

Reading is Fun

Dr. Elisabeth Pölzleitner

Reading is fun: Getting started
Storytime for beginners
Bookmaking basics

Reading activities for narrative texts
Vocab-activities

Reading diaries
Examples from lower school
Examples from upper school
Let's try it out: Free-writing

The Chicken-Coop Monster
(sample story: basis for reading project)

Reading projects and book groups

The blank sheet
Make your own book

Ideas for book presentations

How to wet your students' appetite

Reading classics:
Animal Farm
The Girl with the Pearl Earring
Books that have worked well with my students

Reading is fun!!!

- 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>
English Bookshop, Graz enquiry@english-bookshop.com
The Austrian bookshop homepages are not exciting; e-mail them if you need help or recommendations...)
- 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.

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

Task:

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 the text on the next page.

for forsores binding

The Sibille

My father walked beside me to give me courage, his palm touching gently the back laces of my bodice. In the low-angled glare already baking the paving stones of the piazza and the top of my head, the still shadow of the Inquisitor's noose hanging above the Tor di Nona, the papal court, stretched grotesquely down the wall, its shape the outline of a tear.

'A brief unpleasantness, Artemisia,' my father said, looking straight ahead. 'Just a little squeezing.'

He meant the *sibille*.

If, while my hands were bound, I gave again the same testimony as I had the previous weeks, they would know it was the truth and the trial would be over. Not my trial. I kept telling myself that: I was not on trial. Agostino Tassi was on trial.

The words of the indictment my father had sent to Pope Paul V rang in my ears: 'Agostino Tassi deflowered my daughter Artemisia and did carnal actions by force many times, acts

that brought grave and enormous damage to me, Orazio Gentileschi, painter and citizen of Rome, the poor plaintiff, so that I could not sell her painting talent for so high a price.'

I hadn't wanted anyone to know. I wasn't even going to tell *him*, but he heard me crying once and forced it out of me. There was that missing painting, too, one Agostino had admired, and so he charged him.

'How much squeezing?' I asked.

'It will be over quickly.'

I didn't look at any faces in the crowd gathering at the entrance to the Tor. I already knew what they'd show - lewd curiosity, accusation, contempt. Instead, I looked at the yellow honeysuckle blooming against stucco walls the colour of Roman ochre. Each colour made the other more vibrant. Papa had taught me that.

'Fragrant blossoms,' beggars cried, offering them to women coming to hear the proceedings in the musty courtroom. Anything for a *giulio*. A cripple thrust into my hand a wilted bloom, rank with urine. He knew I was Artemisia Gentileschi. I dropped it on his misshapen knee.

My dry throat tightened as we entered the dark, humid Sala del Tribunale. Leaving Papa at the front row of benches, I stepped up two steps and took my usual seat opposite Agostino Tassi, my father's friend and collaborator. My rapist. Leaning on his elbow, he didn't move when I sat down. His black hair and beard were overgrown and wild. His face, more handsome than he deserved, had the colour and hardness of a bronze sculpture.

Behind a table, the papal notary, a small man swathed in deep purple, was sharpening his quills with a knife, letting the shavings fall to the floor. A dusty beam of light from a

high window fell on his hands and lightened the folds of his sleeve to lavender. 'Fourteen, May, 1612,' the notary muttered as he wrote. Two months, and this was the first day he didn't have a bored look on his face. The day I would be vindicated. I pressed my hands tight against my ribs.

The Illustrious Lord Hieronimo Felicio, Locumtenente of Rome appointed as judge and interrogator by His Holiness, swept in and sat on a raised chair, arranging his scarlet robes to be more voluminous. Papal functionaries were always posturing in public. Under his silk skullcap, his jowls sagged like overripe fruit. He was followed by a huge man with a shaved head whose shoulders bulged out of his sleeveless leather tunic - the *Assistente di Tortura*. A hot wave of fear rushed through me. With a flick of a finger the Lord High Locumtenente ordered him to draw a sheer curtain across the room, separating us from Papa and the rabble crowded on benches on the other side. The curtain hadn't been there before.

The Locumtenente scowled and his fierce black eyebrows joined, making a shadow. 'You understand, Signorina Gentileschi, our purpose.' His voice was slick as linseed oil. 'The Delphic sybils always told the truth.'

I remembered the Delphic sibyl on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Michelangelo portrayed her as a powerful woman alarmed by what she sees. Papa and I had stood under it in silent awe, squeezing each other's hands to contain our excitement. Maybe the *sibille* would only squeeze as hard as that.

'Likewise, the *sibille* is merely an instrument designed to bring truth to women's lips. We will see whether you persist in what you have testified.' He squinted his goat's eyes. 'I wonder what tightening the cords might do to a painter's

1. Getting started: Storytime for beginners

Storytime : Reading aloud

What you need: A nice picture book, a carpet or cushions to sit comfortably in a circle

pre-reading activities:

pictures
titles

key-words

reading activities/ listening activities

predicting next step or next word

follow-up activities

ordering pictures or sentences (story summary)

drawing a picture, labeling it

choosing 3 new phrases

simple writing tasks

Samples of Reading Tasks for Beginners:

Task cards are pasted into the picture books.

The Trouble with Gran:

1. Gran Tours Travel Agency

Design an ad for Gran Tours Travel Agency.

Where can you go? What is the place like? What are the people like? What can you do there?

Use an A4 sheet and design a very nice ad!

2. Vocabulary: Choose 5 words or phrases from the book and write them on vocabulary cards! Put them in your box and study them!

The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch

1. Recipes

Mrs. Grinling is a very good cook. These are the ingredients she uses for her delicious food. Which of these ingredients does she need for each dish?

Apples, bananas, bread, butter, cherries, chicken, chocolate sauce, cream, eggs, fish and shrimps, flour, ginger ale, grapes, icing sugar, lettuce, cheese, milk, mustard, orange-juice, oranges, peaches, pineapples, potatoes, salt, sausages, sliced cucumbers, sliced tomatoes

Write the names of the dishes and the necessary ingredients in your folder.

2. Which of these dishes do you like? Rank them (ordne sie). (1 = the dish you like best, 8 = the dish you like least)

3. Describing food: Which words do the seagulls use to describe the food?

+

Dino's Day in London

1. Poor Dino!!!

Dino is very disappointed! Let's give him another chance. This time his mom writes a note for the taxi driver in which she describes her son.

Write this note.

2. Billy has been mean

His dad is very angry when he finds out what Billy has done. He wants to punish (bestrafen) Billy. Write down three things that Billy must do next week and three things that he must not (darf nicht) do next week. Write full sentences.

example:

Next week Billy must make breakfast for the family.

He must not watch TV.

...

Marcel and the White Star

Choose one of the two tasks: A or B

A: What's going to happen next?

At the end of the story Marcel is sitting on his boat and thinking "What's going to happen today?" Can you imagine what's going to happen? Write a follow-up story.

or B: WANTED !!!

Miss Zaza Dupont has called the police and described the two thieves to the inspector. He writes this information on two posters so that his colleagues can help him find the thieves.

WANTED
Diamond thief

WANTED
Diamond thief

Name _____

Story Tree

A Story Tree can't be planted; it needs to be built. You can build a Story Tree by following the directions below. Write each item in the correct space on the tree frame.

Write:

1. the name of the main character.
2. two words that describe the main character
3. three words that describe where the story takes place (setting)
4. four words telling what the main character wanted in the story
5. five words telling what happened that almost stopped the main character from getting what she or he wanted in the story
6. six words telling how the main character got what she or he wanted in the story
7. seven words that describe the best part of the book
8. eight words telling why you would or would not tell a friend to read this book



Name _____

Story Tree (cont.)

Book title _____

Author _____

Christine Boardman Moen, Better than Book Reports
Scholastic

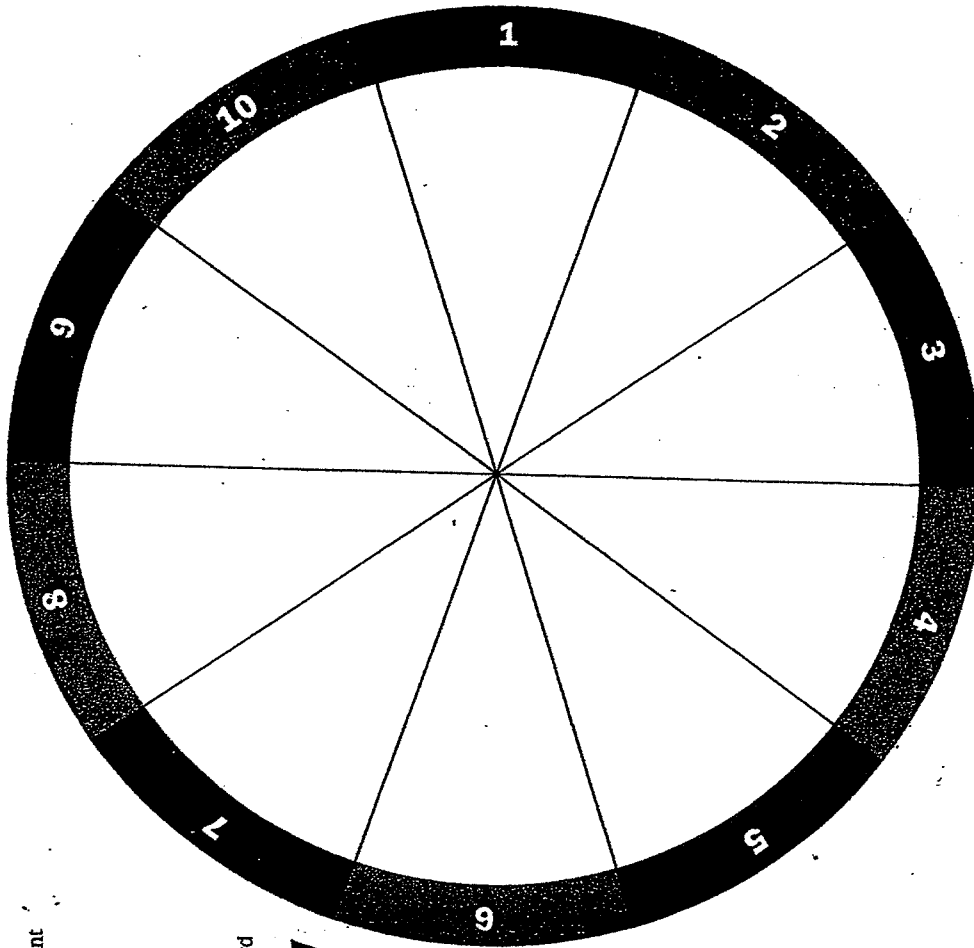


Story Pie

On scrap paper, make a list of the events in a story you read recently. In the story pie below, put the events in the order in which they happen. Put the first main event in piece 1. Tell how the story ends in piece 10.

