1-58485-762-5. It's 1895. Rhoda's father's crew at the lifesaving station are kept busy by stormy seas and a dangerous stretch of coastline. When Rhoda sees strange lights off the shoal she wonders if old tales of the Ghost of the Mangled Mariner could be true. Or could it be worse? Could someone from the island be a wrecker, deliberately luring ships toward the Graveyard Shoals in order to steal their cargo? Find out in this American Girl History Mysteries series title.

4-6

The Mysterious Matter of I. M. Fine by Diane Stanley. HarperCollins, 2002. ISBN 0-38073-327-7. Readers of R. L. Stine's Goosebumps series will appreciate this obvious spoof. When kids all over the country start to do strange and dangerous things in response to books in Fine's Chiller series, Franny and Beamer set out to find the elusive author and save the world. Stanley manages to deliver both great parody and real suspense.

4-6

Sammy Keyes and the Sisters of Mercy by Wendelin Van Draanen. Random House, 1999. ISBN 0-37580-183-9. Smart-mouthed, mischievous Sammy is serving junior high detention time by helping at St. Mary's Church. When valuables begin to disappear Sammy first becomes a suspect and then a self-appointed sleuth intent on solving the mystery. Lively characters and lots of action weave together plots involving the church robberies, a homeless girl, a traveling group of singing nuns and lots of softball action.

4-6

The Serial Sneak Thief by E. W. Hildick. Marshall Cavendish, 1997. ISBN 0-76145-011-4. Felicity Snell, librarian extraordinaire, is at it again! A mystery contest designed to involve children in the library takes on a new level of excitement when a real mystery involving a rare book thief develops. Will the kids on the "Watchdog Squad" save the day?

4-5

Tails of the Bronx by Jill Pinkwater. Simon & Schuster, 1993. ISBN 0-68971-671-0. The kids of Burnridge Avenue have a mystery to solve. Neighborhood cats are disappearing and the prime suspect is the local witch! In the end, the kids more than solve the mystery. They and their families work together to make life safer and better for everyone. A story full of "tough kid" dialogue, interesting characters, humor and heart.

4-5

The Westing Game by Ellen Raskin. Penguin Putnam, 2004. ISBN 0-14240-120-X. In this classic puzzle-style novel, you'll work with the characters to find a murderer and a rightful heir. A select group of reluctant sleuths are named in Westing's will; the successful one will inherit \$200 million! The catch—one of them may be the murderer! A masterpiece of plot, characterization and style, full of surprises. Newbery Award winner.

4-7

ADVENTURERS • Mystery

- GRADES 5+** → ***The Cat Who Robbed a Bank*** by Lilian Jackson Braun. Jove Books, 2001. ISBN 0-51512-994-1. In this 22nd title in Braun's fanciful Cat Who... series, wealthy writer Jim Qwilleran and his two crime-solving cats must unravel the mystery of the death of an important visitor to Qwill's hometown of Pickax. Clever dialogue, interesting bits about Scottish heritage, super-feline antics and insights into Qwill's background make this a fun, involving read.
- 6+** ***Edgar Allan Poe's Tales of Mystery and Madness*** by Edgar Allan Poe. Simon & Schuster, 2004. ISBN 0-68984-837-4. If you have a weak stomach, a faint heart or a small vocabulary, this book is not for you! But the rewards are great for those who dare... Four of Poe's brilliantly gruesome stories are carefully edited and illustrated with grim humor for first-time readers. While more classic horror tales than formula riddle stories, each has clues to follow and mysteries to ponder.
- 6-8** ***The Ghost in the Tokaido Inn*** by Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler. Penguin Putnam, 2001. ISBN 0-69811-879-0. Seikei is the son of a Japanese merchant, but dreams of being a samurai. When he is the only witness to a robbery, Judge Ooka enlists his help in solving the crime. Will Seikei prove his worth? This is an exciting mystery that explores many aspects of 18th century Japanese history and culture.
- 6-9** ***How to Disappear Completely and Never Be Found*** by Sara Nickerson. HarperCollins, 2002. ISBN 0-06029-772-7. There's a mystery surrounding the death of Margaret's father four years ago, and Margaret's depressed mother won't talk about it. What does it all have to do with a spooky old mansion they've suddenly inherited, a young neighbor and a comic book about an unlikely superhero (or villain?) named Ratt? Lots of suspense and interesting characters.
- 6-9** ***The Last Treasure*** by Janet S. Anderson. Penguin Putnam, 2003. ISBN 0-52546-919-2. Eccentric John Matthew Smith went to extraordinary lengths to provide for his descendants and keep his family together. He built a family compound and hid valuable treasures in its houses. But, more than 150 years later, the family is torn by old conflicts and secrets. Can Ellsworth and Jess succeed in binding the wounds and finding the treasure that will save them all? A rich, rewarding mystery.
- 6+** ***The Master Puppeteer*** by Katherine Paterson. HarperCollins, 1989. ISBN 0-06440-281-9. Jiro, the dutiful son of a puppet maker in 18th century Japan, apprentices himself to the puppet master to help his starving family. As famine deepens, the mysterious Saburo, a Japanese "Robin Hood," becomes the people's hero. But who is Saburo, and what does he have to do with the puppet master? Jiro must act with care on his suspicions or risk his own life and the lives of those he loves.
- 5+** ***Nightmare*** by Joan Lowery Nixon. Bantam Doubleday Dell, 2003. ISBN 0-38573-026-8. When Emily is sent to a summer camp for underachievers, her recurring nightmare turns into a waking plot on her life. Who is after her and why? Will her new friends be able to help her escape? A genuine, edge-of-your-chair, bite-your-nails thriller.
- 6+** ***Troubling a Star*** by Madeleine L'Engle. Random House, 1995. ISBN 0-44021-950-7. Vicky Austin is delighted when her aunt gives her a trip to Antarctica as a gift. She will have an adventure and see her friend Adam. But her trip aboard The Argosy provides more adventure than she counted on. Vicky finds herself caught up in a web of secrets involving international espionage, drug smuggling, nuclear waste disposal, fragile Antarctic ecosystems and grave personal danger.

Mystery Vocabulary List

Choose 8 to 12 vocabulary words. You may use any of the following words or work with your Travel Agent to come up with your own words.

Alibi	Homicidal
Allegedly	Hunch
Amateur	Hypothesis
Arson	Impostor
Autopsy	Investigate
Blackmailed	Larceny
Breakthrough	Motive
Bribe	Mysteriously
Circumstantial	Oath
Clueless	Observant
Confess	Parole
Con man	Perpetrator
Counterfeit	Purloin
Deceased	Ransom
Decode	Red herring
Deductively	Scenario
Detective	Sequence
Espionage	Sinister
Evidence	Sleuth
Extortion	Suspect
Forensic	Suspensefully
Forgery	Swindle
Gruesome	Victim
Gumshoe	Whodunit
Heir	
Hoax	

Teaching tip



These informal dictionary-style definitions have been provided to save you time when correcting student work. The word breakdowns provided show syllabic division as indicated in *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh Edition. We have not altered the spelling of the words to show pronunciation or phonetic spelling. For activities that ask students to provide "breakdown by syllable," you may choose to add or substitute a requirement for phonetic spelling and/or end-of-line division (hyphenation).

Mystery Vocabulary List Dictionary Definitions

Alibi

Noun. 3 syllables: a*li*bi.
The explanation given by a person who is being accused of a crime to tell where he or she was or what he or she was doing when the crime was committed. An attempt to prove how an accused person could not have committed the crime.

Allegedly

Adverb. 4 syllables: a*lle*ged*ly.
When it has been suggested that someone did something, but it has not yet been proven or accepted as fact.

Amateur

Noun. 3 syllables: a*ma*teur.
A person who does something as a hobby or for fun, or a person who does something or performs actions without having a lot of experience in what he or she is doing.

Arson

Noun. 2 syllables: ar*son. A type of crime in which a person sets fires to buildings or things on purpose.

Autopsy

Noun. 3 syllables: au*top*sy.
A medical procedure in which a specialized doctor examines a person's body after he or she has died to try and figure out the cause of death.

Blackmailed

Verb. 2 syllables: black*mailed.
When a person threatens to tell another person's secret or expose the truth about something unless that person pays money or offers some other type of reward to keep the secret.

Breakthrough

Noun. 2 syllables: break*through.
A sudden discovery or achievement, or the point at which a person understands something that he or she didn't understand before.

Bribe

Noun. 1 syllable: bribe. Money or gifts that are promised to a person (often a person who is trusted by others or has some authority) to make him or her do something dishonest.

Circumstantial

Adjective. 4 syllables: cir*cum*stan*tial. When evidence or facts could change depending on the circumstances surrounding them, or when evidence is believed to be true rather than proven to be true.

Clueless

Adjective. 2 syllables: clue*less.
When a person has no idea what is going on or is otherwise completely foolish, or when police or other detectives can't find any clues that might help them solve a crime.

Confess

Verb. 2 syllables: con*fess. To tell someone when you did something illegal or wrong, or to tell someone something that you had been keeping secret.

Con man

Noun. 2 syllables: con man. A person who tricks or swindles other people into giving him or her money for some reason; short for "confidence man."

Counterfeit

Adjective. 3 syllables: coun*ter*feit.
When something is made to look like something else, or is an imitation of something else, such as counterfeit money, usually in order to trick somebody into thinking it's real.

Deceased

Noun. 2 syllables: de*ceased.
Somebody who has died.

Decode

Verb. 2 syllables: de*code. To figure out a message or other piece of writing that was written in code so it can be understood by anyone.

Deductively

Adverb. 4 syllables: de*duc*tive*ly.
When something is figured out by looking at general facts or ideas and using them to try to explain more specific facts or events.

Detective

Noun. 3 syllables: de*tec*tive.
A person, such as a police officer or private investigator, who investigates crimes and tries to figure out how they happened, as well as tries to catch the criminals who committed the crimes.

Espionage

Noun. 4 syllables: es*pi*o*nage.
The act of spying on people or organizations, particularly on other governments and countries, to find out secret information.

Evidence

Noun. 3 syllables: e*vi*dence.
The physical items or trail that a criminal leaves behind when he or she commits a crime, or the facts or proof that detectives or investigators offer to prove that a certain person is guilty of a particular crime.

Extortion

Noun. 3 syllables: ex*tor*tion.
The act of taking or unfairly getting something, such as money or information, from another person, usually by threatening that person in some way.

Forensic

Adjective. 3 syllables: fo*ren*sic.
The way in which evidence from a crime scene or other clues left behind by criminals are studied scientifically and with the purpose of catching the criminal or proving a criminal's guilt during a trial.

Forgery

Noun. 3 syllables: for*ge*ry.
The crime or act of making a false copy or imitation of something (such as a painting or a document) that is real and usually valuable, for the purpose of selling it or illegally making money from it in some way.

Gruesome

Adjective. 2 syllables: grue*some.
When something is very frightening, shocking or extremely gross or scary-looking.

Gumshoe

Noun. 2 syllables: gum*shoe.
A detective or other person who studies or investigates crimes or tries to catch criminals.

Heir

Noun. 1 syllable: heir. The person who receives all the money and property from another person when he or she dies.

Hoax

Noun. 1 syllable: hoax. A trick or action that is meant to fool someone else or make someone believe something that isn't true.

Homicidal

Adjective. 4 syllables: ho*mi*ci*dal. Having the ability or tendency to be able to kill someone else, or being capable of really hurting another person.

Hunch

Noun. 1 syllable: hunch. A strong idea, belief, or feeling about something that you feel without really knowing why; a "gut feeling."

Hypothesis

Noun. 4 syllables: hy*po*the*sis. A theory or an idea that a person tries to prove by finding facts or observing evidence or experiments.

Impostor

Noun. 3 syllables: im*pos*tor. A person who dresses up or tries to look like someone else in order to fool or trick people, or who calls him or herself by a false or different name.

Investigate

Verb. 4 syllables: in*ves*ti*gate. To study or look into the details of a crime or event by studying evidence, finding clues and asking questions, or to observe something closely and systematically.

Larceny

Noun. 3 syllables: lar*ce*ny. A type of crime that involves taking something that belongs to someone else; a very serious type of theft.

Motive

Noun. 2 syllables: mo*tive. Somebody's reason for doing something, particularly his or her reason for committing a crime.

Mysteriously

Adverb. 5 syllables: mys*ter*i*ous*ly. To do something in a way that is hard for others to understand, or to do something for a reason that is unknown to others.

Oath

Noun. 1 syllable: oath. A person's promise to tell the truth, usually made in addition to a very serious promise to God or other authority that he or she really is telling the truth.

Observant

Adjective. 3 syllables: ob*ser*vant. When a person notices lots of things, sees everything that goes on around or pays close attention to details.

Parole

Noun. 2 syllables: pa*role. An early release of a prisoner from prison, which usually includes the prisoner having to check in with an authority after he or she is released.

Perpetrator

Noun. 4 syllables: per*pe*tra*tor. The person who commits or carries out a crime.

Purloin

Verb. 2 syllables: pur*loin. To illegally obtain or take something, often from a person who trusts you.

Ransom

Noun. 2 syllables: ran*som.
An amount of money kidnappers or thieves ask for in exchange for their releasing a person they have kidnapped or an object they have stolen.

Red herring

Noun. 3 syllables: red herr*ing.
A clue or event that takes attention away from something that is really true or important; a diversion.

Scenario

Noun. 4 syllables: sce*nar*i*o.
A theory about how events could have happened or a possible or factual sequence of events.

Sequence

Noun. 2 syllables: se*quence.
The order in which things or events happen, or when one thing happens after another.

Sinister

Adjective. 3 syllables: si*nis*ter.
When someone or something is very creepy or threatens to do another person or thing harm or damage.

Sleuth

Noun. 1 syllable: sleuth. A detective or other person who investigates a crime or tries to catch a criminal.

Suspect

Noun. 2 syllables: sus*pect. A person who is considered by the police or other investigators to possibly have committed a crime.

Suspensefully

Adverb. 4 syllables: sus*pense*fu*ly.
To do something in a mysterious way or in such a way that the outcome will be uncertain or surprising.

Swindle

Verb. 2 syllables: swin*dle. To cheat, or to fool someone into giving you money or other property in a tricky or illegal way.

Victim

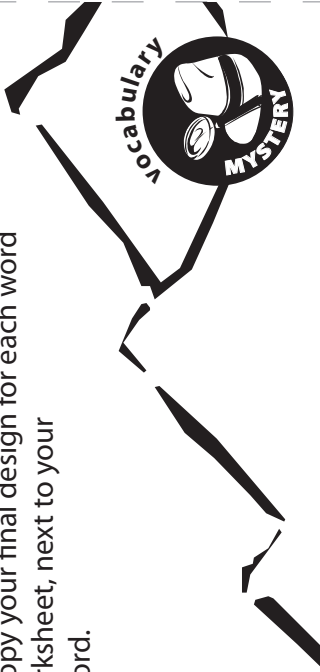
Noun. 2 syllables: vic*tim.
A person who is killed, hurt, cheated or otherwise treated badly by another person, usually as a result of a crime or a disaster.

Whodunit

Noun. 3 syllables: who*du*nit.
A story about a crime or a detective story, in which the reader or listener tries to figure out who did what.

Picture Words

5 Write each of your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words on the **Picture Words** worksheet. Create a picture word for each of your selected vocabulary words on a separate piece of paper. For example, the letters in the word "scary" could be drawn with wavy lines and the word "circle" could be curved around into the shape of a circle. Then neatly copy your final design for each word onto your worksheet, next to your vocabulary word.



Vocabulary #1

What Does It Mean?

5 List your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words on a piece of paper, leaving several lines between them. Look up each word in a dictionary. Write down the part of speech, breakdown by syllable (where you pause when saying the word) and the definition. Do not use any form of the word in your definition. Some words have more than one meaning. Choose the definitions that relate to mystery or your book.

HINT: Dictionaries break down words in two ways—by hyphenation and by syllable.

EXAMPLE: **Suspicious** Adjective.
3 syllables: su*spi*cious. Causing you to question the truth or rightness of something.

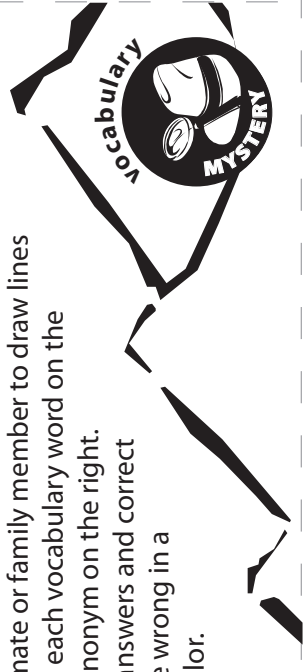


Vocabulary #2

Synonyms Match Game

5 Create a synonyms match game as follows:

- Find a synonym or near synonym for at least five words from the mystery Vocabulary List.
- Write the vocabulary words, one per line, down the left side of a piece of paper.
- Write your synonyms, in scrambled order, down the right side of the paper.
- Ask a classmate or family member to draw lines connecting each vocabulary word on the left to its synonym on the right.
- Check the answers and correct any that are wrong in a different color.

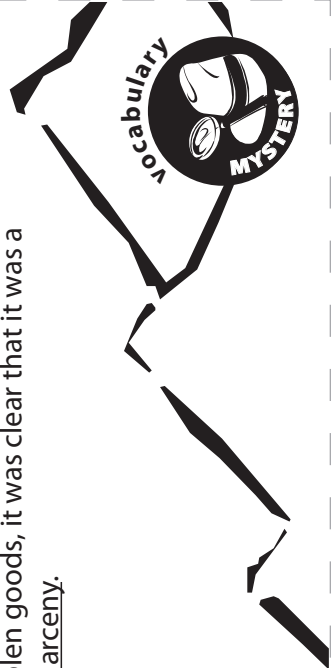


Vocabulary #3

Context Cues

10 Use each of your 8 to 12 vocabulary words in a sentence. Place other words or phrases around the vocabulary word that suggest its meaning. Underline the vocabulary word in each sentence.

EXAMPLE: When he was caught surrounded by mounds of stolen goods, it was clear that it was a case of grand larceny.



Vocabulary #4

Letter Ladder

Use the **Letter Ladder** worksheet and the Mystery Vocabulary List to create a Letter Ladder of words relating to mysteries.

10

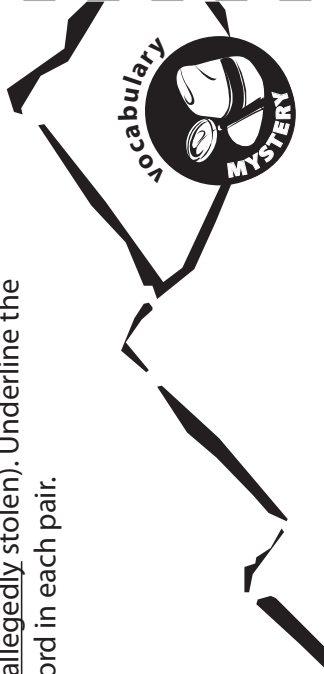


Vocabulary #5

Word Partners

Review the part of speech of each of your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words. Then list each with an appropriate word partner before or after it as follows: An adjective before each noun (obvious motive), a noun after each adjective (counterfeit coins), an adverb next to each verb (cleverly decode), a verb next to each adverb (allegedly stolen). Underline the vocabulary word in each pair.

10



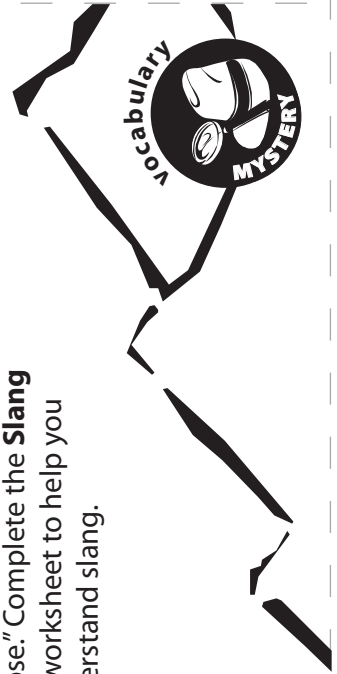
Vocabulary #6

Slang Expressions

Mystery books often contain **slang** (*lively, interesting language that you might use in conversation but not in formal speech or writing*) words or expressions.

Slang expressions often shorten or combine words, as in "perp" for "perpetrator" or "gumshoe" for detective. Sometimes slang assigns new meanings to old words, as in "stiff" for "corpse." Complete the **Slang Expressions** worksheet to help you spot and understand slang.

15

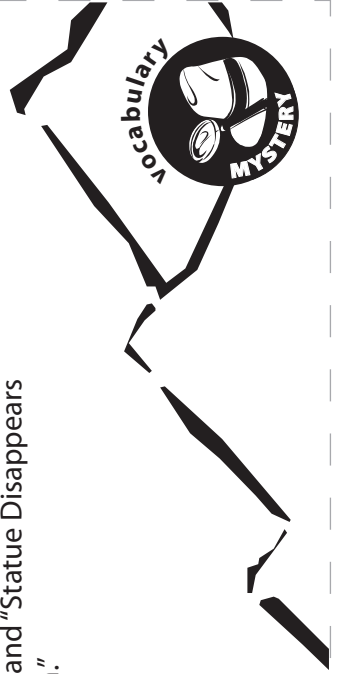


Vocabulary #7

Subject Circles

Some words seem to go together to suggest a subject. For example, if you were reading about a school, you'd expect to see words like "attendance," "recess," "tests" and "classes." Use the **Subject Circles** worksheet to assign at least 15 vocabulary words from the mystery Vocabulary List to the subject headings "Homicide on the East Side" and "Statue Disappears from Museum."

15



Vocabulary #8

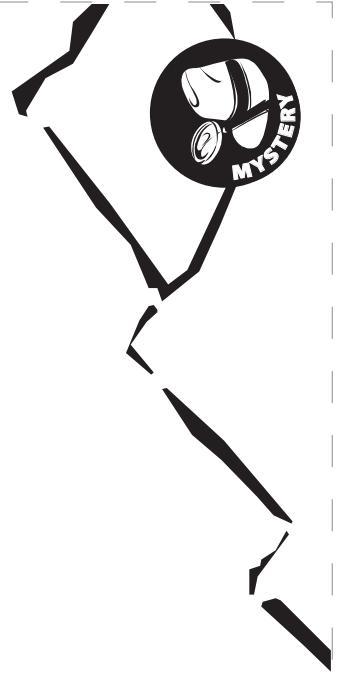
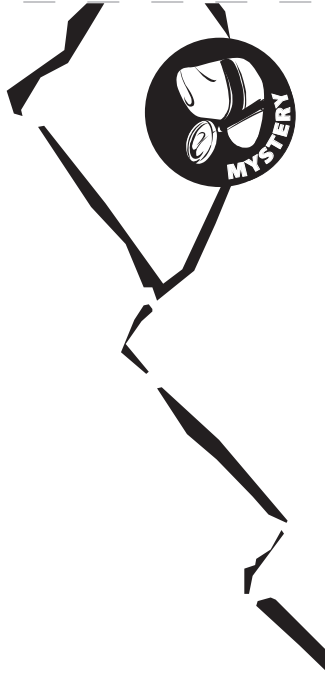
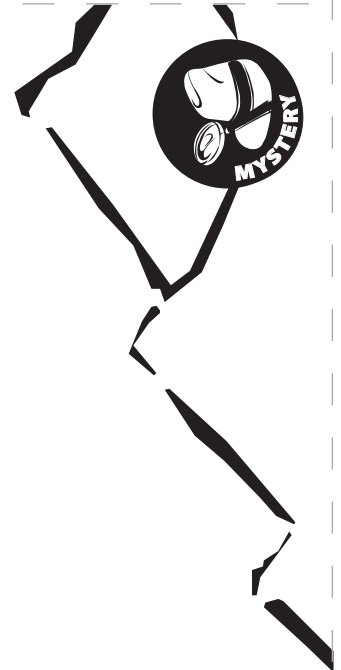
Suffixes

15

Suffixes are word endings added to **root words** (words that stand alone without added beginnings or endings). Suffixes change the meaning of a word or change how it is used. For example, adding "ual" to "fact" changes it from a noun to an adjective. Adding "s" after "disaster" makes it plural. Adding "d" after "generalize" makes it past tense. "Less" tacked onto "hope" makes it mean the opposite, or without hope. Use your selected vocabulary to complete the **Suffixes** chart.

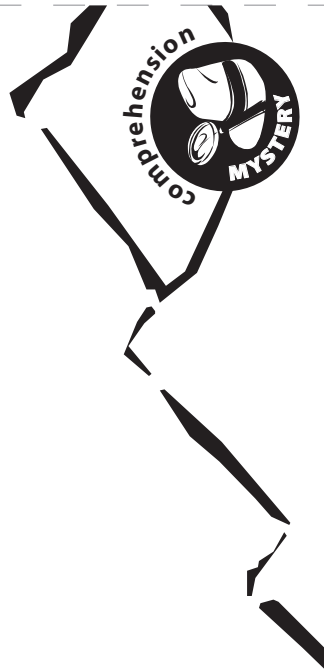


Vocabulary #9



Cheers and Jeers

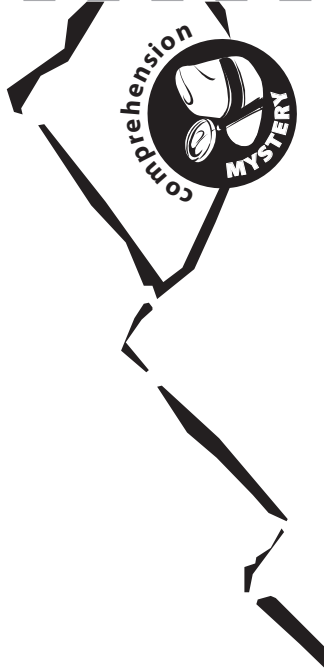
5 Who is your favorite character in your book? Write two or three paragraphs to describe him or her, identifying specific personality traits and explaining why you chose this character. Who is your least favorite character? Write two or three paragraphs to describe him or her the same way.



Comprehension #1

Suspenseful Moments

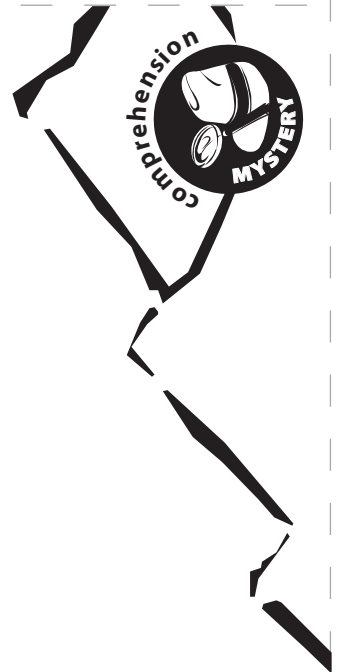
5 What was the scariest or most suspenseful part of your book? Find a short passage from that part of the book. Read it to your teacher and explain why you chose it and how you feel as you read it. Earn five extra points by arranging to read and explain your selection to the class.



Comprehension #2

Basic Story Elements

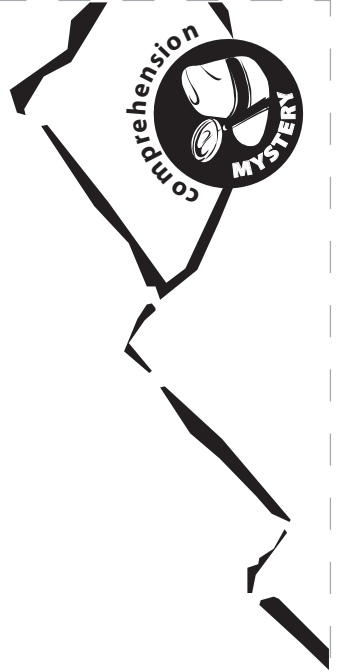
5 Identify the basic story elements of your book and complete the **Basic Story Elements** worksheet.



Comprehension #3

Physical Description

5 Mystery writers often describe settings or scenes in great detail. Look for examples of physical description in your book. Choose a short passage that describes a scene or setting in detail. Write it on a piece of paper. Circle the words and phrases that help you "see" (or feel or hear or smell ...) it clearly.



Comprehension #4

Favorite Quotation

5 Characters in mysteries often say clever, puzzling or funny things. Look through the **dialogue** (*exact words spoken by characters in the story, usually enclosed in quotation marks*). Choose a phrase or comment that you like from one of the characters. Write it down. Then rewrite it in your own words, showing the meaning as you understand it.



Comprehension #5



What's in a Name?

10 Write three to five paragraphs explaining what the title of your book has to do with the story and why you think the author chose it. Then suggest an alternate title that also relates to the story and encourages readers to choose it. Write one or two paragraphs to explain why your title is appropriate for the book.

Comprehension #6



What's the Mystery?

10 The most basic part of a mystery is the problem or riddle to be solved. When you're finished reading your book, write a one-page essay that clearly states the mystery or riddle to be solved and the answer or solution to the mystery.

Comprehension #7



Plot Sequencing

10 As mystery plots unfold, the order in which things happen can be very important. For example, a suspect may have visited the scene of the crime, but if he or she didn't visit it at the right time your case could fall apart. After reading your book, create a time line of the story that shows 10 to 15 important plot developments in the order they occurred.

Comprehension #8



Comprehending Characters

10

Many mysteries include characters that play the roles of “detective,” “victim” and “villain.” The detective is often the main character and his or her appearance, personality and traits are usually very well defined. The victim and villain are often written to advance the plot and are not well-rounded characters. They are important to telling the story, but may not be important as individuals. If you can identify a detective, victim and villain in your book, complete the

Comprehending Characters worksheet to describe the characters and show which characters fit which roles.

Comprehension #9



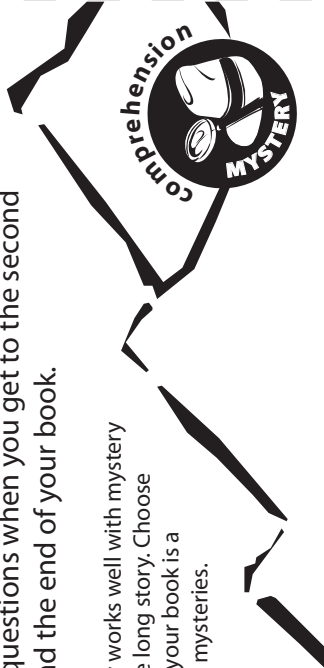
Predicting the Outcome

15

Before you read your book, divide it into parts as follows: Place a Post-it® note on the page that is halfway through the story, and another on the page that is three-quarters of the way through. When you get to the first Post-it note, stop reading and answer the questions on the **Predicting the Outcome** worksheet. You will answer more questions when you get to the second Post-it note and the end of your book.

NOTE: This activity works well with mystery books that are one long story. Choose another activity if your book is a collection of short mysteries.

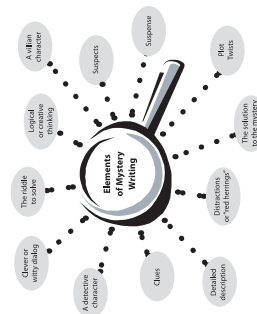
Comprehension #10



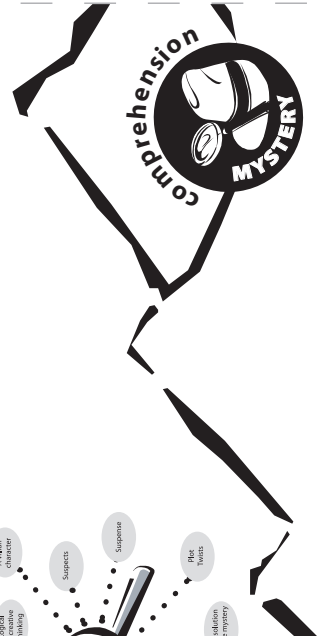
Mystery Elements Scavenger Hunt

15

Use the **Mystery Elements Scavenger Hunt** instruction sheet to complete a search for elements of mysteries in your book.



Comprehension #11

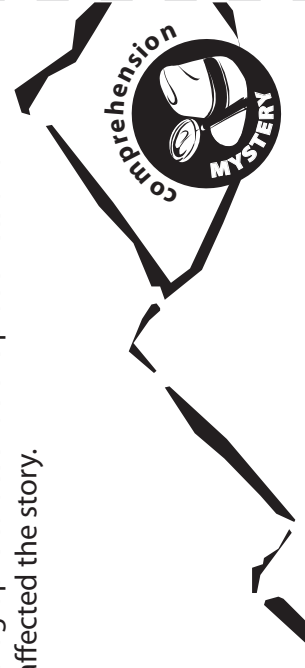


Plot Twists

15

Mystery writers sometimes use **plot twists** to complicate their stories and make it harder to solve the riddle. Plot twists are designed to *mislead without actually lying about the facts*. Common plot twists include cases of mistaken identity, confusing time sequences and false assumptions. Did your book include plot twists? If so, write three to five paragraphs to describe the plot twists and tell how they affected the story.

Comprehension #12



Clues and Distractions

15

Solving a mystery, in real life or fiction, involves sifting through lots of details to put together the important clues and throw away useless information. So part of the fun of a mystery book is going back, after all is revealed, to see how the author “set you up” to be surprised. After you’ve read your book and know the solution, go back through it to find the details the author gave you along the way that led you toward—or distracted you from—the answer. On a sheet of paper, write down important “Clues” in one column and “Distractions” in the other.

Comprehension #13



Literary Devices

15

Choose one of the following **literary devices** (tools or techniques authors use to make their writing effective) and write three to five paragraphs to explain how the author does or does not use it well to set up the mystery, make you want to figure it out and keep the story challenging and interesting:

- **Physical Description** of settings or scenes
- **Dialogue** between characters
- **Clues and distractions**
- **Plot twists**
- Language that creates **suspense**

Comprehension #14



Compare and Contrast

20

Compare and contrast your selected book with another mystery book you’ve read. Choose one or two story elements (setting, plot, characters, tone or theme) and write two to four paragraphs describing how the books are alike and different. Conclude with a paragraph describing which book you like best and why.

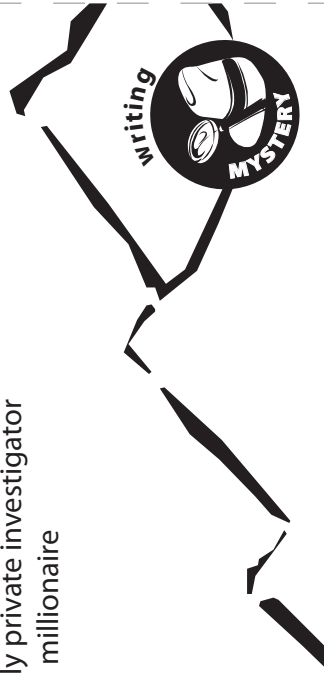
Comprehension #15



One-Person Brainstorming

5 You're looking for ideas for a mystery! Choose one of the prompts below and write it on a piece of paper. Then make a list of at least 10 words, phrases or thoughts that come to mind when you think about that prompt. Use your imagination!

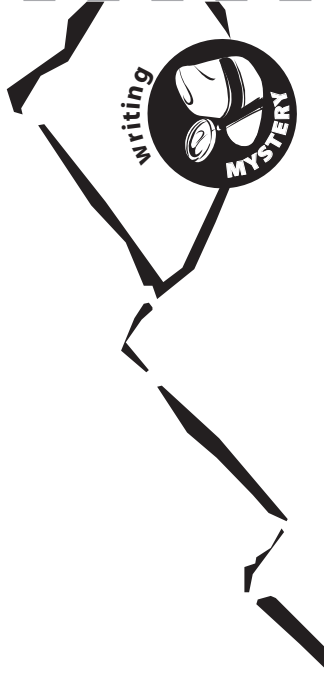
- A graveyard at night
- An unlikely private investigator
- A missing millionaire



Writing #1

Outlining the Action

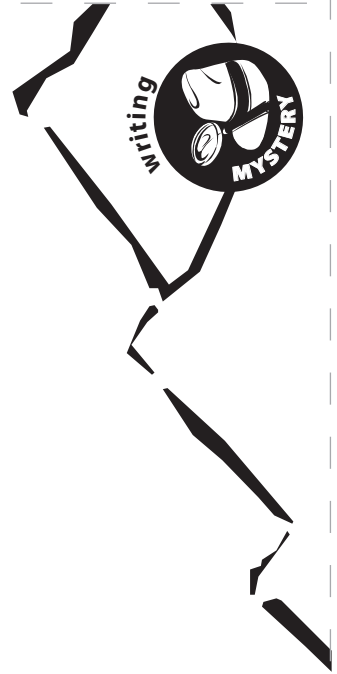
5 Make a general outline of the plot of the mystery book you read. If your book is a collection of mysteries, choose one story. Show the main events that set up the riddle, follow the clues, create suspense and lead to a solution.



Writing #2

Personal Suspense

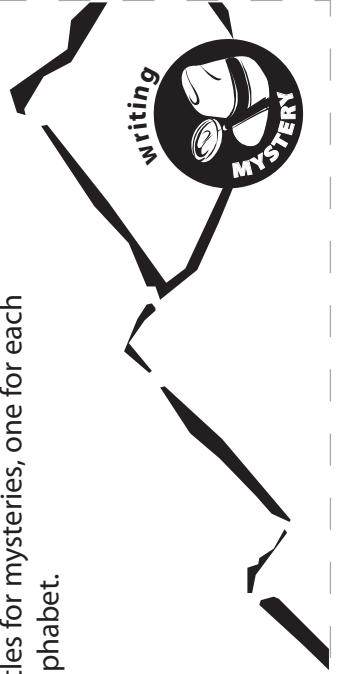
5 Think of a time when you felt frightened or suspicious of someone or something. Write a three- to five-paragraph letter to a friend describing both the situation and your emotions at the time. Try to describe your feelings so well that the reader will feel with you.



Writing #3

Mystery Titles A-Z

10 Ron Roy, in his A to Z Mysteries series, created a children's mystery story for each letter of the alphabet. *The Talking T-Rex* and *The Quicksand Question* are examples of these stories. Sue Grafton has done the same thing for adults—*A is for Alibi*, *B is for Burglar*, etc. Imagine you are a writer of mysteries and create your own catchy titles for mysteries, one for each letter of the alphabet.



Writing #4

The Powers of

10 Observation Part I

Part of being a good detective is noticing little things that most people miss. Try this exercise to develop your powers of observation.

1. Take a notebook with you to recess or lunch.
2. While your classmates are playing or eating, choose a small group and watch the action carefully for five minutes.
3. Write notes about everything you see and everything that happens. Include small details! If you were solving a mystery, even the tiniest thing could be a clue. Remember to include things you hear and smell as well as things you see.



Writing #5

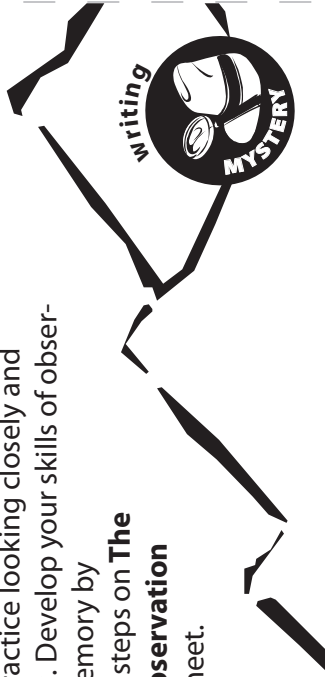
The Powers of

10 Observation Part II

Cam Jansen, girl detective from *Cam Jansen and the Barking Treasure Mystery*, uses her photographic memory to solve mysteries. She simply looks, says "Click!" and captures the scene in detail. But most of us aren't that lucky!

We have to practice looking closely and remembering. Develop your skills of observation and memory by

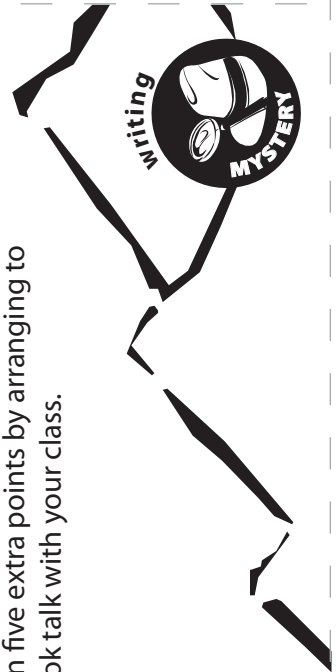
following the steps on **The Powers of Observation Part II** worksheet.



Writing #6

Mystery Book Talks

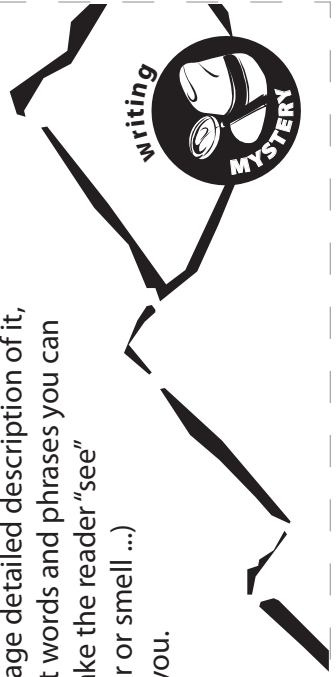
10 Write a one- to two-minute talk about your book or another mystery book, designed to make your classmates want to read it. Book talks are like oral book reports, but less detailed, less critical and more entertaining. They often end with a cliff-hanger. Be sure to grab your audience's attention without giving away too much! Earn five extra points by arranging to share your book talk with your class.



Writing #7

Physical Description

10 Mystery writers often describe settings or scenes in great detail. Look for examples of physical description in your book. Notice how the author uses words and phrases to make pictures in your mind. Now think of a place you know well. It might be your room at home, your classroom or a favorite spot outside. Write a one-page detailed description of it, using the best words and phrases you can think of to make the reader "see" (or feel or hear or smell ...) it along with you.



Writing #8

Good Directions

10

Does your mystery story involve finding someone or something that's hidden? Practice giving good written directions to find a hidden object. Get your Travel Agent's permission to hide a small item (e.g., a piece of candy, pen, or note) somewhere in your school building. Write directions from your classroom to the hidden item. Be as clear and specific as you can. Think about how you will express distances, turns, guideposts along the way, etc. Then work with your Travel Agent to give your directions to a classmate and see how long it takes him or her to find the object. Observe the person as he or she tries to find the object. Write down what you observe, making note of what works and what doesn't.

Writing #9

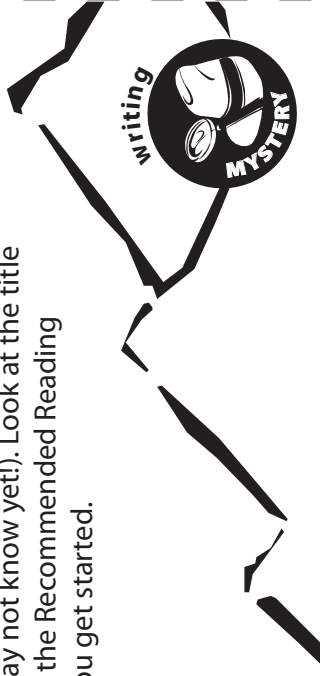


Planning Your Mystery

10

Choose a subgenre of mystery mentioned in the mystery Essay—ecological mystery, murder mystery, Gothic mystery, etc. Write a one- or two-paragraph summary of a story in that subgenre that you'd like to write. Introduce the main characters and suggest a bit of the plot. You don't have to give away the ending (which you may not know yet!). Look at the title summaries in the Recommended Reading List to help you get started.

