

English Language Arts

Grade 4

Days 1 & 2

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Task: Read and jot down your thinking about two or more stories. Read one and respond on day 1 and read a second one and respond on day 2.

Directions:

1. Read and follow along to the videos on Storyline Online:

<https://www.storylineonline.net/books/fast-words-fly/>

<https://www.storylineonline.net/books/to-be-a-drum/>

<https://www.storylineonline.net/books/thank-you-mr-falker/>

*These web sites are not controlled or approved by the NYC Department of Education

2. In your reading response journal or on a piece of loose leaf paper, write down your thoughts and opinions about each story you have read. Briefly summarize each story you read by using the strategy: **Somebody** (main character) **Wants** (the character's goal) **But** (something or someone got in the way) **So** (how the problem was solved).

While you read and write:

- Realistic Fiction is a story with invented characters and situations that could happen in real life. The characters have realistic lives and act in realistic ways. The story's setting, characters, and events may be very familiar to the reader or might be about people and cultures very different from the reader's own experiences. There is usually a problem that the main character faces and must deal with.
- As you read, think about what makes this story "realistic." Stop at places where the story seems true to life and ask yourself if...
 - It reminds you of something that happened to you
 - It sounds like something you have heard about happening in the world
 - Then mark these parts in the story and jot down a word or two about why it seems realistic
- Pay attention to the important idea(s) that run through the story and mark those places with a sticky note or jot your thinking down in a notebook.
 - What sort of things keep coming up in the story that let you know about an important idea? Can you show where?
 - What do you suppose are some of the things the author really wants us to think about when we put down the book? How do you know?
 - Keep track of events in the plot, relationships between characters, and details about setting and then form theories about the character's personality and find textual evidence to support your ideas.
 - Did the character make a change as the story moves over time? What was the character like in the beginning of the story? How is s/he different now? What event caused the character to change? Where was that part in the story?

Days 3 & 4

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Task: Write a realistic fiction story.

Directions:

Write your own realistic fiction story that includes an interesting and engaging beginning, moments of rising tension, and a believable ending.

While you read:

- Invite the readers to hear your character think and feel, to enter his or her mind, to know the character closely. **Do not TELL** the readers what your characters are saying. Let the characters speak for themselves by using dialogue.
- Plan the scenes of your story. You want to keep your readers' interest. Keep adding details to your story and do not rush to the end. To plot out your story, try using one of these strategies:
 - Think about the **Somebody** (main character)... **Wants** (the character's goal)... **But** (someone or something got in the way)... **So** (how the problem was solved)....
 - Count through your five fingers – Thumb: **Introduction** of characters and setting; Index Finger: **Rising Action** (includes events leading up to the main problem or conflict); Middle Finger: **Climax** (when the problem reaches a high point); Ring Finger: **Falling Action** (when the characters work to solve the problem or conflict); and Pinky: **Resolution** (how things end up in the story – a lesson learned)
 - Make a story board or cartoon strip. As you make your story plan, include thought bubbles and speech bubbles if you wish. Then write from the images you have imagined and drawn.
- If you are stuck, just starting writing. One word will lead to others. Keep on writing. Maybe you will get rid of some of these sentences later, but you will be on your way.

Day 5 & 6

Genre: Biography

Task: Read and discover the qualities of the biography genre.

Directions:

1. Select and read at least two biography titles from the following websites:
 - <http://www.ducksters.com/biography/>
 - <http://www.pitara.com/category/non-fiction-for-kids/biographies-for-kids/>

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While you read:

- Before reading strategy:
 - Skim the whole text and jot down what you think the article will teach you before you start reading, (i.e. "I think I will learn _____ because _____").
- During reading strategies:
 - Use text features (e.g. section heading, illustrations/photographs, captions, graphs/diagrams, boxes and sidebars, etc.) to chunk the text.
 - As you read each chunk, use any of the following to help you read deeply: "This reminds me of..." or "I already knew that..." or "Oh, I realize now that..." or "Something new I learned is..." or "I was surprised by ..." or "I didn't get ... because ..."
 - Stop and jot down key information you learned at the end of every "chunk."
- After reading strategies:
 - Is the biography organized like a story or like an informational text? Why do you think the author chose to organize it that way?
 - What have you learned about this person? Use specific details from the text.
 - Do you have any remaining questions about this person?

After you read:

- Biographers often chose to write about an individual to highlight a theme/a big idea. In your reading response journal or a loose leaf paper, note what lesson the author wants to teach through this text. To determine this lesson, think about what we can learn from the individual's life.

Days 7 & 8

Genre: Biography

Task: Write a biography.

Directions:

1. Write a biography about someone in your family, in your community, or in your school.
2. Research your chosen subject (person) and find out as much information as you can about the person. You will most likely need to interview your subject (the person you are writing about) and the people who know your subject.

Getting ready to write:

- Brainstorm a list of questions you want to ask this person. Here are some questions you can use to collect facts about this person's life;
 - "Where were you born?"
 - Other questions you should ask the subject to share stories and give a detailed explanation; for example, "Tell about a time you had to make an important decision. How did it influence your life?"

While you write:

- As you write your biography, be sure to include relevant background information, significant decisions, and turning points that impact the subject's life. You should also share who and/or what influenced this person as well as his/her achievements or proudest accomplishments.
 - Be sure to organize important events in the life of your subject along a timeline - such as: birth, education, family, achievements, etc.
 - Read what other students have published and get inspired. Here are a few examples:
 - http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/biograph/biography_readrep.asp?id=26521&age=10&Page=1&sortBy=
 - http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/biograph/biography_readrep.asp?id=7167&age=9&Page=4&sortBy=
 - http://teacher.scholastic.com/writewit/biograph/biography_readrep.asp?id=66555&age=9&Page=21&sortBy=
- *These web sites are not controlled or approved by the NYC Department of Education

Days 9 & 10

Independent Reading

Directions:

Read a book with your family in English or your native language. Write the title and author below. Read the book on day 9 and discuss with your family. On day 10, re-read the book and write about it.

** A note to parents and guardians: please pause and talk about the text with your child as you read along with them.*

If you would like an e-book, go to <https://www.galepages.com/nycdoe11/ebooks>

Title: _____

Author: _____

After Reading: Write a one page response of your book.

- Describe the characters in the book. Who are they and what are their relationships?
- Describe the setting of the story.
- Explain the events of the story so far.
- What is the main problem or conflict in the story?
- How is the problem or conflict dealt with by the main characters?
- Think about what might happen next in the book or what happens might happen after the story ends (if you have finished the book).