Title _____

Author _____



Reading Response:
Book Report



Fill in the lines inside the star. Then follow the directions to fill in each point of the star. Before you know it, you'll have written a 15-word book report! If you want to write more, use the back of this paper.

All-Star Book Report

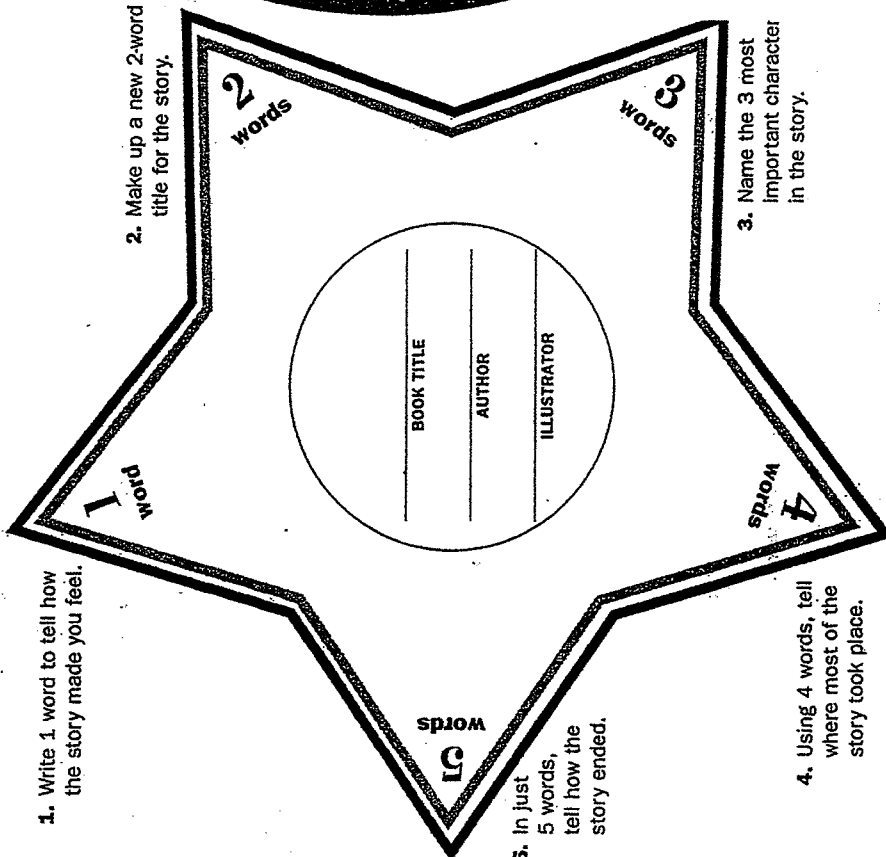
1. Write 1 word to tell how the story made you feel.

2. Make up a new 2-word title for the story.

3. Name the 3 most important character in the story.

4. Using 4 words, tell where most of the story took place.

5. In just 5 words, tell how the story ended.



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 **SOMEBODY** 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 **SOMEBODY** 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 _____

SOMEBODY S	
WANTED W	
BUT B	
SO S	

Name _____
Posting Postcards



Creating a postcard is a way of telling a mini-story. The message is like the plot of the story, and the picture shows the setting. After you have read your book, follow these directions to create a postcard.

1. Pretend you are one of the characters from your book, and decide what picture you will draw on the front of your postcard. This picture should show a place from your book.
2. On the back of the card on the upper left-hand side, tell a little about your picture.
3. On the back of the card on the lower left-hand side, write a message as if you are the character in your book.
4. Write an address on the right-hand side of the back of the card.
5. Draw a stamp in the space where the stamp should go.
6. Cut the postcard out along the lines. Fold the postcard in half and tape or glue the sides together.

Book title _____ Author _____

Front of postcard: Draw picture

Back of postcard:

Message _____

Address _____

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.

6

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 _____
It's in the Mail: Letters That Tell All



1. Write a friendly letter.
2. Cut along the edges.
3. Fold the flaps into the center. Tape to close.
4. Turn the letter over and address the outside of the envelope. Draw a stamp where it belongs.

Salutation _____

Date _____

Body _____

Closing _____

Signature _____

Postscript P.S. _____

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 sad

scared excited

surprised bored

(add your own) _____ when _____

page(s) _____ paragraph(s) _____

4. The story's (circle one) plot reminded me of _____

character(s) _____

setting _____

page(s) _____ paragraph(s) _____

Crayon Conversations

The Crayon Conversation book-sharing strategy blends art and the art of conversational storytelling. Your student storytellers will use crayons (or markers) to draw the adventure they encounter in their books.

The Empty Pot by Demi (Henry Holt, 1991)
The Greatest of All: A Japanese Folktale by Eric A. Kimmel (Holiday House, 1991)

Harold and the Purple Crayon by Crockett Johnson (Scholastic, 1959)
Inogen's Aniters by David Small (Scholastic, 1985)
Jumanji by Chris Van Allsburg (Scholastic, 1981)

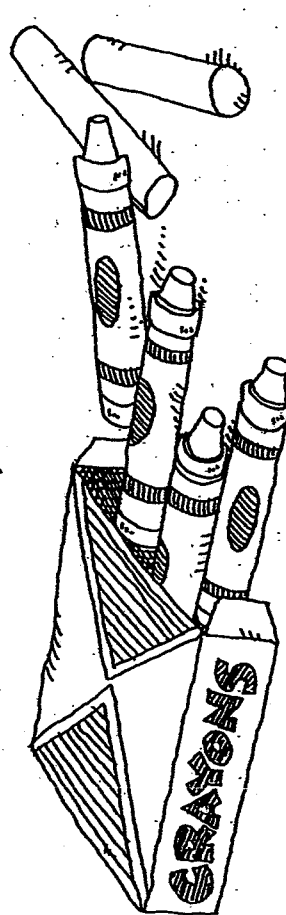
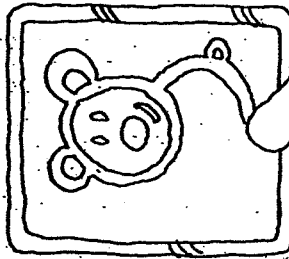
Introduce the Crayon Conversation strategy by reading aloud *Harold and the Purple Crayon* and showing the simple line drawings. Choose one of the stories listed above or a familiar fairy tale, and complete a Crayon Conversation Planning Guide before your demonstration.

To model the strategy, tape a long piece of newsprint to the chalkboard or any other smooth surface. Write the title of the book or story on the far left-hand side of the paper and the words "The End" on the far right-hand side. As you tell the story, draw the different characters and scenes, just like Harold.

After you've finished drawing and telling your story, show students your Crayon Conversation Planning Guide. Explain how you completed it and used it during your demonstration. Emphasize to students that the drawings used on the guide and during the storytelling should be very simple line drawings.

An alternative method of doing this strategy is for students to use the chalkboard rather than newsprint. Instead of Crayon Conversations, students then give Chalk Talks.

It is also possible for students to work in pairs. Students take turns drawing pictures on the planning guide as he or she tells the story.



Name _____

Crayon Conversations



When you do a Crayon Conversation, you use drawings and words to tell about the characters in your book and what happened to them.

Book title _____

On the lines below, tell what your main character(s) looks like. In the box next to the lines, draw a simple line drawing of your main character(s).

Main character(s)

Name

On the lines below, tell about three important events that happened to the character(s) in your book. In the boxes next to the lines, draw a simple line drawing of each event.

1. _____

2. _____

Name _____

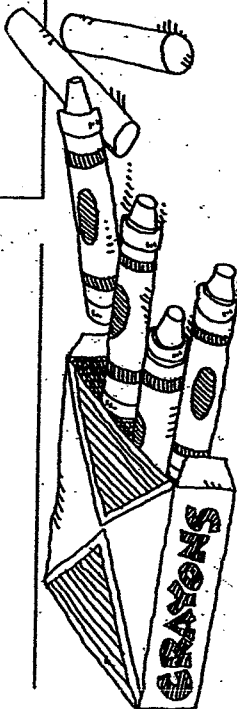
Crayon Conversations (cont.)



3. _____

On the lines below, tell how the story ends. In the box next to the lines, draw a simple line drawing of the ending of your book.

Ending



Here are some helpful hints as you practice telling your story and drawing the pictures.

- Draw large, simple pictures without a lot of details.
- Tell just the main points of the story.
- Practice telling your story into a tape recorder.
- Practice drawing your story on the chalkboard.

When you are ready to do your Crayon Conversation for the class:

- Tape paper to the chalkboard or other smooth surface.
- Write the title of your story at the far left of the paper and the word "The End" at the far right.
- Use this planning guide to remind you of the highlights of the story you'll want to draw during your talk.

The One-Person Show



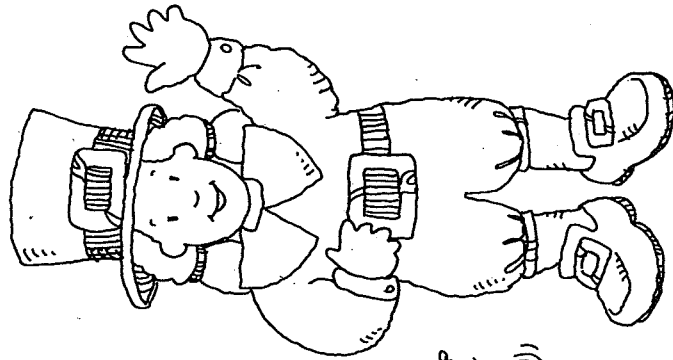
Students who enjoy performing can try this book-sharing strategy. The title says it all; the student becomes the character in his or her book and talks directly to the audience.

- Books for Modeling**
- Cynthia Gregory Dances Swan Lake* by Cynthia Gregory (Simon and Schuster Books for Young Readers, 1990)
 - Fly Away Home* by Eve Bunting (Clarion Books, 1991)
 - The Last Princess: The Story of Princess Kaʻulani of Hawaiʻi* By Fay Stanley (Four Winds Press, 1991)
 - Lion Dancer* by Kate Waters and Madeline Slovenz-Low (Scholastic, 1990)
 - Sarah Morton's Day: A Day in the Life of a Pilgrim Girl* by Kate Waters (Scholastic, 1989)

To introduce this strategy, select a character from one of the books listed above (or choose a character from any book you enjoy) and give your own one-person show. If possible, videotape your performance.