Writing #10

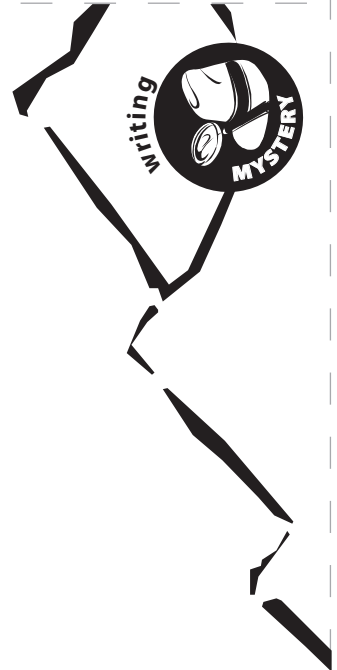


Interrogating a Suspect

10

Write one page of **dialogue** (*exact words spoken by a character*) in which a detective questions a suspect about a crime. If you wish, you can use the detective character from your book and imagine him or her working on "the next case." Try to capture that character's manner of speech.

Writing #11



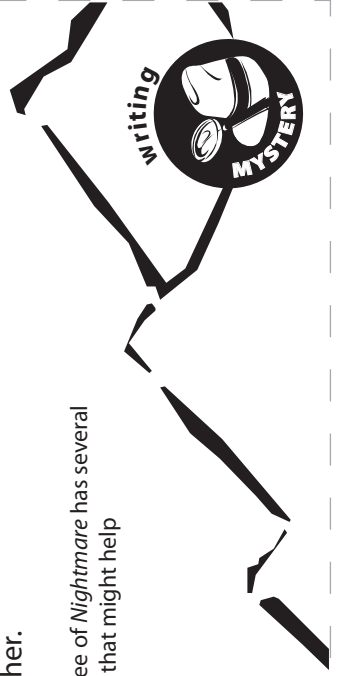
Suspect Sketches

10

Does solving the mystery in your book involve looking at several possible suspects? Title a piece of paper "Suspects." Then write brief descriptions of each suspect in your book, including information about his or her appearance, personality, interests and habits, relationship to the mystery and your feelings about him or her.

HINT: Chapter three of *Nightmare* has several sketches in italics that might help you get started.

Writing #12



Everyone's a Critic

15 Watch a mystery movie or television program. Write a one-page critical review of the mystery, carefully considering the elements of mysteries listed in the mystery Essay. Use examples from the program to explain your comments.

Writing #13



Mystery Theme Song

15 Pretend that a television show is being made based on your book. They've hired you to come up with a theme song for the show! Write new words to a familiar tune. Make sure your lyrics reflect the characters and action in the story. Earn five extra points by arranging to share your theme song with your class.

Writing #14



Riddle Poems

15 Riddle poems are just what you'd expect—*riddles written in poetic form*. The clues make up the poem and the answer is given afterwards. Find a book on riddle poems, such as *When Riddles Come Rumbling: Poems to Ponder* by Rebecca Kai Dotlich (Boyd's Mills Press, 2001) or visit the Interact Web site at www.teachinteract.com for online resources. Study examples. Then write at least three riddle poems of your own. Try them out on your classmates or family members!

Writing #15



Story Starters

15 Choose one of the story starters from the **Story Starters** worksheet. Use it to write a complete two-page mystery story or write a two-page beginning to a longer mystery. Earn five extra points by arranging to share your story with your class.

Writing #16



MysteryNet

Visit MysteryNet Kids Mysteries Web site (kids.mysterynet.com) and complete one of the activities. Print out the activity to keep in your dossier.

5



Challenge #1

Devious Disguises

5 Both suspects and detectives use disguises. How well they fool others depends on how clever their disguises are. Try your hand at creating effective disguises. Cut out five pictures of faces from magazines. Include men, women, teens and children. Look for faces that are at least five or six inches high. Glue each face on a separate piece of paper. Then draw a disguise on each one to protect his or her identity for sleuthing. Be creative!

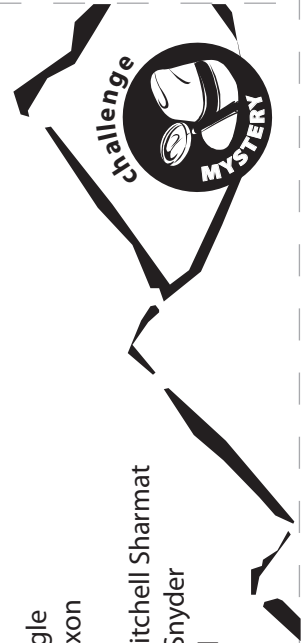


Challenge #2

Who Wrote That?

5 The following people are well-known writers of mystery stories for children. Select one and make a list of at least five of his or her books or stories. Then create a small classroom display celebrating this author and his or her mystery books.

- David A. Adler
- Betsy Byars
- Franklin W. Dixon
- Carolyn Keene
- Madeleine L'Engle
- Joan Lowery Nixon
- Ron Roy
- Marjorie and Mitchell Sharmat
- Zilpha Keatley Snyder
- Donald J. Sobol
- R. L. Stine
- Wendelin Van Draanen
- Gertrude Chandler Warner



Challenge #3

Related Reading

5 Use classroom and library resources to find at least four other mystery books that are like your book in some way. They may be by the same author, feature the same detective character, be of the same subgenre, or have a similar plot, setting or tone and style. Make a list of these books in proper bibliography format, as in the following example:

Hildick, E. W. *The Serial Sneak Thief*. Marshall Cavendish, 1997. ISBN 0761450114.

Under each bibliography entry write one or more sentences describing what makes the book similar to your book.



Challenge #4

Book Jacket Investigation

10

Go to your school or public library. Find several books that have book jackets—the paper covers that fold over the books themselves. Write a list of the features you find on all of the jackets (e.g., book title, author name, plot introduction or summary, illustration). Make a second list of the features you find on at least one but not all of the jackets (e.g., author picture, reviews). Make sure to look at the back cover and inside flaps as well. Then make a jacket for your mystery book. Include all of the features on the first list you created (author, title, summary, illustration...) and at least one or two of the features on your second list. Design the jacket so it will entice others to read the book without giving too much away!

Challenge #5

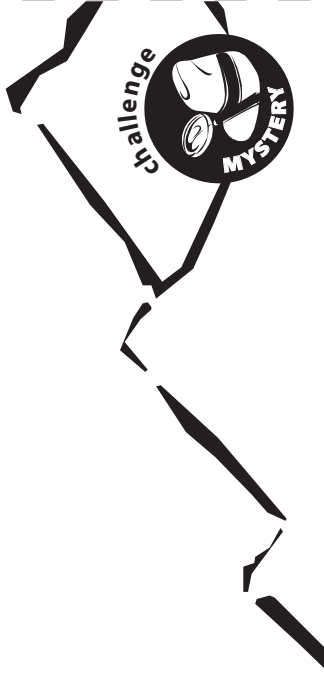


Picture Puzzle Game

10

Create a mystery picture puzzle using the **Picture Puzzle Game** instruction sheet.

Challenge #6



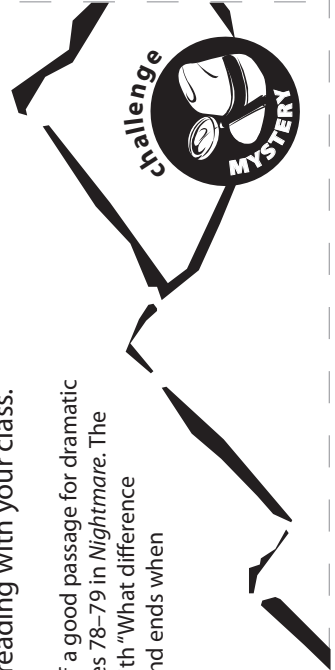
Dramatic Reading

10

One common element of mysteries is suspense. Find an exciting, suspenseful passage from your book or another favorite mystery book that is one or two pages long. Practice reading the passage aloud until you can read it confidently and expressively. Present your dramatic reading to your teacher. Earn five extra points by arranging to share your dramatic reading with your class.

NOTE: A sample of a good passage for dramatic reading is on pages 78–79 in *Nightmare*. The passage begins with “What difference would it make...” and ends when Emily faints.

Challenge #7

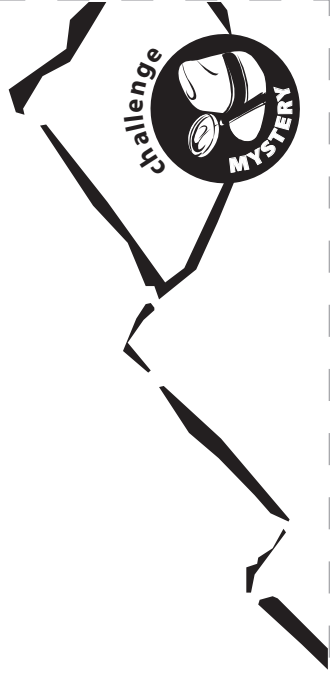


Memory Card Game

10

Careful observation and a good memory are important in solving puzzles. Create and play your own memory card game using the **Memory Card Game** instruction sheet.

Challenge #8

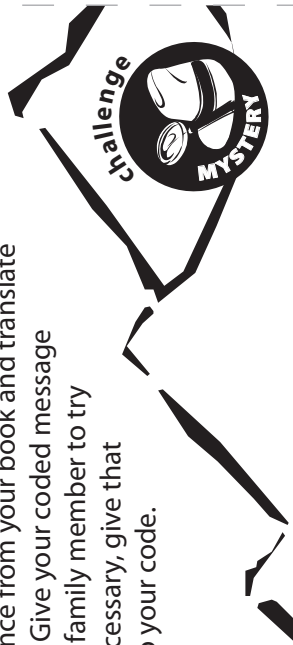


Code Maker

10

Learn about different kinds of codes, like book codes explored in Challenge Activity #10, or simple letter or number codes. You might check out the book *Lu & Clancy's Secret Languages* by Louise Dickson (Kids Can Press, 2001), look for other books on secret codes in your school or public library or search "secret codes" on the Internet. Then create your own secret code. Develop a key to your code. Choose an interesting sentence from your book and translate it into your code. Give your coded message to a classmate or family member to try to decipher. If necessary, give that person the key to your code.

Challenge #9



Book Code Messages

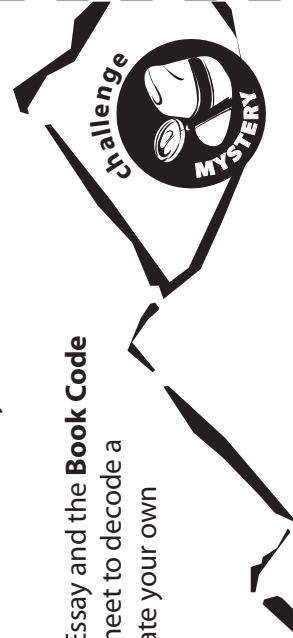
15

Secret codes and secret messages shared between partners in crime or cooperating investigators are a classic element of the mystery tradition. In the book *Chasing Vermeer* Calder and his friend Tommy assign letters to different pentomino configurations to create their code.

Another kind of code is a book code. Book code messages are created by using numbers to identify each letter of the message.

Use the mystery Essay and the **Book Code Messages** worksheet to decode a message and create your own secret message.

Challenge #10



Advertising Flyer

15

Use a single sheet of paper to create an advertising flyer for your own new private investigator business. Give yourself and your business a professional name, think up a slogan and a logo, and convince readers that they should use your services!

Challenge #11

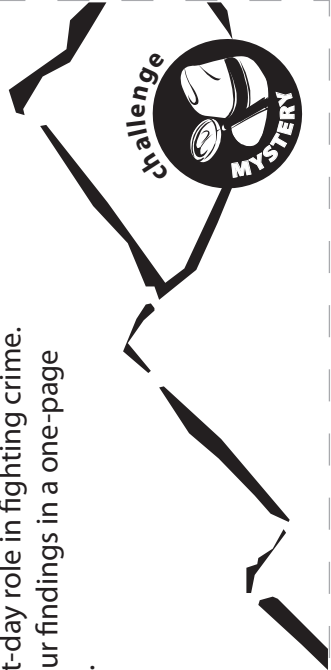


Calling Scotland Yard

15

One of the most famous fictional detectives of all times is Sherlock Holmes, who was often called in to help Scotland Yard solve tricky cases. But what exactly is Scotland Yard? Use school or public library resources to be the detective and learn all you can about Scotland Yard. Find out what it is, where it is, when and how it began and its present-day role in fighting crime. Summarize your findings in a one-page written report.

Challenge #12



Treasure Map

15

In *The Last Treasure*, Ellsworth and Jess follow clues in a painting to find a hidden treasure. Get your Travel Agent's permission to hide a small object (e.g., a candy bar, small toy or colored pencil) somewhere on the grounds of your school. Create a treasure map leading to it. You cannot use words (as in Writing Activity #9), only drawings and visual images to direct a treasure hunter from your classroom to the hidden item. Work with your Travel Agent to give your treasure map to a classmate and see how long it takes him or her to find the object. Observe the person as he or she tries to find the object. Write down what you observe, making note of what works and what doesn't.

Challenge #13

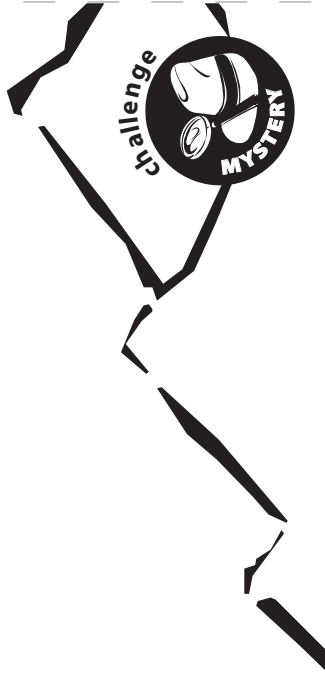


Real-life Crime Fighters

15

Use the **Real-life Crime Fighters** instruction sheet to learn about a recent or present-day crime fighter.

Challenge #14

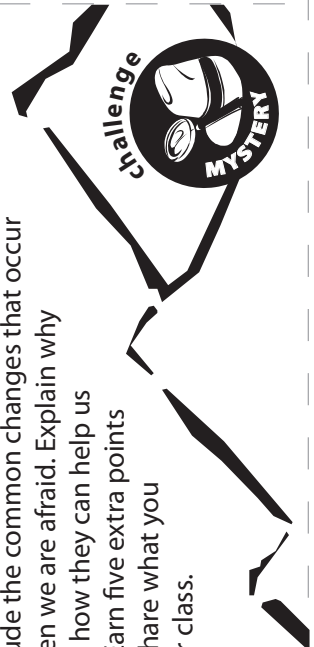


The Physiology of Fear

15

Have you ever been "scared out of your wits?" How did it feel? When we are in frightening or threatening situations, we feel fear not only in our thoughts, but in our bodies. Physical changes occur, preparing us to defend ourselves or run away. Use classroom or school or public library resources to study the physiology of fear. Write a one- to two-page report or create a display that summarizes what you learned. Include the common changes that occur in our bodies when we are afraid. Explain why they happen and how they can help us react to danger. Earn five extra points by arranging to share what you learned with your class.

Challenge #15

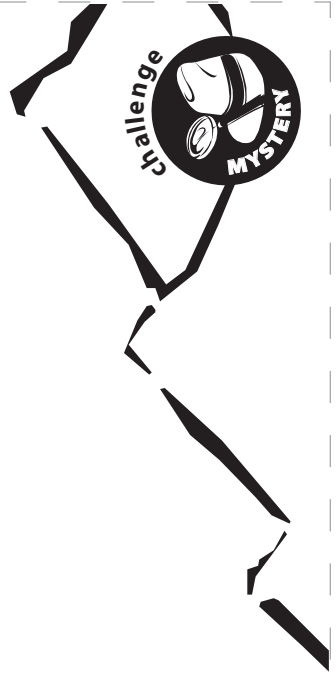


Comic Strip

15

Create a comic strip (make at least four panels) featuring your own, newly created detective character. Refer to comic strips in your local daily newspaper for ideas to help get you started.

Challenge #16



Pentomino Puzzles

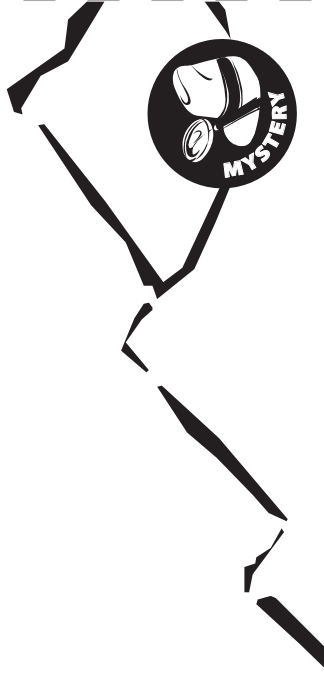
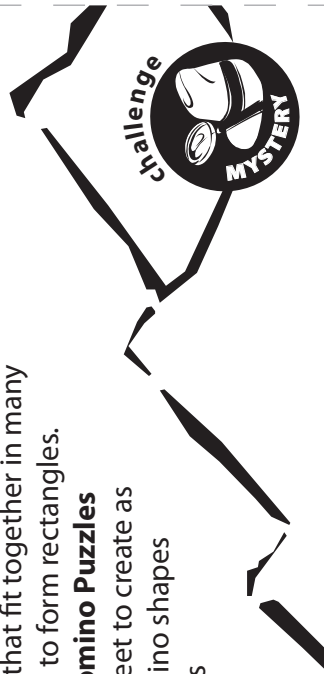
15

Calder Pillay's fascination with pentominoes plays an important role in the mystery *Chasing Vermeer*.

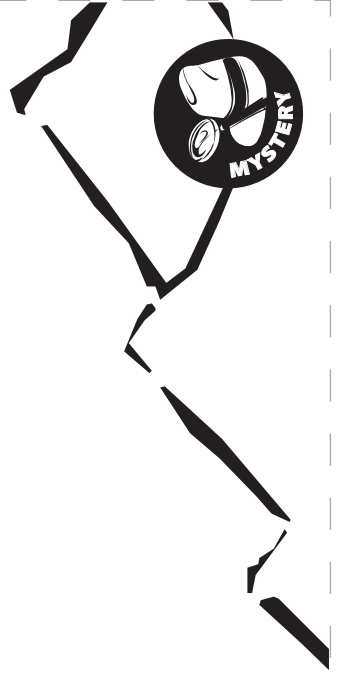
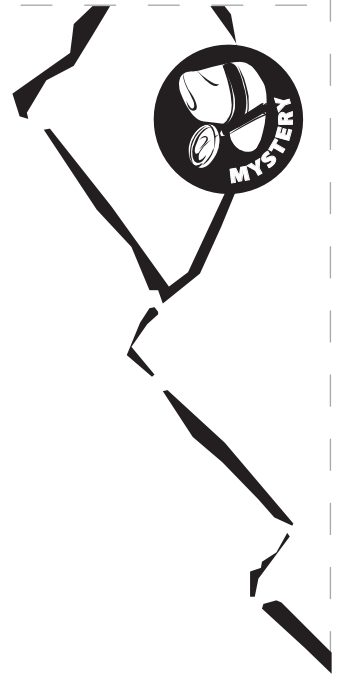
Pentominoes are mathematical tools made up of five squares that share at least one side, in twelve different formations. They can be used in complex ways to study numbers and geography. They can also work like puzzle pieces that fit together in many different ways to form rectangles.

Use the **Pentomino Puzzles**

instruction sheet to create as many pentomino shapes and rectangles as you can.



Challenge #17



Picture Words

Mystery

Traveler name(s): _____

Write each of your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words below. Create a picture word for each of your selected vocabulary words on a separate piece of paper. See the example below. Then neatly copy your final design for each word in the space next to your vocabulary word.

Scary	→	SCARY
_____	→	
_____	→	
_____	→	
_____	→	
_____	→	
_____	→	
_____	→	
_____	→	
_____	→	
_____	→	
_____	→	
_____	→	
_____	→	
_____	→	
_____	→	

Letter Ladder

Mystery

Traveler name(s): _____

Create a letter ladder made of words relating to mysteries. For each letter of the alphabet below, fill in an appropriate word around it. The word may begin or end in the letter, or use it in the middle. Be sure to include each of your selected vocabulary words. Other words may come from the mystery Vocabulary List or from your mystery book. The first three are done for you.



Alleged

Contra **B**and

Gothi **C**

D

E

F

G

H

I

J

K

L

M

N

O

P

Q

R

S

T

U

V

W

X

Y

Z

Mystery

Traveler name(s): _____

Slang expressions often shorten or combine words, as in “perp” for “perpetrator” or “gumshoe” for detective. Sometimes slang assigns new meanings to old words, as in “stiff” for “corpse.” Complete the following steps to help you spot and understand slang.



- 1 Find two slang terms from the mystery Vocabulary List. Find words that are not included in the examples above. Use the lines to the right to start your list.
- 2 Look for at least two examples of slang in your book. Add them to your list.
- 3 Think of more slang terms that might be used in mysteries and add them to your list. Make sure your slang words are appropriate for school use. Your final list should have at least 10 terms.
- 4 Find a slang dictionary or a dictionary that contains slang (try *Merriam-Webster's Intermediate Dictionary*) in your school or public library, or try the Encarta Online Dictionary (encarta.msn.com).
- 5 Look up each of the terms on your list and write the definition on a separate piece of paper.
- 6 Use each in a sentence that shows its meaning. Underline the slang word or expression in each sentence.

[illegible]

Subject Circles

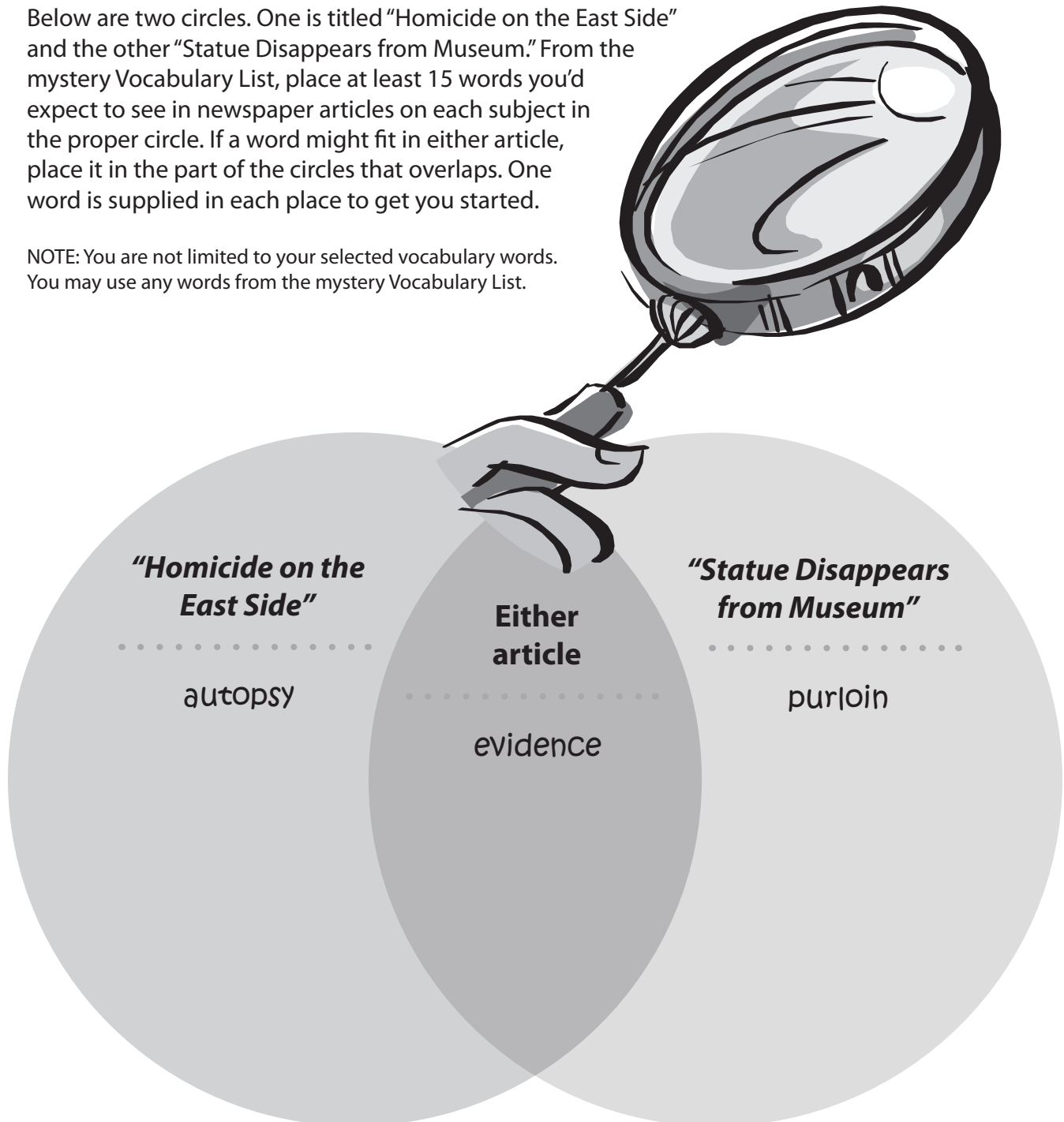
Mystery

Traveler name(s): _____

Some words seem to go together to suggest a subject. For example, if you were reading about a school, you'd expect to use words like "attendance," "recess," "tests" and "classes."

Below are two circles. One is titled "Homicide on the East Side" and the other "Statue Disappears from Museum." From the mystery Vocabulary List, place at least 15 words you'd expect to see in newspaper articles on each subject in the proper circle. If a word might fit in either article, place it in the part of the circles that overlaps. One word is supplied in each place to get you started.

NOTE: You are not limited to your selected vocabulary words. You may use any words from the mystery Vocabulary List.



Suffixes

Mystery

Traveler name(s): _____

Suffixes are *word endings* added to **root words** (*words that stand alone without added beginnings or endings*). Suffixes change the meaning of a word or change how it is used. For example, adding “ual” to “fact” changes it from a noun to an adjective. Adding “s” after “disaster” makes it plural. Adding “d” after “generalize” makes it past tense. “Less” tacked onto “hope” makes it mean the opposite, or without hope. Keep in mind that you sometimes drop letters or double letters when you add an ending, as in “riding” from “ride” or “clubbed” from “club.”

Follow these steps to complete the chart below.

- Choose up to three of your vocabulary words that have a root word and at least one suffix. Fill in a line of the chart for each word. (See example in the first row.)
- Choose other words from your list that are root words, without added beginnings or endings. Write them in both the first and second columns of the row. Then add a suffix that changes the word and write it in the third column. Complete the fourth column, telling how your addition changes the word. (See example in the second row.)
- Continue until you have completed all five rows of the chart.

Vocabulary word	Root word	Suffix	How suffix changes meaning or use
mysterious	mystery	Drop y, add ious	Changes from noun to adjective
hunch	hunch	Add es	Changes from singular to plural

Basic Story Elements

Mystery

Traveler name(s): _____

Title of book: _____

Type of mystery (Subgenres: Check all that apply):

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Murder mysteries | <input type="radio"/> "Hidden treasure" mysteries |
| <input type="radio"/> "Catch the criminal" mysteries | <input type="radio"/> Ecological mysteries |
| <input type="radio"/> Logic mysteries | <input type="radio"/> Horror or Gothic mysteries |
| <input type="radio"/> Other _____ | |

Setting (time and place):

Main characters (who's in it):

Tone of story (happy, scary, gloomy, funny, etc.):

Short plot summary (what happens):



Comprehending Characters

Mystery

Traveler name(s): _____

Identify a detective, victim and villain in your book. Then complete the chart and answer the questions below to describe the characters and show which characters fit which roles. Provide examples from your book to support your answers. List the page number from the book for each reference.

Role	Character Name	Words that describe his or her physical appearance	Words that describe his or her personality or character traits
Detective			
Victim			
Villain			

What is it about the detective that enables him or her to solve the mystery?

Are all three characters well defined in your story?

How does the author use each of these characters to help you solve the puzzle?

Are some of the characters more developed than others?

Predicting the Outcome

Mystery

Traveler name(s): _____

Before you read your book, divide it into parts as follows: Place a Post-it® note on the page that is halfway through the story, and another on the page that is three-quarters of the way through.

When you get to the first Post-it note, stop reading and answer these questions:

At this point in the story, what would you guess is the answer to the mystery?

What evidence from the text leads you to make that prediction? Include page numbers from your book to support your answer.

? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

When you get to the second Post-it note, answer the same two questions again.

At this point in the story, what would you guess is the answer to the mystery?

What evidence from the text leads you to make that prediction? Include page numbers from your book to support your answer.

? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ? ?

When you finish the book, look back at your predictions and answer these questions:

Were you surprised at the solution or did you guess it?

If you guessed, at exactly what point in the book did you figure it out?

Mystery Elements Scavenger Hunt

Mystery

Traveler name(s): _____

Go on a scavenger hunt through your mystery book! Find examples of the elements of mystery writing shown below. Use a separate piece of paper to write the name of each element, the page number where you found the element and a few words from the passage that fits the element. Do your best detecting and find as many of the elements as you can.

Title and Author of my mystery book: _____



The Powers of Observation Part II

Mystery

Traveler name(s): _____

Cam Jansen, girl detective from *The Barking Treasure Mystery* uses her photographic memory to solve mysteries. She simply looks, says "Click!" and captures the scene in detail. But most of us aren't that lucky! We have to practice looking closely and remembering. Develop your skills of observation and memory by following the steps below.

**1**

When students are busy with their tasks in the classroom, choose a view that shows two to four people working quietly together.

2

Use a stopwatch or have your Travel Agent time you while you watch the pair or small group very closely for two minutes.

3

When the time is up, turn around so you can't see them.

4

Write notes that describe the scene from memory, including as many details as you can possibly recall. Describe how the people look, what they're wearing, what they do and say, how they're standing, sitting or moving and what is around them. You may list details, rather than writing complete sentences.

5

When you've written everything you can remember, turn around and compare your notes to the scene. How well did you do? What did you fail to notice or remember? Write notes to record what you missed.

Story Starters

Mystery

Traveler name(s): _____

Choose one of the story starters below. Use it to write a complete two-page mystery story or write a two-page beginning to a longer mystery. Earn five extra points by arranging to share your story with your class.

"I knew right away that something was wrong. The dog was barking frantically and the window was broken ..."

"If he'd only taken the short way home, he never would have stumbled onto ..."

"Jana! I'm sure there's a logical explanation for this. Don't let your imagination run away with you again!"

"I've never been afraid of the dark. But there was a chill in the air tonight that set me on edge. And then I heard it ..."

"Her mother's comment had started her wondering. What WAS the neighbor doing out in his garden so late every night?"

Picture Puzzle Game

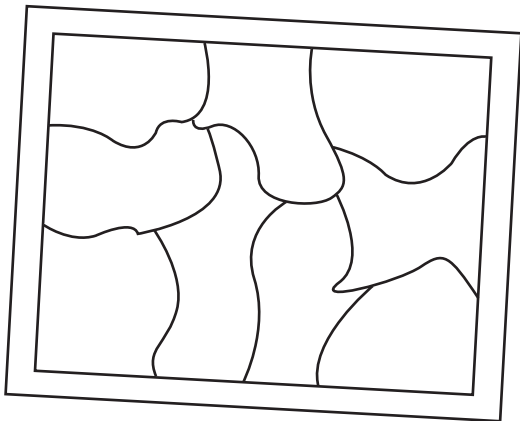
Mystery

Traveler name(s): _____

A mystery story is a written form of a puzzle. Turn your story into a picture puzzle by creating puzzle pieces that represent different parts of your book.

Instructions:

1. Gather your materials. You will need a piece of tag board, colored pencils or markers, a pencil and scissors.
2. Use a pencil to draw a puzzle outline on your tag board. Create a border around the edge and nine interlocking puzzle pieces.



3. Number your puzzle pieces 1–9. Write these numbers small and use a pencil to make sure the numbers don't show on your finished pieces.
4. Decorate the edges of your puzzle to reflect the theme of your book.
5. On each puzzle piece, provide information about your book as listed in the box to the right. Use words, photos or drawings to create interest in your book. Add color and texture to make the puzzle visually appealing.
6. Cut apart your puzzle pieces.

Include this information about your book:

PIECE 1: The title and author

PIECE 2: The main character and secondary characters, including a picture of the main character

PIECE 3: The setting

PIECE 4: The problem

PIECE 5: The main events

PIECE 6: The climax

PIECE 7: Three clues about the problem

PIECE 8: A hint of the solution of the problem (but don't give away the ending!)

PIECE 9: Your personal opinion or feeling about the book

7. Ask a classmate or family member to put your puzzle together.

Adapted from the Puzzle Piece Mystery Book Project from Gray, Che-Mai. (2005). *Everyone Loves a Mystery: A Genre Study*, Newark, DE: International Reading Association (www.readwritethink.org). Reprinted with permission of Che-Mai Gray and the International Reading Association.

Memory Card Game

Mystery

Traveler name(s): _____

Careful observation and a good memory are important in solving puzzles. Create and play a memory card game by following these steps:

1

Gather 16 3" x 5" index cards or cut sheets of card stock into 16 same-size cards. They should be at least the size of regular playing cards.

2

Design eight symbols that relate to your mystery book or to mystery stories in general (e.g., a magnifying glass, a footprint, a headstone).

3

Draw each symbol on two of the cards, making them look as identical as possible. Color them if you wish.

4

Shuffle the cards and lay them out in four rows of four cards each, with the blank sides up.

5

Start playing by randomly choosing two cards to turn over. If they don't match, return them to their places, blank side up.

6

Continue turning over two cards at a time until you find a match. Remove the matching cards.

7

Keep playing until you have found all the pairs and removed them.

?



Compete against yourself by keeping time as you try to match all the cards. See if you match all the cards faster each time you play. Or count the number of turns it takes you to match all the pairs—the fewer card pairs you have to turn over, the better you are.

Compete with a classmate or family member by taking turns matching all the cards and timing how long it takes each of you. Or count the number of turns each of you needs to match all the cards.

Earn five extra points by making the game harder. Create 16 more cards (eight more symbol pairs) to add to your game. Add new symbol pairs or create pairs that are similar but not identical to those you already have. For example, you could use four pairs of footprints that are different sizes, shapes, colors or have different tread designs. These will be harder to remember and match than symbols that are completely different from each other. Challenge yourself and your friends and family!

Book Code Messages

Mystery

Traveler name(s): _____

Secret codes and secret messages shared between partners in crime or cooperating investigators are a classic element of the mystery tradition. In the book *Chasing Vermeer* Calder and his friend Tommy assign letters to different pentomino configurations to create their code.

Another kind of code is a book code. In book codes, each partner has a copy of the same identical book. The books must be exactly the same or the code won't work. Book code messages are created by using numbers to identify each letter of the message.

For this book code, there are four numbers. The first number identifies the page number. The second number identifies the column number. The third number identifies the line on the page. The fourth number identifies the letter within the line.

If you wanted to send the message, "Look out!" using the mystery Essay you could write 33-2-1-25, 34-1-21-9, 34-1-33-1, 33-2-34-18; 33-1-14-17, 33-2-12-12, 34-1-1-12, 33-1-22-14.

Follow these steps:

- 1 Using the mystery Essay, decode the message below. Count only characters (letters and punctuation), not spaces. Notice that we've used different codes for the same letter. This makes the code harder to break.

34-1-12-32, 34-1-21-21, 33-2-4-13, 34-1-35-4

34-2-8-36, 34-2-4-17, 33-1-19-14

34-1-8-7, 33-2-9-4, 34-1-12-14, 34-2-15-19

33-1-4-27, 33-2-26-11, 34-1-27-15

34-1-23-9, 34-1-33-24, 33-1-13-11, 33-1-3-22, 34-1-30-2, 33-2-3-32, 33-1-7-25

34-2-8-10, 33-1-3-12

33-2-25-14, 34-1-15-4, 33-2-27-25, 33-2-37-10

- 2 Use a separate piece of paper to write your own encoded message, based on your mystery book. Include punctuation in your code.
- 3 Explain book codes to a classmate or family member and give that person a copy of the book you used. See how long it takes him or her to decode your message.

Real-life Crime Fighters

Mystery

Traveler name(s): _____

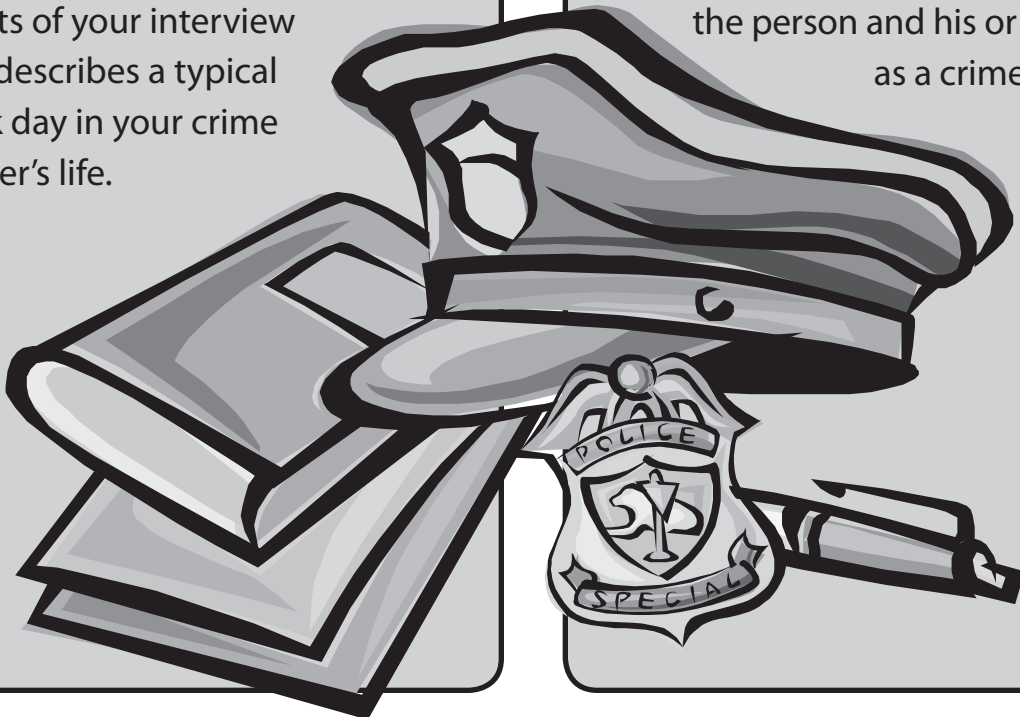
Complete one of these two activities to learn about a recent or present-day crime fighter.

#1

Check your phone book for local private investigators or call your police department. Make arrangements to interview a detective about his or her life and work. You may conduct your interview in person, by phone or by e-mail. Write down your questions in advance. Write a one- to two-page report that summarizes the key points of your interview and describes a typical work day in your crime fighter's life.

#2

Visit a major biographical Web site (like www.biography.com or www.s9.com) and look for crime fighters. Try key words like "forensic," "detective" and "private investigator." Once you've identified a person you'd like to learn about, search by name in other sources and online for more information. Write a one- to two-page report that describes the person and his or her role as a crime fighter.



Pentomino Puzzles

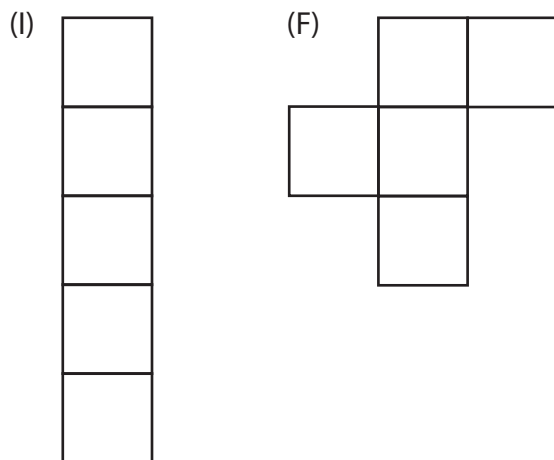
Mystery

Traveler name(s): _____

Pentominoes are mathematical tools made up of five squares that share at least one side, in 12 different formations. They can be used in complex ways to study numbers and geography. They can also work like puzzle pieces that fit together in many different ways to form rectangles. Follow the instructions below to create as many pentomino shapes and rectangles as you can.

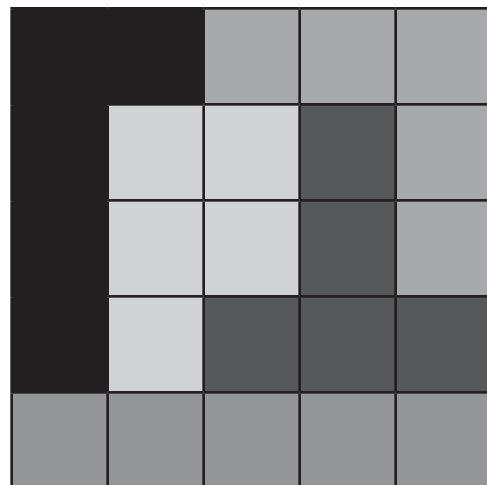
1. Cut five identical squares from paper and put them together in different ways. Make as many of the 12 pentomino shapes as you can. Draw a picture of each configuration you come up with.

HINT: Each shape looks something like a letter of our alphabet. They are named after the letters they resemble. Here are two examples:



2. Make three copies of each configuration you've drawn (use a copy machine or draw the extras). Cut out each pentomino configuration.

3. Then fit your pentominoes together like puzzle pieces to make as many rectangles as you can. You don't have to use all the pieces, but the more you use the better you are at the "game." Think creatively! Draw a picture of each solution you come up with. Here is an example:



HINT: In some cases you will need to use your duplicate pentominoes to complete a rectangle. Try rotating or flipping your pieces to make them fit.

Earn five extra points by challenging a friend or family member to create rectangles using your pentominoes. Use a separate sheet of paper to draw each solution the person creates.



Biography Table of Contents

Introductory Essay	81
Travel Agreement	82
Recommended Reading List.	83
Vocabulary List	89
Vocabulary List Dictionary Definitions	90
Vocabulary Activity Cards	94
Comprehension Activity Cards.	96
Writing Activity Cards	100
Challenge Activity Cards.	104
Master Worksheets	
Penmanship Practice	108
Compound Words	109
Morse Code Message	110
Word Map Sample	111
Word Map	112
Basic Story Elements	113
Doer or Viewer?	114
My Life in Symbols.	115
Poll: Who's Making History?	116
Your Family Tree	117

Brilliant Biographies

Who doesn't like biographies? Even if you aren't a big reader, you may like to read about "real people"—especially if you have something in common with them. Reading about others' achievements can encourage us to go after our own dreams. After all, if he or she did it, why can't we? Or it might help us feel less lonely or more normal to read about others who have shared our feelings and experiences. We can relate to the person we're reading about, one to one. We can compare his or her life to our own and learn about ourselves and the world in the process.

