

# Reading is fun

Ideas for using children's books and young adult literature in secondary school.



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## ***Schedule***

<b>Option A</b>	<b>Option B</b>	
09:00 – 10:30	09:00 – 10:30	
Coffee 30' 10:30 – 11:00	Coffee 15' 10:40 – 10:45	
11:00 – 12:30	10:45 – 12:30 (+15)	
Lunch 12:30 – 14:00	Lunch 12:30 – 14:00	
14:00 – 15:30	14:00 – 15:30	
Coffee 30' 15:30 – 16:00	Coffee 15' 15:30 – 15:45	
16:00 – 17:30	15:45 – 17:00 (-15)	

## Materials

This handout summarizes the ideas presented in the seminar and is meant to remind you of the activities and tasks that you have seen and discussed.

You will find master-copies of all the student materials and full-size pictures of the scanned student samples in the READING section of my homepage:



## Further Reading

Find links to excellent, useful books on teaching literature on eep.at -- Reading – Further Reading

Home Assessment Grammar Reading Video Vocab Writing Portfolio

### Further Reading

By admin, June 3, 2010 1:44 pm

## My favorite teaching

The following books have given me lo

### Awsome Hands-On Activities for Teaching Literary Elements

[Awesome Hands-On Activities for Teac...](#)  
Susan Van Zile, Su...

- Basic activities for beginners
- Lower Intermediate Readers
- Young Adult Literature Projects
- Upper School Literature Projects
- Book-choosing activities
- Poetry
- Book Presentations
- Creative Booklets
- Further Reading
- Christmas and Halloween

[Introduction to Literature Circle Role Sheets](#)  
Christine Boardman...

# Getting Started

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## ***The ten commandments of teaching reading***

- Make reading an everyday topic. Reading is fun. Reading is cool. WE all read.
- Read stories in relaxed atmosphere. Read stories as a special treat after hard work.
- Create a class library: Good bookshops are:  
<http://www.Amazon.de>  
Wolfgang Steinhauser's bookshop <http://www.thebookshop.at>
- Start reading whole books (picture books, stage 1 readers) as early as possible.
- Use reading logs and reading diaries to keep track of Ss reading.
- Give credit to book reports and reading
- Invite students to present books regularly, reserve space for book recommendations on pin-board.
- Create reading circles to discuss books.
- Use books for active vocabulary expansion.
- Allow as much free choice as possible. Consider different reading tastes and reading abilities.

## ***Purpose of reading***

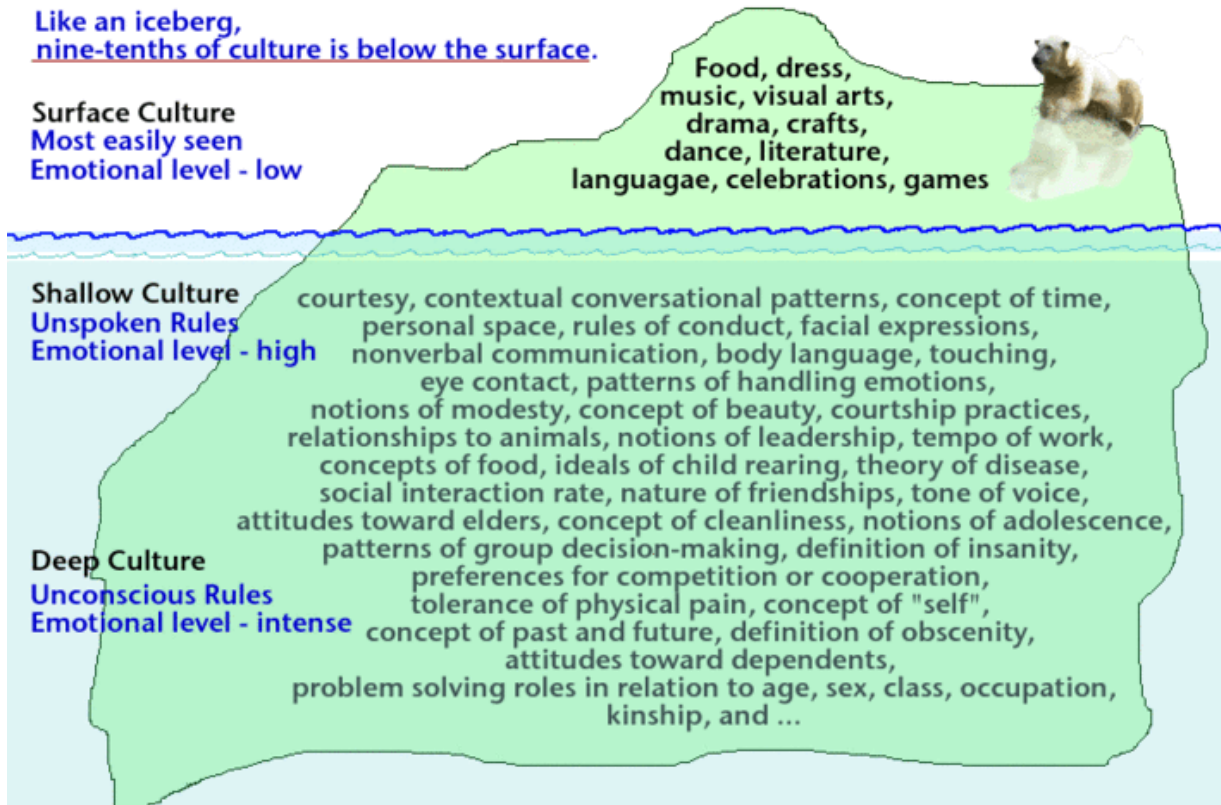
Brainstorm the multiple purposes of reading in the foreign language classroom.

# Culture versus culture



## The Iceberg Concept of Culture

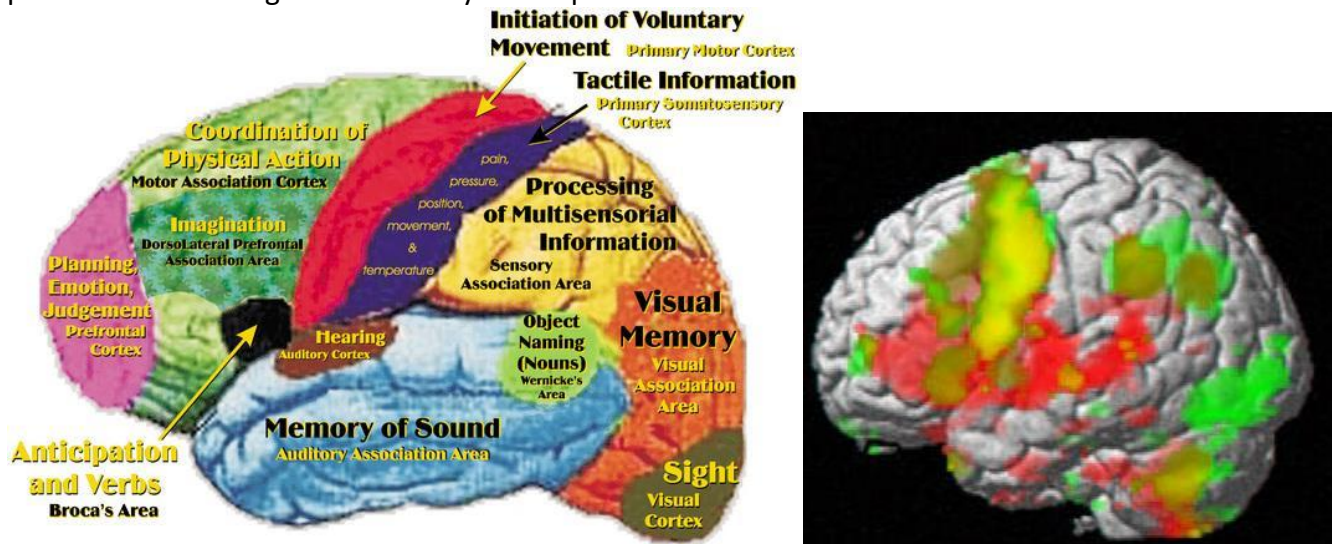
Like an iceberg, nine-tenths of culture is below the surface.



1Indiana Department of Education: <http://crossculturalargentina.files.wordpress.com/2012/03/icebergculture>

## Language: Expansion of vocabulary and grammar

Reading ACTIVELY involves the whole brain. We make connections and associations between language and concepts in our memory. Reading activities (pre- while- post –reading activities) enrich these processes and strengthen the newly developed neural networks.



## How do we read?

- **Skimming:** quickly running one's eyes over a text to get the gist of it.
- **Scanning:** quickly going through a text to find a particular piece of information.
- **Extensive reading:** reading longer texts, usually for one's own pleasure. This is a fluency activity, mainly involving global understanding
- **Intensive reading:** reading shorter texts to extract specific information.

NOTE: The different ways of reading are not mutually exclusive.

Example: We often skim through a passage to see what it is about before deciding whether it is worth scanning a particular paragraph for the information one is looking for. In real life reading purposes vary constantly. Therefore, exercise types should also vary according to the text studied and the purpose of reading it. It would be highly artificial to work on a page of classified ads and propose exercises that require detailed reading of every single advertisement.

## You don't have to know every single word in a text.

1. Read the text and try to understand the *general meaning* of the story. (All the words in italics are nonsense words.)

A country girl was walking along the *snerd* with a *roggle* of milk on her head. She began saying to herself, 'The money for which I will sell this milk will make me enough money to increase my *trund* of eggs to three hundred. These eggs will produce the same number of chickens, and I will be able to sell the chickens for a large *wunk* of money. Before long, I will have enough money to live a rich and *fallentious* life. All the young men will want to marry me. But I will refuse them all with a *ribble* of the head - like this . . .' And as she *ribbled* her head, the *roggle* fell to the ground and all the milk ran in a white stream along the *snerd*, carrying her plans with it.

Now look at the nonsense words again. Can you guess what they might mean?  
Would you feel comfortable to read a text with as many unknown words?

**The 5 Finger Rule:** Students read the first and second page of a book and use their fingers to count the number of unknown words that they cannot easily guess from the context. If the number exceeds 5 unknown words per page, the text is probably too difficult for joyful reading.

## Improving students' confidence

Encourage "top-down" reading skills rather than focusing on every unknown word:

**Fast reading activities** help students gain confidence and focus on content and gist.

**Fast Reading:** Basically skimming, give Ss 30 seconds to "read" text, collect info on board. Give them 2 - 3 minutes to read the text again (1 page), collect inf. on board. Ask Ss to write a 50 word summary of the text (in groups). Only then allow them to read the text slowly!

Try out fast-reading with following text.

## The UK will be part of a new mission to remove pieces of debris from space, and will help build a new 'space junk claw'.



The claw, which will be the first satellite to remove litter from space, has been described as 'vital technology' to help with the mission.

It will be part of a mission called Clearspace-1, which is planned for 2025 and is the first space mission dedicated to removing existing objects in orbit... so a pretty big first step towards a cleaner space environment!

### Why does space need to be cleaned?

For fourteen billion years, between the big bang and the autumn of 1957, space was sparkling clean.

But since 1957, us humans have put almost 10,000 satellites into the sky, and most of those are now defunct or destroyed.

That means there are now an estimated 160 million objects in orbit around Earth- and most of those are "space junk".

Space junk is debris that comes in all sorts of different shapes and sizes. It could be old rocket bodies, or a camera, or a household item dropped by an astronaut!



NASA

Things that have been dropped by astronauts in space are classed as space junk

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said: "We plan to be at the forefront of efforts to track and remove this junk, and I am delighted that technology supporting this pioneering ambition is going to be made right here in Britain."

The junk claw will use a pincer motion to collect debris, before giving it a controlled re-entry into Earth's atmosphere, meaning it will be able to decompose safely and away from life.

UK Aerospace and defence company, Elecnor Deimos, will design Clearspace-1's Attitude and Orbit Control System (AOCS) which will orientate and position the satellite to help grab the space junk, using power generators, thrusters and antennas.

Earlier in 2020, the UK Space Agency announced several new investments through its space surveillance and tracking (SST) programme. The aim is to get better at tracking and monitoring space junk that could potentially be dangerous if it collided with satellites, or even the International Space Station.

In 2018, 186 miles above the Earth, a British satellite sent a net into orbit to show how to capture space debris. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/54972283>. This was part of a mission to test the methods of cleaning up space junk.

BBC, Newsround online: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/54972283>, Nov. 18, 2020

## ***Common reading activities for narrative texts***

**Important: Reading is a silent activity --- encourage silent reading.**

Why? Work with a partner and collect arguments why students should read silently and on their own.

Can you think of any exceptions? When and where would it be meaningful to read a text aloud?

## ***Constructing reading comprehension exercises.***

### **Pre-reading**

Purpose: Creating a reason to read (awaken interest/expectations) or give some idea of the content before the students see the text.

Prepare the brain: “priming”

Prepare difficult vocabulary **before** students see the text.

### **While reading**

Start with global understanding and move towards detailed understanding.

Don't ask too many questions - don't "kill" the text.

### **Post reading**

Design a follow-up activity. Don't separate reading comprehension from the other skills. A following oral or written activity will give the reading text a purpose.

### **Pre-reading activities**

- **Pictures:** Show a picture related to the text. Students guess what the text might be about. For books: show book-cover only. Ss imagine story (plan for a few minutes, then Ss mill around exchanging their invented stories. Can also be done in carousel format. To make it even more exciting: Divide class in 4 groups, show each group a different picture from the book. Then crossgroup- Ss exchange what they've seen and discuss what the story could be about.
- **Kim's game:** Show Ss a picture for about 1 minute (best done on OHT), they jot down all the details they remember. This can also be done at a later stage in the story.
- **Titles, Headlines:** Give title. Have students guess what the story might be about. They might start like this: I think .... is going to...// I hope ....// I don't want ....//
- **Select 4-5 words:** Write these words on board. Ask students for associated words. What might the story be about?
- **Reading a (double)page from a novel:** Choose a page from the novel the ss are going to read. Ideally, the page should describe an interesting key scene, a very low or a very high moment in the character's life. The students are then invited to hypothesize: Who are the characters? How did they get into this situation? How will the story continue? Where does it play?
- **Variation of the previous activity:** Choose 3 telling (double)pages from the novel. Each student reads one of them, then they meet in groups of 3 and share the information and ideas about the book.