After your performance, read aloud the book in which your character appears. Next, with your students, complete a Performance Planning Sheet that you have copied onto an overhead transparency, the chalkboard, or chart paper. Normally, a Performance Planning Sheet is completed before the performance. However, in order to help students see how the sheet is completed and used to prepare for an actual performance, complete it with them. To compare students' answers with your actual performance, play the videotape. Decide if your performance matched what you planned to do according to your Performance Planning Sheet.

Group Sharing Session



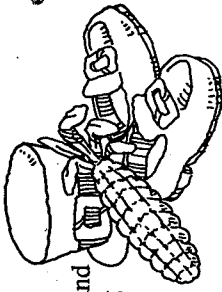
Name _____

The One-Person Show



Performance Planning Sheet

To get ready for your one-person performance, read your book and think about the main character. Plan your performance by filling out this sheet. Finally, practice your performance in front of a mirror.



Book title _____

Author _____

Character's name & age _____

1. What will I need to wear in order to show my audience when and where my character lived?

2. How will I need to speak in order to show my character's age? What kind of accent or special words will I need to use?

3. What kinds of props will I need? (Props include tables and chairs as well as things actors use like books and reading glasses.)

4. As I pretend to be this character, what will I tell the audience about who my character is, where he or she came from, what he or she thinks and feels, and what has happened in his or her life?

BM

Reading Activities for Narrative Texts

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 cross-group- 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 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, shouting out offers... The only rule of the game is that text pieces must never be shown before they are exchanged. Students can even lie about the content of their pieces.
When the students have bought all N pieces of the text they sit down and reconstruct the text.
Note: may be quite chaotic at first, noise dies down as more Ss have bought all the pieces. Fast Ss can then help others.
- **Gapfilling:** any short text, leave-out words or phrases. Leave space where the word is missing
- **Gapfinder:** 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.

- **Answer questions:** Students write questions for another group
- For further ideas (esp. ideas for novels) see "Ideas for Book Presentations"

Exploiting texts for vocabulary expansion:

- **Choosing vocab:** Students choose 3-5 new phrases that they want to remember and write them on vocab cards.

Lexical Furniture: put the new phrases I 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**
 - **Sensible Words**
 - **Word Webs**
 - **Acrostic Puzzles**
 - **Personal Properties**
 - **Wordcycle**
 - **Word Search**
 - **Crosswords**
- see the following pages for details

TEXT MARKET

Potatoes

retold by S. E. Schlosser

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 handwriting and draw your ad. Decorate it nicely.

GAPFINDER

Frozen Dawn

retold by
S. E. Schlosser

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.

Example:

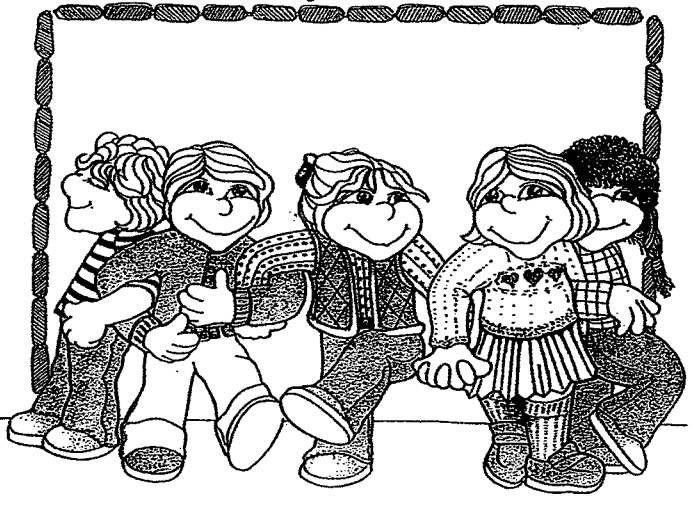
① One winter, it was so ¹ that the dawn froze solid. The sun got caught two ice blocks, and the earth iced up so much that it couldn't turn. The first of sunlight froze halfway over the mountain tops. They looked like yellow icicles dripping towards the ground.

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.

② cold

CONNECT A PAIR

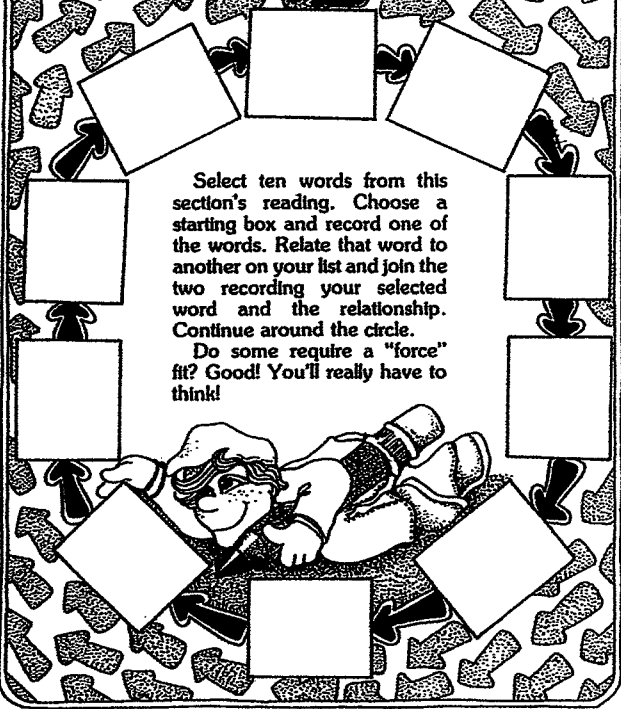
Select twelve vocabulary phrases from your reading. Record them in two columns. Now form six pairs of words and form some connection with each separate pair. Tell how they are alike, or different, use both in the same sentence, make up a new definition for the pair as used together, or create your own pairing activity.



Wordcycle

Select ten words from this section's reading. Choose a starting box and record one of the words. Relate that word to another on your list and join the two recording your selected word and the relationship. Continue around the circle.

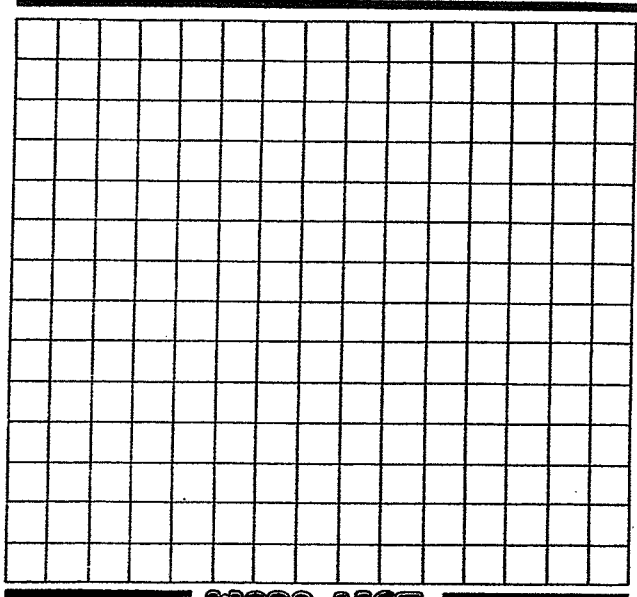
Do some require a "force" fit? Good! You'll really have to think!



Reading, A Novel Approach By Janine Stabos, Good Apple Inc. 1984

WORD SEARCH.

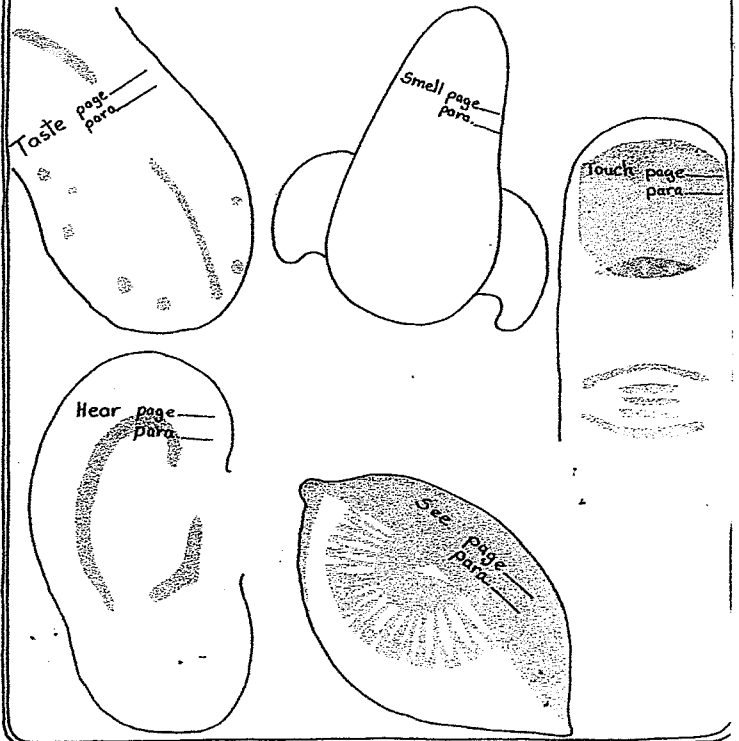
Use new vocabulary words to create a...



WORD LIST

sensible Words

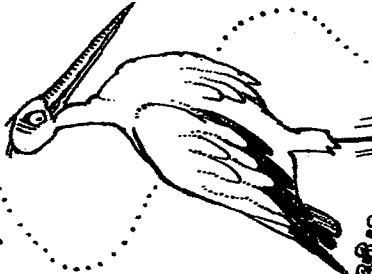
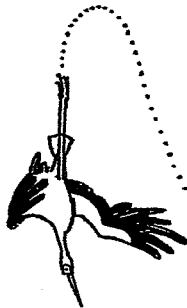
Locate words or phrases that appeal to the senses. Record below. Can you find all 5 senses?