Biographies are, simply, stories of people's lives. They share real events and experiences, rather than made-up stories, so they are a subgenre of nonfiction. Biographies can take many forms. See the center box for different types of biographies.

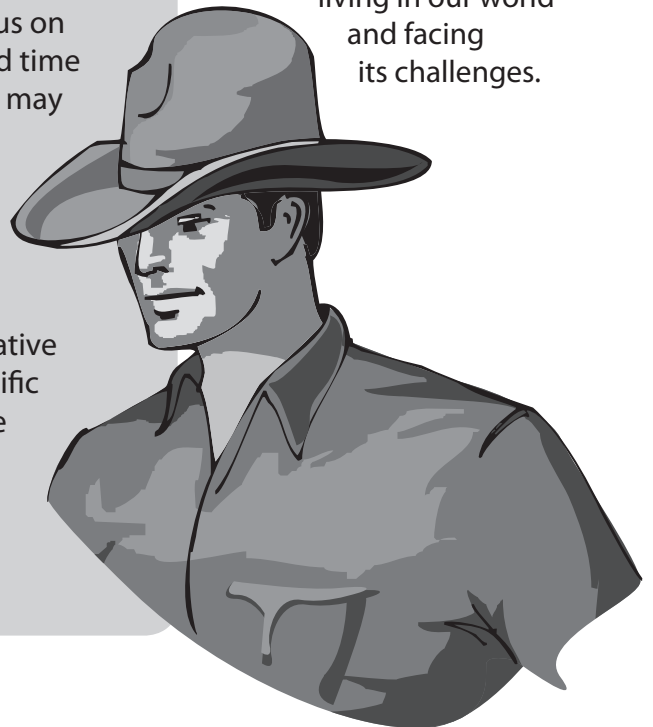
The Recommended Reading List has examples of each type of biography. You'll find stories about people living today and people long dead. You'll find history's heroes and villains. You'll find scientists, writers, artists, musicians, athletes, social activists and kids a lot like you.

Some biographies are funny. Some are intensely dramatic. Some are tragic. Most are a little of each because most people's lives include moments of humor, drama and tragedy. Choose a biography about someone you already admire. Or learn about someone new who did something you're interested in. Whoever you

choose, read the book with an open mind. Think about how this person is like you and different from you. How does this person's life relate to yours? What does he or she have to teach you? Why is his or her story worth telling? You may be surprised to discover a kindred spirit. If you're lucky, when you finish your book, you'll have gained not only facts and information but also new ideas about what it means to be a human being, living in our world and facing its challenges.

Biography subgenres

- **Individual biography** tells about one specific person's life over time.
- **Collective biography** shares the stories of two or more people, usually related to each other through a common interest or experience.
- An **autobiography** is a story a person writes about his or her own life.
- **Memoirs** are a specific kind of autobiography. They are usually informal in style and personal in tone, and often focus on the people, events and time being discussed. They may be gossipy or chatty, and may take the form of diaries or journals.
- A **biographical anecdote** is a short narrative that tells about a specific incident or experience in a person's life, rather than trying to summarize a person's whole life.



se times:

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

Biography Recommended Reading List

NAVIGATORS • Biography

Bad Guys: True Stories of Legendary Gunslingers, Sidewinders, Fourflushers, Drygulchers, Bushwhackers, Freebooters and Downright Bad Guys and Gals of the Wild West written and illustrated by Andrew Glass. Random House, 1998. ISBN 0-38532-310-7. Rip-roaring text and funny, action-packed pictures express the bigger-than-life subject matter. You'll find all the expected outlaws and some surprises. Irresistible.

← GRADES 2-4

A Fairy-Tale Life: A Story about Hans Christian Andersen by Joann Johansen Burch. Lerner Publishing Group, 1994. ISBN 0-87614-642-6. Perhaps the best-loved fairy tale writer of all times, Andersen was an awkward, bullied youth. But he believed he was destined for fame and greatness, and never gave up on himself. Cut-paper artwork, like that which Andersen used in his storytelling, enhance this Creative Minds series title.

2-4

Joan of Arc by Diane Stanley. HarperCollins, 2002. ISBN 0-06443-748-5. Stanley's rich illustrations and clear, lively text convey the heroic life and tragic death of the ignorant peasant girl who saved France and was later made a saint. Driven by voices and visions she believed to be from God, she gave up comfort and custom to take her place in history.

2-6

Nellie Bly: A Name to Be Reckoned With by Stephen Krensky. Simon & Schuster, 2003. ISBN 0-68985-573-7. Nellie Bly never let being a woman in "a man's world" slow her down. The trailblazing female undercover reporter and world traveler comes alive in this inviting account of a spirited woman ahead of her time.

2-5

On the Halfpipe with ... Tony Hawk by Matt Christopher. Little, Brown and Company, 2001. ISBN 0-31614-223-9. Fans of Matt Christopher's sports fiction will recognize his influence in the breezy, energetic style of this Matt Christopher Sports Bio Bookshelf series title. Hawk almost single-handedly established skateboarding as a popular, recognized sport. His story is full of action and drama.

3-5

Quick, Annie, Give Me a Catchy Line! A Story of Samuel F. B. Morse by Robert Quackenbush. Prentice Hall, 1983. ISBN 0-13749-762-8. (Also found in *Two Slapstick Biographies*, Robert Quackenbush Studios, 1999). Samuel Morse, a widely creative man, really wanted his telegraph system to succeed so that he could afford to do what he really loved—painting! Silly illustrations and a humorous tone make this biography tons of fun.

2-4

GRADES 2-4

→ ***Sequoyah: The Cherokee Man Who Gave His People Writing*** written and illustrated by James Rumford, translated by Anna Sixkiller Huckaby. Houghton Mifflin, 2004. ISBN 0-61836-947-3. Sequoyah, a small, crippled, half-Cherokee from Tennessee, became one of this country's best known and respected Native sons. Why? Because he had a dream of keeping the Cherokee nation and its traditions strong by committing its language to writing, and the intellect and perseverance to succeed. What made his achievement so remarkable is that before developing the Cherokee syllabary (set of written characters representing syllables), he was completely illiterate! Rumford's storytelling-style bilingual text combines with rich, textured illustrations to create a striking, award-winning picture book.

2-6

So You Want to Be an Inventor? by Judith St. George, illustrated by David Small. Penguin Putnam, 2002. ISBN 0-39923-593-0. St. George and Small score a solid hit in this lighthearted look at the history of inventing and inventors. In spite of the silly treatment, the information is well researched and fascinating. It's a book that makes you want to "Go for it!"

3-5

A Very Young Musician written and illustrated by Jill Krentz. Simon & Schuster, 1992. ISBN 0-67179-251-2. As in her other photobiographies of accomplished kids, Krentz helps Josh Broder, 10-year-old trumpeter, tell about his life. In the process we learn not just about this dedicated young musician, who is also a friendly, normal fifth grader, but about musical styles, instruments, performers and history.

EXPLORERS • Biography

Ben & Jerry: The Real Scoop! by Jules Older, illustrated by Lyn Severance. Houghton Mifflin, 1993. ISBN 1-88152-704-2. This cartoon-style biography of the famous partners and their famous business is a treat in itself. The story of how these two “lovable, pudgy and not-very-ambitious American boys” become kings of an ice cream empire is irresistible.

A Caldecott Celebration: Six Artists and Their Paths to the Caldecott Medal by Leonard S. Marcus. Walker & Co., 1998. ISBN 0-80278-656-1. Marcus uses photos, quotations, sketches and finished illustrations, and lively narration to introduce these extraordinary award-winning artists. The author’s choice of anecdotes (imagine Robert McCloskey sharing his studio with 16 ducks as he created *Make Way for Ducklings!*) will delight you and help you see the artists as “real people.”

Emily Dickinson: Singular Poet by Carol Dommermuth-Costa. Lerner Publishing Group, 1998. ISBN 0-82254-958-1. Imagine being discouraged from reading by your father because reading “joggled the mind.” Then imagine a born writer growing up under that influence! It is one of the mysteries of the life of the shy, emotional poet. Black-and-white illustrations and excerpts from Dickinson’s poems and letters weave through this graceful biography.

Find Where the Wind Goes: Moments from My Life by Mae Jemison. Scholastic, 2001. ISBN 0-43913-195-2. Jemison comes across as sincere and friendly in spite of her almost intimidating achievements. She shares life lessons learned through experiences with her family and with a society that questioned the potential of a young African American woman. Her confident and determined pursuit of her dreams makes her a truly remarkable astronaut, scientist and woman.

First in the Field: Baseball Hero Jackie Robinson by Derek T. Dingle. Hyperion, 1998. ISBN 0-78680-348-7. This beautiful picture book biography describes the shadow of racism that both clouded Robinson’s life and made his personal and professional success so admirable. Not only did he break the color barrier in professional baseball, but he also became a symbol of new opportunities for people of color in the wider world. His self-discipline and dignity earned respect and gave his achievements greater influence.

John Muir: Wilderness Prophet by Peter Anderson. Scholastic, 1996. ISBN 0-53115-781-4. “If John Muir had been able to, he would have ... hitched a ride on a snowflake or ridden a drop of water down a cascade.” Such poetic language combines with photos to create an appealing picture of naturalist John Muir. His discovery of an active glacier in the Sierras, his battle to save Yosemite as a national park and his founding of the Sierra Club earned him fame as an environmentalist, while he called himself simply “a tramp.”

← **GRADES 4-6**

2-6

5-6

5-6

3-6

3-5

- GRADES 3–6** → ***Lives of Extraordinary Women: Rulers, Rebels (and What the Neighbors Thought)*** by Kathleen Krull, illustrated by Kathryn Hewitt. Harcourt, 2000. ISBN 0-15200-807-1. Quoting American historian Laurel Thatcher Ulrich that “Well-behaved women rarely make history,” Krull and Hewitt present 20 women who were clearly not concerned with being proper! Many headed nations, like Golda Meir, Wilma Mankiller, Nzingha and Catherine the Great. Krull and Hewitt’s winning combination of chatty, insightful text and caricature illustrations entertain and educate.
- 5+** ***Samuel Adams: The Father of American Independence*** by Dennis Brindell Fradin. Houghton Mifflin, 1998. ISBN 0-39582-510-5. Adams didn’t care much for traditional success—a profitable career and peaceful family life. But he gave his all to stirring up support for a free and independent United States of America, and made England’s “Most Wanted” list in the process. A fascinating biography.
- 4–6** ***Savion: My Life in Tap*** by Savion Glover and Bruce Weber. William Morrow & Co., 2000. ISBN 0-68815-629-0. Excitement leaps off the pages of this dynamic red, white and black-toned book full of history, action and street slang. Savion’s extraordinary talent as a dancer and choreographer (*Bring in ‘da Noise, Bring in ‘da Funk*) are highlighted in narration by Weber. Chapters in Savion’s voice focus on his training, his heroes and mentors, and his sense of responsibility to “give back.”
- 4–8** ***The Tarantula Scientist*** by Sy Montgomery. Houghton Mifflin, 2004. ISBN 0-61814-799-3. This book is almost as much an all-purpose biography of spiders as it is of arachnologist (spider scientist) Sam Marshall. Still, between the fascinating facts and stunning photos, we learn a lot about Marshall’s life, work and longtime attraction to his favorite hairy critters. As one reviewer commented, “It’s enough to make Miss Muffet fall in love.”
- 4–6** ***When I Was Your Age: Original Stories about Growing Up***, edited by Amy Ehrlich. Candlewick Press, 1996. ISBN 1-56402-306-0. The stories in this book come from childhood memories of favorite children’s authors like Laurence Yep, Katherine Paterson and Avi. They explore the inspirations and craft of writing. They are also simply excellent stories about universal human experiences. Volume II of the same title, with works by Joseph Bruchac, Jane Yolen and others, is equally good.
- 4–6** ***You Want Women to Vote, Lizzie Stanton?*** by Jean Fritz. Penguin Putnam, 1999. ISBN 0-69811-764-6. With characteristic frankness and humor, Fritz paints a word portrait of the famous women’s suffragist who, while shocking many potential supporters with her radical ideas, still did as much for women’s rights as anyone.

ADVENTURERS • Biography

Babe Didrikson Zaharias: The Making of a Champion by Russell Freedman. Houghton Mifflin, 1999. ISBN 0-39563-367-2. Babe Didrikson was named top female athlete of the first half of the twentieth century by the Associated Press. She excelled in virtually every sport. Fans described her as confident, colorful and fun loving. Critics called her brash and unfeminine. Freedman offers an in-depth, well-researched look at this hugely talented, ferociously competitive sportswoman.

← GRADES 6+

Guts: The True Stories behind Hatchet and the Brian Books by Gary Paulsen. Bantam Doubleday Dell, 2002. ISBN 0-44040-712-5. Paulsen shares stories from his life that inspired and informed his books about Brian Robeson. Not for the weak of heart or stomach, they depict scenes of harsh reality with painful clarity. Gripping reading for mature readers of survival and adventure stories.

6+

Kids at Work: Lewis Hine and the Crusade Against Child Labor by Russell Freedman. Sagebrush Education Resources, 1998. ISBN 0-61307-004-6. Freedman tells the story of Lewis Hine, teacher-turned-photographer. Hine dedicated his life to educating the public about the evils of child labor through his photos. The sincere text teams up powerfully with Hine's photos. You'll be amazed and grateful for his efforts!

6+

The Life and Death of Adolf Hitler by James Cross Giblin. Houghton Mifflin, 2002. ISBN 0-39590-371-8. Adolf Hitler is so infamous that the location of his remains has been kept secret, for fear of attracting dangerous protests or encouraging Neo-Nazis! Giblin's comprehensive biography sheds light on the life of the compelling, gifted, disturbed and rather pathetic man behind one of the most tragic and shameful chapters in world history. A chilling, challenging read.

6+

Looking Back: A Book of Memories by Lois Lowry. Bantam Doubleday Dell, 2000. ISBN 0-38532-699-8. Children's author Lois Lowry treats readers to a cozy, personal look at her life as the source of ideas for her well-loved stories. She weaves everyday memories together with photos and passages from her books to create a feeling of happy recognition for established fans, warm welcome to new readers and encouragement for would-be writers.

6+

Portraits of Great American Scientists edited by Leon M. Lederman and Judith Scheppler. Prometheus Books, 2001. ISBN 1-57392-932-8. What makes this collective biography different is that it was written by high school students at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy. Students interviewed their subjects and explored their fields of study. The science is quite advanced for the average reader. It might help to be a whiz in science, but you don't have to understand quantum mechanics to catch the young writers' excitement and appreciate the amazing contributions of these present-day scientists.

6+

Sacajawea by Joseph Bruchac and Peter Roop. Harcourt, 2000. ISBN 0-15202-234-1. In alternating chapters written in the voices of Sacajawea and Captain William Clark, we learn about the remarkable life of this young Shoshone woman made famous by her great service to the Lewis & Clark Expedition.

6+

GRADES 6+

→ ***Thura's Diary: My Life in Wartime Iraq*** by Thura al-Windawi. Penguin Putnam, 2004. ISBN 0-67005-886-6. It's one thing to hear about the war in Iraq on the news from the comfort of our homes. It's something else entirely to experience the sights, sounds, smells and emotions of living in the chaos as bombs destroy your homeland. Nineteen-year-old Thura's diary makes the war immediate and personal, without political speeches or biased reporting. Challenging and eye-opening.

6+

The Voice that Challenged a Nation: Marian Anderson and the Struggle for Equal Rights by Russell Freedman. Houghton Mifflin, 2004. ISBN 0-61815-976-2. In the late 1930s, when Anderson was the toast of Europe, she was scorned in her own country because of the color of her skin. Russell brings his great reputation and fascinating style to the story of this magnificent African American singer and her triumphant concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. Newbery Honor book.



Biography Vocabulary List

Traveler name(s): _____

Choose 8 to 12 vocabulary words. You may use any of the following words or work with your Travel Agent to come up with your own words.

Activist	Genius
Amateur	Heroic
Ambitious	Immigrant
Ancestor	Legacy
Anecdote	Liberal
Apprentice	Mastermind
Autobiography	Memoirs
Biography	Native
Celebrity	Obituary
Compassion	Outlaw
Conscience	Patriot
Consequently	Perseverance
Conservative	Prejudice
Contemporary	Principle
Controversial	Professional
Descendant	Progressive
Destiny	Role model
Dictator	Segregate
Discriminate	Statesman
Ethical	Stereotype
Exemplary	Suffrage
Eyewitness	Traditional
Feminist	Tragedy
Forefather	Upbringing
Founder	_____
Generation	_____

Teaching tip



These informal dictionary-style definitions have been provided to save you time when correcting student work. The word breakdowns provided show syllabic division as indicated in *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh Edition. We have not altered the spelling of the words to show pronunciation or phonetic spelling. For activities that ask students to provide "breakdown by syllable," you may choose to add or substitute a requirement for phonetic spelling and/or end-of-line division (hyphenation).

Biography Vocabulary List Dictionary Definitions

Activist

Noun. 3 syllables: ac*ti*vist.

A person who engages in activities that support his or her opinion or belief on a very complicated or controversial issue or thing, or who tries to right what he or she feels is wrong.

Amateur

Noun. 3 syllables: a*ma*teur. A person who does something for fun (such as plays sports) or as a hobby, rather than for pay or as a job.

Ambitious

Adjective. 3 syllables: am*bi*tious. When a person has a desire to succeed, gain power, or be really good at something, and often works very hard to get what he or she wants.

Ancestor

Noun. 3 syllables: an*ces*tor. The person who made it possible for you to have been born or from whom you are descended, such as your grandmother or great-grandfather.

Anecdote

Noun. 3 syllables: a*nec*dote. A short and often funny or very interesting story about something that happened in a person's day or life.

Apprentice

Noun. 3 syllables: a*ppren*tice. A person who learns a skill or a job from another more experienced or skilled person.

Autobiography

Noun. 6 syllables: au*to*bi*o*gra*phy. The story of a person's life or part of his or her life, written by that person.

Biography

Noun. 4 syllables: bi*o*gra*phy. The story of a person's life or part of his or her life, as written by another person or a professional author.

Celebrity

Noun. 4 syllables: ce*le*bri*ty. A person who is famous because of who or what he or she is or does.

Compassion

Noun. 3 syllables: com*pa*ssion. To be aware of or feel sad about someone else's problems or misfortunes and to want to help him or her in some way.

Conscience

Noun. 2 syllables: con*science. To know when something is right or wrong and to feel you should do what is right or good.

Consequently

Adverb. 4 syllables: con*se*quent*ly. When something happens because something else happened, or when something happens as a result or consequence of another thing or event.

Conservative

Adjective. 4 syllables: con*ser*va*tive. When a person does not think change is always for the best and prefers for things to stay the way they are, or is very traditional and likes things to be done the same way they always have been.

Contemporary

Adjective. 5 syllables: con*tem*po*rar*y. A person who lives during the same time period as another person, or a person who is living in the current time in which we are living and reading.

Controversial

Adjective. 4 syllables: con*tro*ver*sial. When a policy, event or belief makes people have different opinions about it, or any event or thing that causes people to disagree about what it really means or what should be done.

Descendant

Noun. 3 syllables: de*scen*dant. A person who is alive due to another person and who they are related to, such as a granddaughter or great-grandson, who came from a certain ancestor; a blood relative of a later generation.

Destiny

Noun. 3 syllables: des*ti*ny. The future or set of events that is going to happen to a person, no matter what, or the type of life that a person is fated or sure to live.

Dictator

Noun. 3 syllables: dic*ta*tor. A ruler who makes all the decisions by him or herself, and doesn't ask for anyone else's ideas for leading a country or other group of people, and who can sometimes be very cruel or do the wrong things.

Discriminate

Verb. 4 syllables: dis*cri*mi*nate. To treat another person or group of people unfairly, or to treat one person or group of people better than another group on purpose.

Ethical

Adjective. 3 syllables: e*thi*cal. When a person is fair and follows all the rules, or always does what is right.

Exemplary

Adjective. 4 syllables: ex*em*pla*ry. When a person acts in a way that is right and should serve as an example or model to other people for how they should act or what they should do.

Eyewitness

Noun. 3 syllables: eye*wit*ness. A person who sees another person doing something or any other event, and often tells others what he or she has seen.

Feminist

Noun. 3 syllables: fe*mi*nist. A person who acts to support or to make possible actions and policies which are good for or helpful to women.

Forefather

Noun. 3 syllables: fore*fa*ther. A person from an earlier time who helped form the traditions or lifestyle of a certain group, or the founder of a particular family or group with common ties and heritage.

Founder

Noun. 2 syllables: foun*der. A person who starts or forms a family, group or other organization.

Generation

Noun. 4 syllables: ge*ne*ra*tion. All of the children of one set of parents (parents are one generation, and their children are the next generation), or any group of people that are all around the same age.

Genius

Noun. 2 syllables: gen*ius. A person who is very smart or has another great talent or skill.

Heroic

Adjective. 3 syllables: he*ro*ic.
When a person is very brave or performs many deeds that are very difficult or which have a very small chance of being successful.

Immigrant

Noun. 3 syllables: i*mmi*grant.
A person who moves to a different country from the one where they were born and intends to stay and live there.

Legacy

Noun. 3 syllables: le*ga*cy.
Something left behind by a person who has retired or died, such as a tradition, reputation or a record of good works and achievements.

Liberal

Adjective. 3 syllables: li*be*ral.
When a person is very open to new ideas and change, and is broad-minded about the opinions and actions of others, or who does not follow typical or traditional beliefs.

Mastermind

Noun. 3 syllables: mas*ter*mind.
A person who is usually very smart and plans (or directs) his or her group or organization's actions, activities and events, or any difficult feat.

Memoirs

Noun. 2 syllables: mem*oirs. The story of a certain part of or time period in a person's life, as written by that person.

Native

Noun. 2 syllables: na*tive. A person, plant or animal that is born in or belongs in a particular place or location, and is often referred to as being from that place or region.

Obituary

Noun. 5 syllables: o*bi*tu*ar*y.
A short published news article that tells that a person has died and also provides details of that person's birth, life and death.

Outlaw

Noun. 2 syllables: out*law. A person who has broken the law, done illegal things or is trying not to get caught by law enforcement officials such as police officers.

Patriot

Noun. 3 syllables: pa*tri*ot. A person who loves his or her country and who supports it in many different ways.

Perseverance

Noun. 4 syllables: per*se*ver*ance.
The desire and actions of a person who keeps trying to do or achieve something even if it takes a long time or is very hard to do; or when a person will not give up.

Prejudice

Noun. 3 syllables: pre*ju*dice.
An idea about or preference for certain people or things over others, without basing that idea on fact or experience, or a belief that one thing is better than another with no real proof or for any good reason.

Principle

Noun. 3 syllables: prin*ci*ple.

A general idea or rule on which other theories can be based, or a basic truth or standard that is broadly accepted to be factual.

Professional

Adjective. 4 syllables: pro*fe*ssion*al.

To do something for a job or for which you get paid, and typically a job or work that has certain rules and knowledge and training requirements that a person must fulfill.

Progressive

Adjective. 3 syllables: pro*gre*ssive.

To believe in or work towards gradual change and improvement in economic and social matters, or to believe that progress is made through change and moving toward better surroundings and policies.

Role model

Noun. 3 syllables: role mo*del.

A person who provides a good example for another person in any kind of positive behavior or beliefs, or who is looked up to by another person as someone to be imitated.

Segregate

Verb. 3 syllables: se*gre*gate.

To separate people or a group from others in society, or keep people or things away from each other for a specific reason.

Statesman

Noun. 2 syllables: states*man.

A person who is active or works in government and who usually gives good or smart advice to those people making policies, or who is active in national and international affairs.

Stereotype

Noun. 4 syllables: ster*e*o*type.

Something that seems just like you thought it should or would be, or a standard idea that you may have about a certain thing or group of people based on what information you already know about it or them.

Suffrage

Noun. 2 syllables: su*ffrage.

The right to vote in elections and other political contests.

Traditional

Adjective. 4 syllables: tra*di*tio*naI.

Something that is done because it has always been done that way or is the custom or habit of a person or group of people, or an idea or practice that is followed because it is the usual way to do something.

Tragedy

Noun. 3 syllables: tra*ge*dy. A sad or bad event that causes a disaster or other hardship, or which causes a person's or a group of people's deaths.

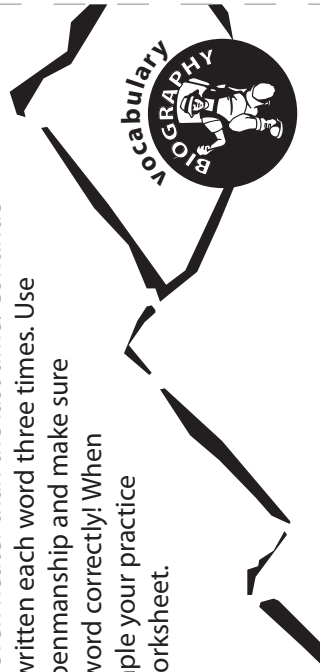
Upbringing

Noun. 3 syllables: up*bring*ing.

The way in which a child is raised or taught, usually by his or her parents or other adults.

Penmanship Practice

5 It's time to show off your very best writing! Start by writing each of your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words on the **Penmanship Practice** worksheet. Then use a lined piece of paper to neatly write, in cursive, each of your vocabulary words, one word per line. Quietly say the letters of each word to yourself as you write. Start at the top and write each word again. Try to be even neater than the last time. Continue until you have written each word three times. Use your very best penmanship and make sure you spell each word correctly! When you're done, staple your practice sheet to your worksheet.



Vocabulary #1

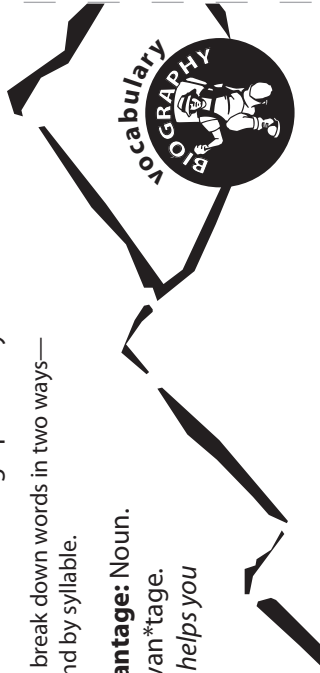
What Does It Mean?

5 List your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words on a piece of paper, leaving several lines between them. Look up each word in a dictionary. Write down the part of speech, breakdown by syllable (where you pause when saying the word) and the definition. Do not use any form of the word in your definition. Some words have more than one meaning. Choose the definitions that relate to biographies or your book.

HINT: Dictionaries break down words in two ways—by hyphenation and by syllable.

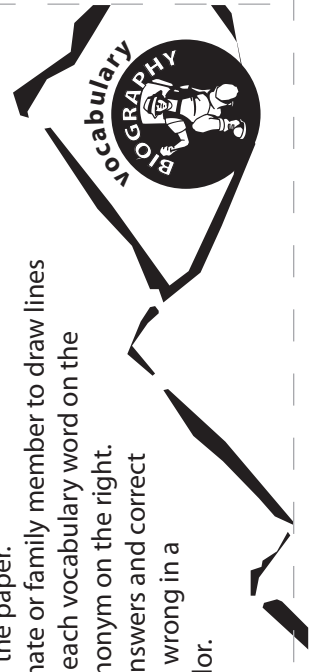
EXAMPLE: Advantage: Noun.
3 syllables: ad*van*tage.
Something that helps you or puts you in a better position.

Vocabulary #2



Synonyms Match Game

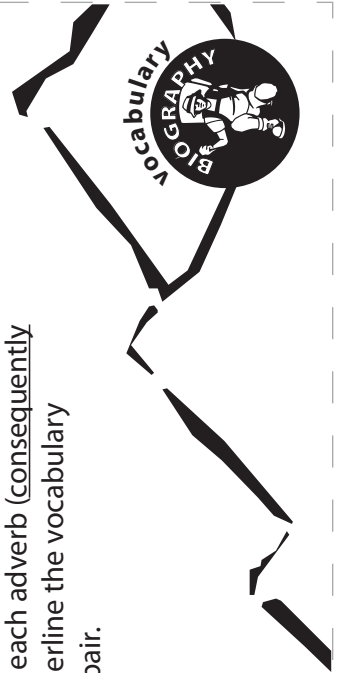
- 5** Create a synonyms match game as follows:
- Find a synonym or near synonym for at least five words from the biography Vocabulary List.
 - Write the vocabulary words, one per line, down the left side of a piece of paper.
 - Write your synonyms, in scrambled order, down the right side of the paper.
 - Ask a classmate or family member to draw lines connecting each vocabulary word on the left to its synonym on the right.
 - Check the answers and correct any that are wrong in a different color.



Vocabulary #3

Word Partners

10 Review the part of speech of each of your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words. Then list each vocabulary word with an appropriate word partner before or after it as follows: An adjective before each noun (respected statesman), a noun after each adjective (heroic tale), an adverb next to each verb (discriminate unfairly), a verb next to each adverb (consequently suffered). Underline the vocabulary word in each pair.

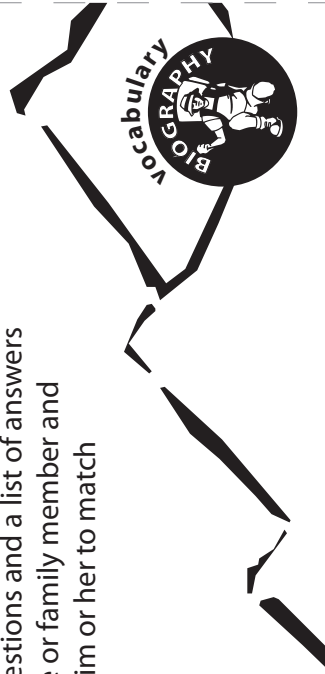


Vocabulary #4

What's the Question?

10

Make up carefully thought-out questions that can be answered by each of your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words. For example, for the word "conscience," you might write "What part of you feels bad when you do something wrong?" Write down both your questions and their answers. Earn five extra points by giving the questions and a list of answers to a classmate or family member and challenging him or her to match them up.

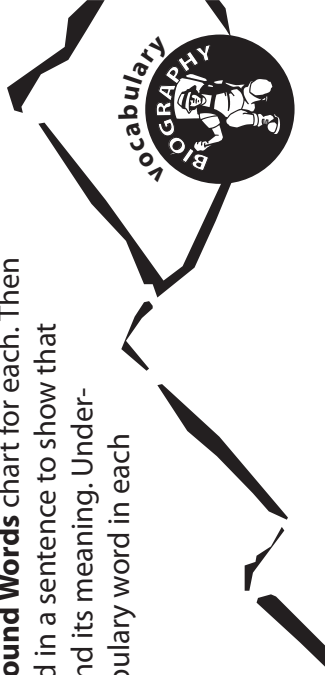


Vocabulary #5

Compound Words

10

A **compound word** is a word that is *made up of two or more other words put together*. Their separate meanings work together to make up the meaning of the compound word. Some examples are "sunrise," "matchbox" and "underwear." There are seven compound words on the biography Vocabulary List. Find them and fill out a row on the **Compound Words** chart for each. Then use each word in a sentence to show that you understand its meaning. Underline the vocabulary word in each sentence.

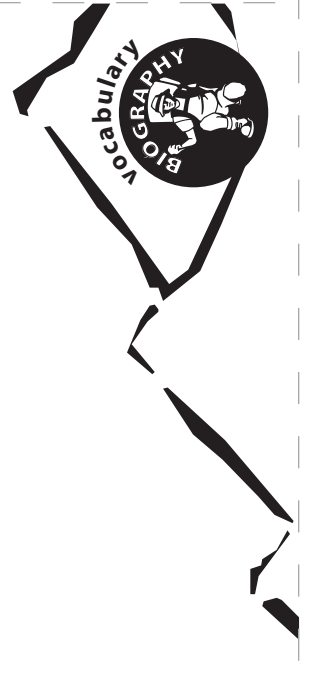


Vocabulary #6

Morse Code Message

15

One of the biographies on the Recommended Reading List is *Quick, Annie, Give Me a Catchy Line!* A Story of Samuel F. B. Morse. Morse invented Morse code, an internationally recognized system for communicating messages. Use the **Morse Code Message** worksheet to translate your vocabulary words into Morse code and create your own Morse code message.



Vocabulary #7

Word Map

15

Word maps can help you review and build on what you've learned about your words. Complete the **Word Map Sample** based on the word "biography." Then use the **Word Map** worksheet to create your own word map for one of your selected vocabulary words. Use questions and prompts that are appropriate for your word.

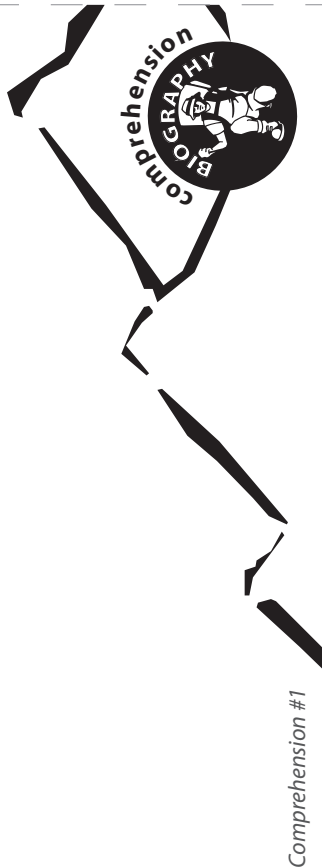


Vocabulary #8

What Does the Subject

5 Look Like?

Write down four adjectives that describe the physical appearance of the person who is the subject of your book. Then write four sentences using one of the adjectives in each. Underline the adjective in each sentence.



Comprehension #1

What is the Subject Really Like?

5

Write down five words that describe the character, personality or accomplishments of the person who is the subject of your book. For example, you might describe him or her as honest, hardworking, brave, funny, rude, stubborn or trustworthy.



Comprehension #2

Basic Story Elements

5

Identify the basic story elements of your book and complete the **Basic Story Elements** worksheet.



Comprehension #3

Challenges to Overcome

5

Describe one hardship or challenge faced by the subject of your book. Write two or three paragraphs about how the hardship was overcome or resolved.

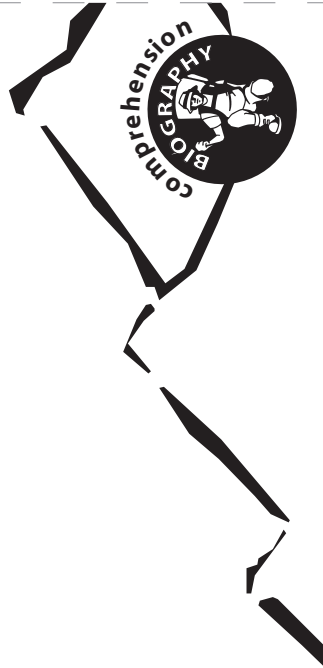


Comprehension #4

Character Development

10 Does the subject of your book grow and change during the story? Write three to five paragraphs that explain how and why he or she changes.

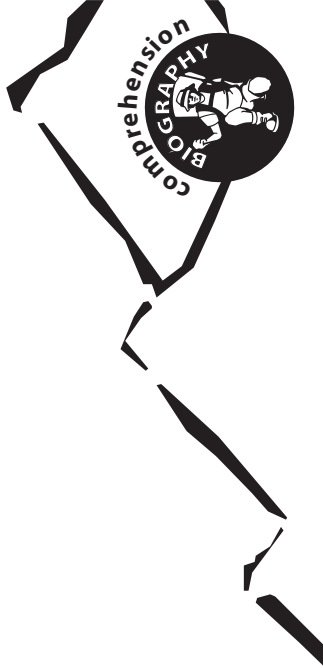
Comprehension #5



Setting and Context

10 Write one or two paragraphs to describe some important events that were happening in the world during the lifetime of your subject. Then write two or three paragraphs about how you think your subject was influenced by these events.

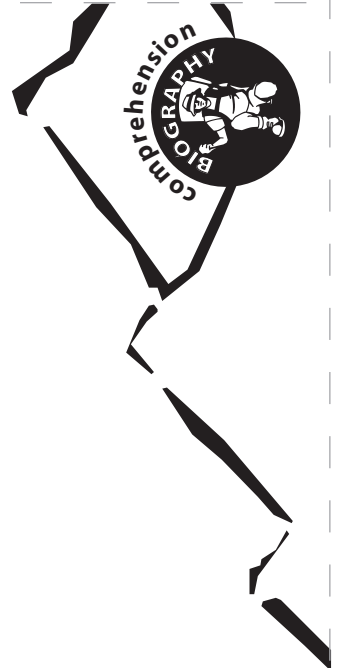
Comprehension #6



Important Choices

10 Identify an important decision made by the subject of your book. Write three to five paragraphs to explain the situation, the options, the decision and the outcome of the choice. How did this choice affect his or her life? The lives of others?

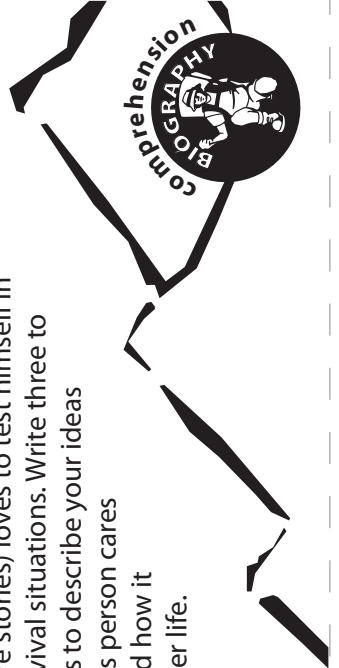
Comprehension #7



Driving Passions

10 Does the subject of your biography have a lifelong dream or cause that he or she is passionate about—one that drives his or her choices and actions? What does he or she want most? For example, Samuel Adams was obsessed with achieving independence for America, and Gary Paulsen (author of the autobiography *Guts ...* and many adventure stories) loves to test himself in wilderness survival situations. Write three to five paragraphs to describe your ideas about what this person cares most about and how it shapes his or her life.

Comprehension #8



Telling Talk

10

Skim through your book's **dialogue**—the words enclosed in *quotation marks* that represent *exact words spoken* by the subject of your biography in conversation with another character. Choose a short section of dialogue (no more than one page) that you think reveals something important about the person's character. Copy the passage and give the page reference. Then write three to five paragraphs to explain why you chose that passage and what it tells you about the person.

Comprehension #9



Book Structure

10

What is the structure of your book? What determines the order of the information? Is it written in the order in which events occurred (like *Nellie Bly: A Name to Be Reckoned With*)? Does it follow the flow of the subject's memories in a journal or diary format (like *Thura's Diary*)? Does it jump back and forth in time, using flashbacks or storytelling techniques (like *Sacajawea*)? Identify the organizing structure of your book and write at least two paragraphs describing why you think the author chose that structure.

Comprehension #10



A Worthy Life?

15

Write a one-page essay completing and supporting this statement:

"My biography subject's life is/is not worthy of being recorded and shared in a biography because ..."

HINT: Think about what this person's life had to tell you. How might you or other readers think or act differently after reading this biography?

Comprehension #11



Doer or Viewer?

15

Some people's lives are recorded in biographies because of what they have done—their unusual individual accomplishments earn them a place in history, like Joan of Arc or Adolf Hitler. Others' stories are published because they shed light on events happening around them. These subjects are viewers and interpreters of their place and time, like Thura Al-Windawi in *Thura's Diary*. Fill out the **Doer or Viewer?** worksheet about the subject of your biography.

Comprehension #12



Contrasting Biographies

15

Find and read a second biography about the subject of your book. Compare and contrast the two books. Look for similarities and differences in tone and overall theme or message. Write a one-page essay

or create a display that answers the following questions. What different things did you learn from each? Do they tell the same events? Do they give you the same or different impressions about the character and importance of the person? Who is telling the story? Does the author's relationship to the subject change the way the story is told? Explain which book you like best and why.



Comprehension #13

Prejudice in Biography

20

In some biographies, the subject is a victim of discrimination or a spreader of prejudice. Look up the words "stereotype," "discrimination" and "prejudice." In your own words, write the definition

of each. Does your book include examples of stereotyping, discrimination or prejudice? If so, write three to five paragraphs to answer the following questions. What person or group of people is the object of these ideas? Why? Do you think the subject of your biography was a victim of prejudice? Use examples from the book to support your answers.

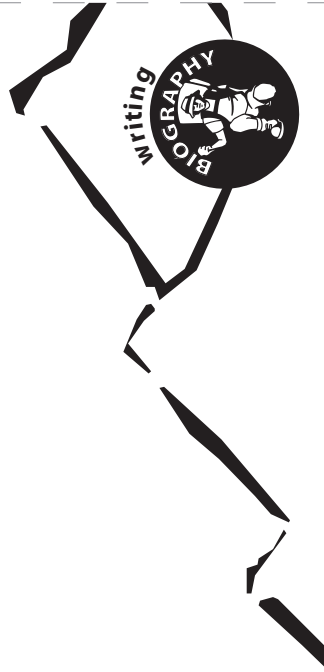


Comprehension #14

My “Must Read” List

5 Visit your school or public library. Find the children's biography section and browse through it. Then make a list of five books from the collection that you would like to read. List title and author for each book.

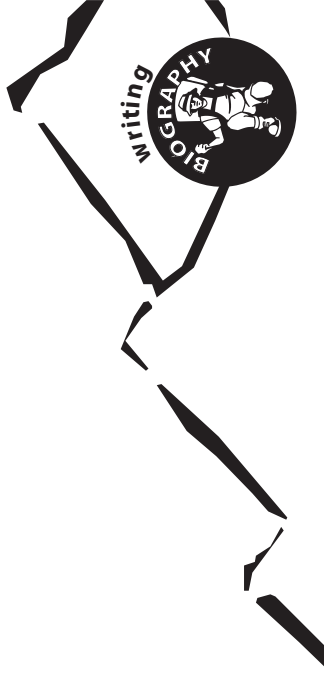
Writing #1



Questions

5 After reading your biography, think about what questions you would ask the subject if you could meet him or her. Write at least five questions. Avoid “yes/no” questions! Be sure your questions would require answers that would make for an interesting conversation.

Writing #2



Bibliography Search

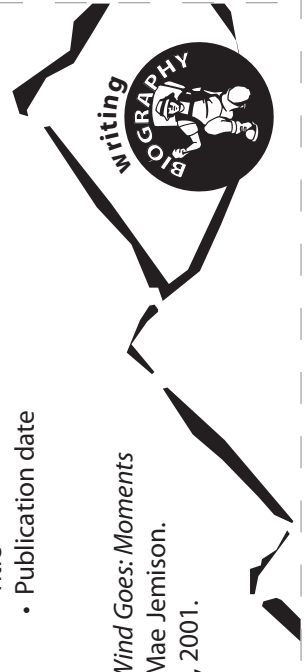
5 Can you find other biographies written about the subject of your book? Look at the end of your book, check your library and do an Internet search using the person's name to find two or three other books. Then create a bibliography of those biographies. Ask your teacher for a sample bibliography format or use the format used in the Recommended Reading List. Include at least these details about each book:

- Author
- Title
- Publisher
- Publication date

EXAMPLE:

Find Where the Wind Goes: Moments from My Life by Mae Jemison. Scholastic Press, 2001.