## ***While reading and post reading tasks and activities***

- **Matching:** text and pictures
- **Ordering pictures:** For picture books, copy picture pages without text (1 set per group), read story, Ss find matching pictures, put them in correct order. Then compare.
- **Ordering jumbled sentences or paragraphs:** Cut into strips if possible
- **Two in one stories:** cut up two short texts, mix. Ss sort and reconstruct the two stories (Works well with the short texts from children's books)
- **Text market:** Cut text into N (e.g. 5) pieces. Provide enough cut copies of the text for each student to be able to put together one complete version. Hand out pieces randomly. Each student has N pieces, some of them might be the same. In order to complete their text they will have to exchange those that are surplus for those that they need. In order to do this Ss sell their unwanted pieces as if they were in a market. They walk around describing their pieces and swapping them for the ones they need. The most important rule of the game is that **text pieces must never be shown before they are exchanged.** When the students have bought all N pieces of the text they sit down and reconstruct the text. **Note:** The market-phase may be quite chaotic at first, noise dies down as more Ss have bought all the pieces. Fast Ss can then help others.
- **Gap filling:** any short text, leave out words or phrases. Leave space where the word is missing.
- **Gap finder:** Leave out words but don't leave any empty space (more difficult). Ss have to find out where a word is missing and write it in. Print texts with double line spacing for this exercise or leave a margin where Ss can write the missing words.
- **C-test:** print first half of each word, Ss complete the text.
- **Picture corrections:** Separate the picture and the text. Change the text so that it represents things slightly differently from the picture. Students spot the mistakes and correct the pictures!!!
- **Draw a picture:** Listen to the story, imagine the scenes in detail, then draw or paint a scene...
- **Carousel:** Divide your story into 6 to 8 short pieces. Copy sets on different colors, enough pieces to serve the whole class. Distribute the pieces randomly. Students with the same color go together, then meet another group of a different color. The two groups build two concentric circles. (Do this in the hallway or any open area) Then the two students facing each other exchange their story bits (they must not show the cards). After one minute (more or less, depending on the length of the texts) the students in the outer circle move one person to the left. The new partners now exchange the content of their pieces... Do this until the students have heard the content of all the pieces.
- **Writing and answering questions:** Students write questions for another group
- For further ideas (esp. ideas for novels) see [epep.at](http://epep.at)

# Potatoes

retold by S. E. Schlosser

Text market

Teacher instructions: Use for TEXT MARKET. Copy one sheet for each student, cut up. Hand out titles and task boxes to everybody. Shuffle all other cards and hand out 4 to each student. Ss must not show their cards to others. They buy and sell cards as described in the TEXT MARKET activity. (Reading Activities sheet) Students who have got all 4 parts then glue the slips on a worksheet in the correct order and do the follow-up tasks.

We here in Idaho are right proud of our potatoes. Our fields are so chock full of potatoes that you can hear them grumbling when you stick your ear on the ground. "Roll over, you're crowding me," they say.

Potatoes grow bigger in Idaho than anywhere else. Once, a greenhorn asked me for a hundred pounds of potato. I set him straight real fast. I don't believe in cutting into one of my potatoes. "You buy the whole potato, or you take your business elsewhere," I told him.

Why do our potatoes grow so big? Well, it's because we feed them like family. Cornmeal and milk every day for breakfast, lunch and dinner. You should taste my wife's mashed potatoes! They are the creamiest mashed potatoes in the whole United States. It's all the milk our potatoes drink while they're growing. Makes them so creamy that all my wife needs to do is just boil them and mash them up.

Sometimes, the size of our potatoes creates a problem for the farmers. One fellow I know got trapped for eight hours beneath a potato. His wife came looking for him when he was late to dinner. She had to get the neighbors to help roll it off. But that's just the way it goes when you're farming potatoes in Idaho.

## How does the storyteller describe potatoes in Idaho?

Idaho potatoes are:

Design an ad for Idaho potatoes. Be creative. Use your computer or handwrite and draw your ad. Decorate it nicely.

# Frozen Dawn

retold by S. E. Schlosser

Gap finder

**Gapfinder:** Some words have been lost in this text. Write the missing words in the margin and put numbers to indicate where the words should go.

One winter, it was so that the dawn froze solid. The sun got caught two ice blocks, and the earth iced up so much that it couldn't turn. The first of sunlight froze halfway over the mountain tops. They looked like yellow icicles dripping towards the ground.

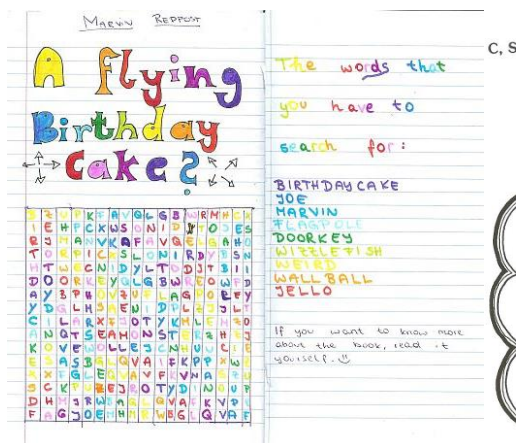
1: cold

Now Davy Crockett was headed home after a successful night hunting when the dawn froze up so solid. Being a smart, he knew he had to do something quick or the earth was a goner. He had a freshly killed bear on his back, so he whipped it off, climbed right up on those rays of and began beating the hot bear carcass against the ice blocks which were squashing the sun. Soon a gush of hot oil burst out of the bear and it melted the. Davy gave the sun a good hard kick to get it started, and the sun's heat unfroze the earth and started it spinning again. So Davy lit his pipe on the sun, shouldered the bear, slid himself down the sun rays before they and took a bit of sunrise in his pocket.

# Exploiting texts for vocabulary expansion

- **Choosing vocab phrases:** Students choose 3-5 new phrases that they want to remember and write them on vocab cards.
- **Lexical Furniture:** put the new phrases in suitable places in your house/home. E.g: the verb “to separate” would go into the kitchen, under the sink, because there I separate my waste....
- **Connect a Pair:** Take 10-12 vocab cards that you want to remember and put them on the desk in front of you. Now form five to six pairs and find some connection for each pair. Example: use both in the same sentence or make up a little story, of match opposites or say how they are alike...
- **Word Webs:** On an A4 sheet create a web of words around a topic in your story.
- **Acrostic Puzzles:** Write the title of your book on the page ↓ vertically. Then find one fitting word or a short sentence for each letter. Your words should have something to do with the story.
- **Personal Properties:** Choose 10-15 new words that you want to remember and collect your personal associations with each of them.
  - Weight
  - Shape
  - Texture

- **Wordcycle**
- **Word Search**
- **Crosswords**



## CRAZY IMAGERY

Record any ten objects. Beside each add an adjective/noun combination found in this week's reading.

Object	and	Adjective and Noun

Think about combining the objects and adjective/noun combinations. Form mind pictures. Make them humorous! Write your three funniest images in sentence form.

## CROSSWORD

Use new words from this week's section to create a crossword puzzle.

Ap, An

**Acrostic Puzzles**

Choose five words from your reading section. Record each word vertically. Now think up other words to "fit" horizontally. Add a word clue work as a puzzle to a partner. You may decide to leave your original word in the puzzle, or maybe you prefer to leave all letters except the original word, or leave all blank!

Here's an example:

*ambitious*  
*nocturnal*  
*create*  
*island*  
*evening*  
*north*  
*teeth*

eager to work; not lazy  
 occurring in the night  
 to make something new  
 body of land surrounded by water  
 late p.m.  
 direction  
 chewing instruments

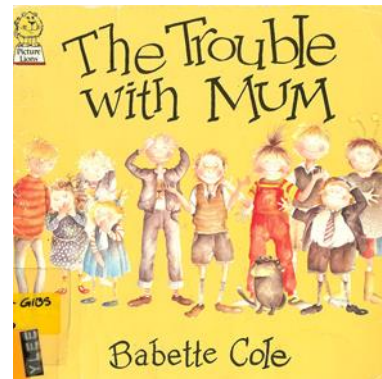
Clues

Find these and more great ideas in J. Szabos, *Reading, A Novel Approach*, Good Apple Inc. 1984



# Reading whole books: How do we start?

Which of these stories would you like to hear? Ask questions to find out what they are about.



Find the teacher's notes and the student materials for these activities on [www.epep.at](http://www.epep.at)  
There you will also find other suitable picture books for beginners.

## Picture books that have worked well in my classes:

Babette Cole, *The Trouble with Mom*  
*The Trouble with Gran*  
*Prince Cinders*  
*Princess Smartypants*  
*The Smelly Book*

Valerie Thomas and Korky Paul, *Winnie the Witch*

Daniel Postgate, *The Snagglegrollop*  
Julia Donaldson, *The Gruffalo*  
Michael Foreman, *All the King's Horses*  
Richard Brassey, *Greyfriar's Bobby*  
Simon James, *Dear Mr. Blueberry*  
Peggy Parish, *Amelia Bedelia goes Camping*  
Shirley Mozelle, James Watts, *Zack's Alligator*  
Angela McAllister, *Monster Pet*  
Jackie French, *Diary of a Wombat*  
Norman Bridwell, *The Witch next door*

Find these and other suitable books on [epep.at](http://epep.at), Storybooks for beginners



## Basic tasks for storybooks

The purpose of these tasks is to make the learners read parts of the text in detail and use some of the new language actively. These tasks should be short and easy – we do not want to spoil the fun of reading.

Find the printable worksheets on [www.epep.at](http://www.epep.at)

### Book Chat:

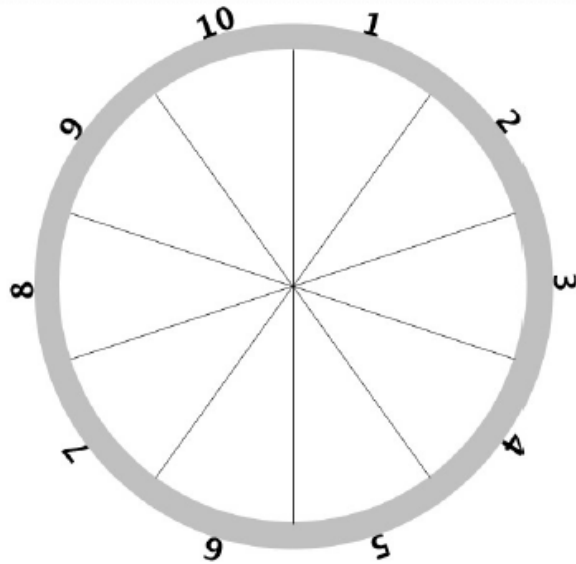
Choose your favorite page in the book and describe it to your teacher or co-teacher. What do you see? What is happening in the picture?

### Write a Postcard

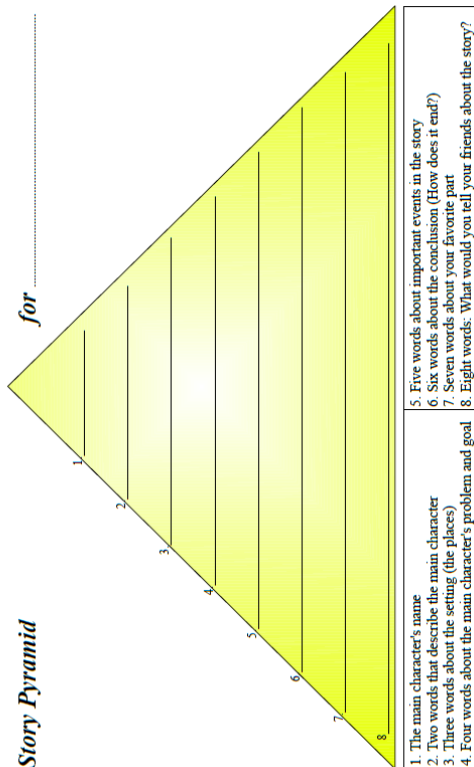
Imagine you are one of the characters and write a postcard to a good friend. Tell your friend where you are and what it is like there. (no past tense necessary for this task!) Draw a picture on the front side of your card.

### Story Pie for \_\_\_\_\_

1. On scrap paper, write down the 10 most important events in your story. Put the main events in the correct order and write them into the story pie below.
2. Use your story pie to tell the story to your teacher and/or a friend.



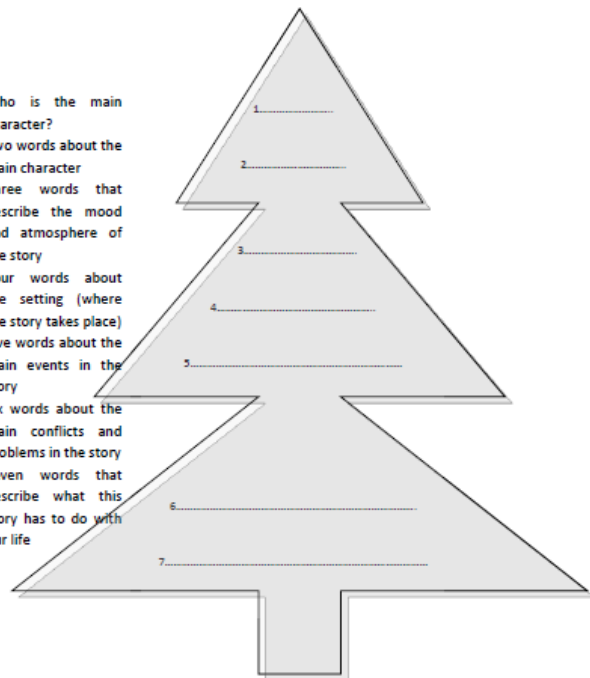
Which of the events in your story do you like best?



1. The main character's name
2. Two words that describe the main character
3. Three words about the setting (the places)
4. Four words about the main character's problem and goal
5. Five words about important events in the story
6. Six words about the conclusion (How does it end?)
7. Seven words about your favorite part
8. Eight words: What would you tell your friends about the story?

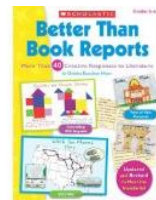
### Story Tree for \_\_\_\_\_ (title of your story)

1. Who is the main character?
2. Two words about the main character
3. Three words that describe the mood and atmosphere of the story
4. Four words about the setting (where the story takes place)
5. Five words about the main events in the story
6. Six words about the main conflicts and problems in the story
7. Seven words that describe what this story has to do with our life



# More useful ideas from


Find this and similar books in the "Anglistik library" or get your own copy. Find a link on [eep.at](http://eep.at)



Christine Boardman Moen, Better than Book Reports, Scholastic Professional Books, 1992,

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Problems and Solutions




Every story has a problem, no matter how small, and a way of taking care of, or solving, the problem. How the problem is taken care of is called the solution.  
Think about the story in your book and follow the directions.

Book title \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_

1. Tell the main problem in your story.
2. Tell the different things the characters did to try to solve the problem. (These things are called solutions.)
3. Tell how the problem was finally solved.
4. Think of a different way you might have solved the problem.
5. Would your solution to the problem have changed the story in any way? Explain.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## SWBS: The Plot Chart




What happens in a story from the beginning until the ending is called the plot. In every story there is **SOME**BODY who **WANTED** something. **BUT** something got in the way, **SO** the character had to solve the problem.  
To finish the Plot Chart, think about your story and ask yourself the questions below. Then write your answers on the chart.

1. Who is the **SOME**BODY in my story?
2. This character **WANTED** something. What was it?
3. **BUT** something prevented the character from getting what he or she wanted. What was it?
4. **SO** the character solved the problem to get what he or she wanted. How did the character solve the problem?


Book title \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_

SOME B O D Y	
W A N T E D	
B U T	
S O	



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Opinion Page




Below, write your opinion (what you think) about your book. If your book has chapters, give the page(s) and paragraph(s) too.