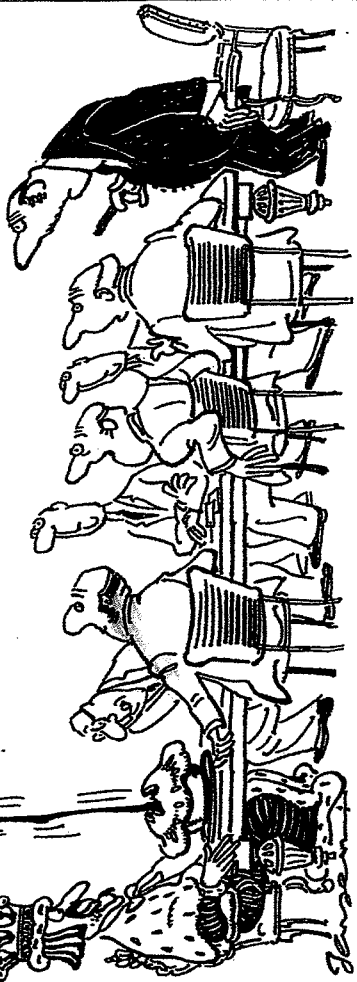
TWO-IN-ONE STORIES

Intensive reading. Sort out the two stories as quickly as you can. Then re-tell them.

The stork The company chairman



- 1 The cook stole a leg from a beautiful roast stork just before it was served to the king.
- 2 'But, your Majesty, you didn't clap last night.'
- 3 He glowered at them. 'Gentlemen, I have something I must say: half of you are idiots.'
- 4 The king asked him angrily why the bird had only one leg.
- 5 One day a company chairman got very angry with his board of directors.
- 6 The king clapped his hands and the birds flew off. 'There,' he said, 'You see, they all have two legs the moment I clap.'
- 7 'Very well,' the chairman said, 'I withdraw it - half of you are *not* idiots.'
- 8 Next morning the cook and the king went down to the river and saw the storks all standing on one leg.
- 9 One of the directors stood up and banged on the table. 'I demand that you withdraw that last observation, Mr Chairman.'
- 10 The cook replied, 'Storks only ever have one leg - come to the river with me tomorrow and I will show you, Your Majesty.'



LISTING IDEAS FOR FLUENT, FLEXIBLE THINKERS

1. List every character.
2. List ways your novel says "said."
3. List any foods mentioned in the book.
4. List ways the author shows size.
5. Write a problem solved in your novel.
List other ways it could have been solved.
6. Open your novel to any page. Find the name of an object. Make that your list heading. List uncommon uses for the item.
7. List happy thoughts about your novel.
8. List places mentioned in the novel.
9. List ideas or things you think the author of this novel believes.
10. List the best places to read a novel like this.



You can make your own book!!!

A Day in the life of Elliot

Elliot was having a lovely sleep when suddenly he was woken by a loud ringing noise it was his alarm clock.

Elliot quickly dressed himself and ran down stairs for his breakfast, when the breakfast cereal seemed to jump for joy.

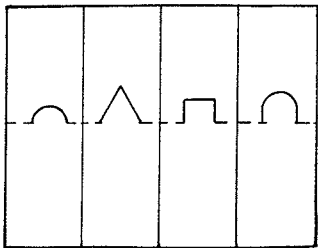
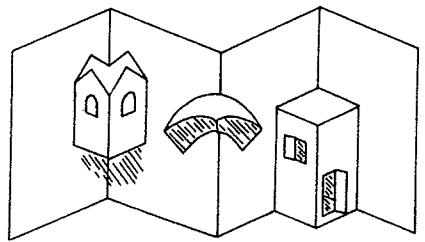
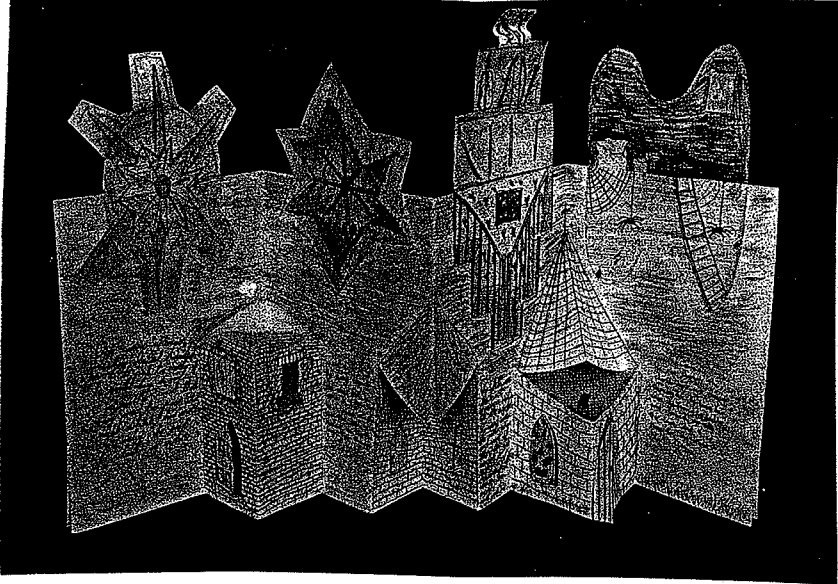
After breakfast Elliot decided to go outside and play football. He kicked the ball high in the air watching it spin round and round.

Next he decided to walk in the fields at the bottom of his garden, he found a hole next full of blue eggs with brown spots.

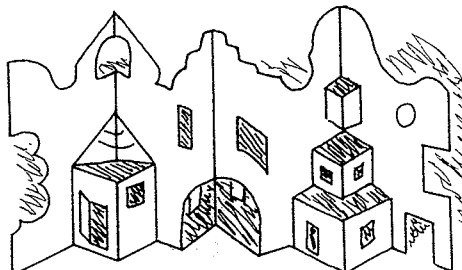
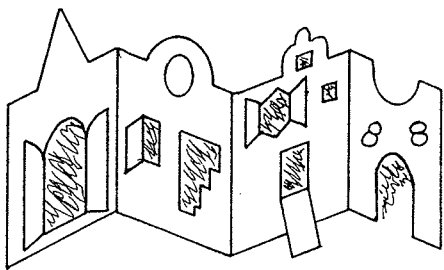
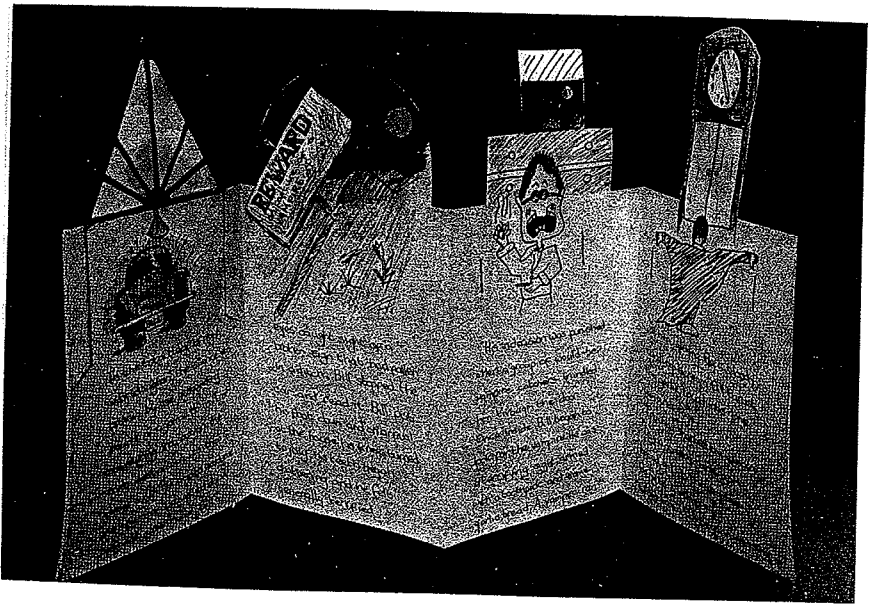
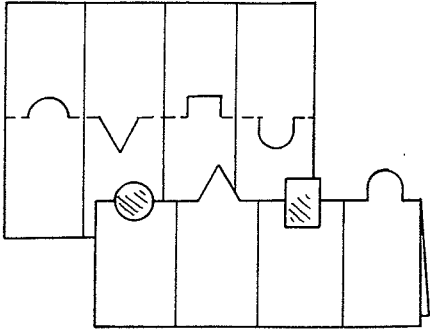
Elliot heard noise from the village green, when he investigated he saw children dancing around a maypole, they asked him to spin in they danced until they were all tired out.

Elliot started to yawn, so he thanked the children for letting him join in the fun, and then made his way home.

When he got home he went straight to bed. Elliot's mum brought him a steamy hot mug of chocolate to read of the day. The end



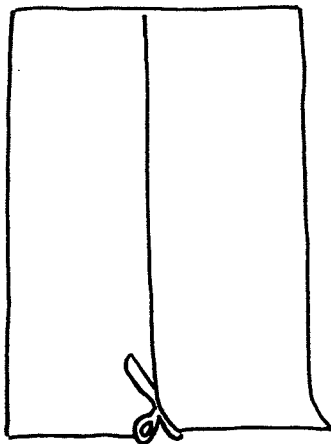
3



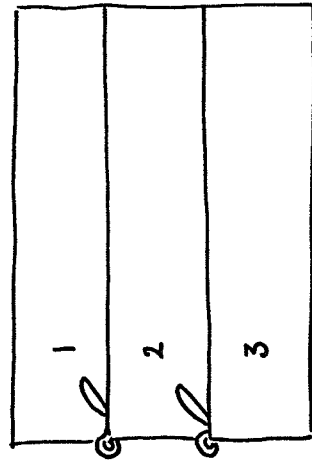
from: Paul Johnston, Literacy through the Book Arts

Concertina book

BASIC FORMAT FROM A1 SIZE PAPER



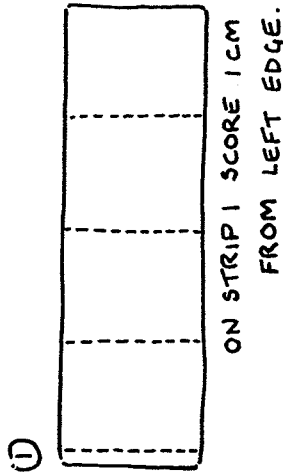
OR



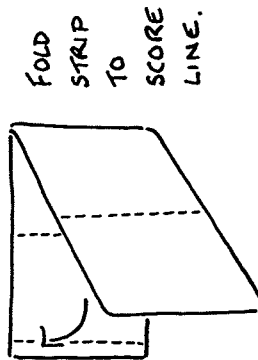
TWO FOUR PAGE BOOKS (A4) OR ONE EIGHT PAGE BOOK JOINED.