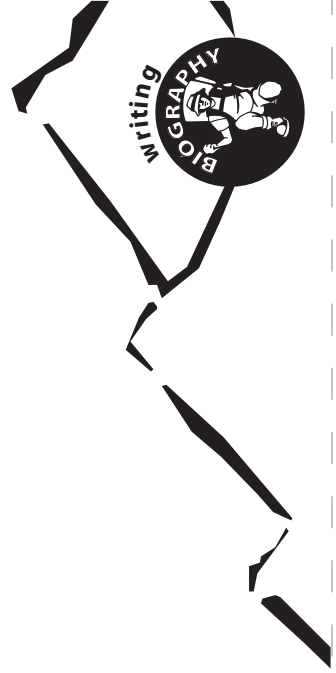
Writing #3



Introducing ...

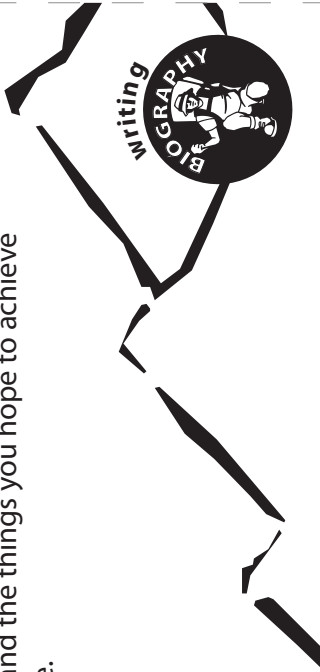
10 Imagine that you've invited the subject of your biography to visit your school. It's your job to introduce this person to your fellow students. Write a two- or three-paragraph introduction that describes this person and his or her accomplishments, and makes others want to listen to what he or she has to say.

Writing #4



My Obituary

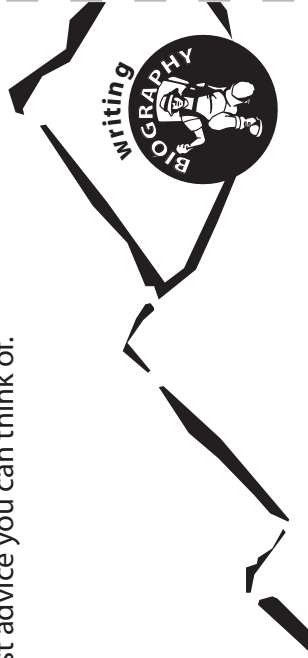
10 How do you want history to remember you? What records would you like to leave behind for a biographer to use in writing your story? Look through obituaries in your local newspaper. Notice how they're written and what information they include. Then write an obituary for yourself. Tell about the life you hope to lead and the things you hope to achieve before you die.



Writing #5

"Dear Abby ..."

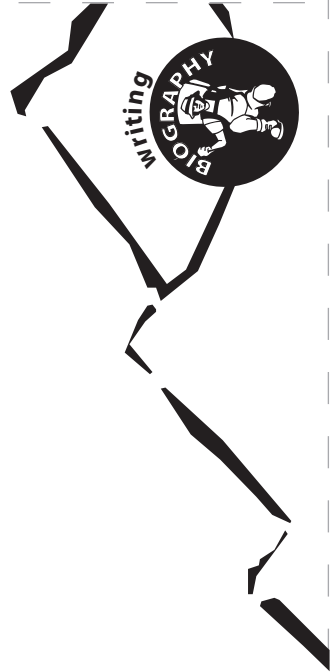
10 Find an example of an advice column like "Dear Abby" in your local newspaper. Think about a problem the subject of your biography faces or a decision he or she needs to make. Pretend you are that person and write a letter to an advice columnist about that issue. Earn five extra points by writing the columnist's reply, offering the best advice you can think of.



Writing #6

Position Paper Outline

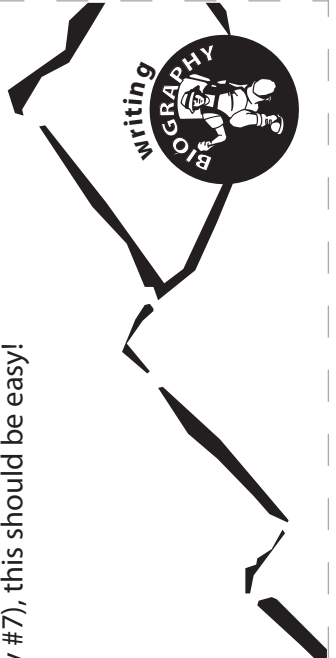
10 Write an outline for a paper either agreeing or disagreeing with this statement: "Only people with money and education can make history." Think through your main points and arguments. Include specific reasons and examples that support each point. Include information from your book if it supports your opinion.



Writing #7

Position Paper

15 Write a one- to two-page position paper either agreeing or disagreeing with this statement: "Only people with money and education can make history." Be sure to explain your position by clearly setting forth arguments. Support each argument with reasons and examples. If you completed the Position Paper Outline (Writing Activity #7), this should be easy!



Writing #8

Celebrity Dialogue

15

What if Jackie Robinson could meet Derek Jeter? Or President Bush could meet President Lincoln? Think of two famous people from different periods of time and imagine them meeting unexpectedly. Who did you choose to put together? Make a list of what they have in common and what they might talk about. From the information on your list, write one page of dialogue that might occur between them.



Writing #9

Wonder Women Hall of Fame

15

Consider a famous woman from the past or present. Find out all you can about her. Then write a one-page essay nominating that woman to the "Wonder Women Hall of Fame." Be persuasive! Include all the reasons why she should be inducted. Earn five extra points by arranging to read your essay to the class. Then have your classmates vote yes or no on your nomination. Did you convince them?

HINT: *Lives of Extraordinary Women: Rulers, Rebels (and What the Neighbors Thought)* might help you get started.

Writing #10



Quiz Time

15

Create a quiz to test your classmates' knowledge of the subject of your biography. Include at least three multiple-choice questions, three true/false questions, three short answer fill-in-the-blanks questions and one short essay question. Create an answer sheet for your quiz, including a sample response for the short essay question. Earn five extra points by having a classmate or family member take your quiz.



Writing #11

Ode to a Person ...

15

An **ode** is a *rhyming poem written to praise or honor someone or something*. Odes are usually formal in tone and use lofty-sounding language. Write an ode to the subject of your biography. Your ode can be serious and formal. Or you might poke fun at the stiffness of odes by writing something light and silly, like "Ode to the Cream Puff" from *Minnie and Moo: Will You be My Valentine?*

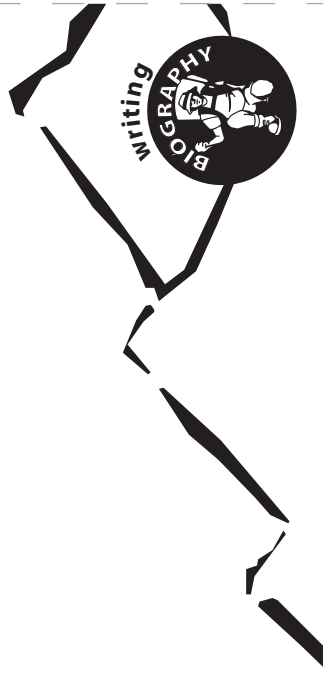


Writing #12

Professional Puns

15 Write eight **puns**—jokes or riddles based on words with more than one meaning—about different jobs or professions.

EXAMPLE: "The good thing about my job is that nothing bugs me." (Exterminator)

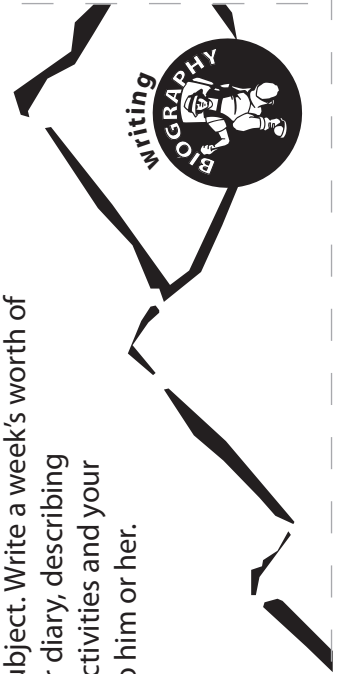


Writing #13

Mouse in the Corner

20 In *Ben & Me* by Robert Lawson and *The Mouse of Amherst* by Elizabeth Spire, mice tell their fictional versions of the lives of the subjects of their stories (Ben Franklin and Emily Dickinson, respectively).

After reading your biography, pretend that you are a "mouse in the corner," watching the daily life of your biography's subject. Write a week's worth of entries in your diary, describing the person's activities and your relationship to him or her.



Writing #15

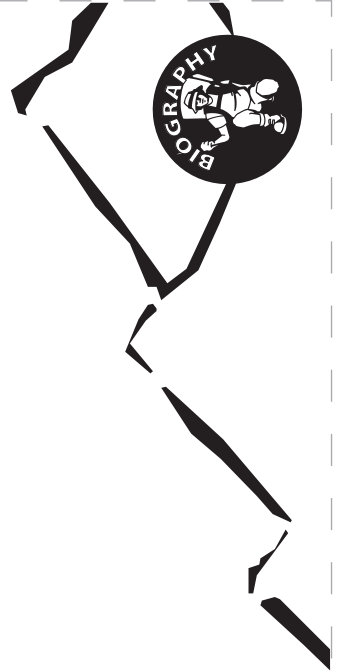
Changing Point of View

15 Choose a passage or short chapter from a biography that interests you. It might be from your assigned book or another biography.

- If the book is an autobiography, rewrite the passage as though it were written by someone other than the subject—in other words, as if it were biography instead. Think about how the change in voice, or point of view, might change how the passage reads. Shift to the third person "he, she, they, them, hers, theirs ..."

- If it is biography, rewrite the passage as if it were written by the subject. Get into the mind-set of the subject by writing in first person, using the pronouns "I, we, me, my, mine ..." to tell the story.

Writing #14



Who Wrote That?

5 The following people are well-known writers of biographies for children. Select one and make a list of at least five of his or her books. Then create a small classroom display celebrating this author and his or her nonfiction books.

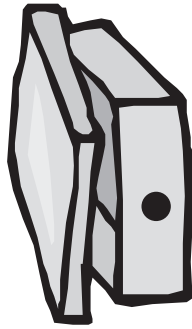
- David A. Adler
- Demi
- Dennis Fradin
- Russell Freedman
- Jean Fritz
- James Cross Giblin
- Andrew Glass
- Kathleen Krull
- Kathryn Lasky
- Peter & Connie Roop
- Diane Stanley
- Judith St. George

Challenge #1



Diorama

5 Make a diorama of a scene from your subject's life. Include an explanation of the scene. Share your diorama with your class.

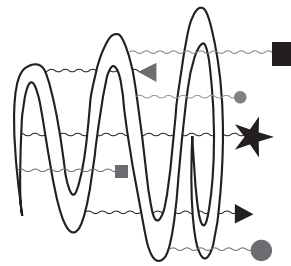


Challenge #2

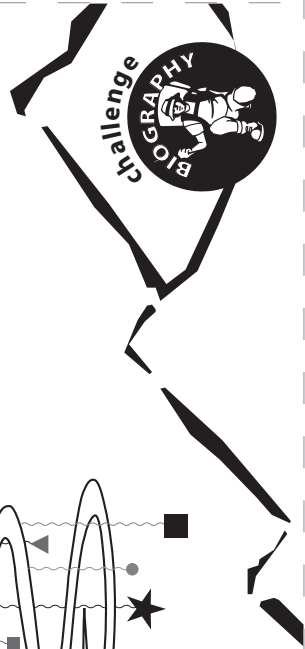


My Life in Symbols

10 Use the **My Life in Symbols** instruction sheet to create a kinetic sculpture (mobile) that represents your life.



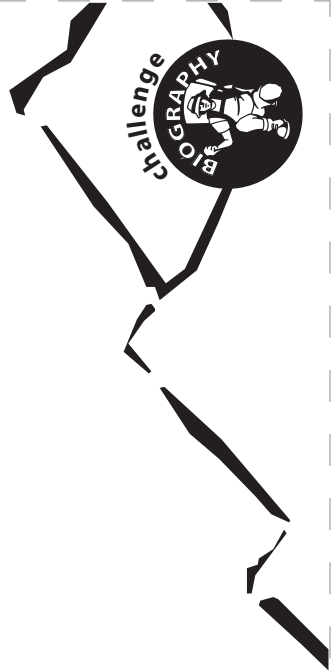
Challenge #3



The Perfect Gift

10 After reading your book, think about what would be the perfect gift for the person you read about. Make the gift, or a model or drawing of it. Write two or three paragraphs describing why this is the perfect gift.

Challenge #4



Poll: Who's Making History?

10

Poll your classmates for the names and activities of people they think are making history today—and will be remembered by history tomorrow—in the local community, the United States and the world. Use the **Poli: Who's Making History?** ballot. After students complete the ballots, count the votes and announce winners and runner-ups in each category. Include your calculations with the list of winners. Earn five extra points by arranging for a local winner to visit your class and talk about his or her history-making activities.

Challenge #5



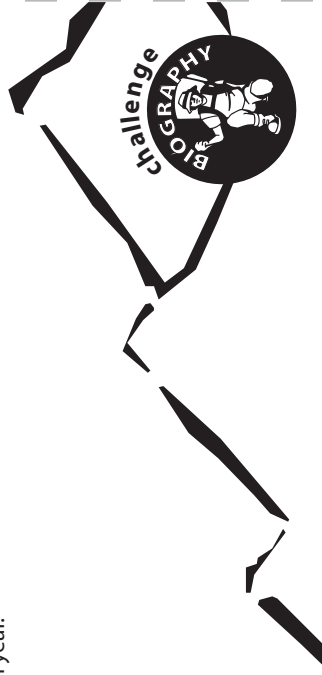
My Life in Context

10

Create a time line of events for each year of your life. Include a mix of important events in your personal life and things going on in the world around you. Decorate your time line as attractively as you can.

NOTE: Remember that time lines have equal intervals representing each year.

Challenge #6



The Award Goes to ...

15

Did the subject of your biography win any special awards or recognition?

- If the subject won an award or received recognition, use classroom or library resources or the Internet to learn all you can about the award and why your subject won.
- If the subject did not, do you think he or she should have? Research awards in your subject's areas of achievement and identify one you think he or she deserved to win.

- Either way, create a poster announcing the real or imaginary award. Show the name of the award, any logos or slogans associated with it, a picture of your subject, and a statement explaining why he or she won.

Challenge #7



You're the Storyteller

15

Choose an **anecdote** (short narrative that tells about a specific incident or experience in a person's life) from your book. Pick one that gives a feel for the person and stands alone as a story with a beginning, middle and end. Read the story until you know it well. Don't memorize it word for word.

Instead, understand the sequence, the overall point of the story and the interesting details that fill it out. Practice telling the story without looking at it; making changes as you wish so that it is exciting yet true to the original. Use appropriate expression in your voice, face and gestures to help tell the story. When you're ready, tell the story to your Travel Agent. Earn five extra points by arranging to tell it to the whole class.

Challenge #8



Characters in Caricature

15

A **caricature** is a drawing of a person with some aspect of his or her face exaggerated for humorous effect. You'll find great examples in *Lives of Extraordinary Women: Rulers, Rebels (and What the Neighbors Thought* and on the editorial page of most newspapers). Create a caricature of the subject of your biography.

Challenge #9



Your Family Tree

15

Part of what makes you who you are—what makes your story special—is your particular family history. Become an amateur **genealogist** (student of family history). Talk to your parents and grandparents and research your family history to learn all you can about your ancestors. Then summarize your findings using the **Your Family Tree** organizer. Try to show at least four generations.

Challenge #10



Wheaties® Box Biographies

15

You may have read about famous athletes on boxes of Wheaties. What if Wheaties decided to feature people from other professions? Who would you nominate as the first non-athlete to appear on a breakfast cereal box? Visit a grocery store (or your kitchen cupboard!) and study the sports biography on a Wheaties box. Note the picture, write-up and overall design. Then create your own cereal box biography of a worthy subject of your choice, using the real box as your model.

HINT: To get ideas, visit www.biography.com and browse through different categories.

Challenge #11



Primary Sources

15

A **primary source** is an original record or eyewitness account created at the time of an event that gives first-hand information about it. Examples include diary entries, original letters or speeches, newspaper articles or legal documents like birth certificates. Find a primary source that relates to the subject of your book. If there are no examples of primary source documents in your book, try an Internet search of the subject's name. Mount a copy of the document on poster board to display in the classroom. Write **wall text**—a brief explanation of the document and what it tells about the person, like you would see in a museum. Find a place in your classroom or library to display your poster and wall text.

Challenge #12



Explaining Science

20

Is the subject of your biography a scientist or inventor? Are you? Choose an invention or scientific theory. Study it until you understand the scientific principles on which it is based and how it works. Then explain and/or demonstrate it to the class so that even those who have a hard time with science understand it.



Challenge #13

Life Wisdom

20

Choose one of the following famous quotations. Write a one-page opinion paper agreeing or disagreeing with the statement. Use real-life examples to support your position.

- "Honesty is the best policy." (Miguel de Cervantes)
- "Don't put off until tomorrow what you can do today." (Traditional)
- "It is better to light a single candle than to curse the darkness." (Ancient Chinese proverb)
- "No one can be perfectly free until all are free." (Herbert Spencer)



Challenge #14

Penmanship Practice

Biography

Traveler name(s): _____

Vocabulary words:

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____
- 9 _____
- 10 _____
- 11 _____
- 12 _____



Compound Words

Biography

Traveler name(s): _____

A **compound word** is a word that is *made up of two or more other words put together*. Their separate meanings work together to make up the meaning of the compound word. Some examples are "sunrise," "matchbox" and "underwear." There are seven compound words on the biography Vocabulary List. Find them and fill out a row on the chart below for each. One word is done for you. Then use each word in a sentence to show that you understand its meaning.

Compound Word	Component Words	Word #1 meaning	Word #2 meaning	Compound Word meaning
<i>stereotype</i>	<i>stereo + type</i>	<i>stereo = copied from fixed pattern</i>	<i>type = kind or group</i>	<i>fixed, rigid idea of something applied to a whole group</i>

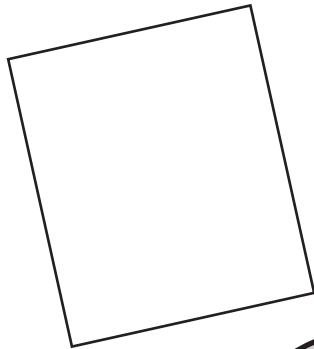
Word Map Sample

Biography

Traveler name(s): _____

Word maps can help you review and build on what you've learned about your words.
Complete the word map sample below based on the word "biography."

Sketch the cover of a biography you'd like to write. Show the title, the name of the subject and an appropriate picture.



Which of these are subgenres of biography?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Dictionary | <input type="radio"/> Collective biography |
| <input type="radio"/> Autobiography | <input type="radio"/> Short story |
| <input type="radio"/> Memoir | <input type="radio"/> Diary or journal |
| <input type="radio"/> Exposé | <input type="radio"/> Nonfiction |

Vocabulary Word

BIOGRAPHY

Answer these prompts about the vocabulary word:

Part of speech: _____

Number of syllables: _____

Plural form: _____

Which syllable is stressed? _____

Adjective form: _____

Form of word that describes a person who writes biography: _____

Write the names of five people you'd expect your library or media center to have biographies about in its collection.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Word Map

Biography

Traveler name(s): _____

Word maps can help you review and build on what you've learned about your words. Create your own word map for one of your vocabulary words. Use questions and prompts that are appropriate for your word.

A word map diagram consisting of a central light gray oval with a dark border. Inside the oval, the text "Vocabulary Word" is centered above a horizontal line. Four dotted lines extend from the top, bottom, left, and right of the oval, forming a cross shape.

Basic Story Elements

Biography

Traveler name(s): _____

Title of book: _____

Type of biography (Subgenres: Check all that apply):

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Individual biography | <input type="radio"/> Memoirs |
| <input type="radio"/> Collective biography | <input type="radio"/> Biographical anecdote |
| <input type="radio"/> Autobiography | <input type="radio"/> Diary or Journal |

Setting (time and place):

Subject (who it's about):

Tone of story (funny, serious, tragic, etc.):

Short plot summary (what happens):



Doer or Viewer?

Biography

Traveler name(s): _____

Some people's lives are recorded in biographies because of what they have done—their unusual individual accomplishments earn them a place in history, like Joan of Arc or Adolf Hitler. Others' stories are published because they shed light on events happening around them. These subjects of biography are viewers and interpreters of their place and time, like Thura Al-Windawi in *Thura's Diary*. Complete this worksheet about the subject of your biography, responding to questions in the appropriate box.

Subject of Biography: _____

Is or was this person a doer or a viewer?

DOER

What unusual things did he or she accomplish that made his or her life "history"?

Do his or her accomplishments affect your life today? If so, how? If not, why not?

VIEWER

What important events does he or she interpret for us?

How is he or she related to the events? What makes his or her perspective important and interesting? What did you learn from his or her point of view that you didn't know before?

My Life in Symbols

Biography

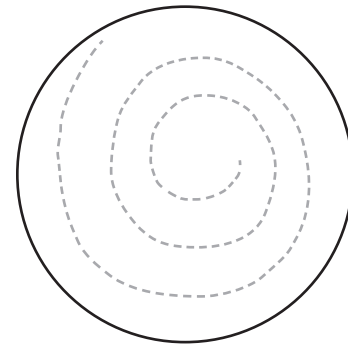
Traveler name(s): _____

Follow these steps to create a kinetic sculpture (mobile) that represents your life.

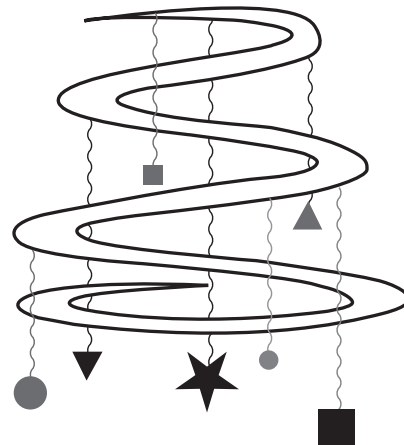
- 1 Think of six to nine words that express different parts of your life. You might think of studious, musical, athletic, friend, etc.

- 2 Then think of six to nine objects that relate to your words. For the words above, you might think of a schoolbook, a violin, a soccer ball, your best friend or your pet.
- 3 Gather your materials. You'll need a paper plate, assorted construction paper or card stock, a pencil, crayons and felt-tip markers, scissors, colored yarn and tape.
- 4 Use the construction paper or card stock to cut out a simple shape to represent each of your objects. Write the corresponding word on both sides of each shape.

- 5 Decorate both sides of your paper plate.
- 6 Use a pencil to draw a spiral on one side of your plate from the edge to the center. Cut along the line, forming a coil.



- 7 Cut three to five different lengths of yarn to hang your shapes and one piece to hang the mobile.
- 8 Use tape to attach one piece of yarn to the center of the paper plate (now the top of the coil) for hanging up the mobile.
- 9 Attach two or more of your shapes to the other pieces of yarn. Hang the shapes in different spots on the yarn.
- 10 Attach the pieces of yarn to the coil so that they form an attractive, balanced mobile.



Poll: Who's Making History?

Biography

In your opinion, who is making history today and who will be remembered by history tomorrow? Vote for three history makers, one from your local community, one from the United States (national) and one from the world (global).

HISTORY MAKERS • HISTORY MAKERS • HISTORY MAKERS

LOCAL

My nomination:

His/her history-making activities:

Why I think his/her story will be remembered:

NATIONAL

My nomination:

His/her history-making activities:

Why I think his/her story will be remembered:

GLOBAL

My nomination:

His/her history-making activities:

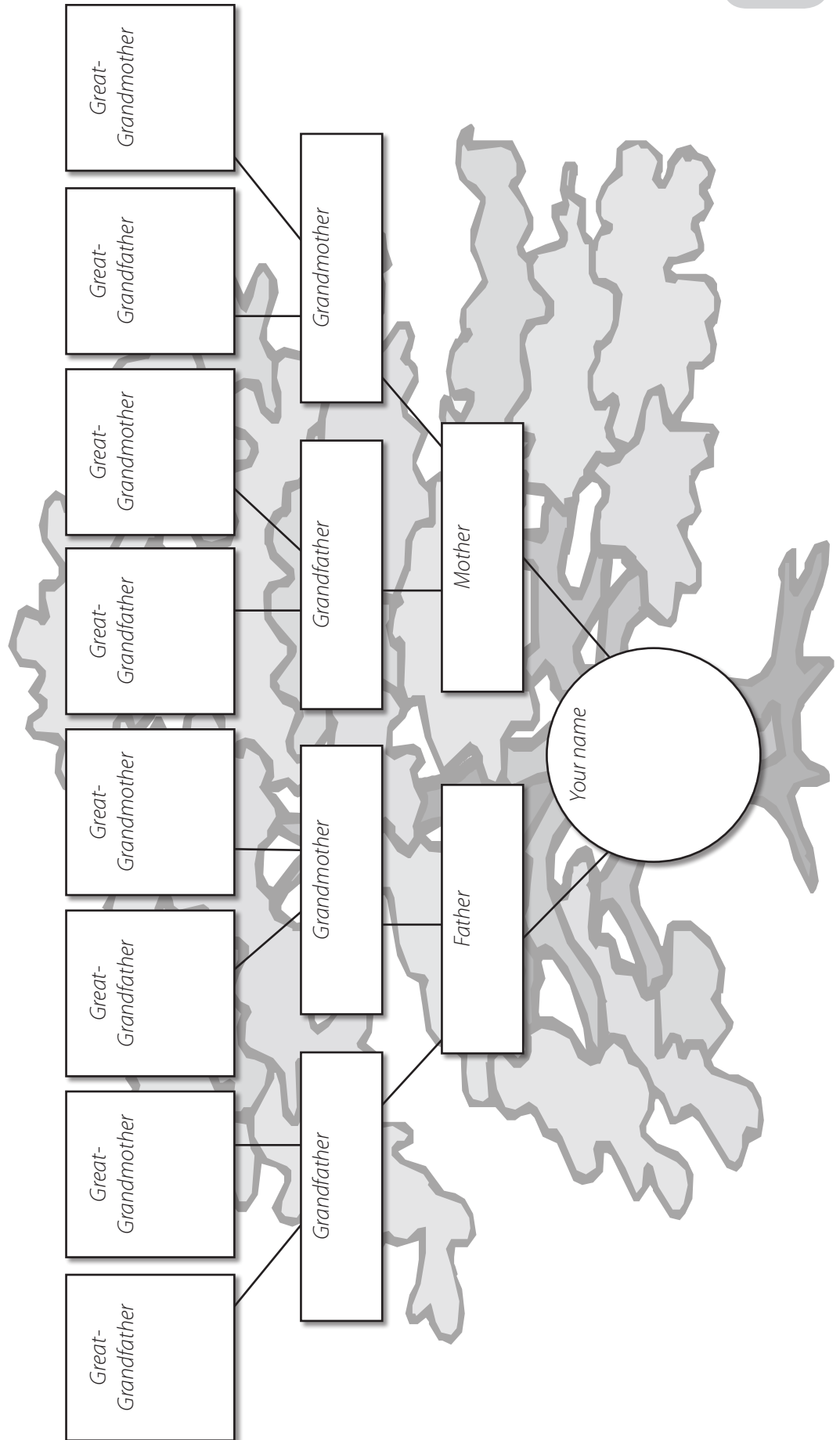
Why I think his/her story will be remembered:

Your Family Tree

Biography

Traveler name(s): _____

Part of what makes you who you are—what makes your story special—is your particular family history. Become an amateur **genealogist** (*student of family history*). Talk to your parents and grandparents and research your family history to learn all you can about your ancestors. Then summarize your findings by making a family tree. Try to show at least four generations.





Animal Stories Table of Contents

Introductory Essay	121
Travel Agreement	122
Recommended Reading List.	123
Vocabulary List	128
Vocabulary List Dictionary Definitions	129
Vocabulary Activity Cards	133
Comprehension Activity Cards.	136
Writing Activity Cards	140
Challenge Activity Cards.	144
Master Worksheets	
Scramble and Unscramble.	148
Subject Circles.	149
Basic Story Elements	150
Character Circles	151
In My Learned Opinion	152
Animal Activism	153

Amazing Animal Stories

Whether you live in the city or the country, animals are part of your life. Do you have, or long for, a pet to love and care for? Live for trips to the zoo? Never tire of watching the critters at a nearby pond? Admire the fierce independence of wild beasts? You may ride horses, hunt or fish for sport. You may use an animal, like a seeing-eye dog or a horse on a cattle ranch, to help with your daily tasks. You probably listen to birds sing, eat meat or eggs, or buy products like leather that used animals in their preparation.

Animal stories explore our complicated relationships with animals and help us learn from and about them. You won't find animals talking and acting like people as in fantasy stories. Instead, the stories in this genre feature animals "as themselves." Animals are the main characters or are important to the plot. In these stories, human characters are closely tied to animals in some way. Animal stories might express the sweetness of a child's love for a pet or the harshness of predator and prey in the wild. You might read about people who mistreat animals, those who rescue them, or animals who rescue people.

You'll find lots of dogs and cats in these stories.

You'll also find lambs, horses, alligators, falcons, wolves, coyotes, foxes, pigeons, burros, bulls and elephants ... enough to satisfy any animal lover! You'll see animals as pets, enemies, food, laborers or simply part of nature.

Reading animal stories can help you look beyond your own experience. Whether you read a heartwarming story of devoted friendship, a raw look at animal fierceness or a troubling tale of human cruelty, you may begin to see the world in a bigger way. And you will probably think of animals with new appreciation and respect.

As you read your animal story, look for the elements mentioned above. How does the story get you involved? How does it teach about animals without having them "speak for themselves?" How does the author feel

about animals and nature? Have fun! You may just discover new thoughts and feelings about the relationship between people and the animals that share our world.

Animal stories subgenres

- **Animals in the wild stories** show how animals live in their natural habitats, focusing on a particular animal or animal family.
- **Kids and their pets stories** share special bonds that form between people and their tame animals.
- **Ecopolitical novels** tell of conflict between people who develop land for profit and those who want to protect wildlife on that land. They often involve animals in danger of extinction.
- **Animal rights/welfare**—in these stories people disagree about how animals should be treated. Are they lesser creatures to be used however people wish, or equal and entitled to equal rights and protection?
- **Animal/human partnerships**—in these stories people and animals work together as willing partners to accomplish something. They often feature working animals and show bonds of understanding and communication that are more equal than those between pet and owner.
- **Animal heroes stories** feature animals risking themselves to rescue people from danger.



se times:

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

Animal Stories Recommended Reading List

NAVIGATORS • Animal Stories

Black Cowboy, Wild Horses by Julius Lester, illustrated by Jerry Pinkney. Dial, 1998. ISBN 0-80371-787-3. Lester and Pinkney, both known for effectively sharing aspects of African American experience, team up to tell the story of Texas cowboy Bob Lemmons, his horse Warrior and the wild mustangs they captured.

← GRADES 2-4

Rescue on the Outer Banks by Candice F. Ransom. Lerner Publishing Group, 2002. ISBN 0-87614-815-1. Ten-year-old Sam Deal and his horse Ginger help a U.S. Life-Saving team rescue the crew and passengers of a sinking ship during a fierce storm in 1879. This story is based on the history of the first African American search and rescue crew, stationed at Pea Island, North Carolina.

2-3

The Salamander Room by Anne Mazer. Alfred A. Knopf, 1994. ISBN 0-67986-187-4. Brian finds a salamander in the woods and brings it home. How will he provide for its needs? Front notes invite students to become “habitat detectives,” carefully observing the complex elements that make up a habitat.

2-4

Smudge, the Little Lost Lamb by James Herriot, illustrated by Ruth Brown. St. Martin's Press, 1991. ISBN 0-31206-404-7. Smudge, a curious lamb, slips under the fence and goes looking for adventure. Will he find his way home safe and sound? Also look for other picture book versions of Herriot's animal stories.

2-4

Sophie's Tom by Dick King-Smith. Candlewick Press, 1994. ISBN 1-56402-373-7. Sophie is small, but mighty in her determination to have things her way in life and, specifically, to be a “lady farmer” when she grows up. In this book Sophie starts school and works the angles to convince her family to take in a stray cat. Lots of fun.

2-4

Throw-Away Pets by Betsy Duffey. Penguin Putnam, 1995. ISBN 0-14034-999-5. Evie and Megan discover three “throw-away” pets doomed to be put to sleep as unadoptable. Can they save the day? Other Pet Patrol series titles offer similar light stories of kids standing up for animals.

2-4

Toro! Toro! by Michael Morpurgo. HarperCollins UK, 2004. ISBN 0-00710-718-8. A grandfather shares with his grandson painful childhood memories of growing up in Spain during the Spanish Civil War. At the center of the story is his love for a young black bull, bred by his family for the bullfight.

3-6

Willa and Old Miss Annie by Berlie Doherty. Candlewick Press, 1994. ISBN 1-56402-331-1. When Willa's family moves, Willa is lonely and friendless, until she meets old Miss Annie and helps her rescue several endangered animals.

2-4

EXPLORERS • Animal Stories**GRADES 4–6**

→ ***Because of Winn-Dixie*** by Kate DiCamillo. Candlewick Press, 2001. ISBN 0-76361-605-2. Opal moves to a small southern town where a big, ugly, lovable dog helps her befriend interesting local characters and overcome her loneliness. A funny, heartwarming Newbery Honor book.

4–6

The Beloved Dearly by Doug Cooney. Simon & Schuster, 2003. ISBN 0-68986-354-3. Ernie is a born businessman. He brings together a group of misfits to join his bizarre business of staging pet funerals. He's all about the money until his own dog dies and he begins to look at things differently. Funny and satisfying.

3–6

Brighty: Of the Grand Canyon by Marguerite Henry. Smith Peter, 2001. ISBN 0-84467-176-2. Free spirited burro Brighty is as lovable as ever, living out his life in the Grand Canyon as it becomes a national park. Brighty blazes trails, fights for his role as leader of a wild burro pack, saves a life or two, and helps catch a murderer. A delightful classic.

4–6

The Chicken Doesn't Skate by Gordon Korman. Scholastic, 1996. ISBN 0-59085-300-7. This book has it all—humor, sports action, quirky characters and a lovable chicken! Nerdy Milo's science fair project on the chicken's role in the food chain brings together an odd mix of middle-schoolers in a crazy tangle of plot lines that somehow all work together.

3–6

Dog of Discovery: A Newfoundland's Adventures with Lewis and Clark, by Laurence P. Pringle. Boyds Mills Press, 2004. ISBN 1-59078-267-4. Pringle uses bits from the real journals of Lewis and Clark, his own words, illustrations and short sidebar notes to tell the story of one of the most famous dogs in history.

5–7

Dogsong by Gary Paulsen. Simon & Schuster, 2001. ISBN 0-68983-960-X. Russell, an Eskimo youth, seeks out a shaman named Oogruk to teach him the old ways. Oogruk sends Russell on a journey of self-discovery across the frozen north by dogsled. Russell faces dangers and forms bonds with his dogs that help him discover his own defining "song." A Newbery Honor book.

5–6

Julie's Wolf Pack by Jean Craighead George. HarperCollins, 1998. ISBN 0-06440-721-7. George continues the story begun in her Newbery-winning *Julie of the Wolves*, this time from the viewpoint of the wolves. A fascinating look at how wolves live in the wild.

3–5

The Missing 'Gator of Gumbo Limbo: An Ecological Mystery by Jean Craighead George. HarperCollins, 1993. ISBN 0-06440-434-X. Liza K. and the "woods people," who live in a forgotten area of the Florida Everglades, panic when a hunter comes to kill the alligator who keeps outsiders away. The homeless nature lovers try to find and save the 'gator and, in solving the mystery of his whereabouts, accomplish surprising victories for themselves and their beloved ecosystem.

On the Far Side of the Mountain by Jean Craighead George. Penguin Putnam, 2001. ISBN 0-14131-241-6. In this sequel to the award-winning *My Side of the Mountain*, Sam's peregrine falcon Frightful is confiscated under laws protecting endangered animals. It's a wonderful adventure story, full of details about wilderness living and new awareness for Sam about respecting wild creatures.

Saving Lilly by Peg Kehret. Simon & Schuster, 2002. ISBN 0-67103-423-5. Sixth graders Erin and David learn about the common mistreatment of circus animals in their TAG program. When their teacher announces a trip to the circus as the reward for a successful class project they protest. The plot thickens when the children discover that Lilly, the circus elephant, is indeed being abused and neglected.

The Trap by Marc Talbert. DK Publishing, 1999. ISBN 0-78942-599-8. Ellie thinks only of revenge after a coyote kills her beloved cat. But when a classmate helps her set a trap near the coyote den the plan backfires. Ellie is forced to consider the difference between the harshness of nature and the cruelty of humans.

Wringer by Jerry Spinelli. HarperCollins, 2004. ISBN 0-06073-948-7. Each year Palmer's town ends its community celebration with a contest to see who can shoot the most pigeons. 10-year-old boys are expected to wring the necks of birds that are wounded but not killed. Palmer doesn't want to be a wringer, but is afraid of being seen as a coward. His problem gets bigger when a stray pigeon befriends him. Disturbing and thought provoking, this one won many awards, including a Newbery Honor.

GRADES 4-6

3-5

4-7

5+



Teaching tip

If providing copies of the reading list to students, cover the grade levels in the margins before copying. Consider making a master reading list to post in your classroom instead of making multiple copies.

ADVENTURERS • Animal Stories

- GRADES 6+** → ***All Creatures Great and Small*** by James Herriot. St. Martin's Press, 1998. ISBN 0-31296-578-8. This first book in the series of Herriot's heartwarming tales of his life as a British country veterinarian has him starting his first job in a small rural town. Both the people and the animals he comes across have unique personalities and quirky stories. Delightful!
- 6-9** ***Beardance*** by Will Hobbs. Simon & Schuster, 2004. ISBN 0-68987-072-8. Cloyd Atcitty, an orphaned Ute boy living with a crusty old Colorado miner, knows that his destiny is tied to the future of grizzly bears in the high country. As he defies all warnings and even the law to protect two orphaned grizzly cubs, he finds his spirit helper and proves himself beyond all expectations. A moving wilderness adventure.
- 5-9** ***The First Horse I See*** by Sally M. Keehn. Putnam, 2000. ISBN 0-69811-867-7. Willo knows at once that Tess is the horse for her. But Tess is skittish and worn by mistreatment. Willo is determined to prove to herself and to her overprotective, emotionally distant father, that she can gentle and control Tess. In the process, she learns about healing wounds of grief, dreaming of first love, and letting go.
- 6+** ***Hoot*** by Carl Hiaassen. Alfred A. Knopf, 2004. ISBN 0-37582-916-4. This Newbery Honor book pits Roy Eberhardt, a middle schooler whose family moves a lot, against both a classic bully and a bunch of greedy corporate types determined to develop land that houses a protected owl species. Likable, strange characters, dark humor and a satisfying ending make this a "must read."
- 7+** ***Papa Tembo*** by Eric Campbell. Harcourt, 1998. ISBN 0-15201-727-5. The story is set in the eerie mystery of an Africa that has changed little in centuries. A demented poacher, motivated by greed and bitter vengeance against an elephant who injured him, searches for his elephant foe. While he stalks Papa Tembo, he is hunted in turn by men who hate his smuggling and brutality to animals. Into the mix come a scientist and his children whose interest in the elephants is both scholarly and compassionate. There is action, suspense, danger and considerable violence as the story moves toward a powerful conclusion. Haunting and intense.
- 7-10** ***Straydog*** by Kathe Koja. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002. ISBN 0-37437-278-0. Rachel is a damaged, lonely teen who scorns the cliques at school. Her passions—writing and animals—come together when a wild dog is brought to the shelter where she volunteers. Rachel identifies with the dog, who is also angry and afraid. She vows to rescue her, and writes movingly about her. The language is sometimes rough and the story bleak, but finally hopeful and beautifully written.

Tiger Rising by Kate DiCamillo. Candlewick Press, 2002. ISBN 0-76361-898-5.

In this dreamlike story two outcast sixth graders, both burdened by emotional pain, find a tiger caged in the woods. The animal represents everything powerful and beautiful that has been locked up within them by their sad life experiences. Freeing the tiger, even with its disastrous results, frees them to accept the truth of their lives and move forward.

White Fang by Jack London. Scholastic, 2000. ISBN 0-43923-619-3. Set during the Klondike gold rush, this novel tells of a half wolf, half dog that is mistreated by both animals and people. He learns cunning and viciousness to survive. Will he be able to trust human kindness and friendship when it is offered? A fiercely satisfying, classic animal adventure.

← **GRADES 6+****6-9**

Animal Stories Vocabulary List

Traveler name(s): _____

Choose 8 to 12 vocabulary words. You may use any of the following words or work with your Travel Agent to come up with your own words.

Adaptable	Mammal
Alpha	Matador
Amphibian	Migrate
Biologically	Omnivorous
Bray	Poacher
Breed	Predator
Camouflage	Prey
Canine	Primate
Carnivorous	Rabid
Domesticated	Refuge
Equestrian	Renegade
Evolution	Reproduce
Extinct	Reptile
Fauna	Rodent
Feline	Ruminant
Feral	Runt
Flock	Safari
Foal	Sanctuary
Gaggle	Species
Graze	Vertebrate
Habitat	Veterinarian
Herd	Vixen
Hibernate	Wildlife
Insect	Zoologist
Instinctively	_____
Litter	_____

a
b
c

Animal Stories Vocabulary List

Dictionary Definitions

Adaptable

Adjective. 4 syllables: a*dap*ta*ble.
When someone or something is able to adjust to its surroundings or environment, or can fit in anywhere with little difficulty.

Alpha

Adjective. 2 syllables: al*pha. When an animal is the most important, dominant or otherwise highest ranked member or leader in its group or family.

Amphibian

Noun. 4 syllables: am*phi*bi*an.
A type of cold-blooded animal that usually has smooth skin and a backbone, such as a frog, toad or salamander.

Biologically

Adverb. 6 syllables: bi*o*lo*gi*ca*lly.
When something has to do with the body or a living organism.

Bray

Noun. 1 syllable: bray. A loud or harsh sound or cry that is typically made by a donkey or horse.

Breed

Noun. 1 syllable: breed. A certain type of animal or plant that is different from other types of animals or plants that are related to it, and is only found under the care of humans; for example, a Labrador Retriever is a specific type, or breed, of dog.

Camouflage

Noun. 3 syllables: ca*mou*flage.
What animals or plants use to make themselves look similar to their surroundings or disguise themselves, usually to hide from other animals or their enemies.