Book title \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_

1. My favorite part of the story was \_\_\_\_\_  
page(s) \_\_\_\_\_ paragraph(s) \_\_\_\_\_
2. I liked the story when the character said \_\_\_\_\_  
page(s) \_\_\_\_\_ paragraph(s) \_\_\_\_\_
3. I felt (circle one)    happy    scared    surprised  
                                 sad        excited    bored  
(add your own) \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_  
page(s) \_\_\_\_\_ paragraph(s) \_\_\_\_\_
4. The story's (circle one) plot    character(s)    setting  
reminded me of \_\_\_\_\_  
page(s) \_\_\_\_\_ paragraph(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Creative Catalogs



Catalogs are a lot of fun to read and to look through. Now is your chance to create a catalog of your very own!  
Your catalog will be special because it will contain drawings and written descriptions of things you read about in your book. By making a catalog, you will be able to share what you read with your classmates.

1. In the box below on the right, draw a simple picture of what you want to sell in your catalog. It should be something important from your book. Write the name of the item in the space below the box.
2. On the lines to the left, write a short description of the item. Use facts from your book. Don't forget to add the price!

Book title \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_

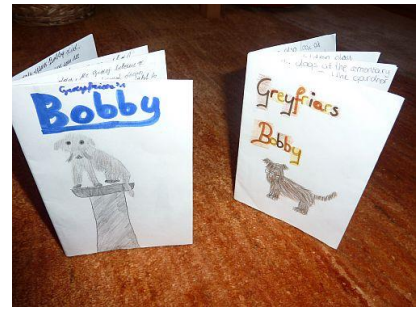
Name of catalog \_\_\_\_\_

Item 1 \_\_\_\_\_

**Tip: Groups can design a catalog of several pages for an interesting book.**

## Elementary level: Origami Books

This activity can be used as one of the first reading activities. It combines listening to a story with reading comprehension and showing this in drawings.



**Preparation:** Select a suitable story or storybook for your learners.

Prepare a simplified version or summary of the story. Break your story into 7 parts and type it into a table. The table columns should be about 9cm wide in order to fit into the origami books.

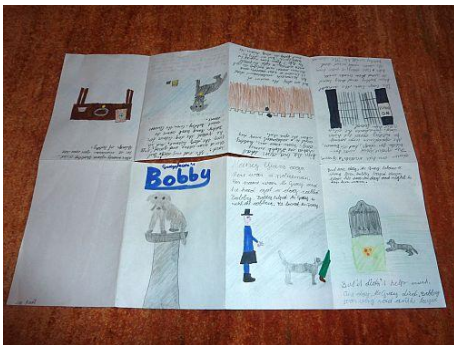
Jumble the text pieces in the table and prepare one copy per student.

**In class:** Read the story or storybook to the learners without showing them the pictures. Read slowly and paraphrase tricky parts to make sure the learners understand the story well.

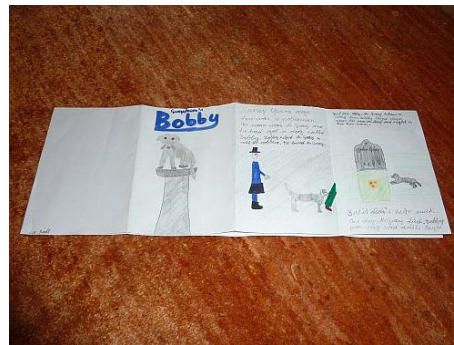
Hand out one A3 sheet per student and show the learners how to fold 8-page origami books from this sheet. Find detailed instructions on [epeg.at](http://epeg.at). (Type Origami books into the search box and scroll down to the bottom of that page.)

**Instruct the learners to**

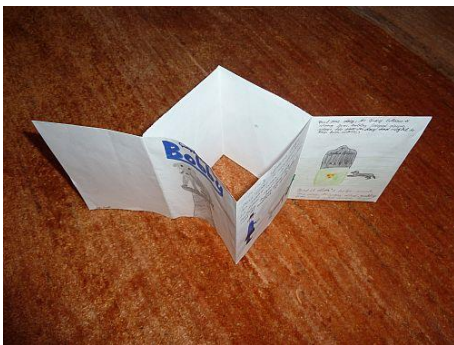
- Cut out the 7 text pieces and put them in the right order.
- Check the order with the solution sheet.
- Glue the text pieces into your origami books, leave the title page free.
- Reread the text carefully and draw the scenes in great detail. (Can be finished at home.)
- Design a fitting title page.
- Practice reading the story to yourself at low voice. Then work with a partner and read the text to each other. Take turns – but do this at odd points – in the middle of a sentence. Listen VERY carefully and take over immediately where your partner has left off.



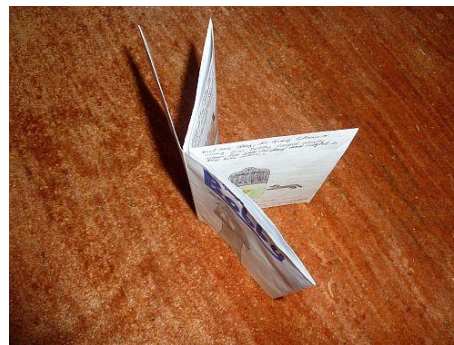
**Step 1: Fold the A3 sheet to eight. Cut through the 2 center sections**



**Step 2: Fold horizontally**



**Step 3: Push left and right ends to the center**



**Step 4: Fold around to form a book.**

# Reading diaries

Reading is fun!  
reading is fun!

### My Reading Log

	Name of Author	Title of Book	Date	I liked the book	number of pages	checked by teacher
1	Babette Cole	The Trouble with Mom	23.3.09	very well	29	10
2	Vera Yates & Claire Honey	Too busy to play!	3.4.09	very well	27	10
3	Ronald Dahl	The Magic Finger	7.4.09	very well	64	10
4	Shirley Mozelle	Zack's Alligator	22.4.09	very well	63	10
5	Babette Cole	King Change-a-lot	23.4.09	very well	30	10
Well done! Go on reading. There are many more interesting books!						
6	Anita Lobel	Alison's Zebra	24.4.09	very well	24	10
7	Pat Hutchins	The Doorbell Rang	24.4.09	very well	23	10
8	P.D. Eastman	Everything happens to Aaron	25.4.09	very well	23	10
9	Frank Jun Berendain	Big Red Kite	25.4.09	very well	32	10
10		Bobby	12.9.09	very well		10
Excellent! You are a very good reader. You'll certainly find more good books in our library!						
11	Horrid Bookworm	Look at this! The dancing frog	18.9.09	very well	29	10
12	Narrator & Mrs. Sackler	The Witch Next Door	25.9.09	very well	31	10
13	Lois Sachar	Marvin Redpost Kidnapped at Birth	30.9.09	not so much	94	10
14	Babette Cole	The Trouble with Gran	28.9.09			10
15		The cursed bakery	29.9.10			10
Fantastic! You are a real reader!!!! You can be proud of yourself!!!						
16		How to Think your Sister	08.05.11	really good	96	
17						
18						
19						
20						
It's unbelievable!!! Your teacher's personal comment:						

# The Trouble with MOM

Dear Mom!

Thanks for making such yummy muffins with frogs, slugs, lime seeds, oat meal, bat wings, mappos and worms. The parents thought that it was a disgusting disaster but it doesn't matter. The children liked it.

Thank you also for inviting my whole class to our speaking house. It was very cool when you saved the whole school from the fire.

Thanks for everything!  
your child

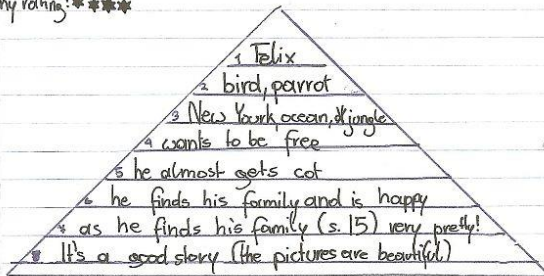
Ps: I like your black pointer hat with the snake, the rat and the cherries!!!



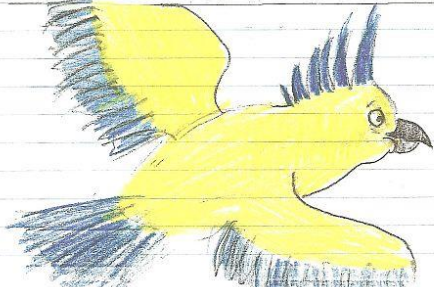
# Flying Home!

Stephen Rabley

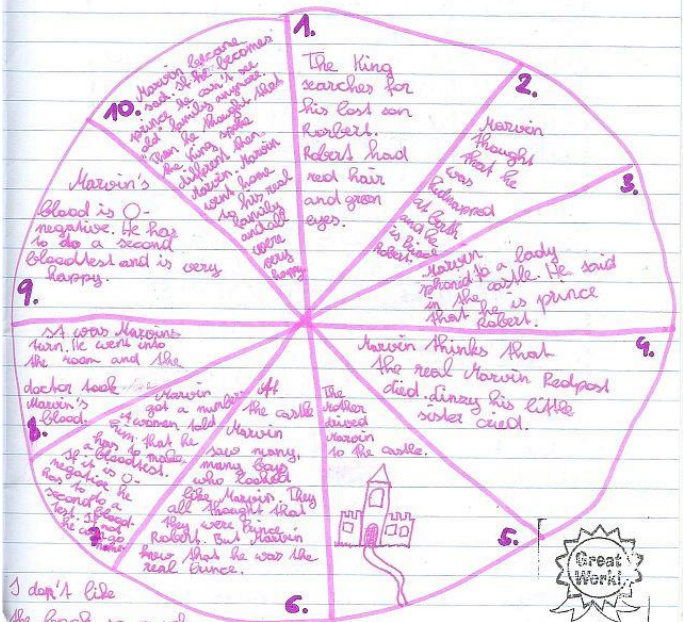
my rating: \*\*\*\*



1. name of the main character
2. 2 words: describe the main character
3. 3 words: describe the setting
4. 4 words: state the main character's goal or problem
5. 5 words: describe an important event
6. 6 words: describe the conclusion
7. 7 words: describe your favorite part
8. 8 words: what would you tell others about the story?



# Marvin Redpost Kidnapped at birth



I don't like the book so much because nobody thinks that he is a prince only because he has red hair and green eyes and his family not.

## Tips for my first reading diary

For each book that you have read enter the following information:

**Author:**

**Title of the book:**

**Your rating:** (Tell us how you liked the book, give **1-5 stars** for example)

**A short summary:** What happens in the story. Write 5-7 sentences

**Personal Comment:**

*My favorite character is ..... because...*

*I don't like (name of character) because...*

*I wonder why ....*

*I like/don't like the ending, because...*

















**Finding Feelings:** Write 5 sentences.

**How do the main characters feel in the book? Why?**

**How did the book make you feel? Why?** (Choose from the faces below.)

Add a nice drawing if possible: Draw one item that plays an important role in the book.

### Feelings:

angry 	bored 	curious 	disappointed 
sceptical 	happy 	optimistic 	pleased 
envious 	frightened 	interested 	puzzled 
relieved 	sad 	thoughtful 	surprised 

## Reading Diaries: Sample pages, year 2



### Matilda by Roald Dahl

I think this book is very good, because it's sometimes funny, sometimes exciting, sometimes sad... But I don't like it's structure because at the beginning everything is about Matilda and her family and Mrs. Trunchbull, the Librarian. Then Mrs. Trunchbull "disappears" in the book, there is no more sign word about her, and Matilda's family is also mentioned fewer, now everything is about Miss Honey and Miss Trunchbull, as she comes and goes... At the end it's just about Matilda and Miss Honey. I think that's not good, if the characters always change. Another thing, which I think is very strange: At the beginning nothing unusual happens, (Matilda is very clever, though but that also happens in real life), but then, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> part of the book she is able to move things with her eyes. I mean that's good I like it, but it doesn't really fit into that book. All in one (or) I think it's a great book, but just the parts themselves, they don't really fit together, still I think it's a lot.

### THE BABY-SITTERS CLUB #4 by Ann M. Martin

I really liked to read this book. I really like books about clubs and ~~books~~ (Borden). And what was really strange about it is, that Mary Anne (who tells the story) favourite colours are yellow and blue and she likes cats. My favourite colours are yellow and blue and I like cats, too. Strange, isn't it? In the next BABY-SITTERS CLUB book (which I just read) Mary Anne gets contact lenses, I got some a month ago, too. Back to #4: It's today January, it's January this all is really ~~probably~~ full of humor. This book is very fun written (and it's a lot of fun and interesting) and I can really recommend it!  
IT'S GREAT!

## Letters

Twilight: The student is writing a letter to Bella: Year 3

Bella,

I always thought a pregnancy is a great experience. So I thought "Wuhuu! Bella is pregnant that'll be great!" But of course a calm and normal pregnancy would be too "diché" for you. Why not let the baby almost kill me so that Edward has to worry about something too.

Then the baby's name... of course it has to be special but RENESTIE?! The poor kid will be threatened for ever (and I mean THAT!) That's not a name that's (sorry but it's true!) something for the trash. Couldn't you just take Harper or Apple or Luck or Olive or anything (there are so many special names and you pick exactly that one) you would not have to be angry about her nickname "Nessie", honestly it sounds like she is a little monster or something like that.

And all the problems with the presents! just say "thx" and take them. They'll be happy and you can just put them into the last corner of your cupboard (or give them to me!) Of course I'm just jealous because I would also love to have a kid with Edward and I wouldn't care about the name you could also call it shit, I wouldn't mind! And I'd be lucky to get at least a nice dress and you get hundreds and and and... should I continue?

lets  
from jealous  
little Steffi

Great!!

a book made me: angry, happy, cry, laugh everything!

in a scale of 5 stars: \* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \* 😊

## More Letters

### Letters to the author or a main character

# Fat Chance



Dear Leslea Newman,  
I have to admit that I was a bit disappointed. The back of the book sounded really interesting and I'm not going to say that it was a bad book but somehow I expected more!

It was kind of... dissatisfying! Although the back said that it was full of drama. It never was really extreme! Still... I want to say something to the main characters.

Dear Main Character,

I can understand that you feel fat because physically you probably are (but!) Losing weight is not the only thing that you have to do so that boys are interested in you... You need to break out of yourself! You need to be more extroverted and you need to make people laugh! I mean ok maybe that is not correct at all but you should at least give it a try because obviously it doesn't work at all the way it is right now.

Oh and another tip: Go out with your friends and have some fun! Because if you sit at home and bore yourself you will start eating again. Why do you think all the H+ives are that skinny? Simply because they don't have time to eat and in their shopping-"stress" they even forget the hunger. Ok so that's all I wanted to tell you... bye and good luck with everything...! Stef f:

+ sound interesting - would you recommend it?

Creative Ideas

# PROM

perhaps a reading project book for 3rd grade -ires  
 Thank for you tip 😊

why did you break up with him? what is wrong with her mother are you always so loud at school why don't you get a better job? help your mother she's for pregnant to do the laundry by herself! Suddenly you change just to be free from the detention? why don't you tell your parents to stop making babies? Is it really that easy to make a prom in few days all by yourself? don't you want to do better in school to have a fixed or at least good future? When did you plan to tell your dad that you don't want to be a nurse?

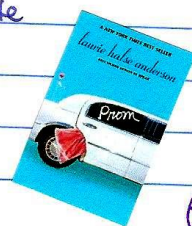
The story is nice, a bit unrealistic but nice. I wouldn't have expected her to be so pissed at her boyfriend but it happened a bit too fast for me. She is all moaning and unhappy but never says anything so nothing changes and she just lives on with it.