DIVIDE A1 INTO THREE EQUAL PARTS TO MAKE THREE FOUR PAGE BOOKS OR ONE TWELVE PAGE BOOK.

Joining method



②



FOLD STRIP TO SCORE LINE.

③

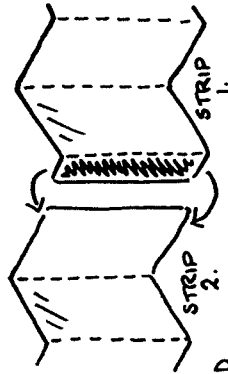


FOLD AGAIN TO MAKE FOUR EQUAL AREAS PLUS SCORED MARGIN.....

④

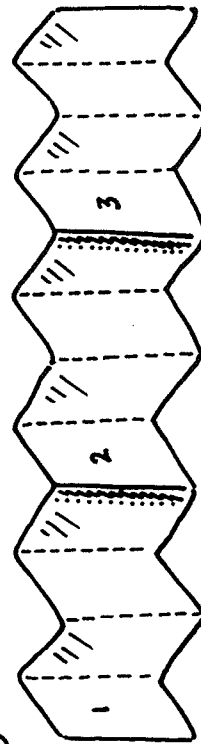
REPEAT SCORING AND FOLDING ON STRIP 2. REPEAT ON STRIP 3 BUT CUT OFF 1CM MARGIN.

⑤



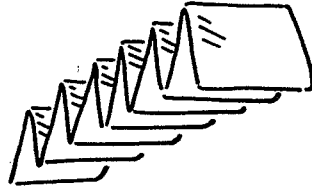
FOLD BACK SCORED EDGE ON STRIP 1. AND GLUE TO RIGHT EDGE OF STRIP 2.

⑥



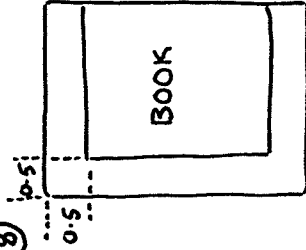
REPEAT GLUEING PROCESS TO STRIP 3.

⑦



THE BASIC BOOK IS NOW FINISHED BUT TO ADD HARD COVERS LAY BOOK ON MOUNTING BOARD OR CARD.

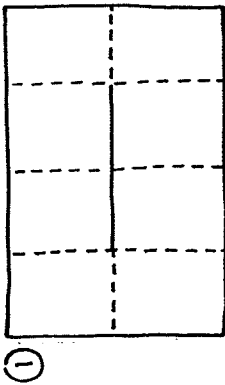
⑧



ALLOW MARGIN OF 0.5CM AND CUT BOOK COVER BOARD (CUT FLUSH TO BOOK ON RIGHT SIDE.)

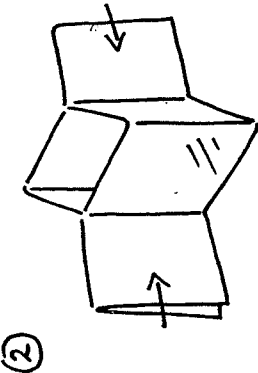
10 Origami book

The simplicity of this book makes it immediately accessible for large-class production whilst being more novel than a simple folded concertina. If children are capable of using scissors, they can make the whole book themselves. I must have seen several hundred origami books by children, on every conceivable theme from stories to recipes, local studies to illustrated journals. I have illustrated two contrasting styles.



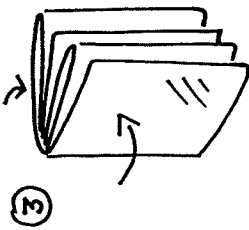
①

A3/A4 FOLD TO EIGHT. CUT THROUGH CENTRE SECTIONS. FOLD ON HORIZONTAL.



②

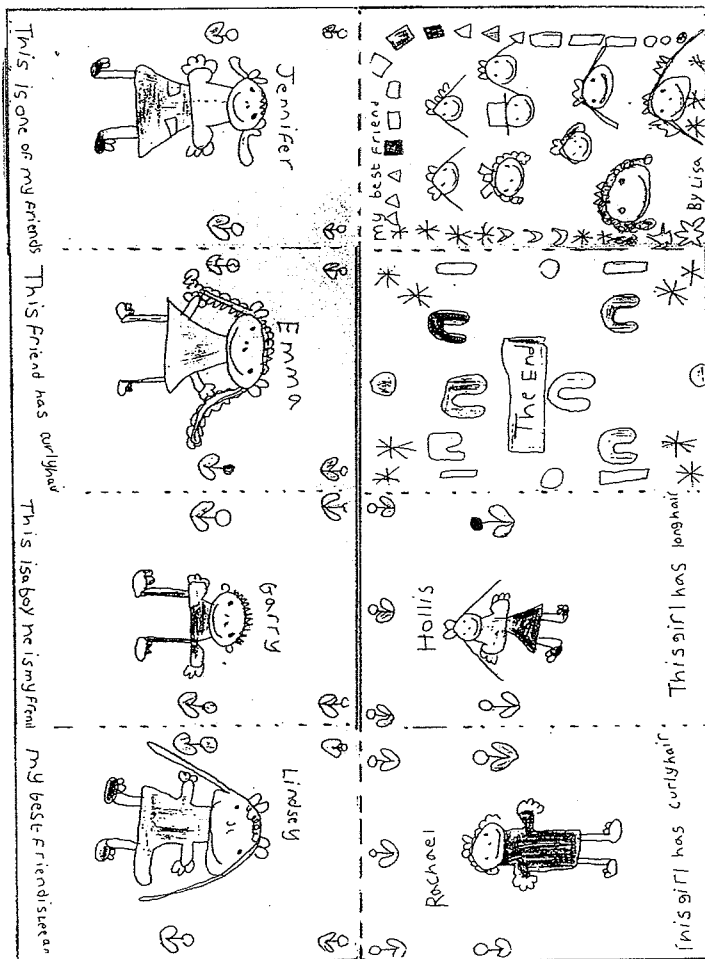
PUSH LEFT AND RIGHT ENDS TO CENTRE.



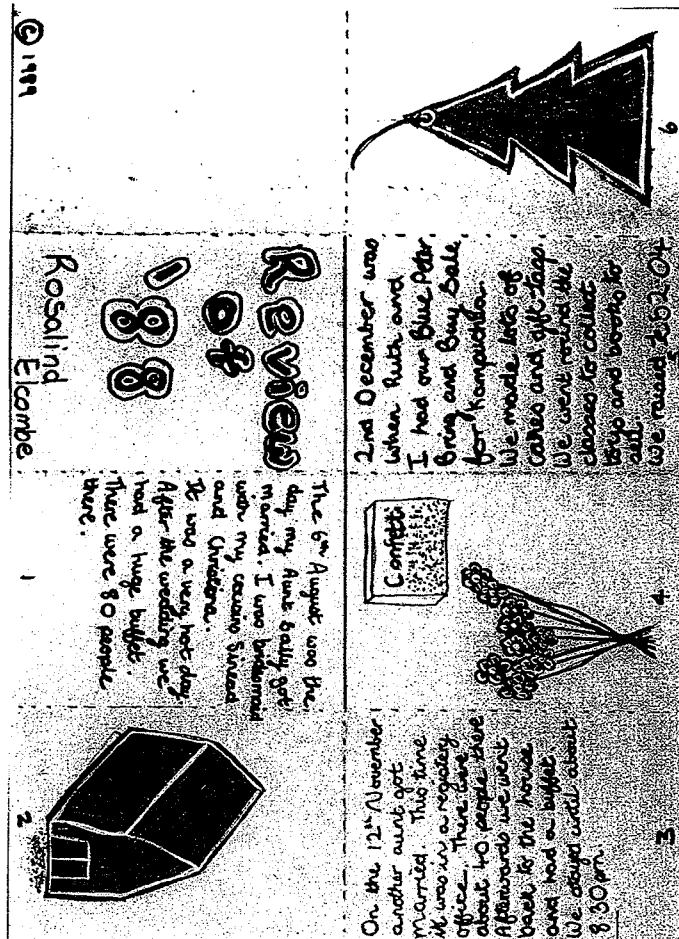
③

FOLD ROUND TO FORM BOOK. SIX WRITING/ARTWORK PAGES, FRONT AND BACK COVERS.

'My Best Friend' by Lisa (6)

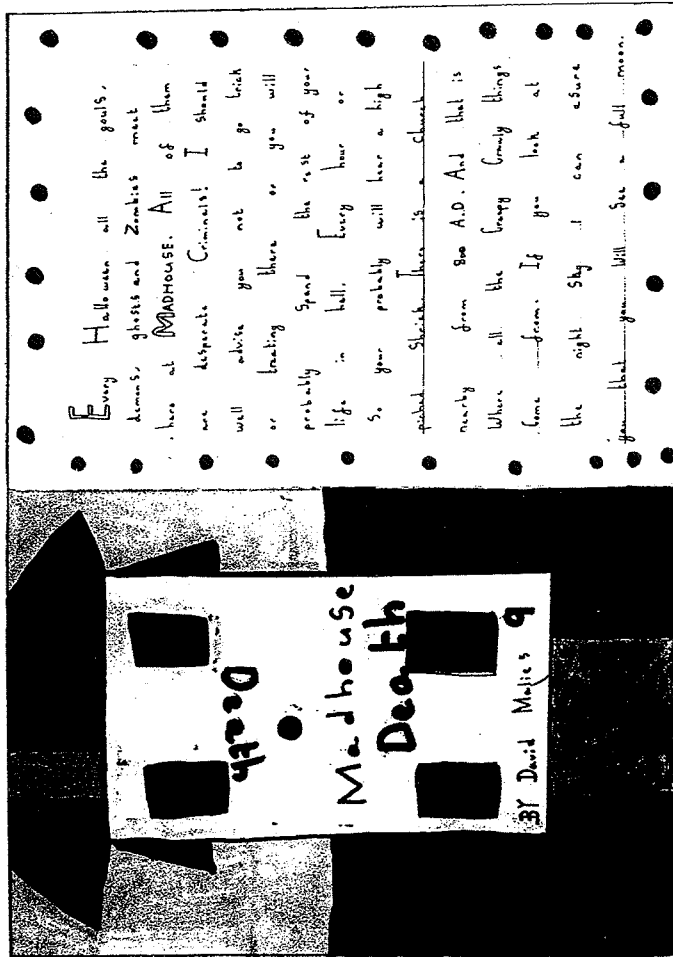
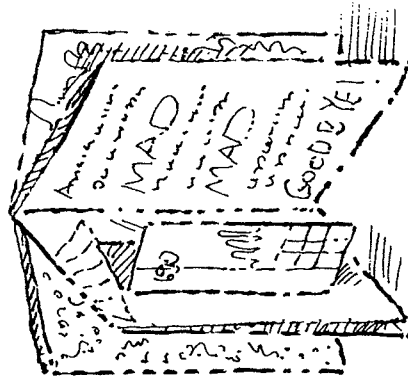
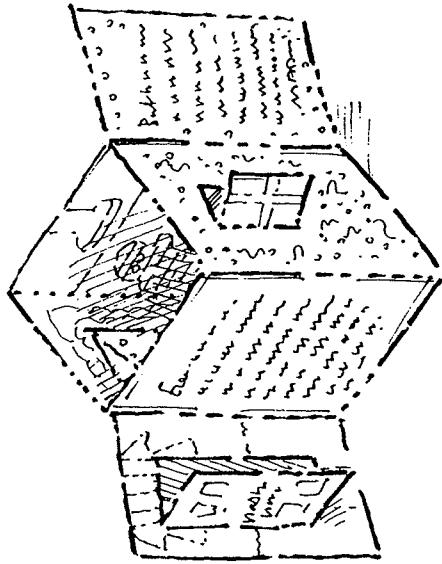
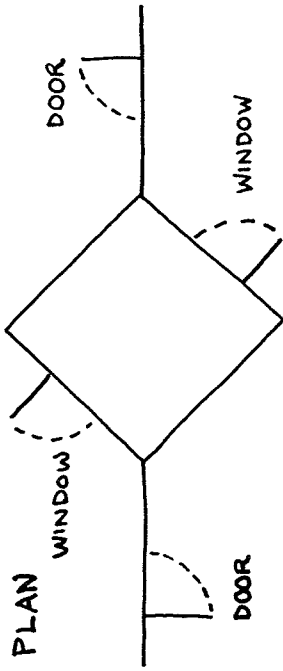