Canine

Noun. 2 syllables: ca*nine. A type of animal that is part of the dog or wolf family of animals (also called the Canidae family).

Carnivorous

Adjective. 4 syllables: car*ni*vo*rous.
When an animal or person regularly eats meat as one of its food sources.

Domesticated

Verb. 5 syllables: do*mes*ti*ca*ted.
When an animal has been tamed, trained or otherwise taught to live with or be helpful to a person.

Equestrian

Adjective. 4 syllables: e*ques*tri*an.
When something has to do with horses and especially with the riding of horses.

Evolution

Noun. 4 syllables: e*vo*lu*tion.
The theory that current people, plants and animals very gradually developed from types of people, plants and animals that lived in the past.



Teaching tip

These informal dictionary-style definitions have been provided to save you time when correcting student work. The word breakdowns provided show syllabic division as indicated in *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh Edition. We have not altered the spelling of the words to show pronunciation or phonetic spelling. For activities that ask students to provide "breakdown by syllable," you may choose to add or substitute a requirement for phonetic spelling and/or end-of-line division (hyphenation).

Extinct

Adjective. 2 syllables: ex*tinct.
When a certain type of plant or animal no longer is living or exists, or when all the members of a certain plant or animal type have died.

Fauna

Noun. 2 syllables: fau*na. The group or groups of animals and plants that live in a certain place or area, or the types of animals and plants that are usually found in places that are alike in temperature or other environmental ways.

Feline

Noun. 2 syllables: fe*line. A type of animal that is a cat or is related to the cat family of animals (also called the Felidae family).

Feral

Adjective. 2 syllables: fer*al. When an animal is wild or untamed or was once tame or lived with people but was then returned to the wild.

Flock

Noun. 1 syllable: flock. A group of animals, often birds, that lives together or is kept or housed together.

Foal

Noun. 1 syllable: foal. A newborn or baby horse.

Gaggle

Noun. 2 syllables: ga*ggle. A group or cluster of geese that lives or travels together.

Graze

Verb. 1 syllable: graze. When an animal eats grass or other growing plants, and usually moves around in a certain area or field to do so.

Habitat

Noun. 3 syllables: ha*bi*tat. The specific place, or environment, where an animal or plant lives in nature.

Herd

Noun. 1 syllable: herd. A group of animals that lives together in the wild, or is kept and housed together by people, such as when a dairy farmer keeps a group of cows together.

Hibernate

Verb. 3 syllables: hi*ber*nate.
When an animal spends the entire winter or any longer period of time sleeping or resting.

Insect

Noun. 2 syllables: in*sect. A small animal that has six legs and a body that consists of three parts, and which also usually has wings.

Instinctively

Adverb. 4 syllables: in*stinc*tive*ly.
To do something in a way that comes completely naturally to a person or an animal, or to react automatically to something rather than thinking about how to react to it.

Litter

Noun. 2 syllables: li*tter. The entire group or family of babies born at one time to one mother animal.

Mammal

Noun. 2 syllables: ma*mmal.

Any animal (including a human!) that is warm-blooded, has a backbone, is covered partially or completely by hair, and which feeds its young on milk that it produces.

Matador

Noun. 3 syllables: ma*ta*dor.

A person or athlete who makes their living fighting and sometimes killing bulls in front of an audience who view the fight as entertainment or a sport.

Migrate

Verb. 2 syllables: mi*grate. To move from one area, country or region to another, sometimes to find new sources of food or better weather or at certain times of the year.

Omnivorous

Adjective. 4 syllables: om*ni*vo*rous. When an animal or person regularly eats both plants and meat as food.

Poacher

Noun. 2 syllables: poa*cher.

A person who illegally hunts or kills animals that are not supposed to be hunted or killed.

Predator

Noun. 3 syllables: pre*da*tor.

An animal that gets most of its food by hunting or killing other, usually smaller or weaker, animals.

Prey

Noun. 1 syllable: prey. An animal that is hunted by other, usually stronger or bigger, animals and is eaten as food.

Primate

Noun. 2 syllables: pri*mate.

Any member of the group of mammals that include apes, humans and monkeys and are characterized by having hands and feet that can grasp things and larger brains than many other animals.

Rabid

Adjective. 2 syllables: ra*bid. Having or being affected by the rabies disease, which often makes animals very angry or vicious.

Refuge

Noun. 2 syllables: re*fuge. A place or shelter in which animals can be safe or protected.

Renegade

Noun. 3 syllables: re*ne*gade.

An animal or person who doesn't do what is expected, or who leaves their regular group or family to go and do something or live somewhere else.

Reproduce

Verb. 3 syllables: re*pro*duce.

To produce new living things of the same kind, as when an animal or a person has a baby.

Reptile

Noun. 2 syllables: rep*tile. A type of cold-blooded animal that has a backbone, breathes air, lays eggs to reproduce and has scales or hard plates for skin, such as snakes, lizards, turtles or alligators.

Rodent

Noun. 2 syllables: ro*dent. Any member of the group of mammals that has sharp front teeth for gnawing, such as mice, rats, squirrels and beavers.

Ruminant

Noun. 3 syllables: ru*mi*nant.
Any animal that has four stomachs and chews its cud, or regurgitated food, from its first stomach, such as cows, deer or sheep.

Runt

Noun. 1 syllable: runt. The smallest animal or offspring in the group of babies born to one mother, or any unusually small animal.

Safari

Noun. 3 syllables: sa*far*i. Any long trip that is taken mainly to go hunting or exploring, and which often refers to hunting trips taken in Africa.

Sanctuary

Noun. 4 syllables: sanc*tu*ar*y. A place or shelter that is built specifically to provide a safe place for animals to live.

Species

Noun. 2 syllables: spe*cies. A group of animals or plants that are similar enough to each other to be able to have babies with one another, and who are all related and are in the same "class" of animals. A group of species makes up a "genus."

Vertebrate

Noun. 3 syllables: ver*te*brate.
Any member of the groups of animals that have backbones extending down the backs of their bodies, such as fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals.

Veterinarian

Noun. 6 syllables: ve*te*ri*nar*i*an.
A doctor who treats the diseases or injuries of animals only.

Vixen

Noun. 2 syllables: vix*en. A female fox.

Wildlife

Noun. 2 syllables: wild*life.
All animals and plants that do not live with humans, or which are not tamed and usually live outside or in nature.

Zoologist

Noun. 4 syllables: zo*ol*o*gist.
A person who studies animals and how they live.

Scramble and Unscramble

5

Write each of your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words on the **Scramble and Unscramble** worksheet. Follow the directions on the worksheet to create a scrambled word game. Once you've created the game pieces, time yourself to see how long it takes to unscramble each of the words. Earn five extra points by convincing a classmate or family member to compete with you to see who can unscramble all the words the fastest.

Vocabulary #1



What Does It Mean?

5

List your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words on a piece of paper, leaving several lines between them. Look up each word in a dictionary. Write down the part of speech, breakdown by syllable (where you pause when saying the word) and the definition. Do not use any form of the word in your definition. Some words have more than one meaning. Choose the definitions that relate to animals or your book.

HINT: Dictionaries break down words in two ways—by hyphenation and by syllable.

EXAMPLE: Jockey: Noun. 2 syllables: jo*ckey. *Person who races horses as a profession.*

Vocabulary #2



Use It!

5

Use each of your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words in a sentence, using each word so that its meaning is clear.

Vocabulary #3



Synonyms or Antonyms

5

Create a table like the one below. Fill in one line for each of your selected vocabulary words. Use your own knowledge and a dictionary or thesaurus to fill in a synonym and/or antonym for each word.

NOTE: Some words don't have antonyms. See examples below.

Vocabulary Word	Synonym	Antonym
feral	wild	tame
reproduce	multiply	none

Vocabulary #4

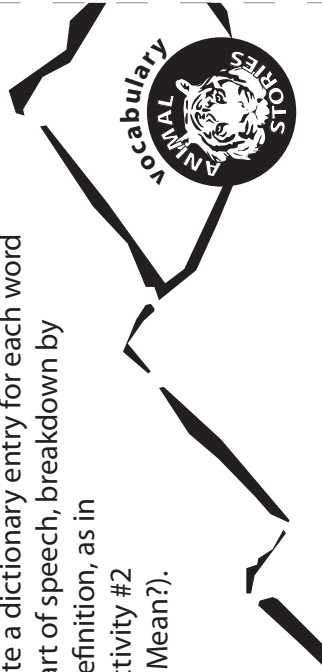


Onomatopoeia

10

Does your book contain examples of **onomatopoeia**—words that sound like what they mean? Many animal sounds are expressed as words that make the sound, like “buzz” for a bee or “cock-a-doodle-doo” for a rooster. If so, make a list of up to 10 examples from your book. Using the context of the story, create a dictionary entry for each word showing its part of speech, breakdown by syllable and definition, as in Vocabulary Activity #2 (What Does It Mean?).

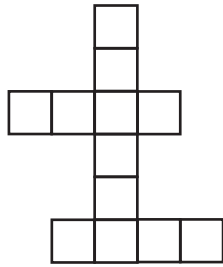
Vocabulary #5



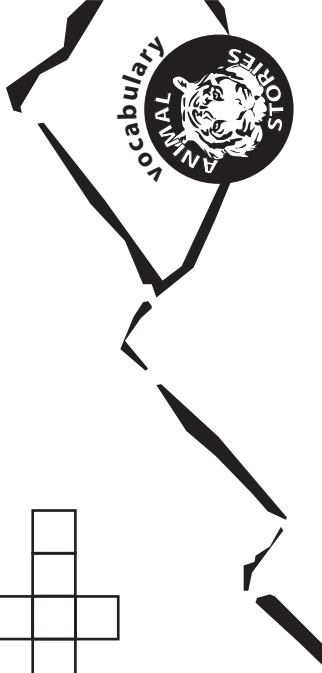
Animal Crossword Puzzle

10

Make a crossword puzzle, complete with clues, using your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words. Challenge a classmate or family member to complete it.



Vocabulary #6



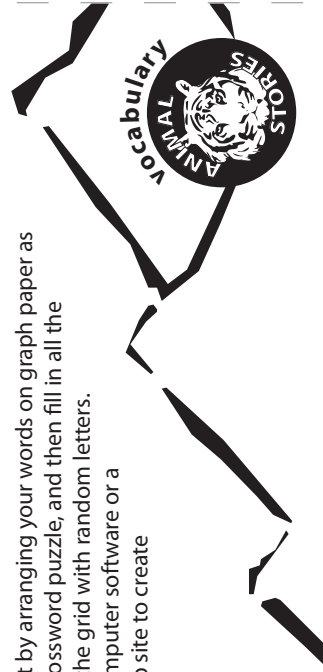
Create a Word Search Puzzle

10

Create a word search puzzle, with a word bank at the bottom, using your selected vocabulary words. Challenge a classmate or family member to find and circle the hidden words. Check the answers and correct any that are wrong using a different color.

HINT: You can start by arranging your words on graph paper as you would for a crossword puzzle, and then fill in all the blank squares on the grid with random letters. Or you can use computer software or a puzzle-maker Web site to create your word search.

Vocabulary #7

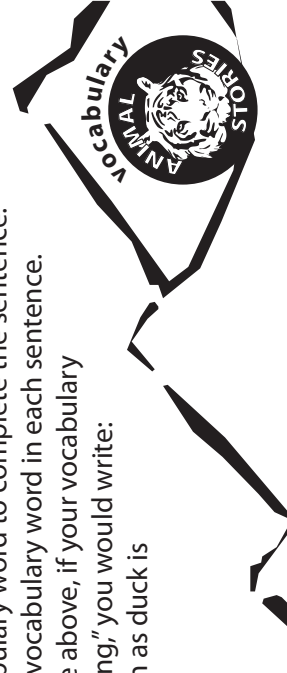


Word Pairs Analogies

15

An **analogy** is a comparison of two things that are alike in some way. For example, the words “duck” and “duckling” are related to each other in the same way that the words “cat” and “kitten” are related. A duck is an adult duckling; a cat is an adult kitten. You can express that analogy by saying: “Duck is to duckling as cat is to kitten.” Create a word pairs analogy for three of your selected vocabulary words. Use your vocabulary word to complete the sentence. Underline the vocabulary word in each sentence. In the example above, if your vocabulary word is “duckling,” you would write: “Cat is to kitten as duck is to duckling.”

Vocabulary #8



Animal Rebuses

15

A **rebus** is a puzzle or riddle that uses simple pictures, letters or numbers to suggest words or parts of words. Here are two examples:



K 9

Canine

Extinct

Create rebuses for at least four of your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words.

Vocabulary #9



Subject Circles

15

Some words seem to go together to suggest a subject. For example, if you were talking about a circus, you'd expect to use words like "clown," "ringmaster," "trapeze" and "elephant." Use the **Subject Circles** worksheet to assign at least 15 words from the animal stories Vocabulary List to the categories "A Country Animal Doctor's Day" and "Studying Animals of the Past."

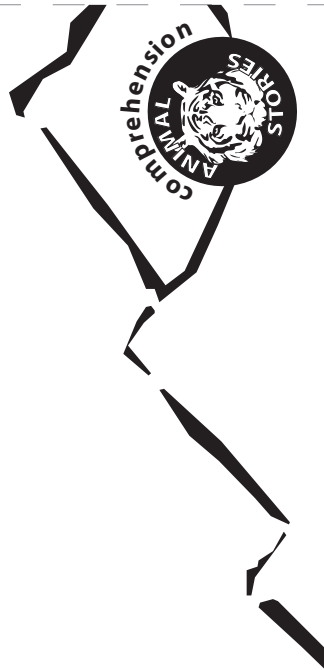
Vocabulary #10



Basic Story Elements

Identify the basic story elements of your book and complete the **Basic Story Elements** worksheet.

5

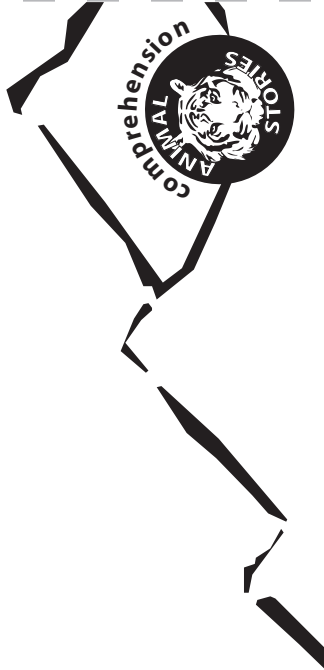


Comprehension #1

Favorite Quotation

Look through the **dialogue** (exact words spoken by characters in the story, usually enclosed in quotation marks). Choose a phrase or comment that you like from one of the characters. Write it down. Then rewrite it in your own words, showing the meaning as you understand it.

5

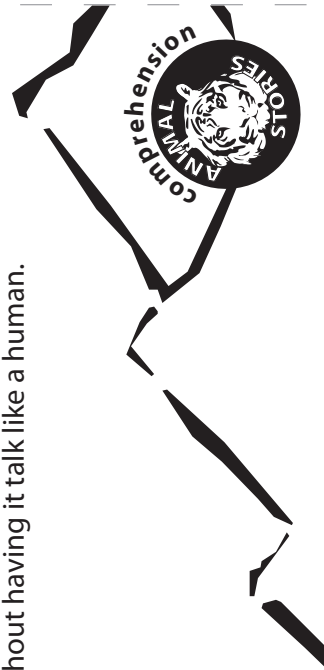


Comprehension #2

Who Tells the Story?

The **narrator** is the person who tells a story—from whose point of view or in whose voice the story is told. Sometimes animal stories are told in the voice of the animals themselves, as in *Julie's Wolf Pack*. Who is the narrator of your story? How do you know? If the narrator is an animal, explain how the animal's point of view is expressed, without having it talk like a human.

5



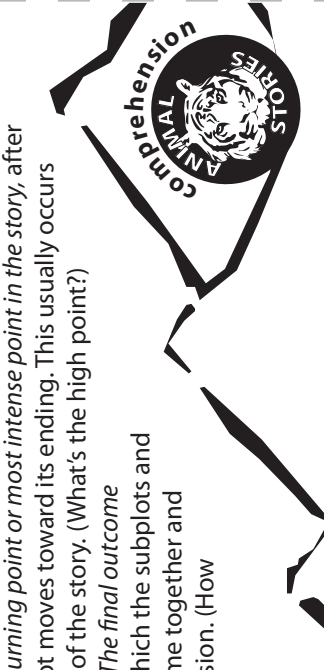
Comprehension #3

Plot Summary

Write a one-page summary of the plot of your book. Include the following things in your summary:

10

- **Title of book or story**
- **Main plot:** The central story that controls the action. (What happens?)
- **Subplots:** Smaller "stories within the story" that add depth and interest. (What else happens?)
- **Climax:** The turning point or most intense point in the story, after which the plot moves toward its ending. This usually occurs near the end of the story. (What's the high point?)
- **Resolution:** The final outcome or result, in which the subplots and main plot come together and reach conclusion. (How does it end?)



Comprehension #4

Animal-Human

10 Relationships

Does your book involve a relationship between a person and an animal? If so, write three to five paragraphs that identify the characters and explain the relationship. Think about the following before writing your paragraph.

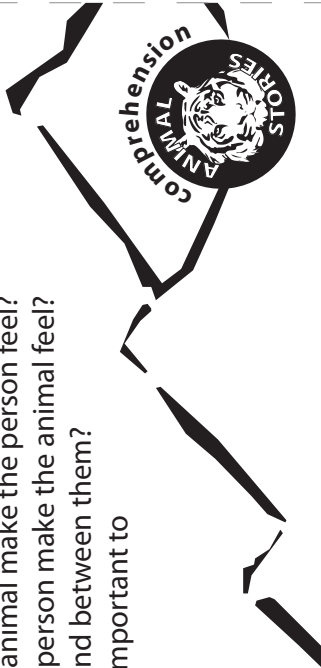
How does the animal make the person feel?

How does the person make the animal feel?

What is the bond between them?

Why are they important to each other?

Comprehension #5



Animal Imagery

10 Authors sometimes build on the subject matter in animal stories by using **animal imagery**—*describing other (non-animal) things in animal terms.*

These comparative words or phrases can draw you into the story and make you think or feel a particular way about what is being described. For example, in *The Trap*, sleep comes to Ellie “on cat feet—stealthily and softly,” and the trap itself is described as having wings, teeth and lips. Write down a few examples of animal imagery from your book.

Then choose three nouns from your story—they might name characters, places, things or feelings—and describe them using animal imagery.

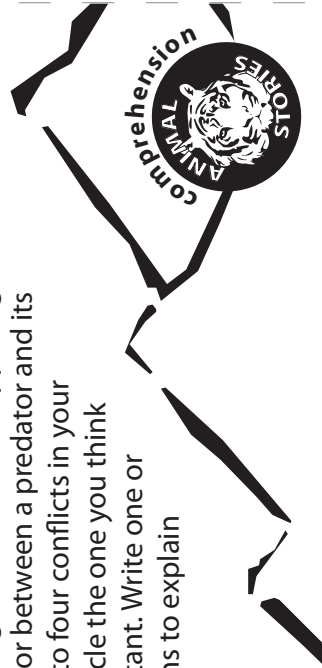
Comprehension #6



Considering Conflict

10 All good stories are moved along by some form of **conflict** (*tension between two opposing characters or forces*). The conflict might be between “good guys” and “bad guys,” between a character and his or her conscience, between a character and some natural force that poses a danger, between two opposing values or viewpoints or between a predator and its prey. List two to four conflicts in your book. Then circle the one you think is most important. Write one or two paragraphs to explain your choice.

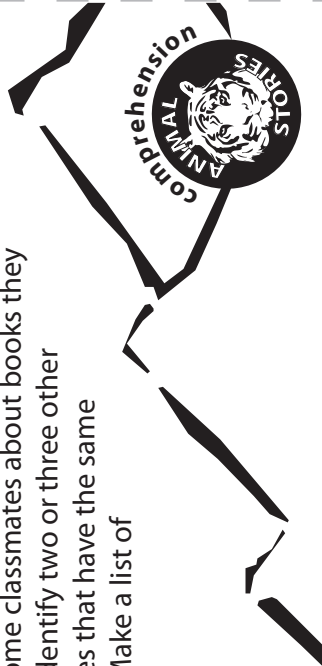
Comprehension #7



Thinking about Themes

10 What is the **theme** (*the main idea or message*) of your book? Write three to five paragraphs that explain what you think the author wants you to get from the story. For example, several of the stories suggest that caring for animals helps us learn about ourselves and become better people. Earn an extra five points by talking with some classmates about books they have read to identify two or three other books or stories that have the same main theme. Make a list of their titles.

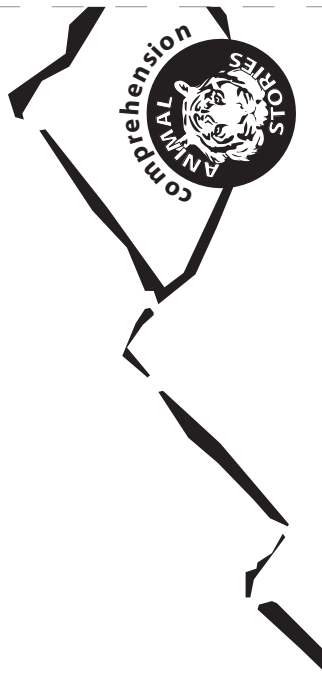
Comprehension #8



Alternate Chapter Titles

15

If your book doesn't have chapter titles, review each chapter and create a title for it that fits its action and meaning. If your book does have chapter titles, make up a different title for each chapter that also fits.

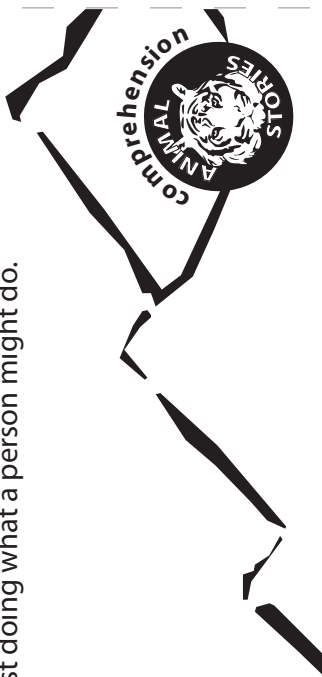


Comprehension #9

"If You Ask Me ..."

15

Choose one problem or conflict that occurs in your story. Put yourself in the place of one of the characters in the conflict and write three to five paragraphs to explain what you would do differently and why. You might choose a human or animal character. If you choose an animal character, try to think like the animal rather than just doing what a person might do.

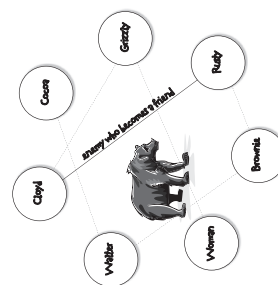


Comprehension #10

Character Circles

15

Create character circles to show the main characters in your book and their relationships to one another. See the **Character Circles** worksheet for instructions and an example based on the book *Beardance*.

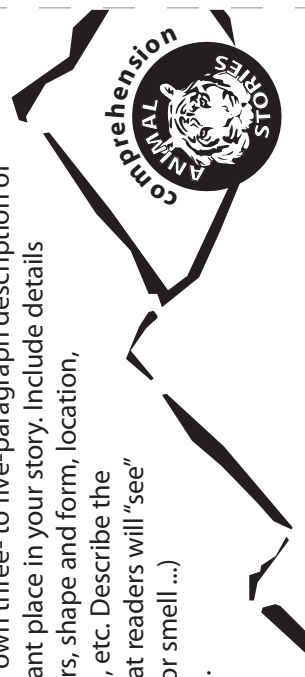


Comprehension #11

Describe a Setting

15

Animal stories are full of descriptive writing. Authors help readers "see" and understand both human and animal characters, places and other aspects of their story. Find a short section in your book that paints a word picture of a place or setting important to the story. Copy it on a piece of paper and read it over several times. Circle the words and phrases that help you "see" what the author wants you to see. Then write your own three- to five-paragraph description of another important place in your story. Include details about size, colors, shape and form, location, natural features, etc. Describe the place so well that readers will "see" (or feel or hear or smell ...) it in their minds.



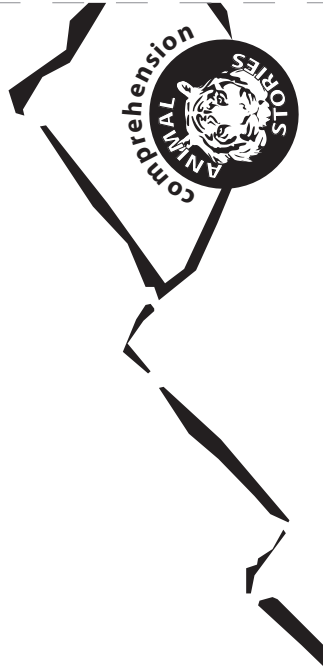
Comprehension #12

In My Learned Opinion ...

Use your best skills of evaluation and summarization to complete the **In My Learned Opinion ...** chart.

15

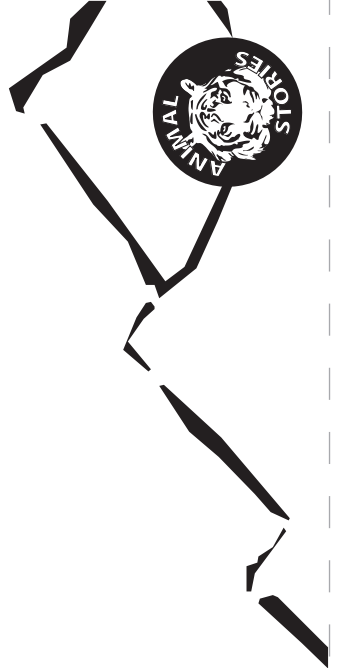
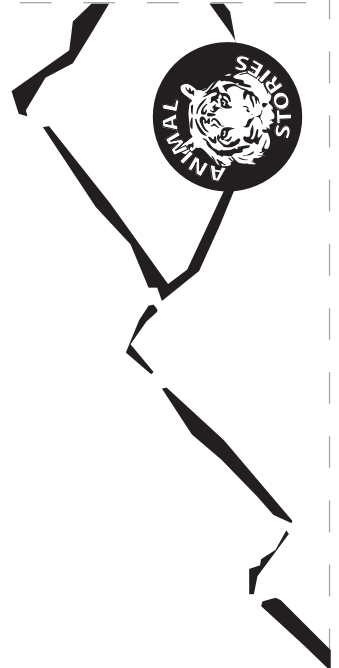
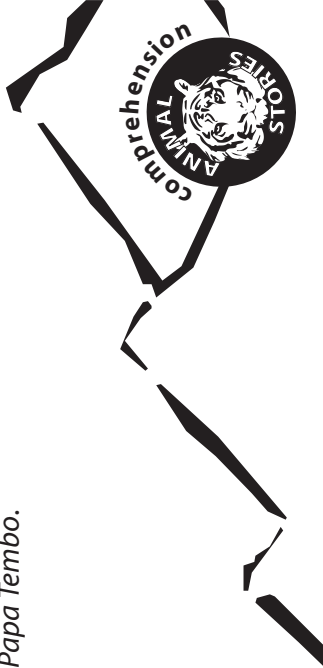
Comprehension #13



Afterword

20 An **afterword** or **epilogue** is a short note at the end of a book. It takes you forward in time to tell you what happened later. Write an afterword or epilogue for your book, imagining and describing what the main characters are like and what has happened to them 10 years after the story ends. An example of an epilogue can be found in *Papa Tembo*.

Comprehension #14

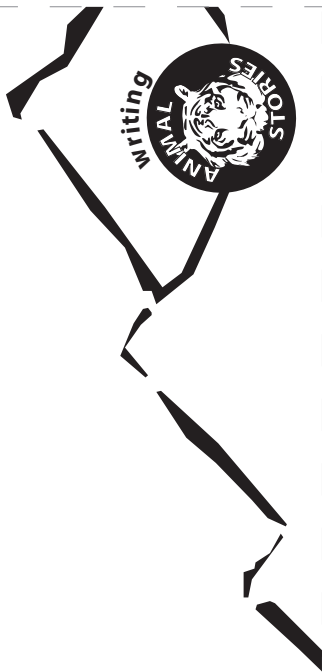


Alphabet of Animals

5 Make a list of animals with names beginning with each letter of the alphabet, from A to Z. For example, you might start with A = aardvark.

HINT: Look for unusual animals, like “emu” rather than “elephant.”

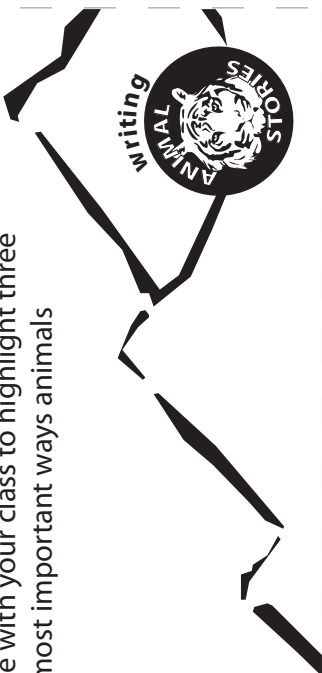
Writing #1



Animals and Me

5 Write this title on a piece of paper: “How Animals Affect Me.” Make a list of ways in which animals are part of your everyday life. Include live animals you meet and also animals that play a part in providing your food, clothing, entertainment, medicines, etc. Make the list as long as you can. Earn five extra points by creating a display to share with your class to highlight three or four of the most important ways animals affect you.

Writing #2

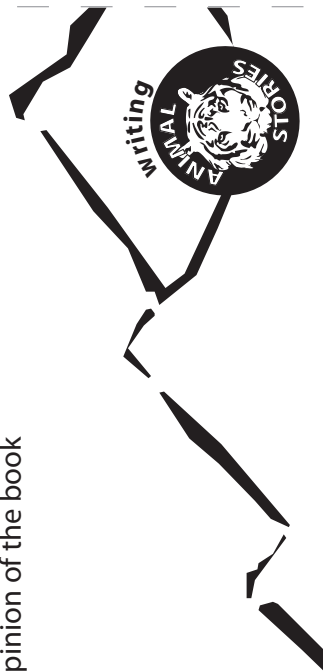


Animal Book Report

10 Write a one-page report on your book. Include these things:

- Title
- Author
- Brief description of the story
- Your opinion of the book

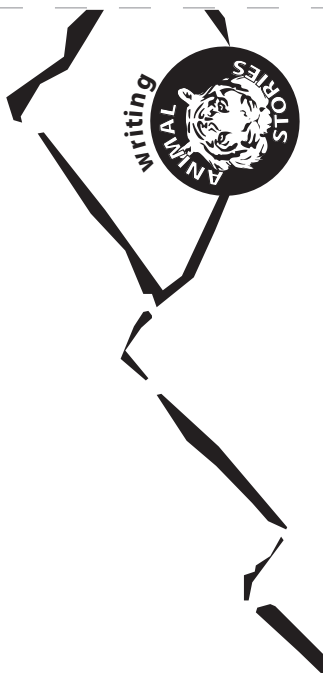
Writing #3



In My Experience ...

10 Write a one-page essay that describes a real-life experience or adventure you had with an animal. It might be sad, funny, scary, exciting or happy. Use words and phrases that help readers see and feel what you saw and felt.

Writing #4

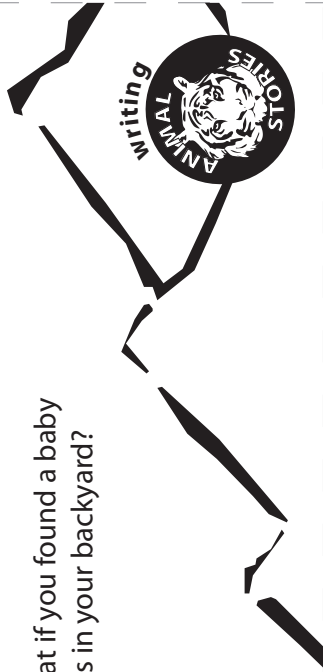


“What If ...”

10 Create five “What if ...” animal story starters like the example below. Then ask a different person to respond to each one of your story starters, and write down what he or she says. You might use their ideas as you complete other writing activities within the animal stories genre.

EXAMPLE: What if you found a baby hippopotamus in your backyard?

Writing #5

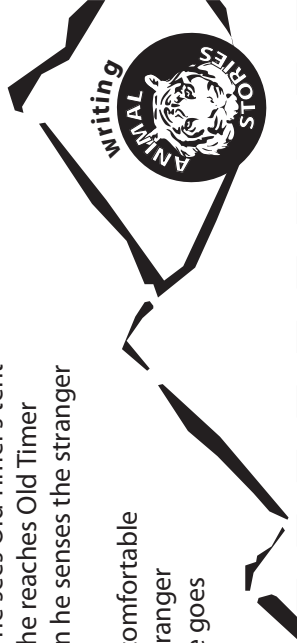


Changing Emotions

10 Choose a favorite character from your book. Then review several chapters, listing in order the feelings your character experiences in the story. Briefly explain what causes his or her emotional responses. For example, from the first chapters of *Brighty of the Grand Canyon*, your list about Brighty might look like this:

- Relaxed when he wakes from a long sleep
- Excited when he sees Old Timer's tent
- Happy when he reaches Old Timer
- Nervous when he senses the stranger approaching
- Watchful, uncomfortable around the stranger
- Content as he goes to sleep

Writing #6

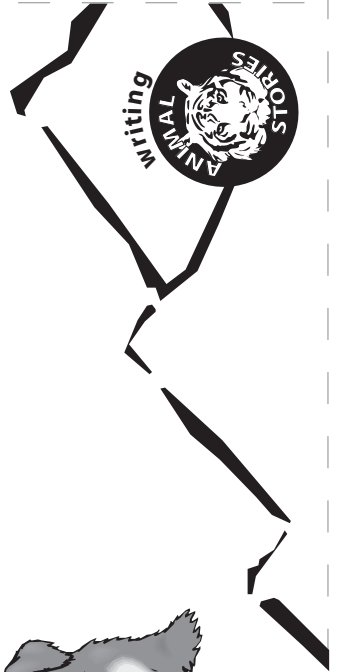


Doggy Diary

10 Watch your pet carefully for a week. Keep notes of its activities. Then write a week's worth of journal entries in the voice of your pet. For each day, write one or two paragraphs in which your pet tells what it did, saw, thought or felt.



Writing #7

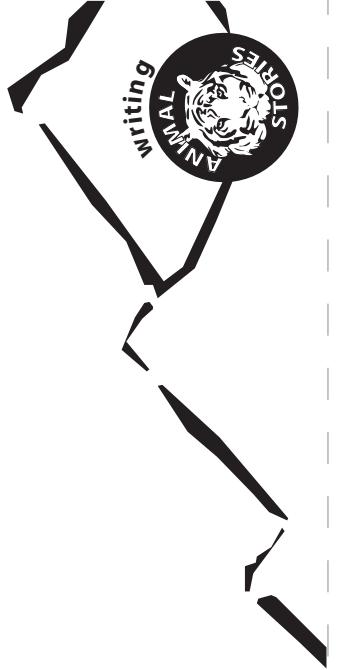


Animal Hero Stories

Outline

10 In *Rescue on the Outer Banks*, the horse Ginger helps rescue the crew of a sinking ship. Write an outline for your own original short story of an animal hero risking itself to save someone in danger.

Writing #8

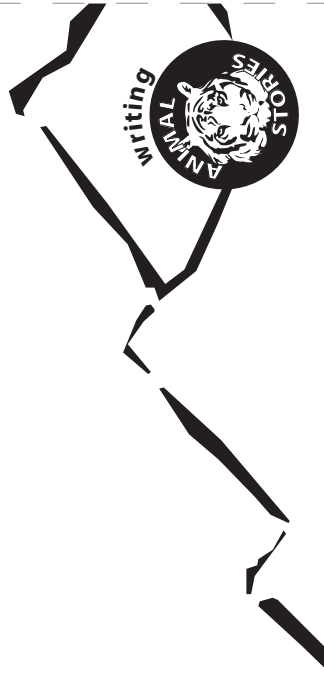


Animals in Song

Write new lyrics for a familiar song. Use your words to create a song that tells about an animal character in your story.

15

Writing #9

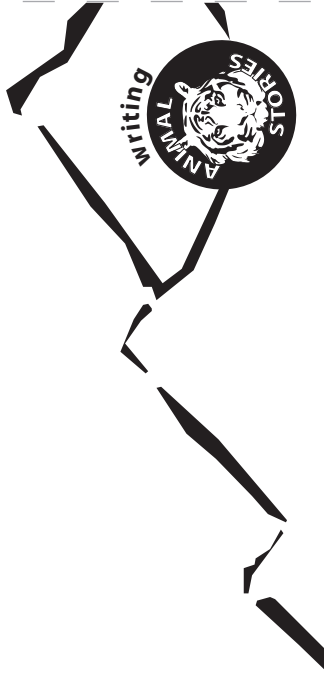


Ode to Fido

Write a poem to or about your pet. Your poem might have a regular rhythm and rhyme scheme, be in free verse, or follow the pattern of a haiku or other structured poem.

15

Writing #10



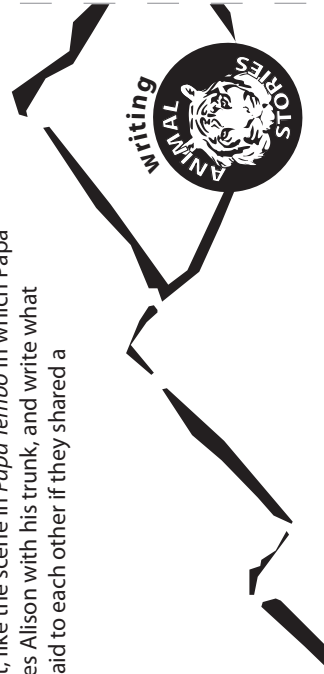
What Would They Say?

Consider the relationship between a human and an animal character from your book. Write an imaginary conversation between them that expresses their relationship.

15

HINT: You might choose a scene from the story in which your characters interact, like the scene in *Papa Tembo* in which Papa Tembo first touches Allison with his trunk, and write what they might have said to each other if they shared a language.

Writing #11



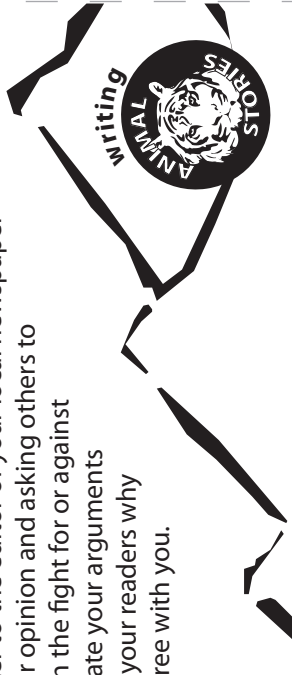
Persuasive Writing Part I

In *Toro! Toro!* Paco comes to believe that bullfighting is really cruelty to animals even though it has a long and glorious tradition as sport in Spain. In the past, Matadors were considered heroes and were highly respected.

15

Traditional bullfighting continues today, though now there are some who strongly support it and others who strongly oppose it. Read about bullfighting. Then imagine yourself living in Spain and write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper expressing your opinion and asking others to join your side in the fight for or against bullfighting. State your arguments clearly and tell your readers why they should agree with you.

Writing #12

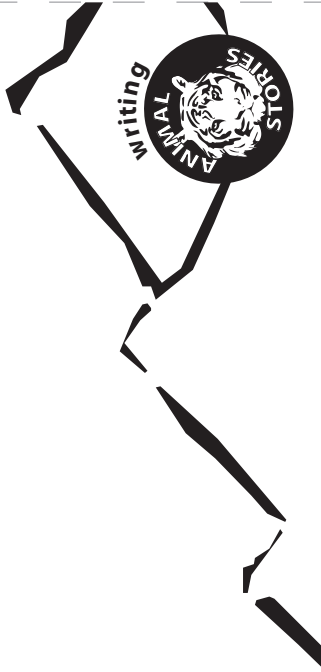


Animal Hero Stories

15

In *Rescue on the Outer Banks*, the horse Ginger helps rescue the crew of a sinking ship. Write your own original short story of an animal hero risking itself to save someone in danger. If you completed the Animal Hero Stories Outline (Writing Activity #8), this should be easy!

Writing #13

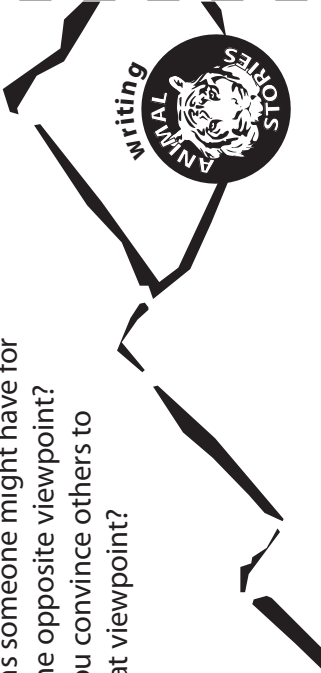


Persuasive Writing Part II

20

It's easy to write persuasively when you really believe in what you're writing. It's harder to see the other side, understand and express a point of view when you disagree. Read about bullfighting. Decide if you are for or against bullfighting. Then write a letter to the editor from the point of view you disagree with. What are the reasons someone might have for believing in the opposite viewpoint? How might you convince others to agree with that viewpoint?

Writing #14

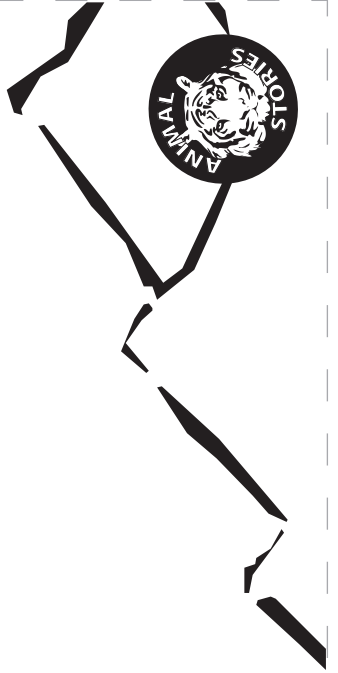
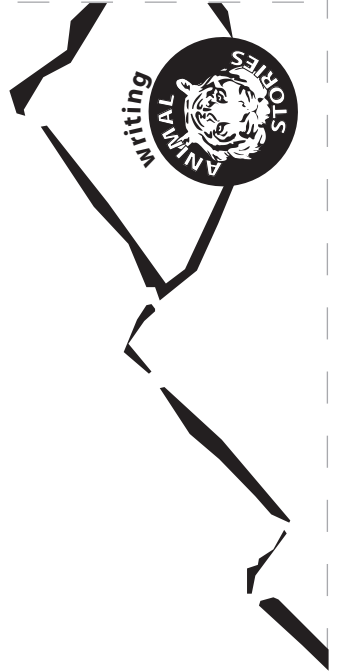


Comedy or Drama?

20

Is your book serious or silly? Depending on the tone of your story, do one of these things. Choose a very dramatic scene and rewrite it as a comedy, or choose a particularly funny scene and rewrite it as serious drama.