Her actual boyfriend is a bit freaky and you never really get to know something about her!

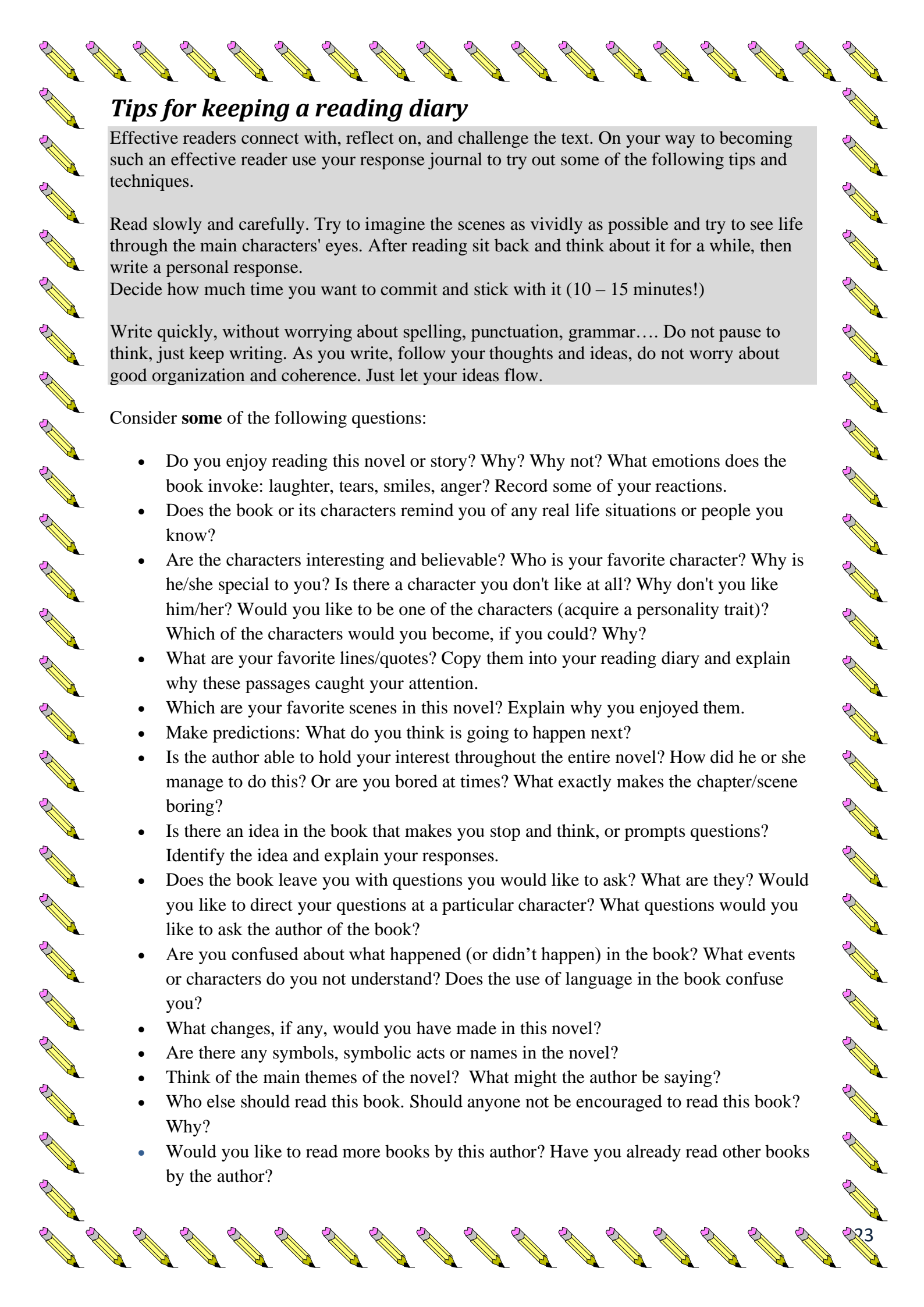
I have to say that even the story is not a typical American "Highschool-Story"

**PARTY**

yes I like it!  
 I hate him  
 never ever it's still like a typical "story!"  
 I don't care  
 leave me alone!  
 he is so cute  
 alright I'll help  
 you annoy me!  
 not too bad  
 uuuuu! It is exhausting!



I guess you've outgrown that genre.



## *Tips for keeping a reading diary*

Effective readers connect with, reflect on, and challenge the text. On your way to becoming such an effective reader use your response journal to try out some of the following tips and techniques.

Read slowly and carefully. Try to imagine the scenes as vividly as possible and try to see life through the main characters' eyes. After reading sit back and think about it for a while, then write a personal response.

Decide how much time you want to commit and stick with it (10 – 15 minutes!)

Write quickly, without worrying about spelling, punctuation, grammar... Do not pause to think, just keep writing. As you write, follow your thoughts and ideas, do not worry about good organization and coherence. Just let your ideas flow.

Consider **some** of the following questions:

- Do you enjoy reading this novel or story? Why? Why not? What emotions does the book invoke: laughter, tears, smiles, anger? Record some of your reactions.
- Does the book or its characters remind you of any real life situations or people you know?
- Are the characters interesting and believable? Who is your favorite character? Why is he/she special to you? Is there a character you don't like at all? Why don't you like him/her? Would you like to be one of the characters (acquire a personality trait)? Which of the characters would you become, if you could? Why?
- What are your favorite lines/quotes? Copy them into your reading diary and explain why these passages caught your attention.
- Which are your favorite scenes in this novel? Explain why you enjoyed them.
- Make predictions: What do you think is going to happen next?
- Is the author able to hold your interest throughout the entire novel? How did he or she manage to do this? Or are you bored at times? What exactly makes the chapter/scene boring?
- Is there an idea in the book that makes you stop and think, or prompts questions? Identify the idea and explain your responses.
- Does the book leave you with questions you would like to ask? What are they? Would you like to direct your questions at a particular character? What questions would you like to ask the author of the book?
- Are you confused about what happened (or didn't happen) in the book? What events or characters do you not understand? Does the use of language in the book confuse you?
- What changes, if any, would you have made in this novel?
- Are there any symbols, symbolic acts or names in the novel?
- Think of the main themes of the novel? What might the author be saying?
- Who else should read this book. Should anyone not be encouraged to read this book? Why?
- Would you like to read more books by this author? Have you already read other books by the author?

## Types of Responses

Below you find a number of extracts typically found in response journals:

**Affective responses** are a kind of raw emotion or a ‘gut reaction’ you have after reading, such as anger, love, jealousy, indignation, contentment, sadness....

e.g.: *I was furious when reading the Battle Royal scene. How can these people be so mean and treat a human being like that. I felt like stepping out and hitting them, or screaming or I don't know what. I was also shocked at how the main character didn't even find it so terrible. (He doesn't have a name! Maybe that has something to say as well, he is invisible and nameless???) He certainly didn't like being treated like that and was frustrated but not as angry as I was. For him this seems to be quite normal. That makes me even more angry! I really hate these fat politicians, they are the worst hypocrites I have ever seen...*

**Associative Responses** are analogies or associations you have when reading. There are no true and false associations, everyone has their own!!! Let your mind wander, relax (as described in the free-writing technique), this will open the doors for all your associations to flow in.

Look, for example, at the following response of a student to a line from a poem.

...“Something there is that doesn't love a wall.”(line 1)

*I remember when I was young and how I was always sent to my room for punishment of something I had done wrong. I hated being sent to my room, not in the beginning, of course, because I always thought I'd get even with my Mom and show her that I could have a lot of fun in there. As the hours went by, though, I usually ran out of things to do and therefore I would always try to think of a good story to tell sweet ole Dad about how mean Mom had been to me. I just hated those four blank walls; I guess that's because I saw them so often.*

or:

*Little Richard's behavior reminds me of this story I read in the newspaper last week. A little boy had played with matches and then hid in the closet because of his bad conscience and fear. Wow, that's dangerous if little kids react like that. I guess it also has to do a lot with the fear of punishment. These kids must be hit a lot!*

You might also note things that strike you as **strange or just interesting** such as for example this response to the beginning of the novel *Song of Solomon* by Tony Morrison.

*It's strange that so many characters have Biblical names: Pilate, Magdalena, First Corinthians, Mercy hospital. (p18). What does this mean?*

...

*There seem to be a lot of symbols in the book: Watermark (p.11), Red velvet (p.10). I don't know their meanings yet, maybe it'll become clearer later.*

Also note your impressions of the **structure of the text**. For example:

*The author is constantly jumping back and forth in the lives of the characters. Slowly their history is becoming clear. It's sometimes difficult to follow. I have to read a page or two until I realize who she is dealing with now! I wonder why she does this!*

...

*It's getting worse. I am getting angry with T. Morrison. I feel she is teasing me! Why can't she just organize her material better? There must be some artistic reason or is it just to be different from the others???*

Most of the time your response will be a **mixture of all of these approaches**. Even the examples above usually include more than just one aspect. Don't let yourself be stifled by trying to stick to one aspect. Just let your ideas flow! Don't forget to write down page numbers, so you can later find exact quotes if you need them.

## ***More examples of reading diary entries***

**These examples are unedited, quick responses copied from the learners' online journals on Moodle. (years 6-7)**

**"The Euphio Question" – Kurt Vonnegut**

The first thing I have to mention after having read „The Euphio Question“ is, that I absolutely loved the ending, probably because it was both surprising, and also funny in a way.

The story mildly reminds me of the first one we read. (Top of the food chain/T.C. Boyle) In both stories someone testifies before a commission, telling what has happened, but this story had the "action" or "plot" that I missed in Boyle's. Although it is, on the second look unrealistic that someone would tell a story in this way before a commission (with all the dialogues and no interaction until the very end with its members), these dialogues etc. make the story easy/fun to read.

One thing I don't quite understand is how to imagine this feeling you get when listening to the fictional device. At some parts the speaker (sociology professor) describes it as some sort of euphoria and buoyancy, while the people exposed to the sound rather seem relaxed and lazy to me.

Another thing that I didn't like was the way Vonnegut depicted the wives of Eddie and the narrator: both husbands seem to be used to having a dinner before them when they get home. Maybe that was normal at the time the story was written, but still I can't help frowning on this type depiction of a wife.

When you have a closer look you can spot some few small details that are a little illogical (for example how does Fred know that the time, when the "whole town went nuts", "checks" to the second with the time when they switched on the device?) Although I know very well that there might be an explanation for these small details that I didn't think of yet and that they are completely irrelevant for the plot of the story, I still like it, when everything is logical and makes perfect sense. (In the book I read (also written by Vonnegut) I noticed many and clearer examples of these small things that apparently didn't fit together, especially with Billy Pilgrim's time travels.)

I wonder what Kurt Vonnegut wanted to criticize with this short story (as he always does criticize something, that's for sure). Maybe the fact that people try to make money out of everything possible, without paying attention to who is harmed? It is clear that he wants to say that you shouldn't want to "buy" happiness, but still I don't see how buying happiness (through purchasing possession for example) can be dangerous, which is his first argument (I think). This doesn't mean that I don't agree with the basic idea, that it is somehow pathetic how we try to become happy.

For me a good story must be/have two things: First of all a message, something to think about, or at least an entertaining story and secondly it must be written in a way that is exciting/funny etc. For me this story fulfills both requirements. (If a story is excellent on one of these two points only, the story can be great too, but if it's merely "good" in one and mediocre in the other, I tend to forget these stories very fast.)

By Agnes V.

## Three reflections on “And Our Flag Was Still There”

by Barbara Kingsolver

### Paula M.

The story is about a woman talking about patriotism because her daughter has to wear red white and blue to kindergarten for a day to remember the victims of 9/11. I really liked the story because the woman, although she is American herself, criticizes the overdoing of patriotism in America. She talks about extreme cases where Americans get really racist towards other people just out of "loyalty to their country". I think it is a nice story because she is not really blaming anyone she is just saying that there are a lot of people overdoing it and in the end she says that the meaning of her flag is that "we're all just people together" and I think that is a really nice way of seeing it.

### Paula N:

First of all, I want to point out how much this story touched me. I actually cried a little. I cried because everything in this story seems so true to me and it's very tragic to me how certain people deal with horrible events like September 11, how they blame other innocent people simply because they might have the same religion as the ones who flew into the building, how they make important rights, that courageous people gave their lives for years, seem stupid and not necessary. But I also cried because this story gave me hope that there are people like Mrs. Kingsolver who keep their heart free from hate and blaming minorities, and who believe in the Constitution and everything that came with it and not only for white Americans but for all Americans, whether they or their grandparents immigrated or what beliefs or sexuality they have. I will suggest this story to friends and family because in my opinion this story forces you to think about the often dark truth of so-called "necessary wars for peace and freedom" but also gives you hope that there are people who want this peace and freedom peacefully and for everyone.

### Johannes W.

Well, a perfect style, an interesting and well-chosen topic and an optimistic message doesn't leave so much room for associations. But still one question came to my mind immediately: "What type of text is this?" To me it is neither a short-story, nor a speech, a report or an article. It is somehow a mixture of all, isn't it? Since I am a European and actually have never left the continent actually so far, this theme of finding one country's or even one people's values, identity and community is something rather unknown, odd, funny to me. Of course this is linked to History, I'm perfectly aware of that, but it is somehow weird but at the same time amusing to read. I liked reading it also for the nice style and the well-chosen tone and language. I wasn't used to the absence of an actual plot (just the little side-track of her daughter) and also the absence of an actual description of characters, etc. But that again was creating a certain tension because I wanted to know more... I guess this was the very intention of the good and talented author and actually now, at this very moment, it comes to my mind: In my opinion this is an inner monologue... :-)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Teacher's comment: The text is actually a literary essay – but the student has never heard of this genre at this point.

## Reflections on: Paul Auster, a story from The Red Notebook

Love it! Awesome! Simply great! I cannot remember the title anymore but I had the story about a man who survived a concentration camp, while being there fell in love with a woman he had never seen before; they just wrote letters. After all, they married got children and raised them. When the oldest son was studying already, he fell in love with a girl that turns out to be the daughter of the SS officer. Nevertheless both fathers like each-other, they (their children) marry and the family leads a rich, good life.

There are three reasons why I like that story:

- 1.) I love the style, the language, the tone and THE LENGTH. This is one of the few short stories that really are short. But the quality is on the top and I did not at all have the feeling that I wasted time. Everything important is in, everything that is not necessary and just makes you lose time is not there - this is what I call real expertise.
- 2.) It is one of the so much wanted, yet so little available stories about the WWII times that is not depressing, full of pain, suffering and "victimism", trying to teach one a lesson, trying to convince one of one certain aspect or making you feel guilty of something others haven't even done... You know all of that horrifying elements are just not there, which -- for a change -- is really relaxing.
- 3.) This is a real story! I find it simply great to take true tales based on life and to make a novel/story/whatever out of it... And the fact that he -- the author -- had done it in such a good way is also wonderful. You see, I find that short story marvelous, perfectly enjoyable and great to read. I have hardly ever said that a very sheet of paper (that I even got in school) was an experience -- but this single page was one!