'Review of '88' by Rosalind (10)



11 Origami environmental book

There are many ways of arranging the origami form into an environmental book. One example is by David (9) and his 'Madhouse'. The pushed-out middle section is realised as the room of a house flanked by house entrance panels. Doors and windows have been cut into the three-dimensional book with some panels reserved for the story. This was organised as follows: a frightening account of spooky goings-on on Halloween night – developed from the stage by stage assembly of the Madhouse artwork.



'Madhouse' by David (9)

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?

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: Briefly sum up what happens in the story.

Personal Comment:

My favorite character is because...

I like the way because...

I don't like the way 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 

My Reading Log

	Name of Author	Title of Book	Date	I liked the book	number of pages	checked by teacher
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
	Well done!	Go on reading. There are many more interesting books!				
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
	Excellent!	You are a very good reader. You'll certainly find more good books in our library!				
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
	Fantastic!	You are a real readoholic!!! You can be proud of yourself!!!				
16						
17						
18						
18						
20						
	It's unbelievable!!!	Your teacher's personal comment:				

THE EASY-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, Mary Anne's 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 is told in January, it is January. This all is really perfect full of humor. This book is very fun written (and it is a lot of fun and interesting) and I can really recommend it!
IT IS GREAT!

Dear Helena,
It seems you've found a really interesting ones. With the parallels between yourself and the girls in the book are really striking.

Tip:

it was fun = luchig / it was a lot of fun
it is funny = komisch oder witzig
a funny man = a BT change

Matilda by Roald Dahl

I think this book is very good, because it's sometimes funny, sometimes weird, sometimes sad. But I don't like its structure because at the beginning everything is about Matilda and her family and Mrs. Phelps, the librarian. Then Mrs. Phelps sort of "disappears" in the book, there is no more single word about her and Matilda's family is also mentioned fewer, now everything is about Miss Honey and Miss Trunchbull, doesn't 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 3rd 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 (all) I think it's a great book, but just the parts themselves, they don't really fit together, I still I think it's a lot.

It even more? yes, also

Sample 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.. (p.18). 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 stiffed 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.

Technical Tip:

It's a good idea to leave a **margin** in your response journal. When going over your material later, you can make little comments in the margin that help you organize your writing. Depending on your reading and topics you might, for example, mark all the "references to religion" in the margin, or you might want to mark all the places where you got angry with a certain character or all the instances where your main character was cheated by someone....

response letters

Dear christoph!

Step 1: Read the play with a pencil in your hands and mark interesting or odd passages, repetitions, possible metaphors or symbols, recurring themes, etc.

Step 2: After the first act write an e-mail letter to the other members of your group. Tell them what you think of the play so far. At this point you will probably have several questions. Try to offer possible answers and ask your partners for help. Your letter should be about one page long (12pt), double line spacing.

E-mail your letter to your friends (or print out a few copies and give it to them in class). Make sure you have hard copies to work in class.

Step 3: Each of you will receive a few letters. Read them carefully. There will probably be similar reactions and questions in some of the letters. One of you might have a different view of the play. Answer the letters you receive and mail copies of your correspondence to all the other group members.

Step 4: Read the rest of the play. Don't forget to mark anything that might be useful in your discussion group. At this point you will have some idea of the main themes of the play. Make lots of marginal notes. This will help you locate interesting scenes for an in depth analysis of the play.

I just finished reading the first chapter of "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead" and I must say, I am confused. It's not, that I don't understand the language, it's just the whole first Act seems more like an introduction to me. You know these books, where the author starts in the middle and slowly you realize what is going on. I think this book is almost like this, but with one exception. You don't really find out a lot of things, when you read on. You must know these things beforehand. You must know them from "Hamlet". Maybe it isn't that way, then I'll (hopefully) find out in the next two acts.

I think the characters Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are really weird. They act more like children. They are not stupid, but still to me, they seem more like children.

I really liked the first part with the game. I can really imagine the two of them, sitting their and throwing their coins. Guildenstern tries to act cool, but every time he throws a coin, he hopes so much, that it will finally not be heads.

One sentence, that surprised me (page 13, middle), is when Guildenstern say, that he has no desire. I don't really understand this part, because the two of them don't seem too happy about their situation, so I thought, that his desire what be, to be rich and to get away from Hamlet and his family.

One question, that I hope will be answered in this book, is what Rosencrantz and Guildenstern think about Hamlet's madnes. Do they believe, that he is acting and if yes, why is he? And if no, why has he become mad? Okay, I'll stop now and read on, to see what happens now, that Hamlet finally appears.

□ Judith

24

<p>Harlem <i>by Langston Hughes</i> 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?</p>	<p>Harriet Beecher Stowe By Dorothy Parker The pure and worthy Mrs. Stowe Is one we all are proud to know As mother, wife, and authoress-- Thank God, I am content with less!</p>
--	---

Barbie Doll

By Marge Piercy

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.

From: Patricia C. Mc Kisseck
The Dark-Thirty

The Chicken-Coop Monster

The final story in this collection is different from the rest, because it is semi-autobiographical. I was shattered when my parents divorced, but fortunately I had a loving grandmother and grandfather who helped me through that very difficult time; I've tried to recapture a sense of that relationship here. A West African proverb from the Benin culture—"Fear is the parent of monsters"—has been used as the story's foundation, but there is a Jewish saying that is its capstone: "Love drives out fear."

THE YEAR I turned nine, my parents' ten-year marriage ended in divorce. The grownups never talked about it around me, but I knew what was going on. Mama and Daddy didn't love each other anymore. So where'd that leave me?

As soon as school was out, they shipped me off to the Tennessee

boonies to stay with my grandparents, Franky and James Leon Russell. I didn't want to go, but no one was listening to me.

A monster lived there. I knew it the minute I set foot on their farm. I was the president of the St. Louis chapter of the Monster Watchers of America, and I was an expert on spotting monsters.

It lived in the chicken coop—the tingling in the back of my neck was strongest when I passed by there. Its hot, mean eyes watched me as I played on the back porch. Sometimes I chased my ball too close and smelled its foul breath. This wasn't an ordinary in-the-closet fright or an under-the-bed scare. I'd come upon something really terrible.

I needed help with this one, so I wrote to my friend Jay, who was in charge of the MWA over the summer. Jay and I had been best buddies since we'd started the MWA the year before. By enclosing fifty cents and six box tops from Crinkle cereal, we'd sent away for and received an official MWA Club starter kit, complete with six badges, six glow-in-the-dark ID cards, and a manual containing ten monster rules and everything else we needed to know about creepy stuff. We'd invited Nora, Jeff, Latisha, and Alandro to join us.

Writing to Jay made me feel better. Meanwhile, I had to be careful not to break any monster rules, because that would make the thing stronger and bolder.

One evening Ma Franky called me to the kitchen. "Missy, I forgot to throw the latch on the chicken coop. Go lock it for me, please."

The sun had set, but there was a little light left in the sky. The backyard was already engulfed by a blanket of darkness, but I could see the silhouette of the old chicken shack against the sky.

I stood on the back porch, a statue of fear. This is what the

monster had been waiting for. I heard the whisper of its tail swishing in the straw.

"Melissa?" My own name startled me. "Why haven't you done what I asked you to do?" Ma Franky's voice quavered with impatience.

She was asking me to break monster rule number five: *Get in the house before dark and don't go out by yourself.*

"There's a monster in your chicken coop," I blurted out. "So I'm not going out there."

Of course Ma Franky had other ideas. "Girl," she said, "if you don't stop this foolishness!" She gave me a little push. "Go on, now. Go close the door, or something will get in the coop and scare my setting hens."

Her hens? What about me? "I hate to tell you this, Ma Franky, but something's in the chicken coop already. That's why I'm not going out there."

"Yes you are, this very minute."

Obviously this monster had fourth-level power, because it'd put a spell on Ma Franky. Why else would she fall for the oldest trick in the book? *Monsters make helpers out of unsuspecting victims.*

"But—" I started to say.

"No buts!" And the next thing I knew, my own grandmother had me by the hand and was pulling me toward the chicken coop. "I want to show you there's nothing out here."

I looked into her eyes. "No!" I screamed. "Don't you see? It's made you a helper." I jerked away from Ma Franky and ran into the house. Even though I was breaking monster rule three—*Never let a monster see you crying*—I couldn't stop the tears.

Then I felt big, strong hands wiping my face with a cool wash-

THE DARK-THIRTY

cloth. "Oh, sweets," Daddy James whispered softly. "There's nothing round here to fear." His eyes smiled. The monster spell hadn't gotten to him. "No need to fret. I closed the door for you."