Writing #15



Who Wrote That?

5 The following people are well-known writers of animal stories for children. Select one and make a list of at least five of his or her books or stories. Then create a small classroom display celebrating this author and his or her animal books.

- Walter Farley
- Jean Craighead George
- Fred Gipson
- Marguerite Henry
- James Herriot
- Peg Kehret
- Dick King-Smith
- Jim Kjelgaard
- Jack London
- Gary Paulsen
- Wilson Rawls

Challenge #1



Animals with Class

5 Choose an animal. It can be from your story or just a favorite of yours. Make a poster showing its scientific classification including **kingdom** (Animal!), **phylum**, **class**, **order**, **family**, **genus** and **species**. Define or explain each term in the classification as needed.

Challenge #2



Animal Calendar

5 Make a themed calendar like "Pets," "Working Animals," "Desert Animals," "Wild Animals," etc. that features pictures of animals. You can use photographs, clippings from magazines or drawings you create yourself. Use single photos or create collages that represent your animal theme.

Challenge #3



Do the Math

10 Using classroom and media center resources, study the reproductive habits of cats. Find out how often they can become pregnant, how long they carry their young and how many kittens make up an average litter. Make notes about the resources you use and what you learn. Then estimate how many cats could be produced in a year, starting with one unsprayed female.

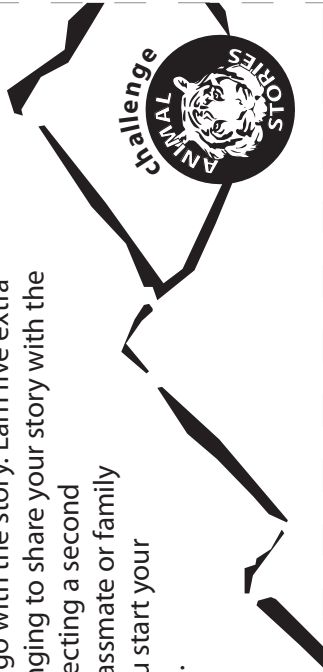
Challenge #4



Real-life Animal Stories

10 Many families have favorite stories that they tell over and over and share from generation to generation. Sometimes those stories involve family pets, livestock or wild animals. Ask an older relative or friend to tell you a story about an animal in his or her past. Write down the story or tape it using a cassette or video recorder. Make your own illustrations to go with the story. Earn five extra points by arranging to share your story with the class or by collecting a second story from a classmate or family member as you start your own collection.

Challenge #5



Animal Rights vs. Animal Welfare

10 Use classroom and media center resources, including the Internet, to study the Animal Rights and Animal Welfare movements. Compare the goals and beliefs of these two movements by making a graphic organizer like the one below. Label one circle "Animal Welfare" (A), label the other "Animal Rights" (B) and label the overlapping area "Either" (AB) to show the shared and differing ideas of the two movements.



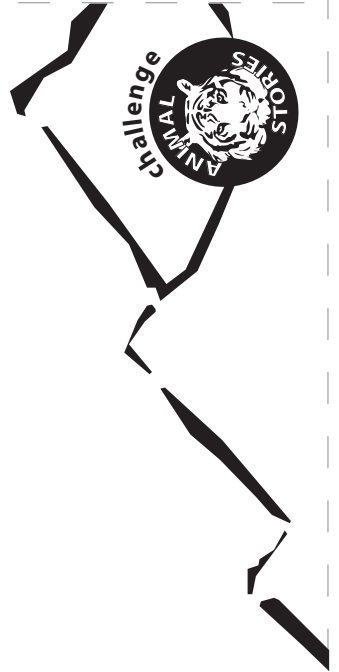
Challenge #6



If I Could Be ...

10 Write a one-page essay that answers this question: "If I could be any animal, what would I be and why?" Would you be wild or tame, large or small, connected to people or not? What would your name be? Earn an extra five points by making a sculpture depicting you as an animal. Use paper, clay, soap or wood.

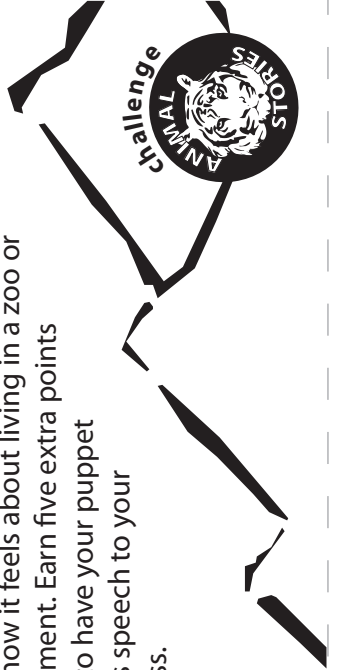
Challenge #7



Animal Puppets

10 Make a puppet of an animal you might see in a zoo or a circus using simple craft materials (cloth, paper, pipe cleaners, scissors, glue, craft sticks, etc.). Then write or record a two- to three-minute speech in which the animal tells about its natural habitat and how it lives in the wild. End by having your animal puppet comment on how it feels about living in a zoo or circus environment. Earn five extra points by arranging to have your puppet animal give its speech to your teacher or class.

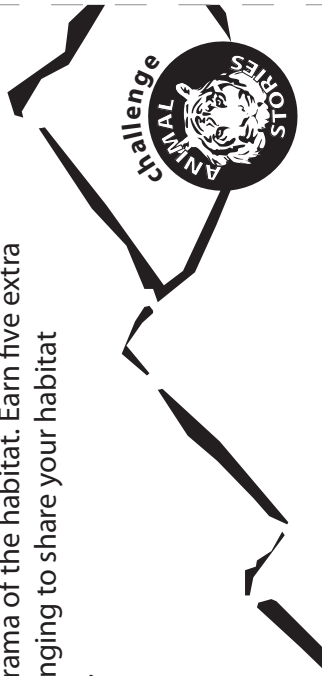
Challenge #8



Create an Animal Habitat

10 In *The Salamander Room*, a boy imagines how he will create an appropriate place for his salamander to live in his room. Think about an animal character from your book and write three to five paragraphs to explain how you would make a place for it to live that would be like its natural habitat. Then create a collage or diorama of the habitat. Earn five extra points by arranging to share your habitat with the class.

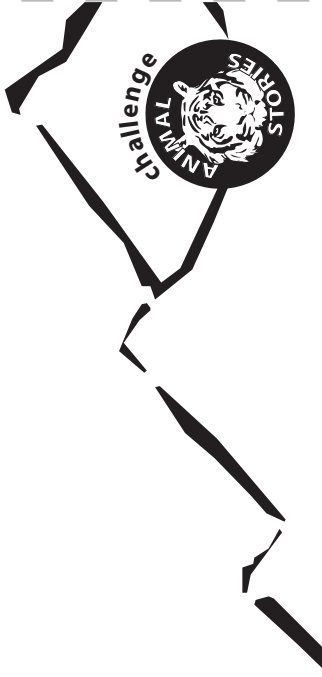
Challenge #9



Animal Activism

15 Interview someone at a local agency to learn about animal control and welfare in your community. Then become an animal advocate and organize a benefit to earn five extra points. Just follow the steps on the **Animal Activism** instruction sheet.

Challenge #10



Animals by the Numbers

15 Choose an animal and read about it, noting all the facts that tell "how big," "how much" or "how many." Include things like the animal's normal size, length of life, number of offspring, range of territory and the amount of food eaten in a day. Then create a worksheet with at least five word problems based on your animal's math facts. Ask questions like these: If a giraffe can run 30 miles per hour, how far can it go in 3.5 hours? If a goose can fly 1,000 miles without resting, how many rest stops will it need to travel from Winnipeg, Manitoba to Mexico City, Mexico? Have a classmate solve the problems. Correct the answers using a different color.

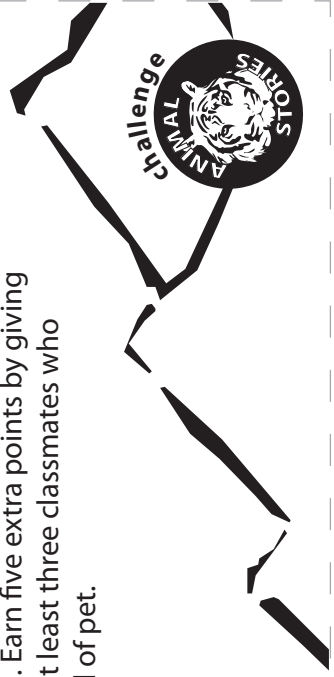
Challenge #11



Pet Care Flyer

15 Choose a common household pet and learn all you can about its habits and needs. Then put together a flyer explaining how to care for that animal. Include tips about the kind of shelter or home it needs, what to feed it, how to exercise it, protect it, train it, keep it clean and show it affection. Explain when it should see a veterinarian. Earn five extra points by giving your flyer to at least three classmates who have this kind of pet.

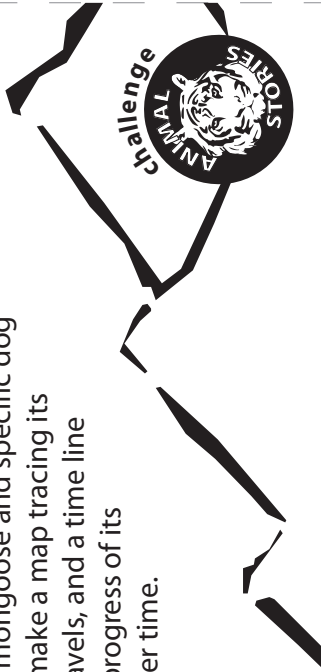
Challenge #12



Where and When:

15 Animal History

Many animals have come from one part of the world and migrated or been moved by people to other places over time. Find an animal with such a history and trace its "where and when." Good examples include the horse, the mongoose and specific dog breeds. Then make a map tracing its origins and travels, and a time line showing the progress of its movement over time.



Challenge #13

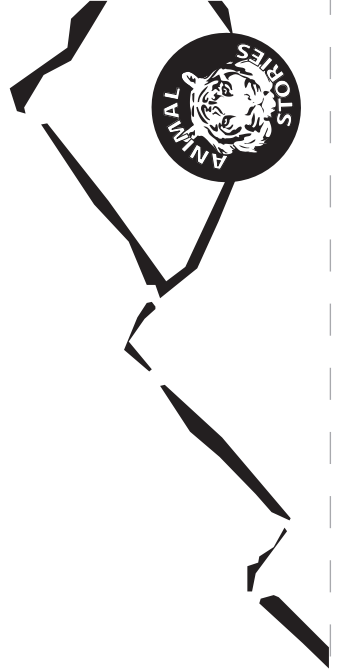
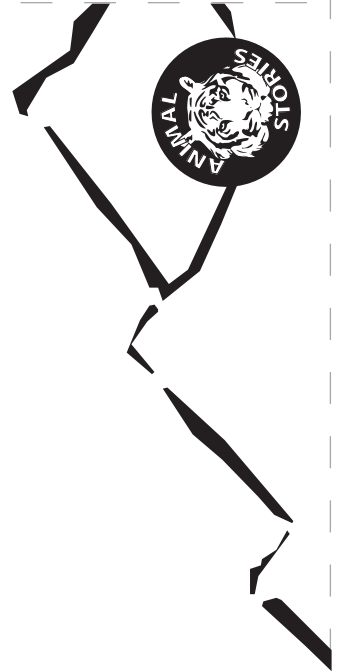
"If you like this ..."

20

Find and read a good nonfiction book about the kind of animal in your book. Then write a one-page review of the two books that starts with the phrase, "If you liked _____ (the title of your animal story), you'll like _____ (the title of your nonfiction book)." Tell what you learned about the animal from each book and why you do or don't recommend each. Earn five extra points by making a small classroom display featuring the pair of books and your review.



Challenge #14



Scramble and Unscramble

Animal Stories

Traveler name(s): _____

1. Write each of your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words on the lines provided below.
2. Count all the letters in all of your selected words.
3. Create enough 1" x 1" squares so you have one square for each letter.
4. Write each letter of each word on each of the squares (see example below).
5. Create a separate pile of letters for each word.
6. Shuffle each pile and place them faceup.
7. Time yourself to see how long it takes to unscramble all the words. Look at your written list if you need help.
8. Glue your word squares in the proper order on the back of this worksheet to create a second list of correctly spelled words.

Earn five extra points by convincing a classmate or family member to compete with you to see who can unscramble all the words the fastest. Make sure your competitor gets a practice round before you begin.

Example: SPECIES



Vocabulary words

1 _____	7 _____
2 _____	8 _____
3 _____	9 _____
4 _____	10 _____
5 _____	11 _____
6 _____	12 _____

Subject Circles

Animal Stories

Traveler name(s): _____

Some words seem to go together to suggest a subject. For example, if you were talking about a circus, you'd expect to use words like "clown," "ringmaster," "trapeze" and "elephant." Below are two circles. One is titled "A Country Animal Doctor's Day" and the other "Studying Animals of the Past." From the animal stories Vocabulary List, place words you might use in conversations about each subject in the proper circle. If a word might fit in either conversation, place it in the part of the circles that overlaps. One word is supplied in each place to get you started.

NOTE: You are not limited to your selected vocabulary words. You may use any words from the animal stories Vocabulary List.



"A Country Animal Doctor's Day"

.....

veterinarian

"Studying Animals of the Past"

.....

extinct

Either subject

.....

omnivorous

Basic Story Elements

Animal Stories

Traveler name(s): _____

Title of book: _____

Type of animal stories (Subgenres: Check all that apply):

- ☐ Animals in the wild
- ☐ Animal/human partnerships
- ☐ "A kid and his/her pet"
- ☐ Ecopolitical
- ☐ Animal rights/welfare
- ☐ Animal heroes

Setting (time and place):

Main characters (who's in it):

Tone of story (happy, scary, sad, funny, etc.):

Short plot summary (what happens):



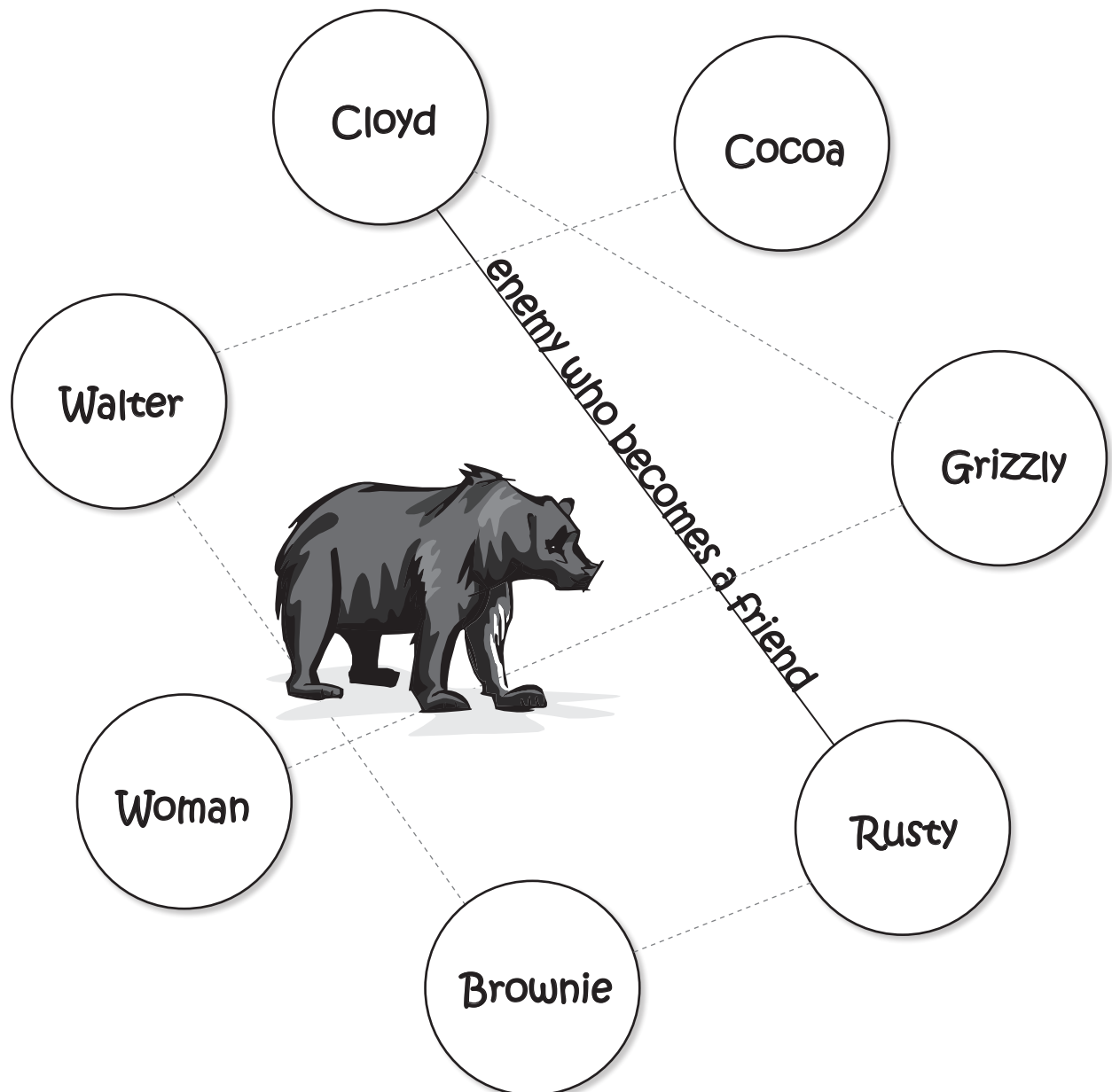
Character Circles

Animal Stories

Traveler name(s): _____

Follow these steps to create character circles to show the main characters in your book and their relationships to one another. An example based on the book *Beardance* is shown below.

1. Make a list of the main characters in your book.
2. Draw a ring of circles—one for each main character on your list.
3. Write the name of a character in each circle.
4. Draw a line connecting pairs of characters that have a relationship in the story.
5. Write a brief statement describing each relationship on the line connecting the two characters.



In My Learned Opinion ...

Animal Stories

Traveler name(s): _____

- Use your best skills of evaluation and summarization to complete the chart below.
- Use a scale of 1–5 (1 is worst and 5 is best) to rate your book on each point listed.
- Then briefly summarize your opinion on that aspect of the book in the final column.

Title of Book: _____

Aspect of Book	Rate (1–5)	Opinion in Words
Plot: How does the action move along? Is it interesting? Easy or hard to follow?		
Characters: Are they interesting, believable, likable or “hateable”?		
Theme: Does it give you a new idea or question to think about? Does it teach you anything important?		
Tone: Happy or sad, scary or funny, does it get your emotions involved?		
Conflicts: Are they interesting? Do they make you think? Do you like the way they were resolved?		
Overall Entertainment Value: Do you like it? Would you recommend it to a friend?		

Animal Activism

Animal Stories

Traveler name(s): _____

Follow these steps to become an advocate for animals in your community.

- Call your city hall or county supervisor's office and use your phone book (try the yellow pages under headings like "Animal Rescue," "Animal Shelters" and "Humane Societies" or government listings under "Animal Control" or "Department of Natural Resources") to make a list of agencies that work with animal control or welfare in your town.

- Interview someone "in the know" at one of these organizations.

- Find out what the organization does, what this person does at the organization and what he or she thinks are the biggest animal-related problems in the community.

- Ask the organization what it needs most. Then earn five extra points by planning and coordinating a simple class or school activity to benefit the organization. For example, you might help a local animal shelter by inviting classmates to donate money or to bring needed supplies such as pet food, cleaning supplies and grooming brushes.





Realistic Fiction Table of Contents

Introductory Essay	157
Travel Agreement	159
Recommended Reading List.	160
Vocabulary List	167
Vocabulary List Dictionary Definitions	168
Vocabulary Activity Cards	172
Comprehension Activity Cards.	175
Writing Activity Cards	179
Challenge Activity Cards.	184
Master Worksheets	
Unscramble Word Challenge	188
Letter Codes	189
Subject Circles	190
Basic Story Elements	191
Tone: Keeping it Real	192
Character Circles	193
My Life in Symbols	194
If I Had a Nickel	195
Calculating Fiction	196
Social Activism	197

Red-hot Realistic Fiction

Do you like books about real-life problems and real-life solutions? Do you like to read about characters you can relate to? Do you prefer stories about the present to stories about the past or the future? Do you like to read about characters that seem a lot like you or someone you know?

Realistic Fiction can be described as “real kids with real problems solved in a realistic manner in a real world setting.”¹ Instead of talking rabbits, superheroes or time travel, you’ll read about believable characters who are dealing with things that could actually happen. This Book Mountain Expedition focuses on **contemporary** realistic fiction so the stories you’ll read are *set in the present time or the very recent past*. These are stories you can relate to because they’re about people like you, except the characters aren’t real.

This kind of story can help you learn about yourself and the world around you. Because the characters seem real, you can compare their issues, their problems, their joys and their rewards to your own. You can think about how you would react to their situations, whether they’re happy or sad. Your story might introduce you to new places and new problems.



Subgenres within contemporary realistic fiction:

- **Family life stories** look at everyday life in happy or troubled families.
- **Friendship stories** explore the ups and downs of relationships outside the family.
- **School life stories** show characters dealing with school challenges, from completing assignments and understanding subjects to appreciating individual differences while finding a way to fit in.
- **Romances** focus on awakening attraction and love that goes beyond friendship.
- **Adventure or Survival stories** put characters in exciting or dangerous situations. They must use skill, resourcefulness and courage to survive or succeed.
- **Growing up/Coming-of-age stories** follow “ordinary” characters as they grow from childhood toward greater maturity.
- **Personal Problem or Social Issue stories** focus on a character’s struggle inside him or herself. The personal problem often reflects a bigger issue in society. For example, in *Lizzie at Last*, Lizzie is confused about how her peers treat her as a “smart girl.” Her personal problem reflects the issue of sexism in society.

Or it might touch on issues close to your heart, like the loss of someone you love or a friend moving far away. It might help you feel better by making your problems seem manageable or even funny. Or it might put your worries in perspective by introducing you to someone with even bigger problems! This kind of story draws you in by building on what you already know firsthand. It extends your understanding of everyday life. Rather than helping you escape from reality, realistic fiction challenges you to go beyond observing and participate!

Writers of realistic fiction face challenges, too. They must use words to convince us that their stories really could happen (“realistic”) even though they didn’t really happen (“fiction”). How do they do that? Here are some things realistic fiction writers must handle well to succeed:

- **Characters:** They must be believable. They don’t have to be ordinary or average, but they do have to seem like people we might actually meet.
- **Plot:** Events and conflicts must also develop naturally. Characters deal with families, friendships or school; homework, bullies or divorce. We must be able to imagine that such things could happen.
- **Settings:** The “when” of these stories is now or the recent past, so we can relate easily to the characters and action. That’s what makes them contemporary. The “where” must seem real. Whether it’s the highest mountain in Nepal or just around the corner, it must be described as we might experience or imagine it. Vague or fantastic-sounding settings get in the way of putting ourselves into the action.
- **Dialogue:** Conversations must reflect how people actually talk—at least in the story’s particular time and place. We

must be able to imagine ourselves speaking or hearing the words they say.

- **Plot Resolution:** Problems or conflicts must end realistically—no fairy godmothers or superheroes saving the day. Characters solve conflicts by learning life lessons and growing up. Endings aren’t always happy and problems don’t always disappear. Sometimes the resolution is internal and personal—a character either succeeds or fails to accept difficulty and grow through it. Just like real life.

As you read contemporary realistic fiction, look for the qualities mentioned earlier. How does your story involve you by building on your experience? What characters do you relate to or identify with? Does the story make you laugh or cry? Do you cheer for the happy ending or ache for a defeated character? How does the story make you think about who you are and who you want to be? Open up to the experience! Let yourself be drawn into the action and feel with the characters. You may just make a new “friend” or learn something useful about yourself in the process.

¹Miss Allen’s 5th grade class, Palos East Elementary School, Palos Heights, Illinois, quoted on their Web site (www.palos118.org/east/media/realistic.html).



Realistic Fiction Recommended Reading List

NAVIGATORS • Realistic Fiction

GRADES 2–3

Always My Dad by Sharon Dennis Wyeth, illustrated by Raúl Colón. Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1997. ISBN 0-67988-934-5. Three young children miss their Dad, whom they rarely see. When they spend a summer with their grandparents, Dad comes to visit and assures them of his love and his determination to “get his life together” and be there for them.

2–4

The Cold & Hot Winter by Johanna Hurwitz. William Morrow & Co., 1988. ISBN 0-68807-839-7. Bolivia makes a return visit (after *The Hot and Cold Summer*) to live up winter vacation for neighborhood friends Rory and Derek. Their fun takes an unexpected turn when things start to go missing. Will suspicion and accusations ruin their friendships?

2–3

Dear Whiskers by Ann Whitehead Nagda. Holiday House, 2000. ISBN 0-82341-495-7. Jenny’s fourth-grade class practices letter-writing skills by writing to second graders as if they were mice. Jenny is embarrassed when her young pen pal proves to be a poor letter writer. But she discovers that Sameera is a recent immigrant from Saudi Arabia, struggling with English and with American customs. Jenny rises to the challenge and finds creative ways to help Sameera adjust.

2–4

Gooney Bird Greene by Lois Lowry. Random House, 2004. ISBN 0-44041-960-3. When Gooney Bird Greene joins Mrs. Pidgeon’s second-grade class, complete with her offbeat clothes, mysterious past, love of the spotlight and unique style, her classmates are fascinated. Mrs. Pidgeon knows a natural storyteller when she sees one, and Gooney Bird’s “absolutely true stories” come pouring out. A delightful look at a unique character and a storyteller’s special way of looking at the world and sharing it with others.

3–4

Jake Drake, Teacher’s Pet by Andrew Clements. Simon & Schuster, 2001. ISBN 0-68983-919-7. Fourth grader Jake tells of four terrible days in third grade when he became, through no fault of his own, teacher’s pet. A funny, quick read about an ordinary kid facing the dragons of elementary school social life.

2–4

The Last Dragon by Susan Miho Nunes, illustrated by Chris K. Soentpiet. Houghton Mifflin, 2004. ISBN 0-61844-298-7. Peter is upset when his parents send him to Chinatown to get to know his great-aunt. But he spots a tattered cloth dragon in a shop window, and things begin to look up. His great-aunt guides him through an adventure of discovery in which he makes new friends and learns to value his cultural heritage.

Master of Disaster by Matt Christopher. Little, Brown and Company, 2003. ISBN 0-31616-498-4. In this Soccer 'Cats series title, Jason must fill in for vacationing goalie Bucky. But all his joking and boasting can't hide the fact that he doesn't know how to play the position. Will the support of his soccer buddies be enough to help him avoid being a "master of disaster?"

Mud Soup by Judith Head. Random House, 2003. ISBN 0-37591-087-5. What exactly is mud soup? Josh isn't sure, so he makes excuses each time Rosa offers it to him. As the story progresses, Josh learns more about Rosa's culture, his class celebrates International Day, and readers get a recipe for mud (black bean) soup. Everybody wins!

Smoky Night by Eve Bunting, illustrated by David Diaz. Harcourt, 1999. ISBN 0-15201-884-0. Bunting describes a night of rioting, stealing and arson in an inner city neighborhood. Neighbors of different backgrounds have avoided each other, preferring to stick with "their own." But the tragic events bring people together and open the door to new trust and friendship. Rich, colorful illustrations by Diaz capture the drama, violence and hope of the story.

The Stories Julian Tells by Ann Cameron. Sagebrush Education Resources, 1989. ISBN 0-83350-724-9. Julian has a knack for wishful thinking, imaginative storytelling and just plain fibbing. This book of chapter-length stories is filled with humor, mischief and consequences. Later Julian stories are also fun.

← GRADES 2-3

2

1-4

2-4

EXPLORERS • Realistic Fiction

- GRADES 3–5** → ***A Day for Vincent Chin and Me*** by Jacqueline Turner Banks. Houghton Mifflin, 2001. ISBN 0-61813-199-X. Tommy is embarrassed when his mother agrees to speak at a rally supporting the rights of Asian Americans. He doesn't like to call attention to his Japanese background. At the same time Tommy and his "posse" of bright, ethnically diverse buddies get involved in their own campaign to make their street safer for children. Likable, believable characters and a satisfying ending make this a winner.
- 4–5** ***Diving for the Moon*** by Lee F. Bantle. Simon & Schuster, 1995. ISBN 0-68980-004-5. Carolina (Bird) and Josh have spent summers together since they were babies. But their twelfth summer is different. Josh, who has hemophilia, tells Bird that he got the HIV virus from infected blood. A sweet story of friendship, fear, self-discovery and budding romance.
- 3–5** ***Doing Time Online*** by Jan Siebold. Albert Whitman, 2002. ISBN 0-80751-665-1. As punishment for a prank that endangered an elderly neighbor, Mitch has to "do time" in a chat room with a nursing home resident. He hates the idea, but changes his tune when spunky "Wootie" becomes a friend and helps him face problems in his life.
- 4–7** ***Everything on a Waffle*** by Polly Horvath. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2004. ISBN 0-37442-208-7. The whole town of Coal Harbour gets involved when Primrose Squarp's parents are lost at sea and presumed (by everyone but Primrose) to be dead. An elderly babysitter, a heartless school counselor, Primrose's kind but bumbling uncle, the owner of a local diner, likable foster parents and, most of all, Primrose herself come alive in this Newbery Honor Book. A quirky, funny, touching story about caring, acceptance and doing the best you can.
- 5–7** ***A Fine White Dust*** by Cynthia Rylant. Simon & Schuster, 2000. ISBN 0-68984-087-X. In this Newbery Honor Book, Woodman tells the story of 13-year-old Pete Cassidy, whose attraction to spirituality makes him easy prey for a shady traveling revival preacher. Rylant treats with equal respect Pete's sincere religious longings, his best friend's atheism and his parents' mixed feelings about the whole thing.
- 3–5** ***Fourth Grade Weirdo*** by Martha Freeman. Random House, 2001. ISBN 0-44041-689-2. This celebration of weirdness centers on two delightful, believable characters—a nerdy kid and a creative, dedicated teacher—as each faces a difficult challenge. Mr. Ditzwinkle must beat a bum rap as a thief and Dexter must learn to be true to himself.
- 4–5** ***Gracie's Girl*** by Ellen Wittlinger. Simon & Schuster, 2000. ISBN 0-68982-249-9. Eleven-year-old Bess starts middle school with two things on her mind—how to be popular at school, and how to claim more attention from her social activist mother who seems too busy helping others to notice her. Bess and her friend Ethan get involved in the school play and then meet Gracie, a homeless old woman who touches them and needs their help. A lovely story of young people finding a social conscience and claiming a place in their world.

The Heart of a Chief by Joseph Bruchac. Penguin Putnam, 2001. ISBN 0-14131-236-X. Chris, a likable Penacook sixth grader, is nervous about his move to a white junior high. Without being preachy, Bruchac shares Chris's struggles with the realities of reservation life, adjustments to his new situation, and efforts to gain respect for his tribal customs. References to classic books about Native Americans, to facts behind our Thanksgiving holiday, and to the debate about using Indian names for sports teams add interest.

Hoot by Carl Hiaasen. Alfred A. Knopf, 2002. ISBN 0-37582-181-3. This Newbery Honor Book pits Roy Eberhardt, a middle schooler whose family moves a lot, against both a classic bully and some greedy corporate types who want to build a restaurant on land that houses a protected owl species. All Roy wants is to survive the problems of always being "the new kid." Interesting characters, great writing, sometimes-dark humor and a satisfying ending make this a "must read."

Lizzie at Last by Claudia Mills. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000. ISBN 0-37434-659-3. Starting seventh grade, Lizzie the nerdy math whiz longs to feel normal and be accepted. She changes her look and her behavior, assuming that popular kids—especially boys—don't like smart girls. But her plan backfires when playing dumb attracts the wrong boy and sends the right one running.

Love, Ruby Lavender by Deborah Wiles. Harcourt, 2001. ISBN 0-15202-314-3. Ruby feels jealous and angry when her grandmother goes to Hawaii to meet a new granddaughter. She misses her terribly as she struggles with painful secrets and everyday problems. Ruby makes things harder than they have to be, but you can't help feeling with her and cheering for her as she tackles life head-on.

My Side of the Mountain by Jean Craighead George. Penguin Putnam, 2004. ISBN 0-14240-111-0. Most kids dream of running away to find independence. Many adults long to leave the bustle of the city behind for a quieter, more natural life. Young Sam Gibley turns dreams into (fictional) reality when he leaves New York City alone to live off the land on his grandparents' abandoned wilderness homestead. This classic Newbery Honor survival adventure is as fresh and exciting today as it was when it was written in 1959.

On My Honor by Marion Dane Bauer. Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1987. ISBN 0-44046-633-4. In this intensely dramatic story, an adventure turns to tragedy. Joel challenges his best friend Tony to swim to a sandbar in dangerous waters. Tony drowns, and Joel is left to deal with shock and guilt.

The Pinballs by Betsy Byars. HarperCollins, 1987. ISBN 0-06440-198-7. Carlie, Harvey and Thomas J. arrive as foster children in the Mason home from different backgrounds of pain, disappointment and loss. All three are damaged, and have their own ways of coping and avoiding pain. But the Masons' gentle caring and Carlie's rebellious strength create the beginnings of healing, friendship and a sense of belonging.

GRADES 4-6

5+

4-6

3-5

5+

3-5

3-5

GRADES 4-6

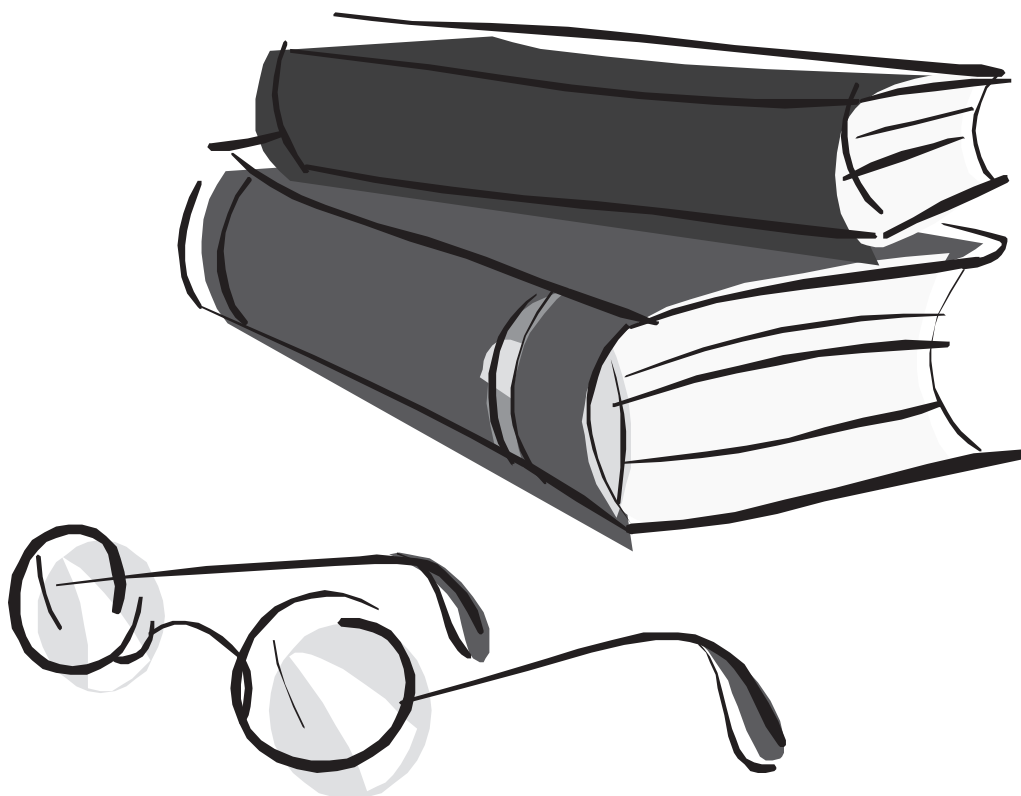
→ ***Shiloh*** by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor. Simon & Schuster, 2000. ISBN 0-68983-582-5. Eleven-year-old Marty, whose family can't afford a pet, befriends a dog mistreated by its owner. He hides the dog, setting off a series of lies and conflicts that trouble his growing conscience. As he faces the consequences of his actions and the complicated questions they raise, Marty finds courage and strength in himself and earns the respect of others.

3-6

Sparks by Graham McNamee. Random House, 2002. ISBN 0-38572-977-4. Todd desperately wants to succeed in a regular classroom after a year in the resource room. In fact, he fears the cruelty aimed at special needs students so much that he avoids his old friends. McNamee shares the pain of trying to keep up, of missing friends and of dodging the labels of "retard" and "Gump." The help offered by a caring family and an understanding teacher, and the hopeful but uncertain ending, ring true.

4-6

Wenny Has Wings by Janet Lee Carey. Simon & Schuster, 2002. ISBN 0-68984-294-5. When eleven-year-old Will and his younger sister walk to the store one evening, an out-of-control truck strikes them, killing Wenny. This honest, touching, funny, heartbreaking novel is made up of Will's letters to his "angel" sister, who was hardly an angel during her short life! He writes about his guilt at being alive, his terrible loneliness in the face of his parents' overwhelming grief, his anger at her for leaving and his own dramatic near-death experience. Excellent.



ADVENTURERS • Realistic Fiction

145th Street: Short Stories by Walter Dean Myers. Laurel Leaf Books, 2001. ISBN 0-44022-916-2. This is Myers at his best. Each of the 10 stories, which follow a group of recurring characters, is compelling on its own. Together they sketch a poor Harlem neighborhood in all its violence, despair, courage, loyalty and painful humanity. Not always pretty, but a great read for more mature readers. One story is somewhat graphic about drug use.

Brian's Winter by Gary Paulsen. Bantam Doubleday Dell, 1998. ISBN 0-44022-719-4. If you've read Paulsen's *Hatchet*, you know about 13-year-old Brian's struggle to survive in the Canadian wilderness after being stranded with only his common sense and a hatchet. In this "alternate sequel," Paulsen rewrites his own fiction. Instead of being rescued in late summer, Brian must face the deadly challenge of making it through the winter. Exciting, serious adventure.

The Homecoming by Cynthia Voigt. Simon & Schuster, 2002. ISBN 0-68985-132-4. When Momma leaves 13-year-old Dicey and her three younger siblings waiting in the car and never returns, Dicey has to grow up in a hurry. With nothing but a map and some spare change to their names, Dicey leads the family on foot to find a home with relatives. This Newbery Medal Winner is a heartbreaking, uplifting story of survival, weighty responsibilities, selflessness and the meaning of home.

Hope Was Here by Joan Bauer. Penguin Putnam, 2002. ISBN 0-69811-951-7. Hope and her aunt are a team. They travel around, cooking and waitressing in one diner after another. Life on the move is hard on Hope, who is especially unhappy about the latest move from the big city to a tiny rural town. But Mulhoney, Wisconsin, holds some surprises for the spunky duo, who find themselves caught up in unexpected friendships, local politics and romance.

Mountain Solo by Jeanette Ingold. Harcourt, 2005. ISBN 0-15205-358-1. Tess is a child prodigy violinist whose own passion for music is overshadowed by her pushy mother's ambitions for her. When Tess messes up an important performance she runs to her father's new family in Montana. Their gentle caring for Tess as a person rather than just a musician helps her find the music in her heart. Anyone who has felt the pressure of unfair expectations from others will relate to this novel.

Nothing But the Truth by Avi. Scholastic, 2003. ISBN 0-43932-730-X. The only thing about school that interests Philip Malloy is making the track team. So when his poor English grade disqualifies him from tryouts, Philip gets back at this English teacher by acting out in class. She sends him to the principal for breaking a school rule about silence during the playing of the national anthem. And what should have been a simple disciplinary matter sets off a national firestorm about education, freedom of speech and patriotism. A fascinating and darkly funny look at the dangers of exaggeration, opportunism, jumping to conclusions, self-serving politics and a runaway media culture. A Newbery Honor Book.

← GRADES 6+

6+

5+

6+

5+

6+

GRADES 6+

→ ***Olive's Ocean*** by Kevin Henkes. HarperCollins, 2005. ISBN 0-06053-545-8. Before Martha's family leaves to visit the coast, the mother of a classmate who recently died gives Martha a note from the dead girl's journal. In it Olive writes of Martha's kindness and Olive's hopes for friendship. But the two hardly knew each other. Both girls wanted to be writers and Olive longed to see the ocean that Martha, too, loves. But aside from that, what connects them? This Newbery Honor Book is a lovely, sensitive coming-of-age story.

5+

Seek by Paul Fleischman. Simon & Schuster, 2003. ISBN 0-68985-402-1. This novel is written entirely in dialogue. Rob is a high schooler who uses a class assignment to explore the many voices that have shaped his life. Among those voices are programs he hears on his beloved radio. The story focuses on Rob's search for his long-gone DJ father. This one made several award lists, including ALA Notable Books for Children.

6+

Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli. Random House, 2004. ISBN 0-44041-677-9. Mica Area High School has never seen anyone like Stargirl. She sweeps in wearing old-fashioned dresses and pigtails, sings to students on their birthdays and takes her pet rat everywhere she goes. But fellow students scorn her for being different and Leo Borlock is caught in the middle, between his heart and his need to fit in. This brilliant novel paints a painful picture of teenage insecurity and nonconformity under fire.

6+

Walk Two Moons by Sharon Creech. HarperCollins, 1996. ISBN 0-06440-517-6. Sal and her offbeat, loving grandparents hit the road tracing the path of Sal's mother who disappeared. Sal fills the time by sharing the mysterious story of her quirky friend Phoebe. As Phoebe's story and the journey both unfold, with their common threads of humor, longing and loss, Sal finds the strength to face painful changes in her life. A moving, Newbery Award winning novel.

5+

What Hearts by Bruce Brooks. HarperCollins, 1995. ISBN 0-06447-127-6. This collection of four stories follows Asa from age seven through seventh grade; from his mother's first divorce to her second. Along the way Asa faces move after move, losing a father, conflicts with a stepfather, trying out for Little League baseball and first love. Every word rings true, and Asa comes across with an eager honesty and sincerity you can't help but like. A Newbery Honor Book.

Realistic Fiction Vocabulary List

Choose 8 to 12 vocabulary words. You may use any of the following words or work with your Travel Agent to come up with your own words. Because realistic fiction covers a huge range of subjects, you may want to combine words from this list with words related to the subject matter of your book.

Adolescence	Eccentric	Racism
Ageism	Elated	Realistic
Bigot	Empathy	Rebel
Character trait	Hilarious	Reputation
Collaborate	Idiosyncrasy	Sarcastically
Coming-of-age	Immoral	Satire
Compassionately	Integrate	Segregated
Compelling	Interpret	Senile
Compromise	Justifiably	Sexist
Confidential	Mature	Sibling
Consequences	Melancholy	Solidarity
Contemporary	Obstacle	Stereotype
Despair	Optimistically	Survive
Development	Persistent	Tenacious
Dilemma	Personality	_____
Disabled	Pessimistic	_____
Discriminate	Privilege	
Diverse	Psychologist	

a
b
c

Teaching tip



These informal dictionary-style definitions have been provided to save you time when correcting student work. The word breakdowns provided show syllabic division as indicated in *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh Edition. We have not altered the spelling of the words to show pronunciation or phonetic spelling. For activities that ask students to provide "breakdown by syllable," you may choose to add or substitute a requirement for phonetic spelling and/or end-of-line division (hyphenation).