There isn't much more to say, for me; I found that an enrichment, something like a little treasure within my long course of educational existence. Thank you for that story.

By Johannes W.

## Reflections on "Top of the Food Chain" by T.C. Boyle

I can't believe that the main character, who is talking to the Senator, is so indifferent to all the animals and at last people dying. It's like he doesn't care at all as long as he can say that he fulfilled his job which was to help the people to get rid of the mosquitoes. It was also unbelievable how arrogant he was and how bad he talked about the people in Borneo and how low he apparently thought about them. If he was as much smarter than the people there, I don't understand how he didn't use his wisdom to help the people instead of making everything worse for them. If he at least had been sorry I could maybe find sympathy for him but like this he just makes me want to punch him. I really would have liked to know what the Senator, he was talking to, thought about all that.

By Paula N.

## Reflections on the novel *Girl with a Pearl Earring*

Even though it is not told sadly, to me the story was very sad. It is beautifully told, but it's depressing that Griet doesn't have even one person that she can confide in, and I don't think that anyone would be able to hide their emotions like she does. She's so shy, and sometimes I wanted her to say something or do something, for example when the friend of Johannes Vermeer comes and tries to rape her, but she just pushes him away slightly. Of course, as a maid you can't always speak your opinion, but she has to stand up for herself a little bit, at least in my opinion.

The language was beautiful. I don't know how Tracy Chevalier does it, but she never tells the emotions of anyone, but you still know exactly how they are feeling. I would have liked to have more emotions when her sister had the plague, that was the only time it was overdone in my opinion. I liked that there was not a cheesy ending, but a very realistic one that was not satisfying to Griet, but she could settle with it. As a reader, it kind of felt the same.

By Anna E.

## Reflections on “*Magdalena Looking*” by Tracy Chevalier

Oh my! There is so much conflict in that simple short story. First of all the women-role problem, ignorance in general, the longing for some acknowledgement, personal needs and poorness all the same.

I felt sorry for that poor little girl, Magdalena. The common theme of a talented daughter of a skilled father who is just not being noticed by him because of gender role and circumstances in which they live in is sad. You want to help them all out of their silly, maybe unnecessary but surely disappointing situation, because you see the escape -- they cannot, maybe should not.

How annoying must it be for a daughter to have a father who hardly ever looks at her, doesn't notice her, while she admires him and wants to be taught by him -- she never paints but a dot. Her abjection is typical for that miserable situation she finds herself in and the ignorance of her father, the unwanted humiliation by her father (looking at her to paint her, giving her the jewelry because of light-reflexion and not beauty) and the final uselessness of all that problematic life does cause the reader pain.

Another aspect is the actual picture that truly exists. Nobody really knows that young woman, yet she is still there, drawn in a fine way, looking very extraordinary, yet familiar. Strange and unfamiliar but at the same time interestingly pretty. I like the way the author has put a whole story around that picture, embedding the little details and relating them with an own anecdote or well explained reason. Nothing happens accidentally -- there is reason behind -- we just cannot see it most of the time. In this story we can, because she wants us to and it works. I like the atmosphere, the jigsaw-puzzle-like coming together of everything and the so very true outlook of great connection, the overall sense -- the living moment for eternity...

By Johannes W.

## ***Now try out FREE WRITING yourself.***

Read the three poems and choose one that you find interesting. Do not choose a poem that you have known and worked on before. Write down your thoughts and associations without stopping to think. Do not take your pen off the paper, just keep writing for ten minutes.

### **Barbie Doll**

This girlchild was born as usual  
and presented dolls that did pee-pee  
and miniature GE stoves and irons  
and wee lipsticks the color of cherry  
candy.  
Then in the magic of puberty, a classmate  
said:  
You have a great big nose and fat legs.

She was healthy, tested intelligent,  
possessed strong arms and back,  
abundant sexual drive and manual  
dexterity.  
She went to and fro apologizing.  
Everyone saw a fat nose on thick legs.

She was advised to play coy,  
exhorted to come on hearty,  
exercise, diet, smile and wheedle.  
Her good nature wore out  
like a fan belt.  
So she cut off her nose and her legs  
and offered them up.

In the casket displayed on satin she lay  
with the undertaker's cosmetics painted  
on,  
a turned-up putty nose,  
dressed in a pink and white nightie.  
Doesn't she look pretty? everyone said.  
Consummation at last.  
To every woman a happy ending.

**Marge Piercy**

### ***News Item***

Men seldom make passes  
At girls who wear glasses.

**Dorothy Parker**

### **Harlem**

What happens to a dream  
deferred?

Does it dry up  
like a raisin in the sun?  
Or fester like a sore--  
And then run?  
Does it stink like rotten meat?  
Or crust and sugar over--  
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags  
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

**Langston Hughes**

### **Incident**

Once riding in old Baltimore,  
Heart-filled, head-filled with glee;  
I saw a Baltimorean  
Keep looking straight at me.

Now I was eight and very small,  
And he was no whit bigger,  
And so I smiled, but he poked out  
His tongue, and called me, "\*\*\*\*."

I saw the whole of Baltimore  
From May until December;  
Of all the things that happened  
there  
That's all that I remember.

**Countee Cullen.**

## Character Profiles

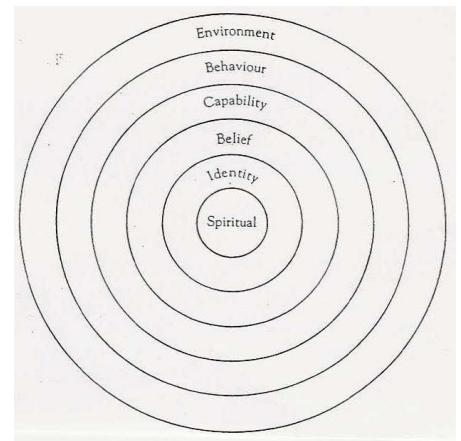
# Character Profiles

Choose one interesting main character in the book/story you are reading and take a closer look at his/her personality. Who is he/she really? Look at the different levels of their personalities, starting with the environment (setting) they live in and move in towards their spiritual centers. Draw a circle diagram like the one on this page and write a few keywords or sentences into each layer of the character's personality.

**Slip into the character's mind** and consider the following questions:

- Environment:** Where does your character live/work? What is this place like? How does it affect him/her? Who else is there? How do these other people influence him/her? How does your character get along with them?
- Behavior:** What does your character do? List a few important or typical actions or activities of your character
- Capability:** What is your character good at? What strategies does he/she use in the story? Does he/she use them openly and consciously? What skills does he/she have?
- Beliefs:** What are your character's basic beliefs? Think of the various ideas that he/she thinks are true, and that your character uses as a basis of daily action. Beliefs can be both permissions and limitations. (e.g.: "I am strong! The positive forces will always win!" or "I am afraid of my stronger enemy, he will certainly kill me." or "I don't do this or that because I think it's wrong.")
- Identity:** What are your character's core values and his/her mission in life? What does your character want to achieve?
- Spiritual:** This is the deepest level of any character or person. Here we consider such metaphysical questions as "Why are we here? What is our purpose?" These questions are hardly ever asked or answered openly. Try to slip into your character's mind and answer these questions for him/her. What would he/she say?

Title of Book/Story .....  
Author: .....  
Character's name: .....



Now do a character profile for one of the main characters in your book:

Download the full-size template from [eep.at](http://eep.at)

# Planning and Organizing Reading Projects

Remember this:



When planning a reading project for your class, consider the following aspects:

- **Find suitable books:** language level, different tastes and interests, season, class topic
- **Book choosing:** introduce the books in interesting ways (see “How to wet my students’ interest”, offer a choice for boys, girls, readoholics and reluctant readers.
- **Book ordering:** time, availability, price
- **Pre-reading and warm-up activities:** the first chapter is the most important one. If students understand who is who and what is going on, if they can relate to the characters’ dilemmas, they will want to read on. Plan some interesting opening activities to set the scene. Allow the class to read quietly for 30min or more to get into their books. Students who are reading the same book can help one another with comprehension questions. Walk around and help them get into the stories.
- **Plan reading time:** check other class projects (books they read in German, important test dates...) and decide on a deadline that is not too far away.
- **While reading:** do not give students too many while reading tasks. Such tasks are helpful if they guide the readers’ focus a bit or if they are asked to collect a few useful phrases from their reading. Don’t overdo it – too many tasks will kill the reading experience.
- **Post-reading tasks:** Groups meet and share their views, ideas and questions. Most reading projects will lead to some kind of PRODUCT (written or oral) such as
  - Booklets (pedagogy of the blank sheet)
  - Tasks to be completed in the reading diaries
  - Presentations in class or online

Whenever possible give students some choice concerning suitable forms of writing or presenting. Decide on a common FORMAT (e.g. design a booklet... or prepare an online presentation using MyBrainshark.com...) but allow freedom within that frame. Students will be more creative if they feel in charge.

## Examples

The following pages show a few examples of tasks that can be used in reading projects. For more ideas visit [eep.at](http://eep.at). There you can also download a variety of handouts and project packages for your students.

# A mini project for one double lesson

Note: in this project students were allowed to read ANY book they wanted to read. Therefore no groups could be formed

## PRIVATE READING: LET'S SHARE

### 1. SWBS: The Plot Chart

From: Christine Boardman Moen, Better Than Book Reports, Scholastic, 1992

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
**SWBS: The Plot Chart**



What happens in a story from the beginning until the ending is called the plot. In every story there is **SOME**BODY who **WANTED** something. **BUT** something got in the way. **SO** the character had to solve the problem.

To finish the Plot Chart, think about your story and ask yourself the questions below. Then write your answers on the chart.

1. Who is the **SOME**BODY in my story?
2. This character **WANTED** something. What was it?
3. **BUT** something prevented the character from getting what he or she wanted. What was it?
4. **SO** the character solved the problem to get what he or she wanted. How did the character solve the problem?



**Book title** \_\_\_\_\_ **Author** \_\_\_\_\_

SOME B O D Y	
W A N T E D	
B U T	
S O	

### 2. Sum It Up

Make a sum-it-up card for your book. Fill in the blanks below.

<p>Title:.....</p> <p>Author:.....</p> <p>Three important facts:</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>	<p><b>Write a summary that tells the main idea.</b></p> <p><b>Summary:</b></p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p>
--	--

### 3. Book-Fair:

Walk around and read all the posted SWBS and SumItUp sheets. Find 3 books that have something in common with your own.

### 4. Grouping Books Together

Name \_\_\_\_\_

#### Grouping Books Together



Sets of books, or books that belong together, are books that are like each other in some way. Fill in the chart below to show how the books in your set are alike and different.

1. Write the names of the books in your set across the top of your chart under the word "Book."
2. Think about how your books have some of the same and some different ideas, people, places, and things. Write these ideas, people, places, and things in the spaces on the left.
3. Mark an X in the spaces under each book title if that book has the idea, person, place, or thing named on the left.

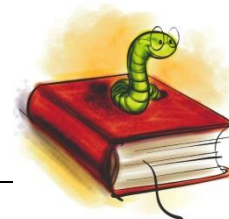


The name of my book set: _____			
<b>Ideas, people, places, things from the books</b>	<b>Book:</b>	<b>Book:</b>	<b>Book:</b>

From: Christine Boardman Moen, Better Than Book Reports, Scholastic, 1992



## Book-sharing



### Prepare the following things for the book you have read:

<b>5 nouns (things, objects...)</b>	Choose 5 things that play an important role in your book and write them on the cards provided. (Example: broom, hour glass, magic potion, train, ... for a Harry Potter book)
<b>Big trouble</b>	Choose a passage in your book where one of the main characters is in trouble, has a problem or is very sad. Practice reading this passage so you can later read it out to your group.
<b>Happy moments</b>	Choose a passage in your book where one of the main characters is happy. Practice reading the passage.
<b>Important adjectives</b>	Find three adjectives in your book that are somehow important for the story. Choose new and interesting adjectives – not words we all know. Copy the adjective on a card and write the sentence you found in the book on the BACK of the card.

### Group Phase

Work in groups of 4 with classmates who have read books you do not know yet.

<b>Guess what...</b>	Show your noun cards and adjective cards to your friends and have them guess what the book might be about. Ask lots of questions about your friends' books and try to find out as much as possible about the main characters, their problems, their wishes and hopes. Do not give away the endings and solutions of your book.
<b>Big trouble and Happy moments</b>	Read the passages that you have chosen to your friends and explain why your characters feel so happy or so sad.
<b>Important adjectives</b>	Put all the adjective cards on the desk (only show the adjectives, not the sentences) Copy all the adjectives on the back of this sheet and guess what the words might mean. Discuss your ideas in the group. Then turn over the cards and look at the sentences. How can these sentences help you guess the correct meaning of the adjectives? Now ask the students who have written the cards to explain the meaning of the word and record it in the table.
<b>Homework</b>	Copy the new adjectives and sentences on vocab cards and add a second sentence where you use the new adjective in a TRUE sentence.

**This is what your vocab cards should look like:**

Use ONE card for ONE vocab item.

Word:	<b>Dreadful</b>
Sentence from the book:	Their <b>dreadful voices</b> sounded like dentists' drills all grinding away together.
My true sentence:	My neighbor Rosalinde has a <b>dreadful, whiny voice</b> .

**On the back write a translation of the main parts of the sentences. Example:**

Ihre schrecklichen Stimmen klangen wie Zahnarzt Bohrer...  
Rosalinde hat eine schreckliche, weinerliche Stimme.

Adjective	Sentence from the book:
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	


# Reading Project

## 1. Choosing a book:

Look at all the books in the selection. Read the blurb (back cover) and then read the first two or three pages of each book. How many unknown words are there on each page? Can you guess the meanings? What else do you notice about the book?

- What kind of book do you think this will be? Do you think it will be science fiction, fantasy, realistic fiction, historical fiction, mystery, a crime story?
- What do you think the plot will be about? Make a one-sentence prediction for each book.
- What kinds of characters do you expect to meet in each book?
- What will the settings be like?

Write your findings in the table on the next page.

Which of the books would you like to read? Award 1 – 3 stars  to the books, depending how interesting they look. Mark the stars in the first column. Then decide which book you would like to read. Write down your first, second and third choices on a sheet of paper and stick your paper up on the book poster under the title of your first choice. As far as possible you will be given your first choice.

## 2. Getting ready for the book: Making predictions

While you wait for your chosen book to arrive imagine what might happen in your book. We will try a **10-minute free-writing activity** in class. Write down what you expect from the book. Use the following expressions and the "will" future. Use your reading diary for all the tasks.

I hope that.....	}	.... will ...
I wonder if ....		
I bet that...		
I'm afraid that...		
I (don't) think that...		


## 3. The books have arrived!!! Let's start reading

Get together with your friends who have chosen the same book (3-4 students). Read quietly for 20 minutes. Read slowly and imagine the scenes and characters as vividly as possible. After 20 minutes meet to discuss your reading. Distribute the task cards in your group. Each of you is responsible for a different task. Read your task card carefully, then guide your group through the activity. Write all the questions and answers into your reading diary.

## 4. Homework:

Read chapters ..... by .....

Read slowly and carefully and mark any interesting passages in your text. Choose 3 phrases or expressions that you would like to remember and write them on vocab. cards. Then write a five minute entry (non-stop writing) into your reading diary.