DARK THOUGHTS flee in morning light. But the old wooden coop was surrounded by permanent shadows, a sure sign that it was occupied by a hateful thing. I had to be very careful. It would do anything to lure me into its evil hole.

"Bring me my clothespins off the porch," Ma Franky called.

Just as I passed the coop the door creaked open slowly. Sunlight pushed away the darkness just long enough for me to see something large and shapeless. But the monster leaped back into the shadows before I got a really good look at it. I must have screamed, 'cause Ma Franky came running.

"What is it? What is it?"

"I saw the monster. It pushed open the door."

Ma Franky said nothing but walked purposefully into the coop. I wouldn't look, *couldn't* look as she disappeared behind the darkness. I never expected to see her again. But within a few seconds out she came holding a tiny little chick.

She gently transferred it from her hands to mine. "But that isn't the monster," I cried.

"I know. There isn't one. Period!"

Poor Ma Franky. She really believed that, I'm sure. "Won't you come in and look around?" she asked. "Come see where the chickens set on their eggs and hatch little chicks like this one."

It was another monster trick, and I wasn't going for it. "No! I'll never go inside!"

Ma Franky sighed and shook her head. "Whenever you're ready,"

she said, and went back to hanging out her wash. My back was turned, but I could feel the creature laughing at me.

DURING THE WEEK, separate letters came from Mama and Daddy. I wrote them back right away—Mama's went to our old house, Daddy's to a new address. Mama wanted to know all about my new friends. Daddy was happy I could swim in deep water and had caught a fish. But I still hadn't heard from Jay, so I wrote to him again.

First I told him about my new pet chick, Tissy, and how she followed me everywhere, answering my voice and eating the feed I threw out to her. Then I told him about the creature. "I feel it's stronger now, because I've broken a couple of monster rules. It's a tricky one, but I'm watching out for myself. Write soon. Missy."

Following rule nine, I didn't go near the thing's lair. In fact I didn't even play in the backyard. But late one afternoon I missed Tissy. I felt she was in danger. Sure enough, the chick was out back, heading straight for the coop. And the door was open!

Tissy belonged to me. The monster knew it. Monster rule six clearly stated: *Watch out for those you love. If monsters can't get you, they will get the ones closest to you.*

If little Tissy went inside, she was a goner! I had to do something—and fast.

"Here, biddy-biddy-biddy." I imitated Ma Franky calling her hens. Tissy heard my voice and stopped. That was the split second I needed. Dashing forward, I scooped up my little chick and swerved to keep from plunging headlong into the monster's den.

No tears this time. I was mad, so I foolishly broke rule ten—*never let the monster see you angry.*

"Hey, Chicken Neck! You're a real creep, Creep! Why pick on a little bitty innocent chick? Mess with somebody your own size!"

Like who did I have in mind? How dumb could I get? My anger had made the monster swell with fresh power. If I kept breaking rules like that, the creepy thing was going to get me for sure.

AT LAST a letter came from Jay.

July 18, 1960

Dear Missy,

Never got your first letter. The monster must have eaten it. Beware!

The MWA met today. I read your letter to them. We all agreed you're okay as long as you don't break rule one: *Don't face a monster alone!*

The MWA went to see *The Werewolf Returns* five times. We're going again today. We miss you. Come home soon.

Your friend,
Jay

p.s. Are you going to bring Tissy with you?

Hearing from Jay and my friends helped ease my mind a little. The MWA was right. Nothing could happen to me unless I made the number-one mistake. So I stayed on my guard, ready for any tricks.

That evening the six Harper kids came down to play hide-and-seek. Mae Elizabeth, who was my age but three times my size, smelled like lilac talcum powder all the time. She had a likable way about her that made me feel comfortable. During the summer we had become almost friends.

"Come be my partner and hide with me," I said.

Mae Lizabeth pulled me along behind her. I suggested we hide behind the shrubs along the front porch.

"Come on," she said. "Let's hide in the chicken coop!" I jerked away. "No! Don't . . ."

"Why? It's the perfect place to hide." Suddenly my almost-friend rushed toward that dreaded spot.

I could feel the monster's excitement. My warnings didn't stop Mae Lizabeth from going inside. When she disappeared into the darkness, I started screaming. At the same time Mae Lizabeth let go a bloodcurdling cry. I knew without a doubt my friend had been devoured.

Daddy James, moving like a man half his age, reached the backyard first. Ma Franky puffed along behind him fussing, "We're too old to be going through this, James."

Mae Lizabeth staggered forward, terror and pain twisting her face. She was holding her arm. Blood oozed from a deep gash and trickled down her hand.

Well, the monster hadn't swallowed Mae Lizabeth, but he'd taken a good-size bite out of her arm. Actually, I felt relieved. Now everybody would know that I'd been right all along.

Ma Franky scooted me off to the house to get the first-aid kit. "Seems this nail scratched you," she was saying when I got back. And Daddy James looked and nodded his agreement.

A nail? Oh, no! They couldn't be faked out by that old monster trick. No nail had attacked Mae Lizabeth. I moved in close to get a good look at the wound. "It was the monster!" I shouted. "I bet he did this with his sharp claws. Tell them, Mae Lizabeth. Tell them!"

Mae Lizabeth's eyes opened wide. "Huh? Oh, yes, I saw it . . . It got me."

The monster was hiding deep in the shadows, but I felt it stir. Oh, no, I thought. I was breaking monster rule seven: *Never lie about seeing a monster*. I hadn't lied, but I'd made my friend lie.

"Stop, Mae Lizabeth. You didn't really see anything, did you?" said Daddy James.

The girl shook her head.

"And neither did you, Missy," Ma Franky put in. "Tell me the truth. Have you ever really *seen* anything in that coop?"

"No," I answered, but hurried on to add, "That's how they fool you."

"Hush! Hush this minute," Ma Franky said sternly. "There's nothing in that old coop to hurt anybody."

"Oh, yeah?" I sassed back. "Well, what's that running down Mae Lizabeth's arm? Tomato juice?"

Daddy James pulled me behind him. "Don't speak to your grandmama that way," he said in a stern voice.

"I'm sorry for sassing Ma Franky." And I really was sorry. Lies. Sassing. None of this was me! That thing in the coop had made my summer miserable. I wanted to hate it, but that would break rule eight.

The Harper children stared in wide-eyed amazement while Ma Franky bandaged Mae Lizabeth's arm. Then Daddy James and I walked them home.

"It's a water moon," he said on the way back, pointing out how hazy the full moon looked. "It'll rain 'fore morning."

Most of the time Daddy James was right about things like that. He had his own way of understanding the world, and he'd taught me how to see things differently, too.

For a while we walked in silence. "Missy," he said at last. "Tell me about the monster in your grandmama's chicken coop."

What? Was my very own grandfather a believer? I tested him. "Ma Franky doesn't think it exists."

"I know. But monsters are sneaky like that," he said. "They want people not to believe in them."

How lucky could a kid get? My grandfather knew about monster tricks. He listened while I talked about Jay, the MWA, and all ten monster rules.

"I've never really seen the thing in the coop, but I can feel it. And once this summer I saw its shadow. It was big! Since it lives in a chicken coop, I bet it looks a lot like a big chicken."

"Makes sense."

"I imagine it's got two big yellow eyes that glow in the dark, razor-sharp scales, and three-fingered claw hands and claw feet. It stinks like a sewer."

"That sounds like a pretty powerful monster," he said, chuckling softly. "It was a long, long time ago, but a monster like that lived in the crawlspace under my house."

"Really?"

"The thing had me so scared I couldn't even play in my own yard. Then one night I decided to face my monster."

"You broke monster rule one?"

Daddy James laughed. "Is that the rule that says you shouldn't face a monster alone?" I nodded. He went on. "Spec I did. But to keep that ol' slinky, slimy thing from beatin' me down, I had to take it on face to face."

"Was it ugly?"

"It was all the way ugly!"

"Was it mean?"

"Oooo-weeee. It was mean like a snake. But I found courage that night long ago."

"Tell me what happened!"

"I called that monster out, and when it came, I stood flatfooted and looked at it straight in the face."

"Weren't you scared?"

"At first. But as I held my ground I got stronger and it got weaker. Then I said, 'I'm not afraid of you. Now git gone!' Next thing I knew, it had run off hollering."

"Did it ever come back?"

"Oh, every now and then one tries to scare me. But that monster long ago must have told all its friends that I wasn't easy to scare, 'cause I ain' been bothered too much down through the years . . . till now, that is."

I was so excited. Daddy James was a monster fighter. "Good! Then will you chase the creepy thing in the chicken coop away?"

"I could. But it ain' troubling me. If I run it off, it'll just come back and devil you some other way. To be rid of it forever, you must call it out and face it by yourself."

"You mean break monster rules one and two? That'd be like facing Dracula in his castle, at night, all by myself! I wouldn't have a chance."

"You can do it. You're my granddaughter, and that makes you very special."

The short walk home had taken over an hour. Ma Franky had homemade peach ice cream waiting. I didn't feel much like eating, knowing what was before me.

Mustering my courage, I hugged Ma Franky and Daddy James, just in case I didn't get back. "There is no fear in love," he whispered.

Breaking every rule in the monster manual and trusting my grandfather completely, I went to face the creature within.

"You Chicken Creep. Come out and face me."

Heat lightning zipped across the sky. Thunder grumbled in the distance. Slowly the coop door creaked open. The monster's foul odor sprang at me from its dark hole. The wind picked up, sending wind eddies scampering in the dust. All at once a scratchy moan followed by an awful commotion chilled me to the bone. "Ssss-flip-kkkkk-flop. ssss-flop-kkkkk-flop!" The thing was at the door. I waited breathlessly, not knowing what to expect. Running crossed my mind, but Daddy James's words helped me stand firm. And I did.

What a surprise to see Ma Franky's rooster flap and flutter out of the dark hole with one of his feet stuck in a tin can.

"Another trick," I said boldly. "You can't distract me."

The wind whipped and churned the trees. The thing's anger roared out of the dark gaping hole. It wanted to get me. Why wouldn't it come? Suddenly I realized it couldn't! I was getting stronger and it was getting weaker.

Armed with the powerful weapon my grandfather had given me, I yelled over the whistling wind, "I'm not afraid of you. You're just a lot of hot stinky air."

I heard scurrying about inside the darkness. I waited and waited, hardly noticing that it had started to rain.

Then calling upon the growing courage within me, I turned my back on the monster, saying with confidence, "I am the oldest granddaughter of James Leon Russell. He loves me, and I know it!"