Realistic Fiction Vocabulary List

Dictionary Definitions

Adolescence

Noun. 4 syllables: a*do*les*cence.
The period in a person's life between childhood and adulthood.

Ageism

Noun. 3 syllables: a*gei*sm. To treat someone unfairly because he or she is middle-aged or old, or to feel prejudice against or dislike for people who are elderly.

Bigot

Noun. 2 syllables: bi*got. A person who only likes their own group or people of the same race, religion, who also treats members of other ethnic groups with hatred or cruelty; a person who is intolerant of any beliefs that differ from his or her own.

Character trait

Noun. 4 syllables: char*ac*ter trait.
Some piece of personal information or a special appearance or other distinctive quality that a person has, or that all the members of a certain group have that make them stand out.

Collaborate

Verb. 4 syllables: co*llab*o*rate.
To work with others or to participate with team members during a game or other activity, or to work with an enemy force that has taken over your country.

Coming-of-age

Noun. 4 syllables: co*ming*of*age.
To reach adulthood, to grow up or to reach a higher level of maturity or reach understanding of a certain topic or situation.

Compassionately

Adverb. 5 syllables: com*pa*ssion*ate*ly. To help someone in a way that reflects how sad you feel about his or her problems and misfortunes, and indicates your clear desire to want to help.

Compelling

Adjective. 3 syllables: com*pell*ing.
When a story is very interesting or makes the reader or listener feel like he or she should do something or react to it strongly.

Compromise

Noun. 3 syllables: com*pro*mise.
An agreement reached when people having an argument or discussion each agree to give up something or do something for each other; to "meet someone halfway."

Confidential

Adjective. 4 syllables: con*fi*den*tial.
When a piece of information is being kept secret, or something that only a few specific people know about.

Consequences

Noun. 4 syllables: con*se*quen*ces.
The results of your actions, or events or things that happen due to specific causes.

Contemporary

Adjective. 5 syllables: con*tem*po*rar*y. Modern, or something that is very new or fashionable.

Despair

Noun. 2 syllables: de*spair. A complete loss of hope or a very sad feeling that everything is wrong and that nothing good will ever happen again.

Development

Noun. 4 syllables: de*ve*lop*ment. When something has become clear or understandable over time, or the steady unfolding of the details of a story or character's personality.

Dilemma

Noun. 3 syllables: di*le*mma. A situation in which a person has a problem that doesn't seem to have a solution or is faced with a choice in which all of the options or possibilities are bad or unsatisfactory.

Disabled

Adjective. 3 syllables: dis*a*bled. To be incapable of certain physical actions or skills, often due to traumatic injuries or other natural physical causes.

Discriminate

Verb. 4 syllables: dis*cri*mi*nate. To treat another person or group of people unfairly, or to treat one person or group of people better than another group on purpose.

Diverse

Adjective. 2 syllables: di*verse. When things or people in a group are different from each other, or there are a number of different qualities or characteristics to be found among one particular group of people.

Eccentric

Adjective. 3 syllables: ec*cen*tric. When something is very strange or different, or when a person acts very oddly or not how you normally expect people to act.

Elated

Adjective. 3 syllables: e*la*ted. To feel very joyful or excitedly happy and proud.

Empathy

Noun. 3 syllables: em*pa*thy. Being able to feel or sense another person's discomfort, pain or other feelings, or to be able to imagine what someone else feels like.

Hilarious

Adjective. 4 syllables: hi*lar*i*ous. Very, very funny.

Idiosyncrasy

Noun. 6 syllables: i*di*o*syn*cra*sy. A quirk or unique characteristic a person has that makes other people able to recognize or identify him or her.

Immoral

Adjective. 3 syllables: im*mor*al. When something is bad or wrong.

Integrate

Verb. 3 syllables: in*te*grate. To mix together or to put individual things together to make a bigger group, or to open an institution or event to members of all races and ethnic groups.

Interpret

Verb. 3 syllables: in*ter*pret. To translate the words and conversation of others, or explain the meaning of what someone says or writes.

Justifiably

Adverb. 5 syllables: jus*ti*fi*a*bly. To do something or be a certain way because you have a good reason or explanation for it.

Mature

Adjective. 2 syllables: ma*ture.
Fully grown or developed, or to act in a more adult than childlike way.

Melancholy

Adjective. 4 syllables: me*lan*cho*ly.
To always feel very depressed or seem very sad, or to be very down or gloomy.

Obstacle

Noun. 3 syllables: ob*sta*cle.
A person or thing that stands in your way or prevents you from doing things or getting certain things done.

Optimistically

Adverb. 6 syllables: op*ti*mis*ti*ca*ly.
To do something in a very positive way or to have a cheerful manner of thinking; to do something in a way that shows you always "look on the bright side."

Persistent

Adjective. 3 syllables: per*sis*tent.
To act or be a certain way for a very long time, or to be very repetitive in requests or desires; to refuse to give up.

Personality

Noun. 5 syllables: per*so*na*li*ty.
The qualities or habits or quirks that make one person different from another, or the total effect of a person's behavior and characteristics that make them unique.

Pessimistic

Adjective. 4 syllables: pe*ssi*mis*tic.
Having the attitude that your troubles will never end and that most things are very bad and gloomy, or that there is more evil in the world than good.

Privilege

Noun. 3 syllables: pri*vi*lege.
A special treat, advantage or something that you receive as a reward or extra, rather than as a right or other thing that you are guaranteed to receive.

Psychologist

Noun. 4 syllables: psy*cho*lo*gist.
A person who specializes in learning facts about the mind and how a person's brain works, and who often helps people with their problems.

Racism

Noun. 3 syllables: ra*ci*sm. The belief that a person's color, ethnic background, or race determine his or her actions and abilities and that certain ethnic groups are better than others.

Realistic

Adjective. 4 syllables: re*a*lis*tic.
When something is very true to life or natural, or is very lifelike in its appearance or actions.

Rebel

Noun. 2 syllables: re*bel. A person who defies authority figures or who otherwise doesn't believe in playing by the same rules that everyone else plays by.

Reputation

Noun. 4 syllables: re*pu*ta*tion.
A person's or thing's record of behavior or the overall opinion that others have of a certain person and their actions.

Sarcastically

Adverb. 5 syllables: sar*cas*ti*ca*ly.
To say something in a way that sounds like it means the exact opposite of the words you're using, such as telling a short person "you're tall, aren't you?"

Satire

Noun. 2 syllables: sa*tire. A cartoon or piece of writing that is meant to point out a person's or thing's weak points by exaggerating them or putting them in an exaggerated or imaginary story.

Segregated

Adjective. 4 syllables: se*gre*ga*ted. When certain people or an entire group are kept away from others in society, or when people or things are kept away from each other for specific reasons.

Senile

Adjective. 2 syllables: se*nile. The loss of memory or confusion that older people often develop or suffer from as they grow older.

Sexist

Adjective. 2 syllables: sex*ist. When someone has the attitude or opinion that one gender (male or female) is better than the other for no logical reason, and treats people of that gender poorly or unfairly.

Sibling

Noun. 2 syllables: si*bling. A brother or sister, or any of two or more people or things that share a parent.

Solidarity

Noun. 5 syllables: so*li*da*ri*ty. A feeling of unity, or a group of people who share the same community and the same common goals.

Stereotype

Noun. 4 syllables: ster*e*o*type. Something that seems just like you thought it should or would be, or a standard idea that you may have about a certain thing or group of people based on what information you already know about it or them.

Survive

Verb. 2 syllables: sur*vive. To continue to live or to be, especially living through a disaster or hardship.

Tenacious

Adjective. 3 syllables: te*na*cious. To cling or hold on to an idea or belief, or a desire to continue to seek or obtain a wanted goal or object.

Unscramble Word Challenge

5 Write each of your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words on the **Unscramble Word Challenge** worksheet. Follow the directions on the worksheet to create a scrambled word game. Once you've created the game pieces, time yourself to see how long it takes to unscramble each of the words. Earn five extra points by convincing a friend to compete with you to see who can unscramble all the words the fastest.



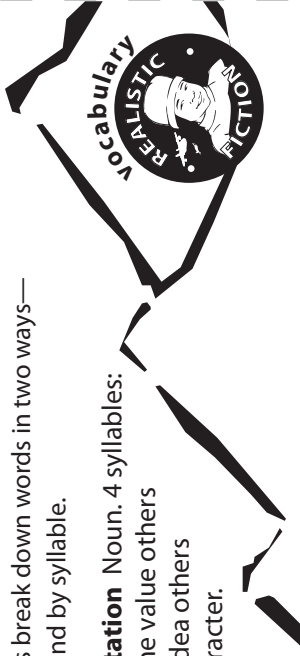
Vocabulary #1

What Does It Mean?

5 List your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words on a piece of paper, leaving several lines between them. Look up each word in a dictionary. Write down the part of speech, breakdown by syllable (where you pause when saying the word) and the definition. Do not use any form of the vocabulary word in its definition. Some words have more than one meaning. Choose the definitions that relate to realistic fiction or your book.

HINT: Dictionaries break down words in two ways—by hyphenation and by syllable.

EXAMPLE: Reputation Noun. 4 syllables: re*pu*ta*tion. The value others place on or the idea others hold of your character.



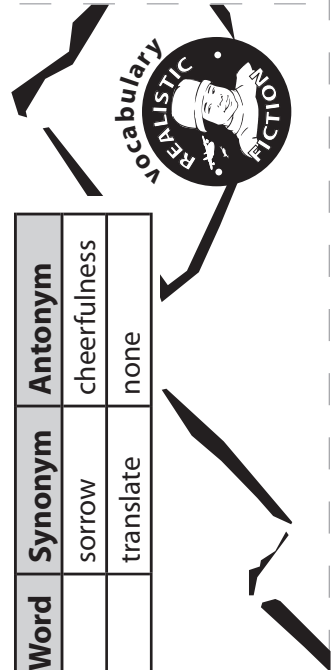
Vocabulary #2

Synonyms or Antonyms

5 Create a table like the one below. Fill in one line for each of your selected vocabulary words. Use your own knowledge and a dictionary or thesaurus to fill in a synonym and/or antonym for each word.

NOTE: Some words don't have antonyms. See examples below.

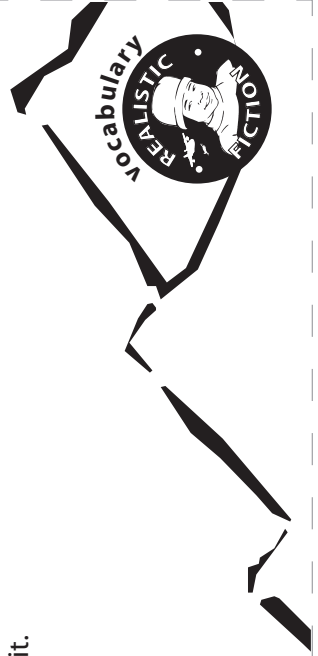
Vocabulary Word	Synonym	Antonym
despair	sorrow	cheerfulness
interpret	translate	none



Vocabulary #3

Anagram Game

5 When you play a game of anagrams you start with one word and make other words from its letters. For example, from the starting word "realistic" you could make the words "stir," "era," "clear," "it," and many more. Choose one of the longest vocabulary words from the realistic fiction Vocabulary List. Write it at the top of a piece of paper. Find as many words as you can that are made from its letters and list them under it.



Vocabulary #4

Put Your Words to Work

10

Write a paragraph that includes five of your selected vocabulary words. Use the words so their meaning is clear and the paragraph makes sense. Underline the five vocabulary words in your paragraph.

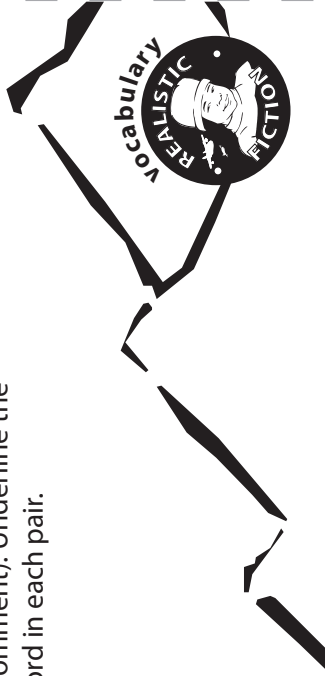


Vocabulary #5

Word Partners

10

Review the part of speech of each of your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words. Then list each with an appropriate word partner before or after it as follows: An adjective before each noun (shocking racism), a noun after each adjective (pessimistic attitude), an adverb next to each verb (barely survive), a verb next to each adverb (sarcastically comment). Underline the vocabulary word in each pair.



Vocabulary #6

What's the Question?

15

Make up carefully thought-out questions that can be answered by each of your selected vocabulary words. For example, for the word "hilarious," you might write "What word describes something that makes you laugh so hard you squirt milk out of your nose?" Write down both your questions and the answers.



Vocabulary #7

Letter Codes

15

Make a letter code by creating your own key in which each letter of the alphabet stands for a different letter of the alphabet. In a simple letter code there is an obvious pattern to the substitutions. Explore letter codes by completing the steps on the **Letter Codes** worksheet.

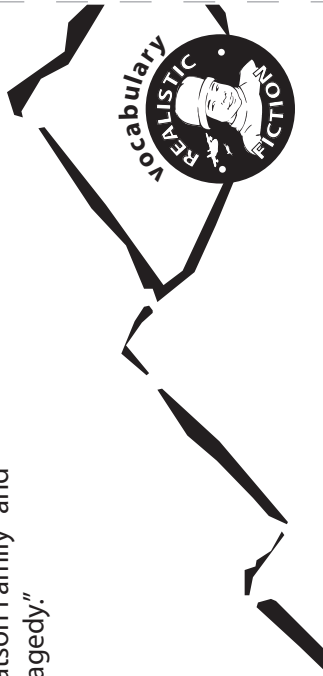


Vocabulary #8

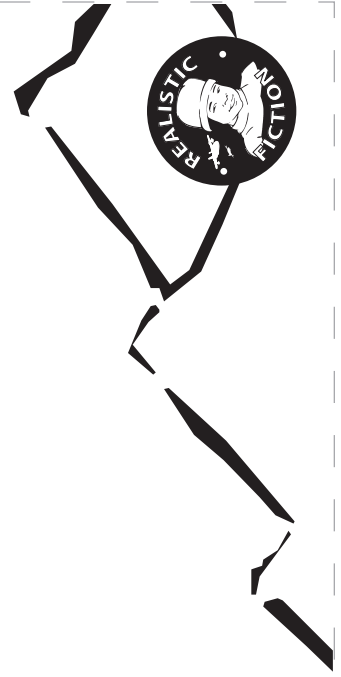
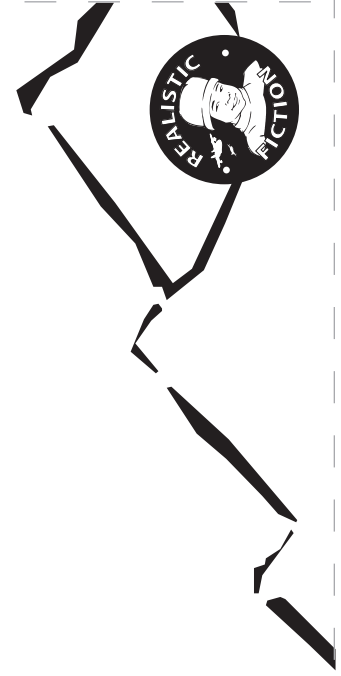
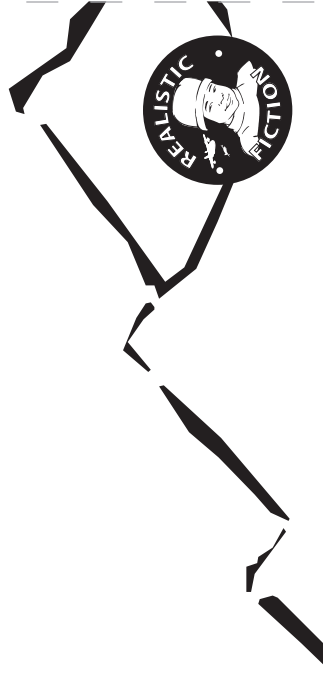
Subject Circles

15

Some words seem to go together to suggest a subject. For example, if you were talking about a library, you'd expect to use words like "checkout," "reference," "books" and "librarian." Use the **Subject Circles** worksheet to assign at least 15 words from the realistic fiction vocabulary list to the made-up realistic fiction book titles "The Wacky Watson Family" and "Summer of Tragedy."



Vocabulary #9



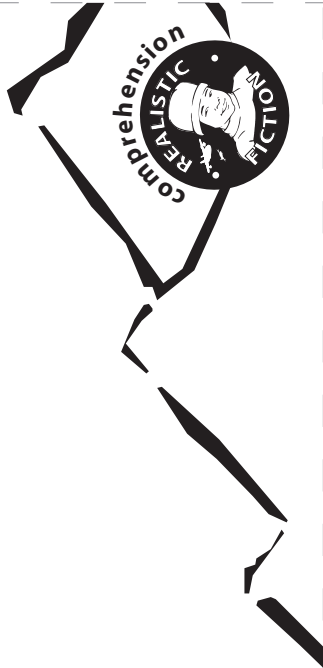
Because ...

5

Write a paragraph beginning with this statement:

"I did/did not enjoy reading this book because ..."

Complete the paragraph with three to five sentences that support your opening statement.

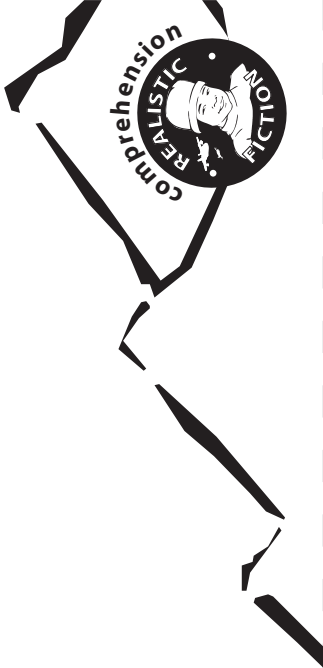


Comprehension #1

Basic Story Elements

5

Identify basic story elements of your book and fill in the **Basic Story Elements** worksheet.



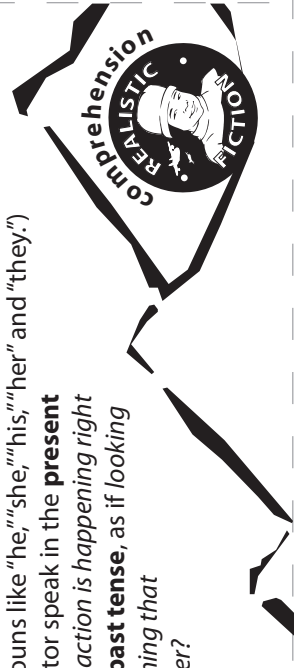
Comprehension #2

Narrator's Voice

5

The **narrator** is the person who tells a story. Who tells the story in your book? From whose point of view do we see the action? Identify the narrator, who may be a character in the story or an unnamed observer. Then answer the questions below. Make sure to provide examples and page references from your book.

- Is the story told in the **first person**, with the *narrator actively participating*? (Look for pronouns like "I," "me" and "we.") Or is it told in the **third person**, by an observer reporting the actions of others? (Look for pronouns like "he," "she," "his," "her" and "they.")
- Does the narrator speak in the **present tense**, as if the action is happening right now, or in the **past tense**, as if looking back on something that happened earlier?



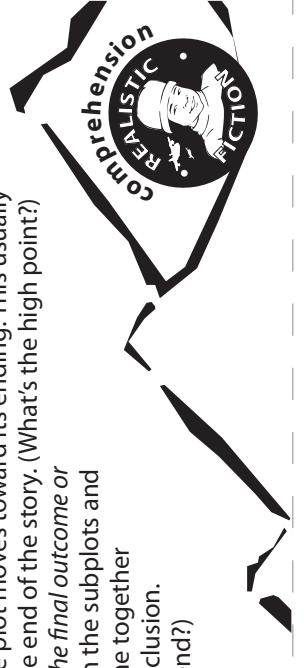
Comprehension #3

Plot Summary

10

Write a one-page summary of your book's plot. Include the following things in your summary:

- **Book title**
- **Main plot:** The central sequence of events that drive the action. (What happens?)
- **Subplots:** Smaller "stories within the story" that add depth and interest. (What else happens?)
- **Climax:** The turning point or most intense point in the story, after which the plot moves toward its ending. This usually occurs near the end of the story. (What's the high point?)
- **Resolution:** The final outcome or result, in which the subplots and main plot come together and reach conclusion. (How does it end?)



Comprehension #4

Realistic Settings

10 Find passages in your book that tell about the physical **setting**—the place where the story happens. Write a paragraph of your own that describes a main setting. Include words or phrases from the book that make the place seem real and help you picture it in your mind. Underline words or phrases you borrow directly from the book and write the page number in parentheses after each.



Comprehension #5

Teaching and Learning

10 Choose a scene from your book in which one character teaches another character something. Write three to five paragraphs explaining the situation, what was taught and why it was important.



Comprehension #6

Tone: Keeping it Real

10 Real people's lives are sometimes happy and sometimes sad. So a story that is always funny or always tragic will not seem realistic. Follow the steps on the **Tone: Keeping it Real** worksheet to discover how the author of your book keeps the tone realistic.



Comprehension #7

Considering Conflict

10 All good stories are moved along by some form of **conflict** (tension between two opposing characters or forces). The conflict might be between two characters, between a character and his or her conscience, between a character and some natural force that poses a danger or between two opposing values or viewpoints. List two to four conflicts in your book. Then circle the one you think is most important. Write one or two paragraphs to explain your choice.



Comprehension #8

Thinking About Themes

10 What is the **theme** (*the main idea or message*) of your book? Write three to five paragraphs that explain what you think the author wants you to get from the story. For example, many realistic fiction stories suggest that it's important to accept who we are and be true to ourselves. Earn five extra points by taking with some classmates about books they have read to identify two or three other books or stories that have the same main theme. Make a list of their titles.

Comprehension #9



Growing and Changing

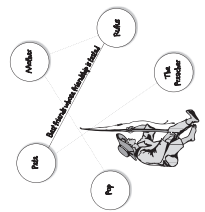
15 Identify a main character in your book that somehow changes between the beginning of your book and the end. Write a paragraph that describes your character at the beginning of the story. Then write a second paragraph that describes the same character at the end of the story. Conclude with a paragraph that describes how he or she changed and what caused the changes.

Comprehension #10



Character Circles

15 Make a list of the main characters in your book. Then draw a ring of circles—one for each main character on your list. Write the name of a character in each circle. Draw a line connecting pairs of characters that have a relationship in the story. Write a brief statement that describes each relationship on the line that connects the two characters. See the **Character Circles** instruction sheet for an example based on the book *A Fine White Dust*.



Comprehension #11

If You Ask Me ...

15 Choose one problem or conflict that occurs in your book. Put yourself in the place of one of the characters in the conflict. Write three to five paragraphs to explain what you would do differently and why.

Comprehension #12

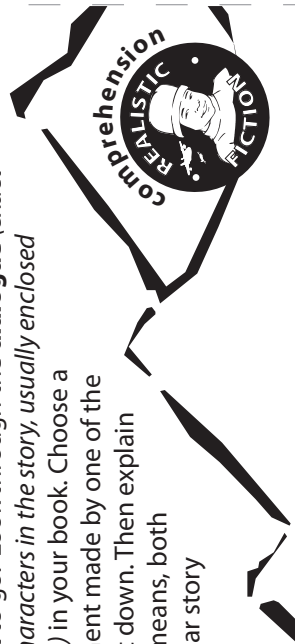


Reflections on Life

15

In realistic fiction, characters usually become more mature or wise. They may make simple comments about other characters or situations that express some new idea about life in general. For example, in *Everything on a Waffle*, Primrose says, "... the only really interesting thing about someone that makes you want to explore them further is their heart, and Miss Honeycut has a teeny tiny pea-sized one and it takes you nowhere you want to go." Look through the **dialogue** (exact words spoken by characters in the story, usually enclosed in quotation marks) in your book. Choose a meaningful comment made by one of the characters. Write it down. Then explain what you think it means, both about this particular story and about life.

Comprehension #13

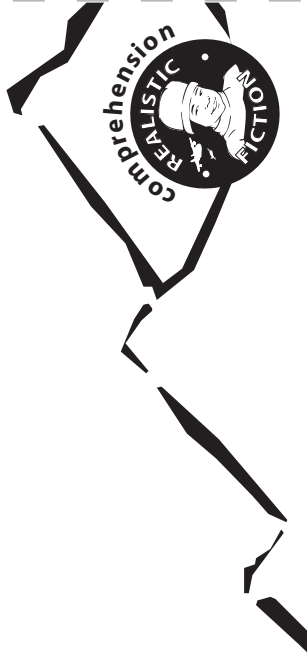


Compare and Contrast

20

Compare and contrast your selected book with another realistic fiction book you've read on a similar subject. Choose one or two story elements (setting, plot, characters, tone or theme) and write two to four paragraphs describing how the books are alike and different. Conclude with a paragraph describing which book you like best and why.

Comprehension #14

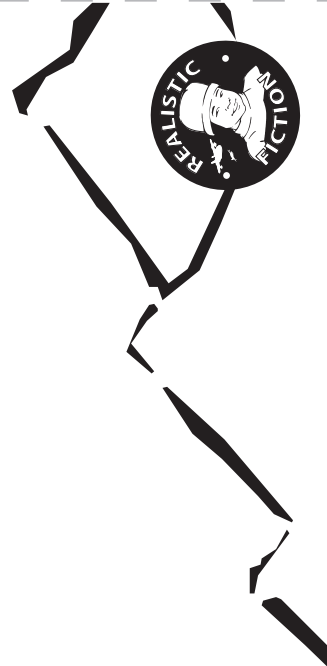


Prejudice in Realistic Fiction

20

Some realistic fiction deals with prejudice and discrimination in society. For example, *Stargirl* is shunned by classmates for being different, as is Leo for associating with her. Look up the words "stereotype," "discrimination" and "prejudice." In your own words, write the definition of each. Does your book include examples of stereotyping, discrimination or prejudice? If so, write three to five paragraphs that answer the following questions. What character or group of characters is the object of these ideas? Why? What message do you think the author wants to send about prejudice? Use examples from the book to support your answers.

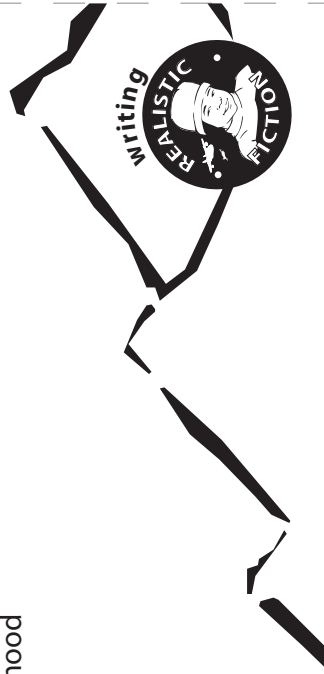
Comprehension #15



One-Person Brainstorm

5 Brainstorm on your own (or with another person who has read the same book) and write a list of at least 15 words or phrases describing one of the following from your book:

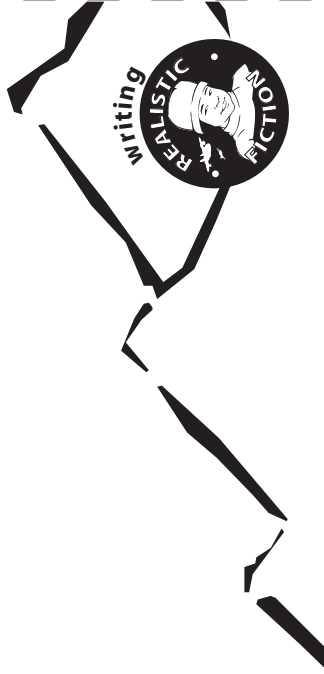
- Setting
- Main character
- Tone or mood



Writing #1

While I Can Still See ...

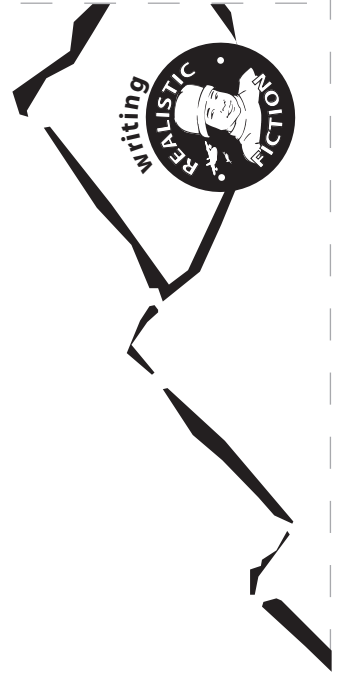
5 Some realistic fiction explores how people deal with physical disabilities. Try this activity to get into that dramatic mind-set: Pretend your doctor has just told you that in two weeks you will be completely blind. Make a list of all the things you would do before you lose your sight forever.



Writing #2

Similar and Different

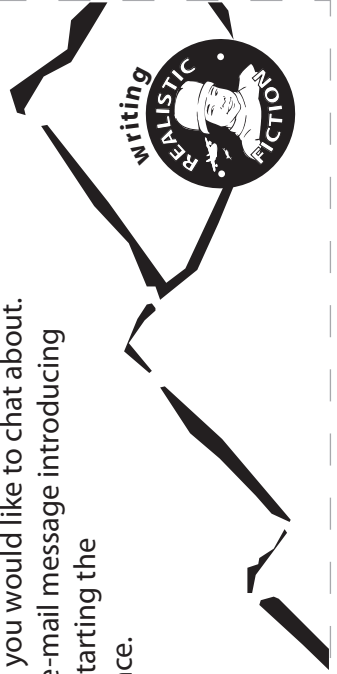
5 Consider one of the central characters from your book. Write a paragraph explaining three ways in which that character is like you. Write a second paragraph explaining three ways in which he or she is different from you.



Writing #3

E-Pen Pal

10 In *Doing Time Online*, Mitch gets in trouble. His “sentence” is to communicate with an elderly nursing home resident via e-mail and chat room. Imagine yourself in Mitch’s position. Make up and name an elderly character whom you have never met. Think about what you would tell him or her about yourself and what subjects you would like to chat about. Compose an e-mail message introducing yourself and starting the correspondence.



Writing #4

Introducing ...

10

Imagine that you've invited the author of your book to visit your school. It's your job to introduce this person to your fellow students. Find some basic information about the author. Then write a two- to three-paragraph introduction that describes the person and his or her accomplishments, and makes others want to listen to what your he or she has to say.

Writing #5



A Laughing Matter?

10

Almost any subject has a potentially funny side. Write three to five original jokes or riddles based on the subject of your book.

Writing #6



Quiz Time

15

Create a trivia quiz to test other readers' knowledge of your book. Include at least three multiple-choice questions, three true/false questions, three short answer fill-in-the-blanks questions and one short essay question. Make an answer key for your quiz, including a sample response for the short essay question.

Writing #7



My Life as Fiction

15

Sometimes in realistic fiction characters struggle with feelings of guilt or embarrassment about something they have done. You'll find examples of guilt in *On My Honor* and *The War With Grandpa*, and of embarrassment in *Fourth Grade Weirdo* and *Jake Drake, Teacher's Pet*. Complete one of the following tasks, based on uncomfortable experiences from your own life.

- Think of a time when you did something you felt guilty about. Create an outline of a serious short story based on that experience.
- Think of a time when you felt embarrassed about something you did or that happened to you. Create an outline of a humorous short story based on that experience.

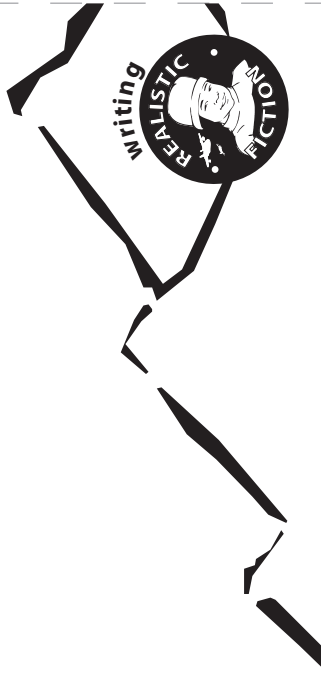
Writing #8



Novel Theme Song

15

Pretend that a television show is being made based on your book. They've hired you to come up with a theme song for the show! Write new lyrics to a familiar tune. Make sure your words reflect the characters and action in the story.



Writing #9

"Reality" vs. "Real" TV

15

Think about so-called "reality" shows on television. Make a list of at least three such shows. Now think about other television shows that try to give a realistic picture of contemporary life. They might be sitcoms, dramas or animated children's shows. List at least three of these shows.

Compare your two lists. Finally, write a one-page essay that explains your answers these questions:

- Which show seems the most realistic, in that the characters and events seem real and believable?
- Which show seems most closely related to you and your life?
- Which show offers the most useful ideas or lessons for living your life?

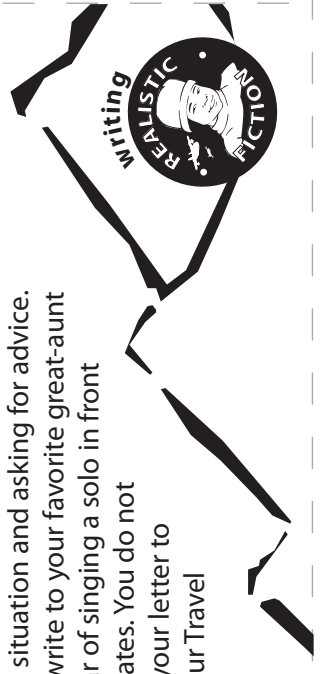


Writing #10

Letter to the Departed

15

In *Wenny Has Wings*, Will works through his grief and confusion by writing letters to his dead sister. Think of someone you knew or wish you'd known who has died. Write a letter to that person expressing your feelings about a problem in your life. For example, if you're trying out for a Little League team but don't think you're good enough to make it, you might write to Babe Ruth or Jackie Robinson explaining the situation and asking for advice. Or you might write to your favorite great-aunt about your fear of singing a solo in front of your classmates. You do not have to show your letter to anyone but your Travel Agent.

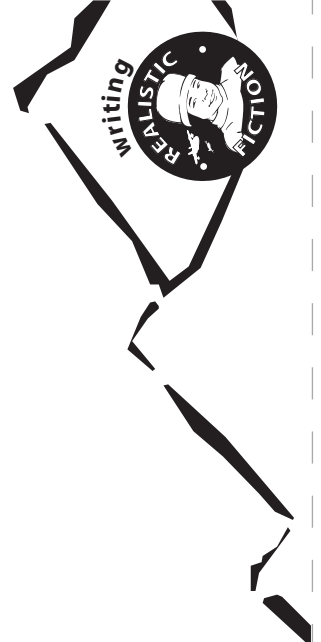


Writing #11

Looking Ahead

15

Think about the main character in your book. Write a one-page essay describing what that character will be like and what he or she will be doing 10 years after the end of the story. Base your essay on what you already know about the character.

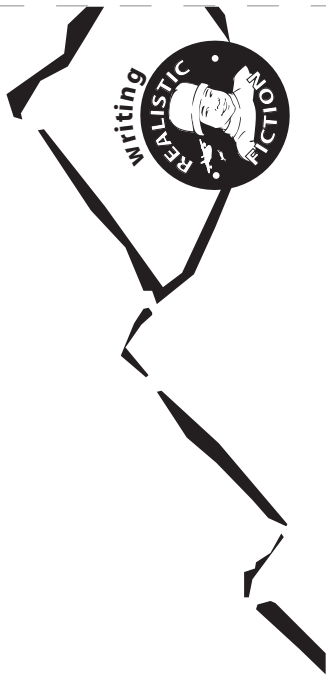


Writing #12

What They Didn't Tell You

15 What do you wish the author of your book had told you that he or she didn't? Write a one- to three-page extra chapter for your book that you think improves it by adding excitement, explaining something or resolving an unresolved conflict.

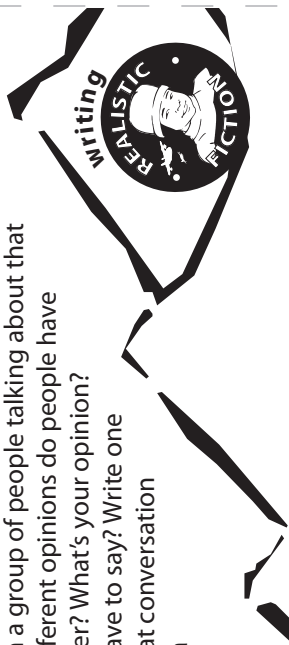
Writing #13



Dramatic Opinions

20 In much contemporary realistic fiction, a central character is viewed or understood in different ways by others. Whether the character is liked or disliked, or judged fairly or unfairly, may be a matter of opinion. For example, in Chapter 23 of *Stargirl*, Leo lists some attitudes floating around the school about the title character. Depending on who is talking, Stargirl is seen as self-centered or superior, a phony or a saint. Choose an interesting central character from your book and imagine yourself in a group of people talking about that character. What different opinions do people have about that character? What's your opinion? What would you have to say? Write one to two pages of that conversation as though it were a scene in a play.

Writing #14



When I Could See ...

20 Look at Writing Activity #2 (While I Can Still See ...). Imagine yourself two weeks ahead in time. Your vision is gone. Write a one-page contemporary realistic fiction story about your experiences during the last two weeks.

Writing #15



The Heart of the Story

20 Write a simple version of your story that could be the text of a picture book for kindergarten or first-grade students. This is hard! Think about how to relate the setting, main characters, most important conflicts and events, and theme to your readers in just a few words on one to two pages.

Writing #16

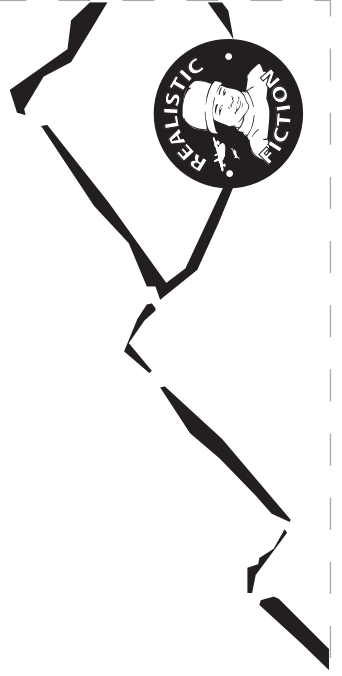
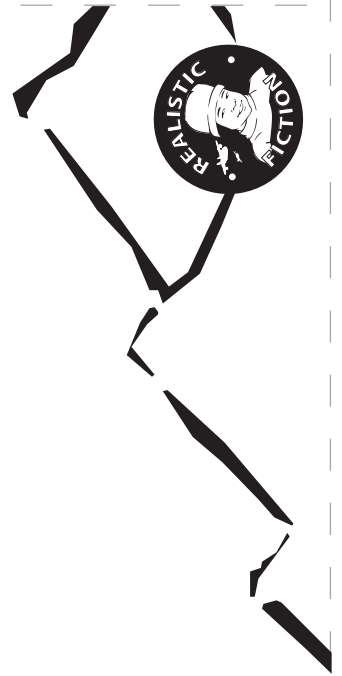
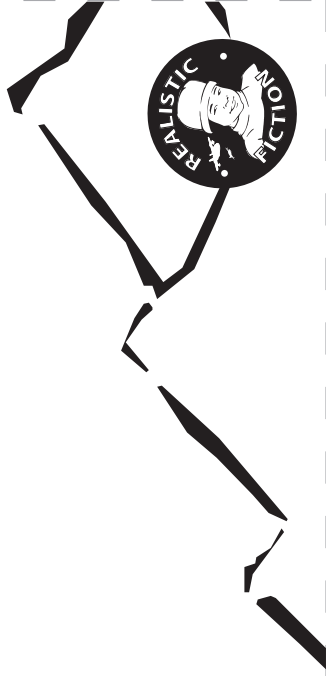
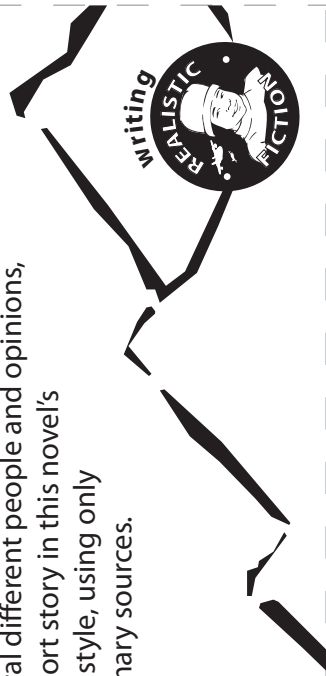


Documented Fiction

20

In *Nothing But the Truth*, a story is told entirely through fictional "primary sources"—school announcements, newspaper articles, transcribed conversations and speeches, letters and e-mail messages, etc. The only personal narration comes as entries in the main character's diary. Choose or make up a conflict that involves several different people and opinions, and write a short story in this novel's documentary style, using only (fictional) primary sources.

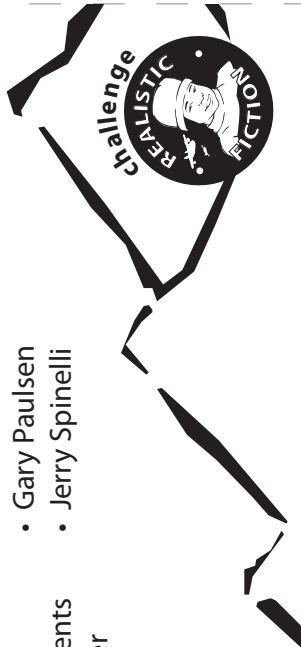
Writing #17



Who Wrote That?

5 The following people are well-known writers of children's contemporary realistic fiction. Select one and make a list of at least five of his or her books or stories. Then create a small classroom display celebrating this author and his or her realistic fiction books.

- Joan Bauer
- Judy Blume
- Betsy Byars
- Andrew Clements
- Paula Danziger
- Paula Fox
- Lois Lowry
- Katherine Paterson
- Gary Paulsen
- Jerry Spinelli

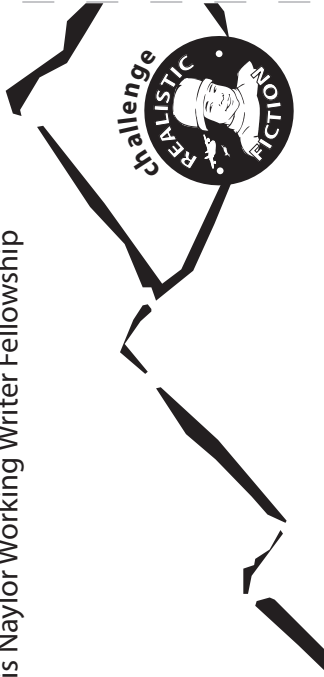


Challenge #1

And the Winner Is ...