<b>Book title and</b> 	<b>New words per page</b>	<b>Other comments about the book:</b>
		Type of book: Plot prediction:  Characters: Settings:
		Type of book: Plot prediction:  Characters: Settings:
		Type of book: Plot prediction:  Characters: Settings:
		Type of book: Plot prediction:  Characters: Settings:
		Type of book: Plot prediction:  Characters: Settings:
		Type of book: Plot prediction:  Characters: Settings:

Task 1: **Language Police**

# English please!!!

In this activity you are responsible for reminding your group to speak only English. Whenever you catch somebody using German show them this card.

Task 3: **Character Detective**

List all the characters that you have met so far. What do you know about them? Who are they? What is their role in the story? What mood are they in? Do you like/dislike them? Do you trust/mistrust them?

Task 2: **New Expressions Expert**

Ask each of your friends to find one new phrase or expression that they would like to remember. Highlight these phrases in your book and write them on vocab. cards.

Task 4: **Where and When?**

Where and when does your story play? Find a passage in your text where the setting (place and time) is described. Highlight it and copy a few important details into your reading diary.

Task 5: **Asking questions**

Ask each of your friends to write down one question that they have in mind now. What is it they would like to know about the book? Share your questions and write them into your reading diary. Maybe you can answer them later or ask your teacher.

## 5. Reading Circle Activities

1. Get together in your reading group and decide who is going to be the **Language Police** and **Group Leader** today? Remind your friends to use English only in their discussions and to stay on track ( = not digress from the topic). In case of disagreements make sure that your friends argue their point politely.
2. **Sharing Reading Diaries:** Read each others' reading diaries and discuss your reactions to the story.
3. **Work with the small Discussion Prompt Cards<sup>2</sup>.** Sort the cards by color and put the piles face down on your desk. Take a card from the top of a pile and read it out to your classmates. If the card doesn't apply to your book at all, put it back and take a new one. Do the task carefully in your group. Write all your answers into your reading diary. When you have completed a task, take a new card from a different pile. Take turns reading the tasks out and leading the discussion. Do as many tasks as you can but do them carefully and thoroughly.
4. **Workshop and Homework Tasks:** On the following pages you will find 13 tasks. You have one double period in class to do them. You may work alone or in a small group. Do the other activities at home. Write all your answers into your reading diary. Always write clear headings (number and name of activity).
5. **Reading on: Read chapter(s) .....** by ..... and write a 5-minute non-stop entry into your reading diary.
6. **Vocabulary Work:** Collect good phrases and write 20 new vocab cards for the whole book. Hand them in with your reading diary.

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<sup>2</sup> Laura Robb and Rick Brown, *50 Fabulous Discussion Prompt Cards*

## Useful materials and ideas

Find more ideas on [epep.at](http://epep.at)


### Laura Robb, 50 Fabulous Discussion Prompt Cards:

Can be used again and again. For lower intermediate speakers you might want to adapt the language a bit.

#5/Character

### Show Me the Support


As a group, discuss several adjectives that describe the main character and pick the best one. Then scan the book for a line or a passage that proves you right. Take a vote on which section provides the strongest evidence.



#6/Character

### Minor Character


Imagine you are having pizza with one of the minor characters in your book. Think about how this character would view a conflict that the main character faced and how they would have solved it. Discuss from the minor character's point of view.



#7/Character

### Unsolvable!

The main character of your book has problems that he or she couldn't solve. Choose two unsolvable problems, explain how the main character deals with each and why each one is impossible to resolve.



#8/Character

### Favorite Things


List things you cherish in life, such as free time, in-line skating, a friendship, or a favorite sport. Now list five to six things the main character values. Discuss how the plot helps



#1/Character

### Heart-to-Heart


The main character wants to meet you at the local diner to talk about everything he or she has been going through. Think about conflicts this character faces. Then tell the main character what you think about how he or she handles them, and what you consider to be his or her greatest strength—and his or her greatest fear or flaw.



#2/Character

### Mood Clues


Mad? You slam a door. Hurt? You cry or run away. Sad? You slump your shoulders. What you say and do communicates your mood and even your personality. The same is true for book characters. Find and discuss two character-revealing passages, and explain what each taught you about that character's feelings, motivations, and personality traits.



#3/Character

### Choose a Character


Discuss this if you had to be stranded on a deserted island with any character in this book, who would it be? Why? Who would be your last pick? Why?



#4/Character

### Movie Tag Line

You've been hired to write a one-sentence ad to promote the movie version of this book. With your group, come up with a single sentence that conveys what the main character faces, and what he or she discovers about himself or herself or about others.



# Booklets: The pedagogy of the blank sheet

These booklets are my favorite projects. The idea is based on Hannelore and Helmut Zehnpfennig's concept of the "Didaktik des weißen Blattes" (see below). This idea can be used at all levels, from beginners to advanced learners. The results are always stunning and much more interesting than answers to teacher-created questions and tasks. They really show how students have understood a novel or a topic in general.

## Didaktik des Weißen Blattes

Hannelore Zehnpfennig (Grundschullehrerin) - Helmut Zehnpfennig (Soziologe)

Im **Offenen Unterricht** von Hannelore Zehnpfennig werden alle Fächer zum freien Arbeiten angeboten. Ausnahme: Sport, Musik, Religion und Kunst. Die herkömmliche **Zeit-, Raum- und Stoffstruktur** wird **aufgelöst**. Das heißt: Raum ist individuell nutzbar, Zeit ist individuell nutzbar für die Fächer, Stoff wird selbständig ausgesucht

## Didaktik des Weißen Blattes

Der Sitzkreis zu Beginn und am Ende des Unterrichts ist freiwillig. Zehnpfennig wählt den Weg der drastischen Einschränkung des Materials. Sie fordert eine kleine Handbibliothek mit Nachschlagewerken und Fachbüchern zu vielen Themen, Schulbücher sind nicht dabei. Sie können höchstens als Angebot in der Klasse aufliegen. Heute ist auch der PC wichtige Infoquelle.

*„Unser wichtigstes Arbeitsmaterial ist das **weiße Blatt Papier**, unseres Erachtens das kreativste Material, das es gibt. Es stellt **„wahrscheinlich die größte Herausforderung an die Imagination der Kinder dar“** stellt Peschel (1996, S.38) fest, nachdem er unsere **„Pädagogik des weißen Blattes“** kennengelernt hatte. Das leere Blatt fordert oder provoziert geradezu die kindliche Phantasie es zu füllen. Wie, das sagt ihm weder das leere Blatt, noch sagen wir´s. Das Kind muss selber entscheiden und gestalten. **Ein Arbeitsergebnis ist zu dokumentieren, ein Sachthema zusammengefasst darzustellen, um in ein gemeinsames Buch zu kommen.** Welche Informationsquellen benutzt werden und wie, überlassen wir vollständig dem Kind. (Zehnpfennig/Zehnpfennig 1992)“*

Für die Eigenproduktion von Arbeitsblättern spricht ein gewichtiger Grund:

**„Selbsterstellte Arbeitsblätter sind immer auch aktive, individuelle und 'originelle' Lösungen von Problemen“** (Zehnpfennig/ Zehnpfennig 1995c, S. 7). Und darauf legt Zehnpfennig in ihrem Offenen Unterricht viel mehr Wert als auf die noch so korrekte Ausfüllung eines vorgegebenen Arbeitsblatts. **Weniger wichtig ist uns, ob Arbeitsblätter ästhetisch oder didaktisch perfekt sind. Wichtig ist vor allem, dass sie von den Kindern selbst und für andere verständlich sind.** Diese Fülle an Arbeitsblättern wird dann thematisch zu "Büchern" versammelt, wie z.B.: "Kniffelbücher" (Mathematik) oder "Rumänien" (fächerübergreifend) und präsentiert.

[http://www.zeugner.at/files/nachlese/010909/Go\\_OffUnt\\_Didaktik\\_des\\_weissen\\_Blattes.pdf](http://www.zeugner.at/files/nachlese/010909/Go_OffUnt_Didaktik_des_weissen_Blattes.pdf)

The preparations and instructions are VERY simple:

**Step one:** Each student receives a blank booklet consisting of 3 white A4 sheets folded and stapled together like an A5 booklet. I usually use a colored sheet on the outside but this is not really necessary. In some cases I copy the title page of their book on the cover to get them started. You'll need a long-arm stapler to produce these booklets.



## Step two:

Ask the learners to fill the booklet with anything that shows their understanding and reaction to the book they have read.

Do a short brainstorming with the class what this might mean. Students come up with many of the ideas they know from their reading diaries and presentations such as:

- Letters or postcards (from the point of view of the characters or to one of the characters), Maps showing the settings of the story,
- Travel brochures advertising the places,
- Diary pages,
- Sociograms,
- Plot diagrams,
- Reviews for Amazon etc.
- Newspaper articles
- Creating their own title page ...



## Step three:

When the booklets are finished the students meet in their groups and share their products. This step can be very interesting and learners see different interpretations of the task and different reactions to the books.

## Step four: Optional

Sometimes, if there is not enough time for a round of book presentations ask students to meet with 3 classmates who have read different books and find the similarities and differences of their novels.



## Sample pages from such booklets

### Letters and Postcards



## Letter to Gerry

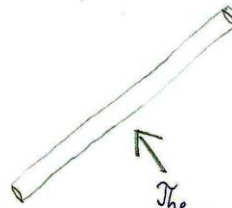
Hey Gerry,

I know it's not easy to do everything right. School, soccer, friends, family ..... but one thing must be clear: John is your best friend and you must be on his side!! Not in the opposite gang. Sure you get drawn in the whole thing and your dad lost his job but John was on your side also in hard times! In the game against Norton you and him were the absolute match-winners!

but when somebody sticks a piece of chalk into John's pocket and you know who it was but are too afraid to say it then you're not a good friend. But I know in future you will stand to your friends and will stand to your personality!

yours  
Ellie

$$\begin{array}{l} x + 2 = 5 \\ x = 3 \end{array}$$



The piece of chalk that "appeared" in John's pocket.

## Brochures

### Brochure of the Hotel

LENG  
THE Husky-Hotel

Welcome

A big hotel with many rooms and friendly workers

Nearly every night, you can see a Polarlight.

OPEN

The pretty landscape

And the Best is inside!

For the prizes go on our homepage: <http://www.BJOER-husky-hotel.com> or on: <http://www.CapLand.com/husky-hotel/prize/>

And if you want to visit Sweden we have a journey that only costs 50€ for the drive, the guide and the drive back!

50€

Husky-sled riding! with your sled. Aki and Kalle will go with you. Now some pictures of Huskies and donduone:



8

# Winter Safaris

Winter Safaris - Exciting trips through the wilderness with family and friends

All inclusive:  
Breakfast buffet  
Lunch and dinner restaurant



Enjoy our new hotel with lovely rooms, a great view and finnish saunas, were you can relax and rest!

Make friends with fabulous huskies and try to drive a dog sled on your own, you will not regret it!

Experience the wilderness, like you never did before and see the wide and open landscape which is still as beautiful as centuries ago!

### Info:

Kelottie, Saariselän Siuta, FI-99830  
Winter Safaris  
Phone +358 (0)16-668 402  
E-mail info@wintersafaris.fi



# Recipes

## Hot chocolate (from the hut)

Ingredients: Milk, Chocolatebar, sugar, schnapps made out of cloudberries (Malkebeere)

Heat up the milk in a pot, cut chocolate into pieces, add to milk, stir until solved, Add sugar, beat until creamy. If preferred add a shot of cloudberryschnapps.

## Crisp Waffles

Ingredients: 1/8 l cold water, 160g flour, 60g butter (melted), 200ml milk, 2 teaspoons sugar.

Stir together flour and water. Add milk, melted butter and sugar. Heat the waffle iron and bake the waffles. serve with fruits or jam (raspberries, cloudberries, cranberries...)

Both recipes are good for cold and dark winter days.

Great idea ☺

8

## Other ideas: Recipes, Travel info,

# HUSKIES!!!

A Husky is a medium-size working dog. It is black to grey and has its origins in Siberia. It has a thick fur and is the closest made to wolves. Interesting about Huskies are their eyes: They can be blue, amber, pink, brown or green, sometimes even the same dog has different eye-colours!

Size: Male: 50-60 cm high, 20-27 kg  
Female: 50-56 cm high, 15-24 kg



A male black and white coloured husky.

A Husky with one blue and one brown eye.



A young female Husky playing in the snow.

If I was...

Example from *Lord of the Flies*

### Me in that position

*landed*  
If I would land on an island with some friends of mine I probably wouldn't try to be the chief. I think it would be very hard for us to decide who will be the chief and who is allowed to say what has to be done. Another great problem would be that all would start talking at the same time, that's why you would have to introduce something like the conch in the book that I've read. This will help a lot and after you have voted for a chief, everybody has to obey him and has to follow his rules. For me it is impossible to be the chief, because most of the time I don't like to tell the others what to do and I don't like to carry all the responsibility. Still, I would try to add my ideas if I think that they are meaningful and could help. In my opinion it would be very important to come together at least one time a day and discussed what has been done already and what has still to be done. This would be very important, because otherwise people start to get confused and just do what they want. All in all I think that this situation isn't at all easy to handle and a lot of problems would probably occur.

### Characters (briefly)

Creative Catalogues

Winnie's Catalogue

105 €

These are Winnie's favorite winter boots. They are brown and have black stripes in the middle of the boots.

260 €

This is Winnie's fashion hat for special occasions. There is a pom-pom hanging down her hat. It's like the nice color of the hat. He has blue stripes on the top of her hat. It nice small crowls around the pretty hat.

51.300 €

This is the coolest broom of the world. He is green pink striped. It like the colors so much. The broom also has a candy dispenser. He divides the nice. It's the latest invention.

900 €

The prettiest clothes dress ever! The dress has yellow stars on it. Every witch would like to have this.

20 €

These are Winnie's warm gloves they so colorful. They green, pink and orange. The gloves are really cool. These are the coolest gloves ever.

130 €

This is a brilliant vase. On the front of the vase there is a red flower. The background is brown. The flower stalk is light green. Every witch would like to have a vase like this.

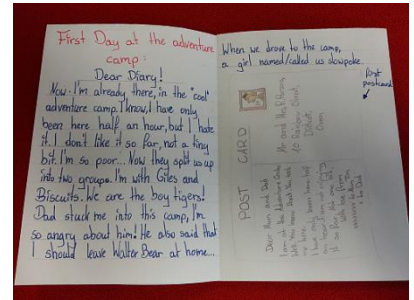
800.000 €

This is Winnie's cooking pot. He is black and there is a nice looking red apple on the front. This is a really really big pot. It is 1,2 m high and 49,5 cm wide.

300 €

These are Winnie's Christmas socks. There are yellow stars on it and a Santa Claus. These socks are very warm and soft. The background is red. It like the socks.

## Origami books or Diaries



# Fagin's Diary

Dear Diary,

1<sup>st</sup> of Sept.

I think it's over now, there is no chance to hide anymore.

They have found out the murder of Nancy and who the murderer was, Bill. He is hiding with us, so if they get him, they'll get us too. I read about that in the newspaper this morning. So I know that the police are also searching for me. If they get me, I'll be hanged, horrible, isn't it, my dear?