5 Use classroom, library or online resources to learn about these annual awards for young people's fiction. For each award, tell who sponsors it and list the winners for the last three years, including title and author.

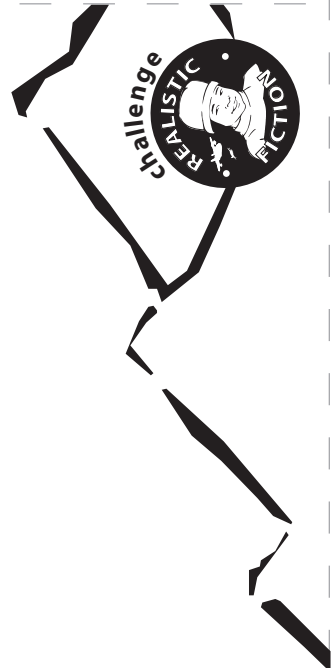
- ALA Notable Books for Fiction
- Golden Kite Award for Fiction
- PEN/Phyllis Naylor Working Writer Fellowship



Challenge #2

The Soundtrack

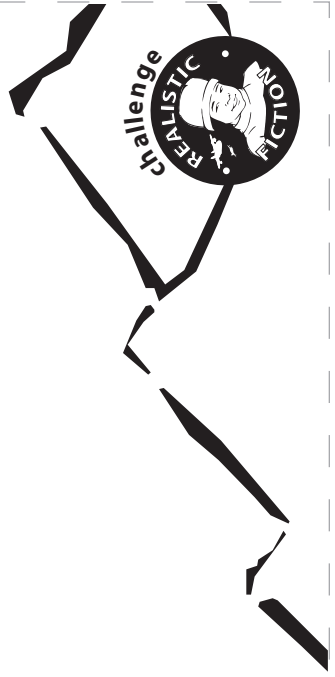
5 Find and record a theme song or a collection of songs you would use if you were making a movie of your book. Explain in writing why you selected each song.



Challenge #3

Medal Making

5 Select three characters from your book. Then design and make an appropriate medal for each character. Your medals might credit characters for such things as "Most Improved Attitude," "Best Friend Ever," "Kindest," "Most Courageous," etc. Write the award-winning character's name on each medal.



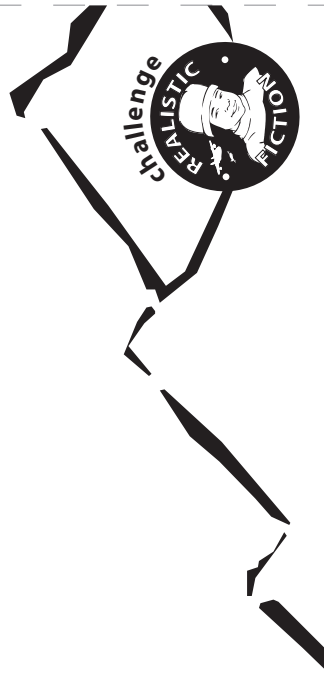
Challenge #4

Model Making

10

Does your realistic fiction book include references to specific places? Make a map or model that shows an important place and helps tell the story. Use detail from the book to make your project as accurate as you can.

Challenge #5

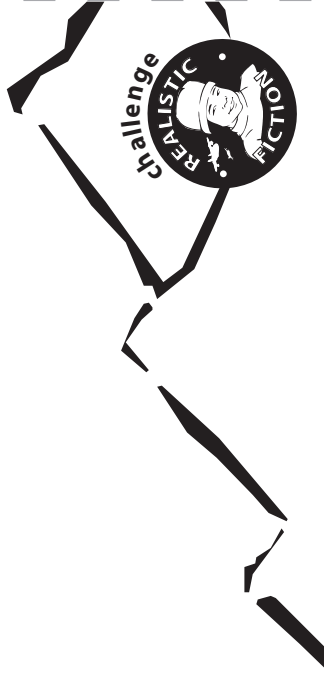


Alternate Ending

10

Draw a picture that shows a different possible ending to your book. Write a caption for your picture and explain your alternate ending briefly under the caption.

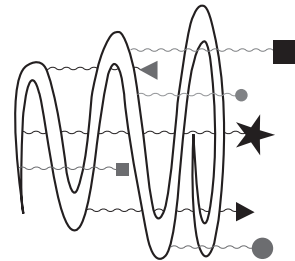
Challenge #6



My Life in Symbols

10

Use the **My Life in Symbols** instruction sheet to create a kinetic sculpture (mobile) that represents your life.



Challenge #7

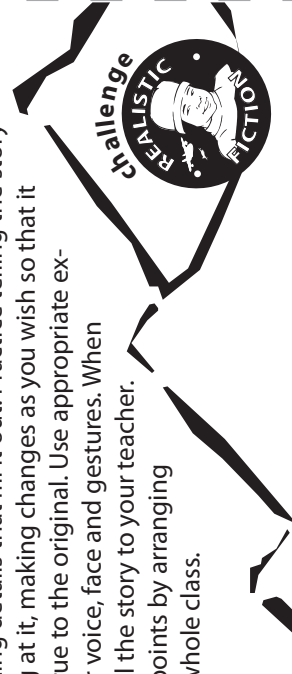


You're the Storyteller

10

In *Gooneybird Greene*, Gooneybird delights her class with her talent as a natural storyteller. Choose a one- to two-page **anecdote** (*short narrative that tells about a specific incident or experience*) from your book. Pick one that represents characters well and stands alone as a story with a beginning, middle and end. Read the story until you know it well. Don't memorize it word for word. Instead, understand the sequence, the overall point of the story and the interesting details that fill it out. Practice telling the story without looking at it, making changes as you wish so that it is exciting yet true to the original. Use appropriate expression in your voice, face and gestures. When you're ready, tell the story to your teacher. Earn five extra points by arranging to tell it to the whole class.

Challenge #8



Quotation Collage

10

Find five quotations that express ideas that you agree with. These may be quotations you already know or you might find them in books or on the Internet. If possible, include a quotation from your book. Create a collage on poster board using your quotations and related graphic images. You may draw the images yourself, use computer clip art or cut and paste from magazines. Be prepared to explain your collage to your teacher.

Here are some sample quotations to get you started:

- "The great tragedy of life is not that men perish, but that they cease to love."
(Somerset Maugham)
- "The end is nothing. The road is all."
(Willa Cather)

Challenge #9

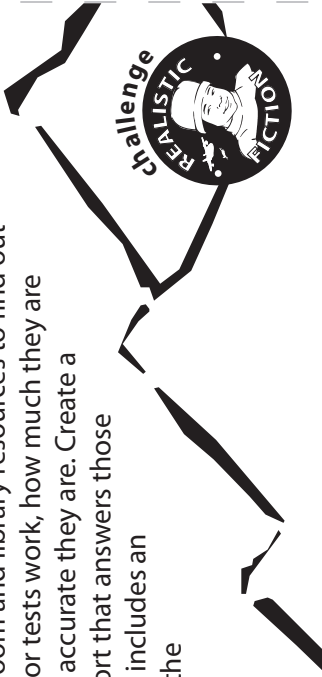


Truth or Lies?

10

Some true (nonfiction) stories are so amazing that they seem like fiction. Some fiction stories seem so believable that they seem like the truth. This is a problem for law enforcement officers trying to decide if suspects are telling the truth or lying. How do they figure it out? One tool that helps them is the polygraph or "lie detector" test. Use classroom and library resources to find out how lie detector tests work, how much they are used and how accurate they are. Create a two-page report that answers those questions and includes an illustration of the equipment.

Challenge #10

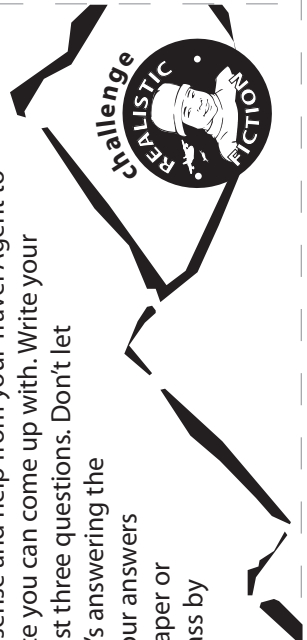


Advice Column

15

Does your school have a newspaper? If so, offer to write an advice column for at least one issue—anonymously! Have the editor of the paper announce the column and invite students to send in questions about their real-life problems. If not, have your Travel Agent announce an advice service as a class experiment, invite students to send questions anonymously to the Travel Agent, and have him or her forward them to you. Then use your common sense and help from your Travel Agent to give the best advice you can come up with. Write your responses to at least three questions. Don't let anyone know who's answering the questions! Have your answers published in the paper or shared with the class by your Travel Agent.

Challenge #11

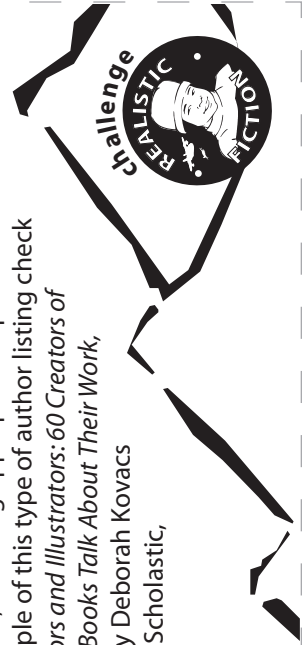


Author Research

15

Learn about the author of your book. Read the author information on the book jacket, check your school or public library for reference books that contain author biographies or use the author's name to do a search on the Internet. Take notes about the author's life and work. Make as complete a list as you can of his or her books. Then create a two-page spread that you might submit for publication in a new reference book on children's authors, including appropriate captioned illustrations. For an example of this type of author listing check out *Meet the Authors and Illustrators: 60 Creators of Favorite Children's Books Talk About Their Work, Volumes 1 and 2*, by Deborah Kovacs and James Preller, Scholastic, 1994 and 1996.

Challenge #12



If I Had a Nickel ...

20

Have you ever wondered how authors make their money? Most sign a contract with a publisher. The author gives the publisher the right to publish his or her book in return for payment. Payment usually comes in two parts. First, a lump sum paid before the book ever comes out. This is called an advance. Then, once the book is published, a percentage of the sales—for example, “a nickel for every time” a copy sells. This is called a royalty. Calculate the earnings of three different authors by completing the **If I Had a Nickel ...** worksheet. Earn five extra points by creating three of your own royalty problems with solutions.

Challenge #13



Calculating Fiction

20

What's in your school library's fiction collection? (If your school doesn't have a library, visit the children's fiction section of your public library.) What genres are represented? How much of the collection is animal stories, how much mysteries, etc? Follow the steps on **Calculating Fiction** worksheet to help you find out. Sample the collection, then analyze the numbers and form conclusions about the collection as a whole.

Challenge #14



How to Overcome Prejudice

20

Write a “how to” instruction manual that suggests steps people can take to identify their own prejudices and overcome them.

HINT: Common wisdom says that prejudice is the result of lack of knowledge or experience. Be sure you include ways people can learn about individuals or groups of people they have prejudged, including reading good contemporary realistic fiction books!

Challenge #15



Social Activism

20

Some contemporary realistic fiction has to do with children getting involved to help solve community problems or address social issues, like homelessness or animal abuse. Some examples include *A Day for Vincent Chin and Me*, *Gracie's Girl* and *Hoot*. Follow the steps on the **Social Activism** instruction sheet to take action on behalf of a community problem or issue that is important to you.

Challenge #16



Unscramble Word Challenge

Realistic Fiction

Traveler name(s): _____

1. Write each of your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words on the lines provided below.
2. Count all the letters in all of your selected words.
3. Create enough 1" x 1" squares so you have one square for each letter.
4. Write each letter of each word on one of the squares (see example below).
5. Shuffle all the squares together (do not separate by word) and place them all faceup.
6. Time yourself to see how long it takes to unscramble all of the words. Look at your written list if you need help.
7. Glue your word squares in the proper order on the back of this worksheet to create a second list of correctly spelled words.

Earn five extra points by convincing a classmate or family member to compete with you to see who can unscramble all the words the fastest. Make sure your competitor gets a practice round before you begin.

EXAMPLE: Diverse



Vocabulary words

1 _____	7 _____
2 _____	8 _____
3 _____	9 _____
4 _____	10 _____
5 _____	11 _____
6 _____	12 _____

Letter Codes

Realistic Fiction

Traveler name(s): _____

Make a letter code by creating your own key in which each letter of the alphabet stands for a different letter of the alphabet. In a simple letter code there is an obvious pattern to the substitutions.

For example, you might switch the alphabet back to front, so Z stands for A, Y for B, X for C, and so on. Or you might keep the letters in order but offset them slightly so that C stands for A, D stands for B, E stands for C, and so on.

Explore letter codes by completing these steps:

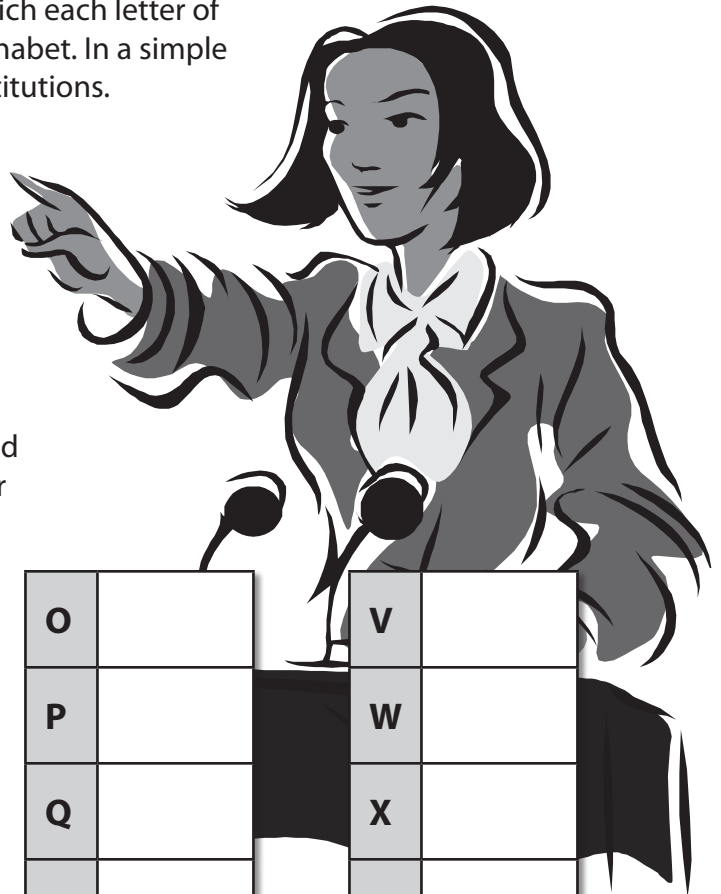
1. Choose a simple pattern for your letter code and write a key that shows each letter and the letter that stands for it.

A	
B	
C	
D	
E	
F	
G	

H	
I	
J	
K	
L	
M	
N	

O	
P	
Q	
R	
S	
T	
U	

V	
W	
X	
Y	
Z	



2. On the back of this worksheet list each of your 8 to 12 selected vocabulary words. Next to each vocabulary word write the word in your letter code.
3. On a separate sheet of paper write five sentences, using one of your vocabulary words in each.
4. Rewrite the sentences using your code.

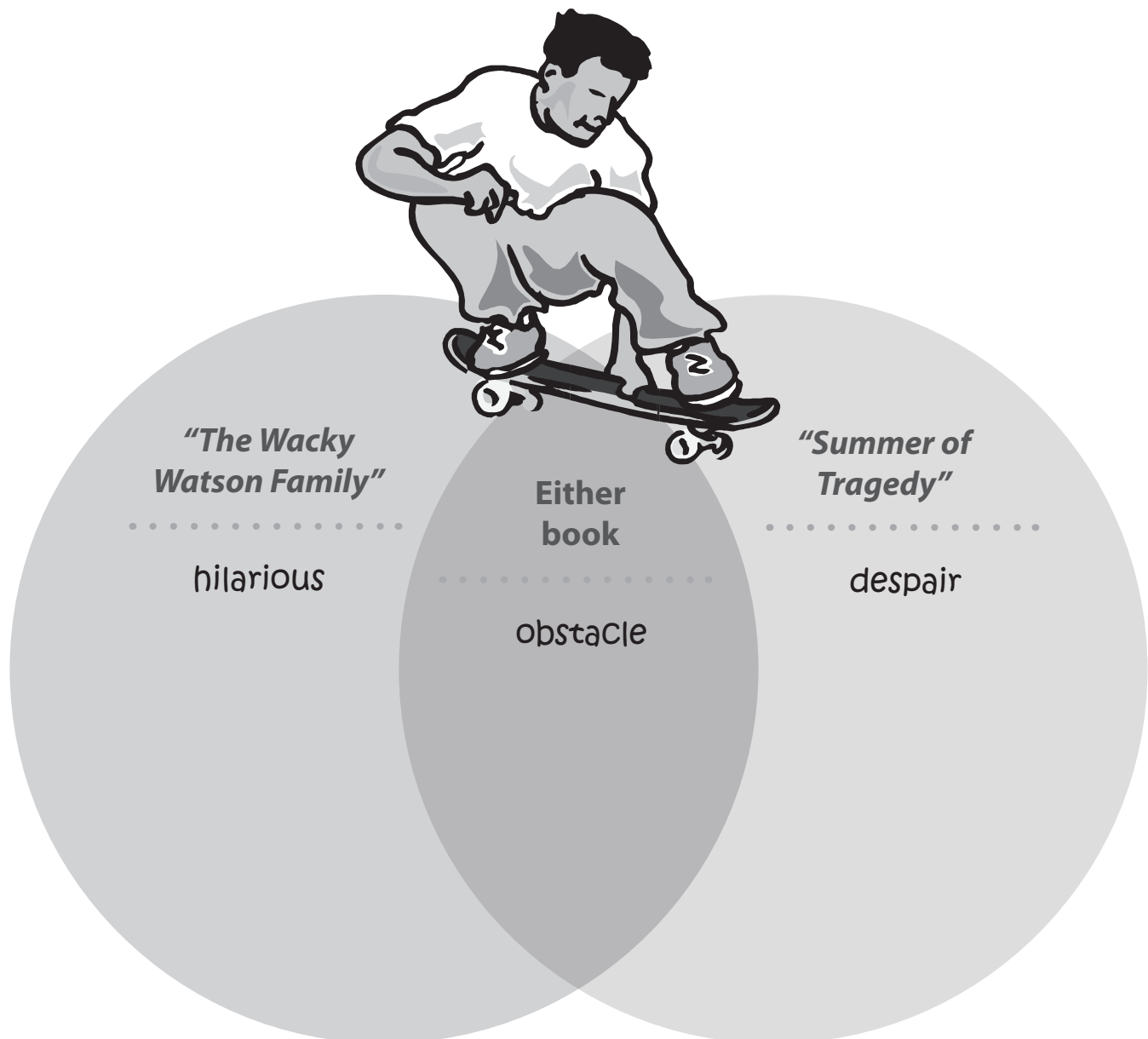
Subject Circles

Realistic Fiction

Traveler name(s): _____

Some words seem to go together to suggest a subject. For example, if you were talking about a library, you'd expect to use words like "checkout," "reference," "books" and "librarian." Below are two circles. Each is labeled with the title of a made-up realistic fiction book. One is titled "The Wacky Watson Family" and the other "Summer of Tragedy." From the realistic fiction Vocabulary List, place at least 15 words you'd expect to find in each book in the proper circle. If a word might fit in either book, place it in the part of the circles that overlaps. One word is supplied in each place to get you started.

NOTE: You may use any words from the realistic fiction Vocabulary List. You are not limited to your selected words.



Basic Story Elements

Realistic Fiction

Traveler name(s): _____

Title of book: _____

Type of realistic fiction (Subgenres: Check all that apply):

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Family life | <input type="radio"/> Adventure/Survival |
| <input type="radio"/> Friendship | <input type="radio"/> Growing up/Coming-of-age |
| <input type="radio"/> School life | <input type="radio"/> Personal problem/Social Issue |
| <input type="radio"/> Romance | |
| <input type="radio"/> Other _____ | |

Setting (time and place):

Main characters (who's in it):

Tone of story (happy, suspenseful, gloomy, funny, etc.):

Short plot summary (what happens):



Tone: Keeping it Real

Realistic Fiction

Traveler name(s): _____

Real people's lives are sometimes happy and sometimes sad. So a story that is always funny or always tragic will not seem realistic. Follow these steps to discover how the author of your book keeps the tone realistic.

Find a place in your book where a character has a **pleasant** experience. Write the character's name, briefly describe the experience and note the page number.

1

Name:

Experience:

Page number:

Find a place in your book where a character has an **unpleasant** experience. Write the character's name, briefly describe the experience and note the page number.

2

Name:

Experience:

Page number:

Find an example of a character in your book expressing a **happy** mood. Write the character's name, identify the mood and note the page number.

3

Name:

Mood:

Page number:

Find an example of a character in your book expressing an **unhappy** mood. Write the character's name, identify the mood and note the page number.

4

Name:

Mood:

Page number:

Comment on whether your story has a happy or sad ending. Remember to include specific examples from the book that support your view and note the page number(s).

5

Think about your book as a whole, and describe the overall tone (funny, warm, sad, tragic, serious, scary, etc.).

6

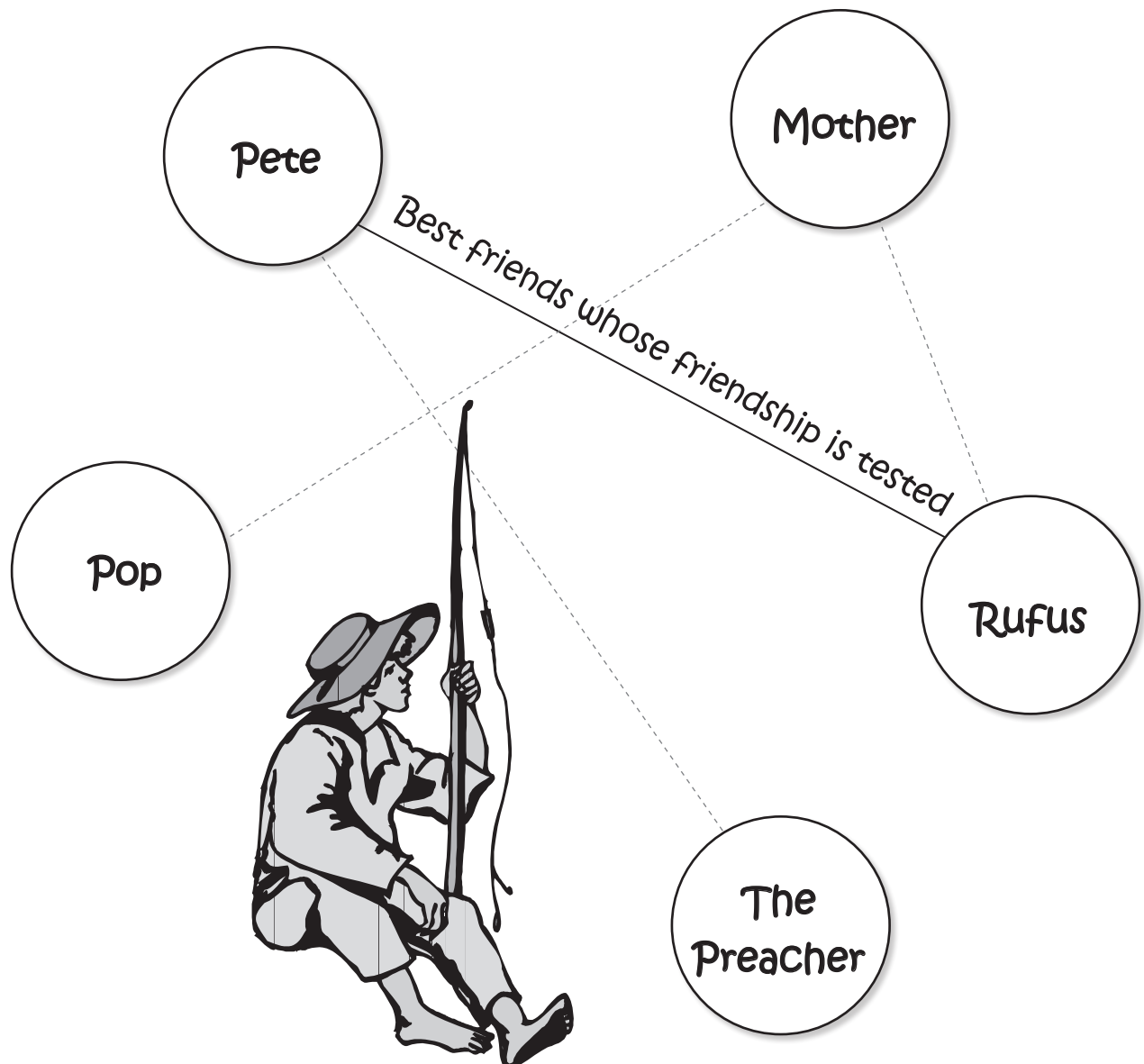
Character Circles

Realistic Fiction

Traveler name(s): _____

Follow these steps to create character circles to show the main characters in your book and their relationships to one another. An example based on the book *A Fine White Dust* is shown below.

1. Make a list of the main characters in your book.
2. Draw a ring of circles—one for each main character on your list.
3. Write the name of a character in each circle.
4. Draw a line connecting pairs of characters that have a relationship in the story.
5. Write a brief statement describing each relationship on the line connecting the two characters.



My Life in Symbols

Realistic Fiction

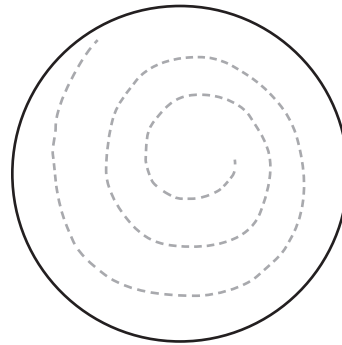
Traveler name(s): _____

Follow these steps to create a kinetic sculpture (mobile) that represents your life.

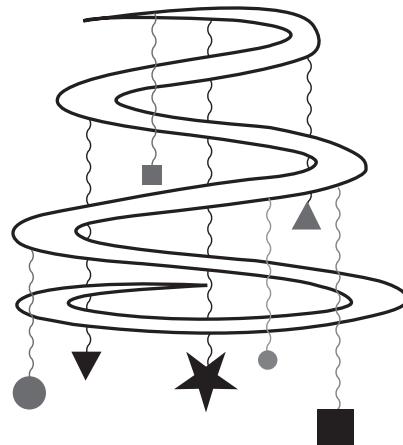
- 1 Think of six to nine words that express different parts of your life. You might think of studious, musical, athletic, friend, etc.

- 2 Then think of six to nine objects that relate to your words. For the words above, you might think of a schoolbook, a violin, a soccer ball, your best friend or your pet.
- 3 Gather your materials. You'll need a paper plate, assorted construction paper or card stock, a pencil, crayons and felt-tip markers, scissors, colored yarn and tape.
- 4 Use the construction paper or card stock to cut out a simple shape to represent each of your objects. Write the corresponding word on both sides of each shape.

- 5 Decorate both sides of your paper plate.
- 6 Use a pencil to draw a spiral on one side of your plate from the edge to the center. Cut along the line, forming a coil.



- 7 Cut three to five different lengths of yarn to hang your shapes and one piece to hang the mobile.
- 8 Use tape to attach one piece of yarn to the center of the paper plate (now the top of the coil) for hanging up the mobile.
- 9 Attach two or more of your shapes to the other pieces of yarn. Hang the shapes in different spots on the yarn.
- 10 Attach the pieces of yarn to the coil so that they form an attractive, balanced mobile.



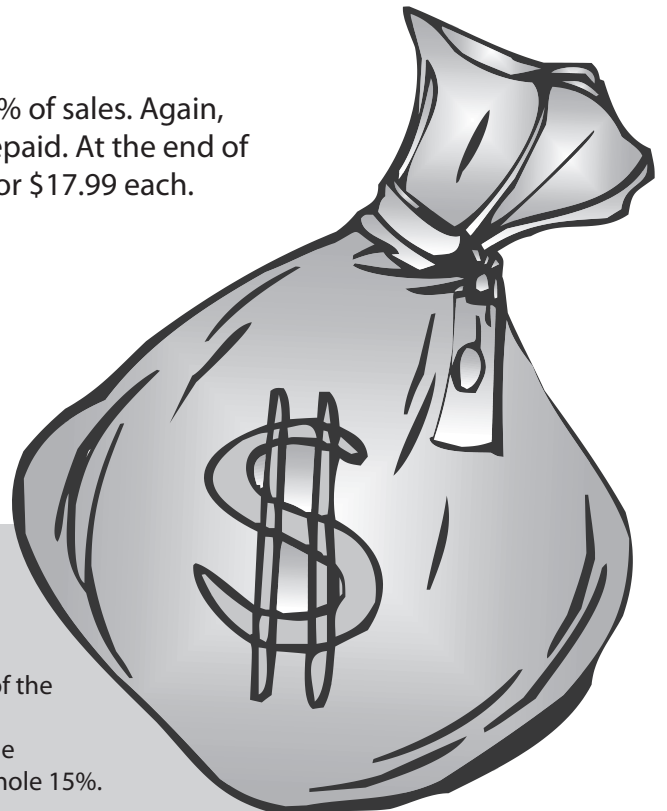
If I Had a Nickel ...

Realistic Fiction

Traveler name(s): _____

For each of the following scenarios, figure out how much money the author has actually made for writing his or her book:

- 1** Albert Author contracts for 8% of total sales, with no advance. In the first year, sales total \$1,570. How much has Albert earned for his book?
- 2** Annie Author's contract provides a \$1,000 advance and 12% of total sales. But the advance is prepayment of Annie's expected royalties. So the royalty payments don't begin until the advance has been "repaid" to the publisher from Annie's share of the profits. Total sales for the first year are \$7,442. How much has Annie earned so far?
- 3** Andrew Author receives a \$5,000 advance and 15% of sales. Again, royalties begin only after the advance has been repaid. At the end of the first year, 7,500 copies of the book have sold for \$17.99 each. How much has Andrew earned?



HINTS

Question 1: What is 8% of \$1,570?

Question 2: Figure out the author's 12% of \$7,442. Is the total more or less than \$1,000?

Question 3: Figure out the total sales by multiplying the price of the book by the number of copies sold. The author's part of that is 15% of the total sales. Is it more than the advance? If so, the advance has been "repaid" and the author has earned the whole 15%.

Calculating Fiction

Realistic Fiction

Traveler name(s): _____

What's in your school library's fiction collection? (If your school doesn't have a library, visit the children's fiction section of your public library.) What genres are represented? How much of the collection is animal stories, how much mysteries, etc?

Follow the steps below to sample titles from the collection, analyze the numbers and form conclusions about the collection as a whole.

1. Make a piece of lined paper into a chart like the one below.

Animal Stories	
Contemporary Realistic Fiction	
Fantasy	
Science Fiction	
Historical Fiction	
Mysteries	
Sports Fiction	
Westerns	

2. Take your chart and pencil to the library.
3. Randomly choose 10 books from the "A" authors section of the fiction collection.
4. Look at each book and decide which fiction genre (which column on your chart) it belongs to.

NOTE: Sometimes this is obvious. If the title is something like *The Mystery of the Haunted House* you can be sure it's a mystery. If the cover illustration and title both reflect sports, you can assume it's sports fiction. But sometimes it isn't so obvious. Use the title, the cover art, the summary on the inside cover and chapter

titles to help you decide. Many children's novels that don't clearly fall into other categories are contemporary realistic fiction. Make your best guess.

5. Place a tally mark in the appropriate genre column for each. Make only one tally mark for each book, based on which genre it seems to fit best.
6. Follow the same procedure for 10 books from the middle of the fiction section (maybe "K" or "L" authors) and again for 10 books from the end of the section (maybe a combination of "W" to "Z" authors).
7. Once you have sample data for your 30 books, you can analyze it. Make a bar graph or pie chart showing how many books from the collection fall into each genre.
8. Finally, write a short summary of your analysis. Identify the genres that have the most and fewest titles in the collection.
9. Share your graphic and written analysis with both your Travel Agent and your librarian.

Social Activism

Realistic Fiction

Traveler name(s): _____

Some contemporary realistic fiction has to do with children getting involved to help solve community problems or address social issues, like homelessness or animal abuse. Some examples include *A Day for Vincent Chin and Me*, *Gracie's Girl* and *Hoot*. Follow these steps to take action on behalf of a community problem or issue that is important to you:

1 Use your phone book (look in the yellow pages under different words that relate to your subject), and call your city hall or county supervisor's office to learn what organizations work with your problem or issue in your town.

2 Talk to someone "in the know" at one of these organizations.

3 Find out what the organization does and how it tries to address the issue.

4 Ask where and how the organization gets the resources (e.g., people, money, materials) it needs.

5 Ask the organization what it needs most.

6 Then plan and coordinate a simple class or school activity to benefit the organization. For example, you might organize a bake sale or invite classmates to donate money or to bring needed supplies like blankets, cleaning supplies and books for a local homeless shelter.



Standards

McREL Content Knowledge Standards for Language Arts

Standard 1: *Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process*

Benchmarks Level II (Grades 3–5)

- Uses strategies to write for a variety of purposes
- Writes expository compositions
- Writes narrative accounts, such as poems and stories
- Writes autobiographical compositions
- Writes expressive compositions
- Writes in response to literature

Standard 2: *Uses the stylistic and rhetorical aspects of writing*

Benchmarks Level II (Grades 3–5)

- Uses descriptive language that clarifies and enhances ideas
- Uses paragraph form in writing

Standard 3: *Uses grammatical and mechanical conventions in written composition*

Benchmarks Level II (Grades 3–5)

- Uses conventions of spelling in written compositions
- Uses conventions of capitalization in written compositions
- Uses conventions of punctuation in written compositions

Standard 4: *Gathers and uses information for research purposes*

Benchmarks Level II (Grades 3–5)

- Uses encyclopedias to gather information for research topics
- Uses dictionaries to gather information for research topics
- Uses electronic media to gather information
- Uses strategies to gather and record information for research topics
- Uses strategies to compile information into written reports or summaries

Standard 5: *Uses the general skills and strategies of the reading process*

Benchmarks Level II (Grades 3–5)

- Makes, confirms and revises simple predictions about what will be found in a text
- Uses phonetic and structural analysis techniques, syntactic structure and semantic context to decode unknown words
- Uses a variety of context clues to decode unknown words
- Uses word reference materials to determine the meaning, pronunciation, and derivations of unknown words
- Understands level-appropriate reading vocabulary
- Understands the author's purpose or point of view
- Uses personal criteria to select reading material

Standard 6: *Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of literary texts*

Benchmarks Level II (Grades 3–5)

- Uses reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of literary passages and texts
- Knows the defining characteristics of a variety of literary forms and genres
- Understands the basic concept of plot
- Understands similarities and differences within and among literary works from various genres and cultures
- Understands elements of character development in literary works
- Knows themes that recur across literary works
- Understands the ways in which language is used in literary texts
- Makes connections between characters or simple events in a literary work and people or events in his or her own life

Standard 7: *Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of informational texts*

Benchmarks Level II (Grades 3–5)

- Uses reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of informational texts
- Knows the defining characteristics of a variety of informational texts
- Uses the various parts of a book to locate information

- Uses prior knowledge and experience to understand and respond to new information
- Understands structural patterns or organization in informational texts

Standard 8: *Uses listening and speaking strategies for different purposes*
Benchmarks Level II (Grades 3–5)

- Responds to questions and comments
- Listens to classmates and adults
- Uses strategies to convey a clear main point when speaking
- Makes basic oral presentations to class
- Uses a variety of nonverbal communication skills
- Uses a variety of verbal communication skills
- Organizes ideas for oral presentations

Standard 10: *Understands the characteristics and components of the media*
Benchmarks Level II (Grades 3–5)

- Understands similarities and differences among a variety of media

NCTE Standards for the English Language Arts

Standard 1: Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of text, of themselves and of the cultures of the United States and the world to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.

Standard 2: Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions.

Standard 3: Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies and their understanding of textual features.

Standard 4: Students adjust their use of spoken, written and visual language.

Standard 5: Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

Standard 6: Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions, media techniques, figurative language and genre to create, critique and discuss print and non-print texts.

Standard 12: Students use spoken, written and visual language to accomplish their own purposes.

California Applied Learning Standards

Standard 9: Students will understand personal skill development and its impact on their success. Students will exhibit self-confidence, honesty, perseverance and self-discipline.

- Effectively manage time and balance priorities
- Meet deadlines and consistently complete all assignments

McREL (Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning, www.mcrel.org) standards © McREL, 2004.

Teacher Feedback Form

At Interact, we constantly strive to make our units the best they can be. We always appreciate feedback from you—our customer—to facilitate this process. With your input, we can continue to provide high-quality, interactive, and meaningful instructional materials to enhance your curriculum and engage your students. Please take a few moments to complete this feedback form and drop it in the mail. Address it to:

Interact • Attn: Editorial
10200 Jefferson Blvd. • P.O. Box 802
Culver City, CA 90232-0802

or fax it to us at **(800) 944-5432**

or e-mail it to us at **access@teachinteract.com**

***We enjoy receiving photos or videotapes of our units in action!
Please use the release form on the following page.***

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Interact Unit: _____

Comments: _____

Release Form for Photographic Images

To Teachers:

To help illustrate to others the experiential activities involved and to promote the use of simulations, we like to get photographs and videos of classes participating in the simulation. Please send photos of students actively engaged so we can publish them in our promotional material. Be aware that we can only use images of students for whom a release form has been submitted.

To Parents:

I give permission for photographs or videos of my child to appear in catalogs of educational materials published by Interact.

Name of Student: _____ (print)

Age of Student: _____ (print)

Parent or Guardian: _____ (print)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Address:

Phone: _____

Interact

10200 Jefferson Blvd.
Culver City, CA 90232-0802
310-839-2436

Welcome

to **Book Mountain Expeditions!**



Here's how to plan your adventure

Are you ready to begin your personalized reading adventure? With your teacher as your Travel Agent and this travel guide, you have the tools you need to journey into the world of literature. As a Navigator, Explorer or Adventurer, you will read books and complete activities that you select to fit your own needs and interests. Whether your journey is short or long, you will learn amazing things as you show your knowledge, creativity, resourcefulness and determination. Your hard work will earn you travel points that move you along the Expedition Map to your goal—the top of Book Mountain.

Each Book Mountain Expedition focuses on one **genre** (*a specific type or kind of literature you might enjoy reading*). For each completed expedition, you will earn a sticker representing the genre you explored. See how many stickers you can collect!

Now you're ready to begin!

- 1 Arrange a time to meet with your Travel Agent
- 2 Agree on which genre you will explore
- 3 Determine whether you're a Navigator, Explorer or Adventurer and agree on which book you will read
- 4 Agree on which activities you will complete and how many travel points you will earn
- 5 Agree on when you will complete your journey
- 6 Sign your Travel Agreement and create your travel **dossier** (daw-see-AY; *a file containing documents related to a particular subject*)

First you will read an introduction to the genre you've chosen. It will describe things to look for when you read your book and

explain the specific types of stories (subgenres) within your genre. It will also define new words you need to know. New words will appear in bold type and the definitions will be in italics (just like in this travel guide!).

Once you've learned about your genre, you can start reading your book and working on your activities. Some activities can be done before you finish reading your book. You will complete activities in four categories:

- **Vocabulary**—Learn to define, spell, understand and use words related to the genre.
- **Comprehension**—Show that you understand the story, setting, characters and ideas in your book.
- **Writing**—Use ideas related to your genre and book to practice different kinds of writing.
- **Challenge**—Use ideas related to your genre and book to be artistic, practice your investigation skills and explore other subjects that you study in school.

To complete your expedition, you'll share something you learned with your class. You might choose to share your favorite activity or you might give a summary of your entire journey. This is your chance to convince your classmates to begin their own expeditions!

As you complete activities, show them to your Travel Agent to earn your travel points. Then move your marker along the map and record your points earned on the travelogue included in this guide. Keep in mind that you can earn more points by choosing more challenging activities and by doing your best work. Neatness, completeness and creativity will be rewarded!

Travel tips to help you complete your expedition

- Work on your journey at the times discussed with your Travel Agent. Work quietly and responsibly.
- Keep all papers related to your journey in your dossier when you are not using them. Keep large projects in the project area when you're not working on them. That way you won't lose anything!
- Keep the project area clean. Responsible travelers leave a place better than they found it. Remember to return Activity Cards to the box and keep the classroom dossier file neat and clean.

- Carefully read each Activity Card before you begin. Make sure you understand what is expected. Write a few notes to remind you of the steps you need to follow and the parts that must be completed.
- Use examples from your book to support your answers whenever possible. This will show your Travel Agent that you understand the activity you're working on. When using an example from your book, write the page number next to it so you can easily find it again in the book. If your book is a collection of stories, identify the story used in your example.
- You don't have to do activities in order. When you're ready, choose an activity that fits with the time and resources you have available. If one activity is hard for you, make yourself work on that part of the agreement for a while and then reward yourself by doing a different activity that is easier or more fun.
- Keep yourself going! Famous explorers don't need to be told what to do next—they "boldly go where no one has gone before!" Part of the challenge is to manage your own journey. Complete your reading and activities by the date you agreed to. Don't wait for your Travel Agent to remind you! Show yourself and your Travel Agent that you can use your time wisely and stick to your plan.
- If you enjoy a particular activity and want to do more like it, talk to your Travel Agent. But don't change the plan without permission. After all, an agreement is an agreement!
- Do your best! Look at the rubrics for the Activity Cards, Presentation and your overall Expedition to see how you're doing. And remember, you're not competing with classmates, because your expedition is just for you. So it's a chance to show yourself and your Travel Agent what you—just YOU!—can accomplish.

Once you've completed one Book Mountain Expedition, you'll be ready to try another. Ask your Travel Agent to help you get started. Explore a different genre. Suggest a book or an activity that isn't in the materials. Take the initiative and become a true Reading Adventurer!

Expedition: 1. A long journey for a special purpose, such as exploring
2. A short trip to do something enjoyable, as in a shopping expedition

Keep track of the Activity Cards you’ve completed and the number of travel points you’ve earned in each category. Remember to mark your progress on the map!

● **My Travelogue** ●

Genre: _____

Activity	Activity Card Numbers Completed	Points Earned
Introductory Essay	_____	
Vocabulary		
Comprehension		
Writing		
Challenge		

Genre: _____

Activity	Activity Card Numbers Completed	Points Earned
Introductory Essay	_____	
Vocabulary		
Comprehension		
Writing		
Challenge		

Genre: _____

Activity	Activity Card Numbers Completed	Points Earned
Introductory Essay	_____	
Vocabulary		
Comprehension		
Writing		
Challenge		

Genre: _____

Activity	Activity Card Numbers Completed	Points Earned
Introductory Essay	_____	
Vocabulary		
Comprehension		
Writing		
Challenge		



Book Mountain Expeditions

Your travel guide to reading adventures.



Student Travel Guide