Please help me, I don't know what we can do! The only thing I can do just now is, sitting here, waiting and praying that they won't find us very quickly, so we still have some time to find a solution to our terrible situation.

God help us!

# Dear Diary,

4<sup>th</sup> of Sept.

Wow, what a week! I have never experienced anything like that before: Fagin and Bill tried to kill me. The police found out about their intention because Mr. Brownlaw had told them and they were searching for us. When they were about to catch us, Bill took me hostage and hanged himself unintentionally. I finally got a new family and Fagin, my good old friend, was hanged too.

So you can imagine how I am feeling at the moment, I am happy and sad at the same time. On the one hand, I've got a new and wonderful life, a new home, a nice father and I learned how to read and write and many other great things. On the other hand I lost my good friend Fagin, who supported me when I had nothing, no home, nothing to eat and no family. I also lost all the other boys who showed



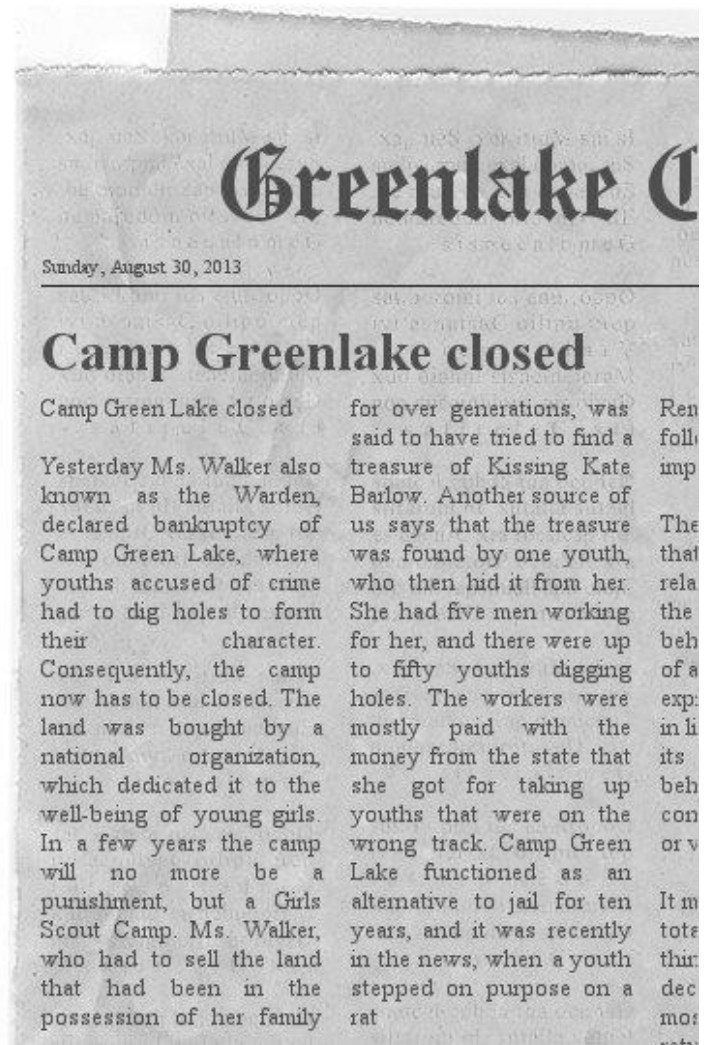
## Newspaper Articles

Instructions: Choose an important moment in your book and write an article about this event for a local newspaper.

Remember: The journalist does not know everything; focus on one event – do not tell the whole story or include the characters' private thoughts and feelings. What would the readers of the local newspaper want to know?

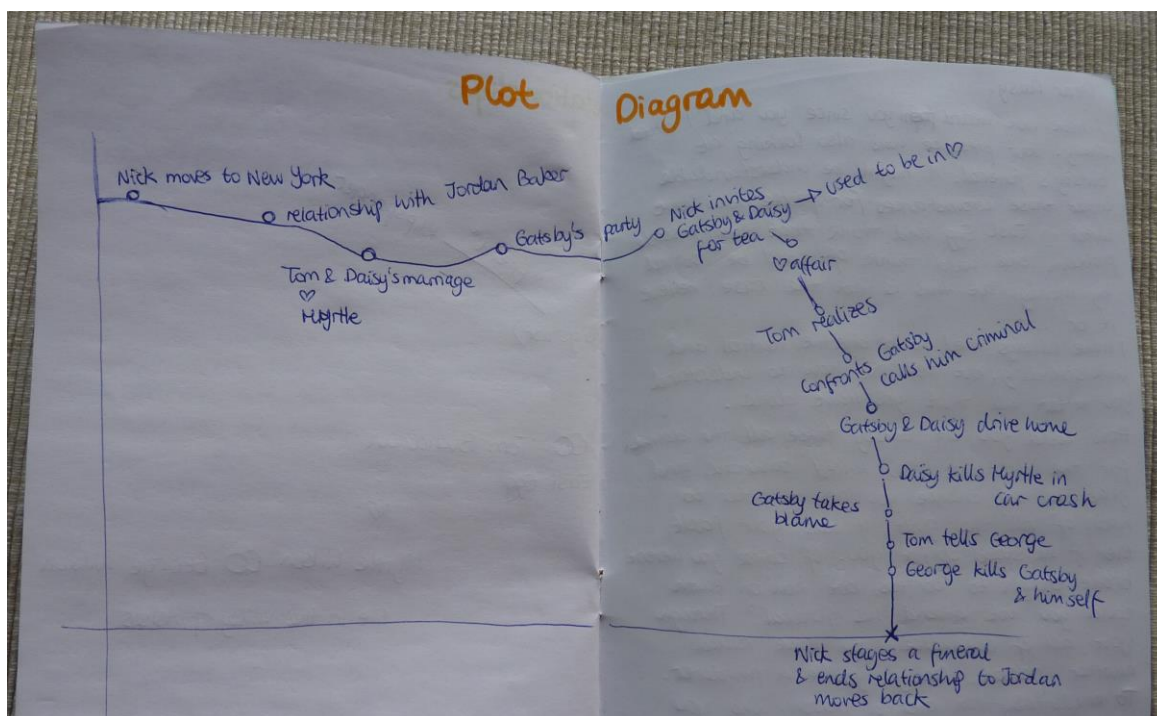
Tip: for the layout of a newspaper article use the online Newspaper Clippings editor :

<http://www.fodey.com/generators/newspaper>



## Plot Diagrams

Example from *The Great Gatsby*



# Letters to the Author

## Email to the Author

Dear Mr. Ian McEwan

Firstly I want to congratulate you for the Booker Prize award you have received for Amsterdam. I personally have read the book and have to say that I really did enjoy it a lot. In fact I finished it in a very short period of time, and I found myself hooked from the very first page.

However, after I finished reading i was left contemplating about a few things and pondering about some questions only you can answer. The first question I would like to ask you is about Clive and his music passion. Why did you give great emphasis on cleaves composing process. In fact those passages were brilliant and mesmerizing but I wonder why you know so much about composing, have you studied music or tried to compose yourself?

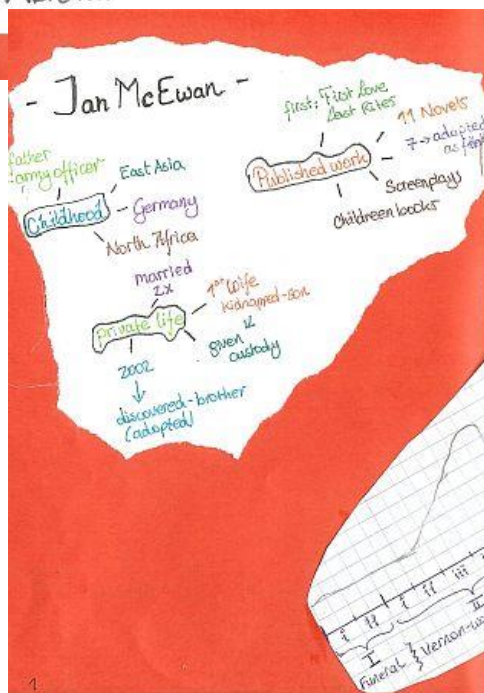
Another thing that occurred to me is that all female characters in the book seem to be faultless and innocent while the bad sides of all male characters have been uncovered, is there a particular reason?

One last question concerning the end, why did you choose to have Clive die happy, not knowing that he has been poisoned but Vernon grasp in his last seconds what has happened?

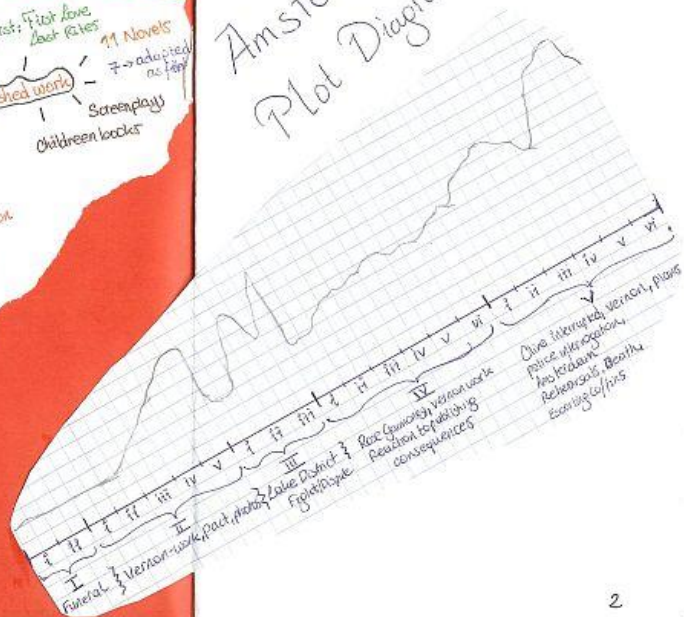
These are only a few of the questions I had and knowing that you are quite busy, I would really appreciate if you would take the time to answer these questions!

yours faithfully,

Furtuna Abraham



## Amsterdam Plot Diagram



## Famous Composer and Newspaper Editor Commit Double Suicide

Amsterdam: The renowned composer Clive Linley and ex-editor of *The Judge* Vernon Halliday were found dead Saturday morning in a hotel in Amsterdam

Both Clive Linley and Vernon Halliday flew from London to Amsterdam on Friday, the former for orchestra rehearsal of the *Millennial Symphony* he had been commissioned to compose, the latter for a business meeting. After a day's stay in Amsterdam the two men were found dead in their hotel rooms the following day by the cleaning staff of the hotel.

According to autopsy results both had been poisoned by lethal medication they had taken with champagne in the evening party that took place in the hotel. Among friends and family it's known that Clive Linley and Vernon Halliday had a close relationship and were old friends.

Acquaintances who were also at the party have reported to

Both men accepted that the nature of the request, its intimacy and self-conscious reflection on their friendship, had created, for the moment, an uncomfortable emotional proximity which was best dealt with by their parting without another word.



have seen them leave at the same time that evening. In view of the fact that their death seems very identical, it's suspected that they could have made a suicide-pact.

However since no suicide note has been found yet, the real motive for their death is still unknown. One speculation is that Vernon Halliday's resignation from *The Judge* could have led to this. As for Clive it's assumed that the extreme pressure and stress he had been under in the last weeks composing the symphony could have been one reason.

Their death also has revived talks about the controversial euthanasia laws in Holland. This had been the subject of discussion last week when a medical scandal was uncovered in which doctors exploited these laws helping people commit suicide. In this case the two men couldn't possibly have legally bought the lethal medication anywhere else in Europe if not in Amsterdam.

## Some Themes with Quotes

### Journalism

*It's time we ran more regular columns. They're cheap, and everyone else is doing them. You know, we hire someone of low to medium intelligence, possibly female, to write about, well, nothing much. You've seen the sort of thing. Goes to a party and can't remember someone's name. Twelve hundred words.'*

### Hypocrisy, Moral decisions

*Lying on the bed beside him was a venomous little card gloating over his downfall, written by his oldest friend, written by a man so morally eminent he would rather see a woman raped in front of him than have his work disrupted.*

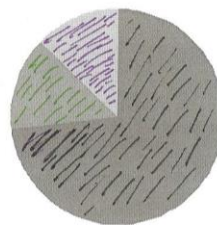
### Friendship

*Put most crudely, what did he, Clive, really derive from this friendship? He had given, but what had he ever received? What bound them? They had Molly in common. There were accumulated years and the habits of friendship, but there was really nothing at its centre...*

### Conceit

*There were moments in the early morning... when Clive... had once more a passing thought, the minuscule fragment of a suspicion that he would not have shared with a single person in the world... the thought was, quite simply, that it might not be going too far to say that he was... a genius.'*

## Setting



- London: Clive's house, The Judge building,...
- Lake District
- Amsterdam

The pie chart above shows the three main places used by the author. Surprisingly although the book is called Amsterdam only 13% of the book is set in this city. A hiking area in England called Lake District also has a similar share. As can be seen, the majority of the book is however set in London.

For more examples from upper-school visit the page "creative booklets" on [epep.at](http://epep.at)

# Ideas for Book Presentations

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Presentations are the final and culminating point of every book project. Many of the **presentation activities** described in this section can be used at any level. What they all have in common is “activity”. The main goals of these presentations are

- 😊 to make the other learners interested in reading some of the books as well
- 😊 to practice presentation skills and oral skills and
- 😊 to motivate the learners to dig a bit deeper and understand more than just the plot level of a story.

What we **don't want** in these presentations are learners

- 😞 reading long summaries from their sheets
- 😞 confusing the class with all the minor characters
- 😞 boring the audience with unimportant details of the author's biography



## Year 1:

From year 1 on my students present books regularly. The first presentations are no more than 2-3 minutes long and absolutely harmless. Avoid any stress and formality in these presentations and encourage the kids to do as many of them as possible. Invite the learners to present a book at the beginning of your lessons. The whole idea of these mini-presentations is to show the class that WE ALL READ and that reading books is actually fun and not hard work at all. Moreover these mini-presentations give even young learners a chance to speak in front of the whole class regularly and thus lose their fear of presenting. Reward the learners and “pay” them for each of these presentations. Everybody will get a + 😊

After these little presentations the kids pass on the books and thus the whole process of reading starts rolling....

In a typical presentation in year one the learners

- **show the book** they have read (usually one of the picture books) and they
- **say 5 to 7 sentences** about the plot and characters in the book. If they have done one of the simple *reading diary tasks*, they can easily use these sentences again in the presentation. They
- **tell us how they liked the book** and finally, they
- **write one “cool phrase”** that they have learned from the book on the board and the class copies the new phrase into their vocab files.

## Years 2-8 and beyond

In the course of year 2 or 3, when students do their first real book-projects, the presentations become more varied and creative. The following list of possible activities can be used at any level, up to adult literature. The depth and complexity of the results will of course depend on the age and the level of maturity of the learners.

Most of these presentations are done in groups and every student is responsible for a different activity or aspect of the book. Being responsible for it means that the student plans and prepares this part of the presentation. In some cases they will then need other members of the group to do it with them (act out a scene, take turns speaking, bring some of the props....) The presentation should be as colorful and interesting as possible and will often be assessed by the class according to a list of criteria that the class has agreed upon before.

The best and most interesting book presentations will result from intensive group-discussions with the help of Laura Robb's discussion prompt cards and similar tasks based on ideas from the books below. Every group-member chooses a different task, possibly from a different area (plot, setting, character...) To make this easier for the students, the tasks are copied on colored cards, one color for each area. The students choose different colors and thus cover all the important aspects of their books.

A wonderful collection of tasks can be found in the following books, all available at Amazon.com

Christine Boardman Moen, *Better Than Book Reports*, Scholastic Teaching Resources, 2009

Laura Robb, *52 Fabulous Discussion-Prompt Cards for Reading Groups*, Scholastic, 2000

Janice Szabos, *Reading- A Novel Approach*, Good Apple Inc. 1984.

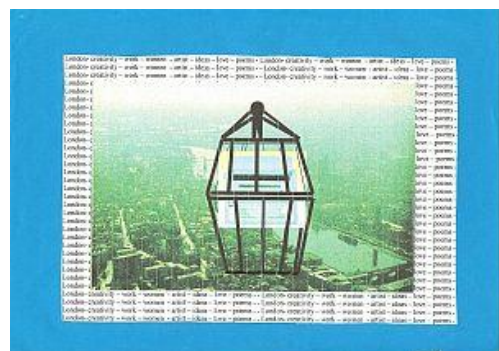
Susan Van Zile, *Awesome, Hands-on Activities for Teaching Literary Elements*, Scholastic, 2001.

## *Sample ideas that have worked very well*

### **Plot**

#### **Present an alternative book cover and blurb:**

Be sure the illustration relates to an important aspect of the book. Use appropriate colors to evoke the atmosphere created by the book. (Older Ss can also be asked to print out different book covers from the internet. Amazon.com usually has different editions. Ss then present the different cover designs and their own version. The class chooses their favorite one. This is a very good way to discover underlying themes and the tone of a novel.

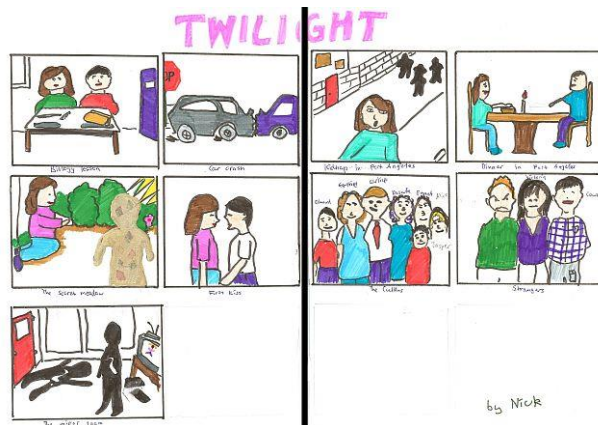


### Plot on the line or Storyboard:

Write seven to ten main events on separate sheets. Add simple drawings and illustrations. In your presentation hang up one picture after the other using clothes-pegs and a string or stick your

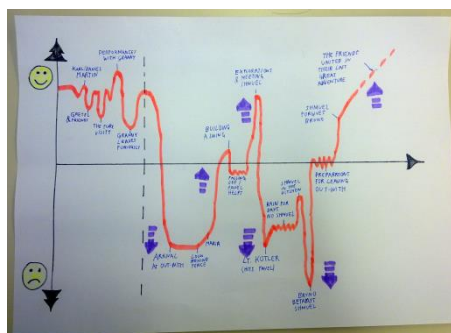


pictures on the board with magnets or blue-tack. Talk about each picture using your own words. Don't give away the ending.



### Plot diagram/ Plot mountain:

Draw a "fever curve" of the ups and downs in the novel. Peaks of suspense or conflict..., label the curve. In your presentation use your own words to explain each of the events briefly.



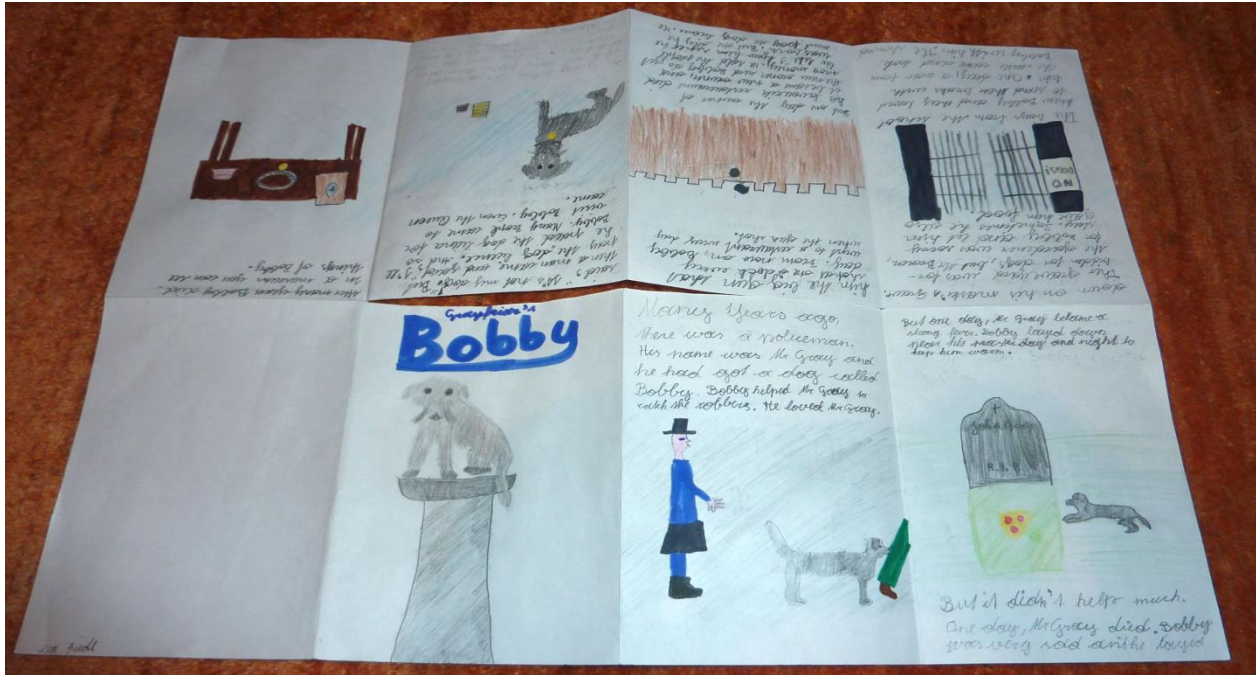
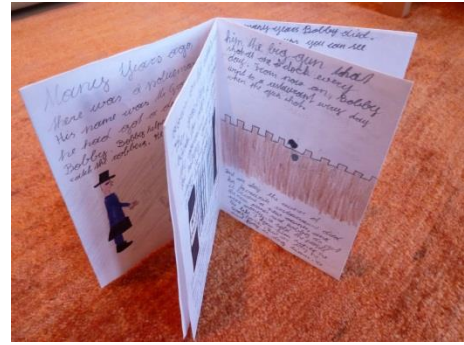
### Act out a scene of your choice:

Use simple props and costumes. This activity works best in combination with the "plot on the line" or the "plot mountain" activities. The learners act out one or two important scenes and explain at what point in the novel these scenes happen.



## Make a plot mini-book (concertina or origami)

This activity works well for picture books or short stories that the teacher has read to the class. After listening to the story the learners design their own mini-books. They write their own version of the story and add illustrations on each page. Variation: The learners might also write a follow-up story rather than a summary of the original story.



## Setting

**Make a setting pop-up or a painting** that shows the most important place(s) in the book.

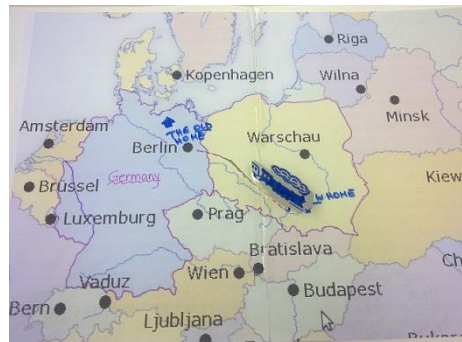
### Setting murals:

several paintings glued together



**Draw a simple map** of the locations in your novel. Make

sure the map is large enough so your classmates can read it clearly. Attach a legend to your map. Write a paragraph that explains the importance of each location indicated on your map.



## Characters

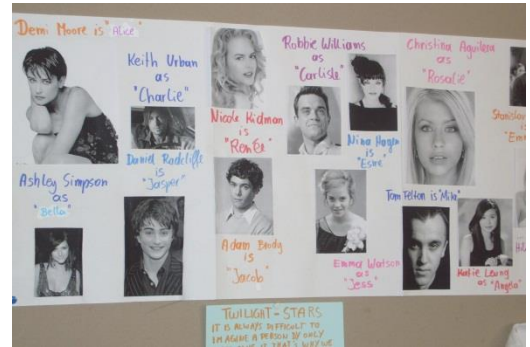
**Identity bags/ character suitcase:** Bring a bag full of objects that are somehow important to the main character of your book. Show them and explain their relevance.



**Character T-shirts:** Design a T-shirt (picture and slogan) for one of your book's characters. Show what is important to them.

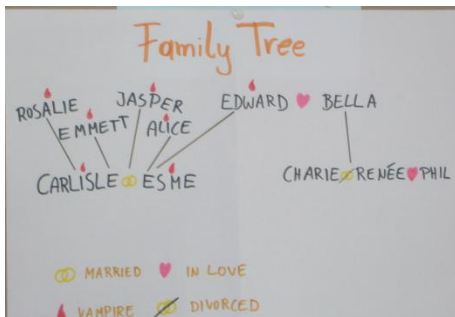
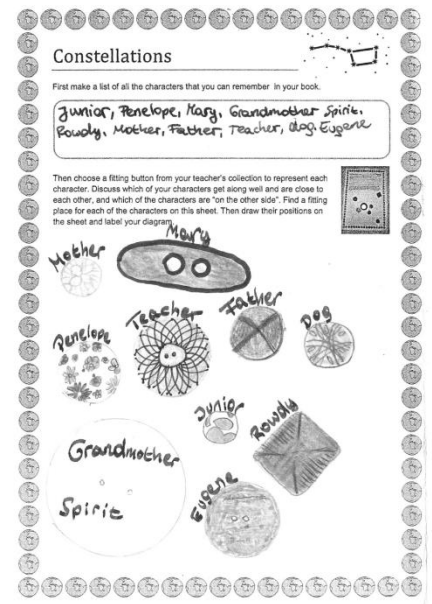
**Character collage:** Find fitting pictures and words from magazines and present (one of) the main character(s) in a collage.

**Movie Casting:** Imagine that your book will be made into a movie. Choose suitable actors and actresses for each of the main characters and present them to the class. Explain why you think these actors/actresses would be ideal for these roles. What characteristics and qualities will they have to show in order to portray the characters well.

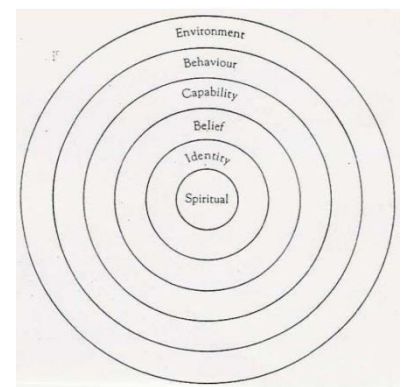


**Prepare a "bubble sheet" (A3 poster)** where you collect important quotes from your book. In your presentation explain who said these words and why they are important.

**Sociogram:** Choose suitable buttons to represent the main characters of the book. Then make a sociogram showing the relations between the characters. Show (close) friendships, rivals and enemies, good and bad characters. Compare your version with other students.



**Character profiles:** Look at the different levels of a main character's personality and complete the profile circles. (Find the detailed description on [epep.at](http://epep.at))



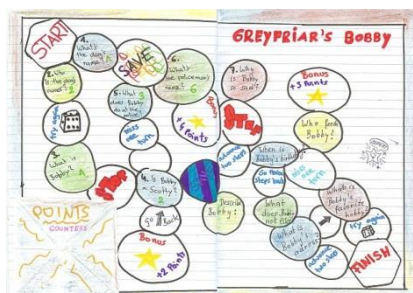
## Other Ideas

**A Novel Museum:** display 10 to 15 items that play a role in the book. Act like tour-guides and present the artifacts to the class. Explain the significance of each item. See detailed instructions on the right.



**Write a poem or song-lyrics** that might be used in a film or radio-play of your book. Present your poem (show it on the projector while you read it) or sing your song. Maybe other classmates can sing along or accompany you on a guitar. You can also use a karaoke CD for background music.

**Make a board game:** Design a board (use settings, plot line and events... task cards or fields... you might even make *Fimo* character-counters...



If class time is limited or if students are to present their private reading use the following activity:

**Non-stop talking:** Students stand in two concentric circles or parallel rows. The Ss in the outer circle or row talk non-stop for 1 minute (more advanced Ss can do 2-3 minutes) about the novel they have read. Ss in the inner circle/row listen. After 1 minute Ss change roles. Then the students in the outer circle move one person to the left. Do this with 3-4 partners. This activity works well for independent reading where Ss talk about different books. If they have all read the same book give out sub-tasks for each round: e.g: favorite character, least favorite character, setting(s), ending, ...

**Acrostic poem:** Write the title of the novel downwards on a page. Then use each letter as an initial for a line about the book.

**Alternative idea:** If you have an idea of your own contact your teacher about it.

## Novel Museums



For the Novel Museum imagine that the characters in your book were REAL people. Our town wants to make their stories public and has, therefore, dedicated a whole room in the museum to these people and their stories. There they show real artefacts from your characters' lives. These objects are presented nicely in showcases and on tables around the room. Each of the objects has a label explaining the importance of the item, where it is from and what role it played.

In your museum display you might show some of the following things:

Maps, short newspaper articles about what happened to your characters, diary pages, letters, objects they used during their adventures, photos, clothes they were wearing, favorite items of your characters..... or any other things that play an important role.

## ***Older students***

Older students who read modern or contemporary literature in their reading groups might also be asked to present some of the following aspects:

**Short information about the author:** main focus should be on typical themes or characteristic topics, style, other books... Biographical information only if relevant (e.g.: personal experiences that are reflected in the books...)

**Historical or cultural background** of the novel.

### **Make connections to the modern world:**

Depending on the topics and themes of the book Ss might do tasks such as the following (designed for *Brave New World* or *Animal Farm*):

- Present the basic principals of propaganda and advertising (do an internet search)
- Give a propaganda speech about any topic of your choice. Then explain the methods you have used.
- Present the pros and cons of genetic engineering

Encourage students to prepare attractive, attention grabbing visuals for their presentations. Do not allow text on powerpoint slides. Allow only pictures or keywords and make sure the students use their own words rather than reading off prepared texts.

## ***Presenting books online***

Another great way to organize book presentations is by creating book-trailers or pecha kuchas.

For examples of book trailers go to:



# Contract

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I commit myself to trying out the following two projects or activities which I have learned in this seminar.

1

2

I will try these activities within the next two months and will then share my experiences with my

colleague \_\_\_\_\_.

My signature: \_\_\_\_\_

My colleague's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