And that's when I knew that my monster was gone!



Year II

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. Write down at least 10 sentences. 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

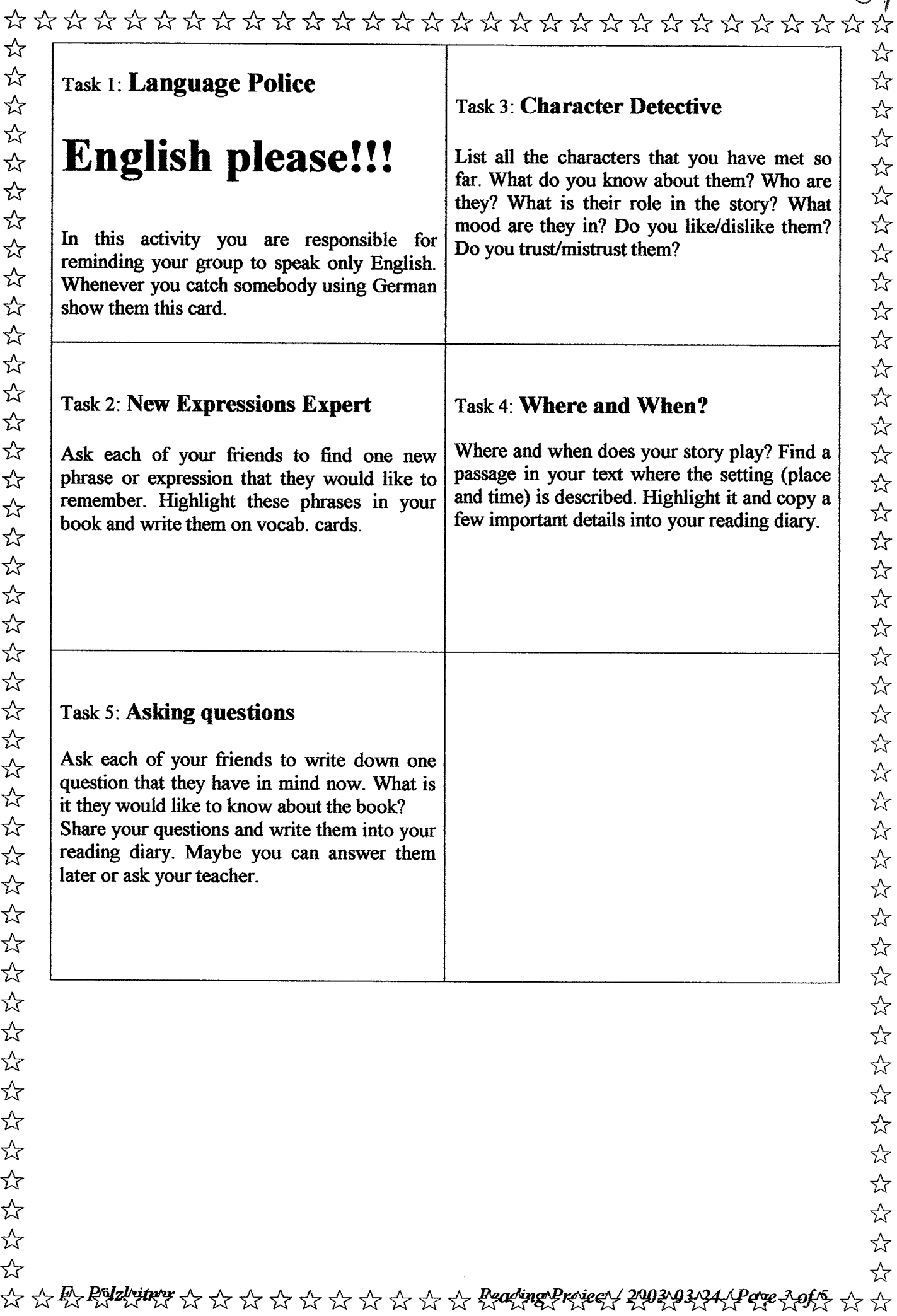
Get together with your friends who have chosen the same book (3-4 students). Read quietly for 20 minutes. Read slowly and imagine the scenes and characters as vividly as possible. After 20 minutes meet to discuss your reading. Distribute the task cards in your group. Each of you is responsible for a 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.

Book title and 	New words per page	Other comments about the book:
		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:
		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.** 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. **Choosing a Homework Task:** You will find a large selection of homework task cards on the teacher's desk. The homework task cards are A4 size and also come in different colors. Draw any card, read it briefly and ask yourself whether it applies to your book. If the task does not apply at all, put it back and draw another one. Please enter your name and the card number in the list on the box and return the card in the next lesson. Next time draw a different color.

5. **Reading on:** Read chapter(s) by and write a 5-minute non-stop entry into your reading diary. Choose 3 new phrases for vocab. cards.

6. Go to top of page.

Book Presentations:

After everyone in your group has finished their reading activity tasks, get together and discuss how the book will be presented to the class. Look at the *Presentation Tips* sheet for ideas. Choose the best and most interesting products you have made during the project. Make sure you show different aspects of your book (plot, characters, setting, other). Your presentation should take no more than ten minutes. You will be assessed according to the rubric below. Fill it in and assess yourselves as a group after you have finished your presentation. Put an x under the assessment you think is the right one for each aspect of the presentation. Write extra comments if you want to.

	Very good	Good	Could have been better
How informative was our presentation?			
Was the information presented in an interesting way?			
Did we present information about the plot, characters, setting and theme?			
How good was our presentation at making others want to read our book?			

Book-Groups 3a

1. SWBS: The Plot Chart

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.

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

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: _____			
Ideas, people, places, things from the books	Book:	Book:	Book:

5. Creative Catalogues: Design three A5 catalogue pages.

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.

- 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.
- 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

Name _____

Creative Catalogs (cont.)



Item 2

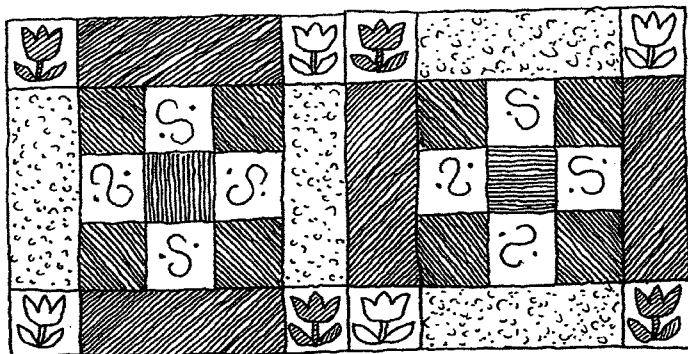
Item 3

6. Vocabulary Quilt

Choose one of your favorite new expressions from your book and write it on a piece of colored paper. Write a short, typical sentence and decorate the paper in a suitable way. Your paper must include:

- the new word written in big letters
- a typical sentence
- a drawing that will help you remember the new phrase.

We will put all our word cards together to make a Vocabulary Quilt. Please design your cards nicely.



Ideas for Book Presentations

The best and most interesting book presentations will result from intensive group-discussions with the help of the discussion prompt cards and the homework task cards. Every group member should do a different task, possibly from a different area (plot, setting, character...) To make this easier for the students, these different areas are copied on colored cards. The students choose different colors.

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

Laura Robb, *52 Fabulous Discussion-Prompt Cards for Reading Groups*, Scholastic, 2000
ISBN No. 0-439-22722-4

Janice Szabos, *Reading-A Novel Approach*, Good Apple Inc. 1984.
ISBN No. 0-86653-186-6

Susan Van Zile, *Awesome, Hands-on Activities for Teaching Literary Elements*, Scholastic, 2001.
ISBN No. 0-439-16355-2

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. (Very good way to discover underlying themes and the tone of a novel.)
- Plot on the line: Write the main events on separate sheets. Add simple drawings and decorations. Use clothes-pegs and hang them up on a string. Don't give away the ending.
- Plot mountain: write main events on paper strips (key-words). Stick them on a plot diagram mountain. (draw mountain, slope = rising tension and conflicts, peak = climax, descent = resolution)
- Plot diagram: draw a "fever curve" of the ups and downs in the novel. Peaks of suspense or conflict..., label the curve. Gives a very good overview of the important events in a book.
- Make a plot mini-book (concertina or origami)
- Act out a scene of your choice.

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 for us to 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.
- Paper-chain characters: Cut out a set of paper-chain figures, one for each of the main characters in your book. Decorate them: Name, favorite quote(s), looks, favorite activities, likes/dislikes... Use packing paper or flip-chart paper to make your characters big enough for the class to read.
- Character T-shirts: design a T-shirt (picture and slogan) for one of your book's characters
- Character collage: (pictures and words from magazines)
- Prepare a "bubble sheet" (A3 poster) where you collect important quotes from your book.
- Sociogram: Choose suitable buttons to represent the main characters of the book. Then make a sociogram showing the relations between the 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 (see attached worksheet)

Other:

- Write a poem or song-lyrics that might be used in a film or radio-play of your book.
- A Novel Museum: display 10 to 15 items that play a role in the book. Tour-guides present the artifacts.
- Theme in a bottle: (message in a bottle)
- Make a board game: Design a board (use settings, plot line and events... task cards or fields... you might even make *Fimo* character-counters...)
- Non-stop talking: Ss stand in two concentric circles. The Ss in the outer circle talk non-stop for 1 minute (Older Ss can do 2-3 minutes) about the novel they have read. Ss in the inner circle listen. Teacher measures time. After 1 minute, Ss change roles. Then Ss in the outer circle move one person to the left. Do this with 5-6 partners. (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.

Older students: Older students who read modern or contemporary literature in their reading groups might also be asked to present:

- 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
- Making 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

52 Fabulous Discussion-Prompt Cards for Reading Groups

Snap-Apart Question Cards That Build Comprehension & Spark Great Discussions About Character, Plot, Setting, Theme & More

by Laura Robb

#10 Setting

You Are There
Sometimes an author describes a place so perfectly, you can see, hear, smell, and feel what it looks like. Find a setting in the book that drew you in your partner or group. Then, discuss the words and phrases you like.




#23 Making Inferences

Dialogue Detective
Read aloud to your partner or group a dialogue that taught you a lot about the characters conversing. Tell how you used their words to figure out what they were feeling and what their personalities were like.



#45 Plot

Page Turner
Did the author leave you dangling from a cliff at the end of each chapter? Discuss two or three of your favorite cliff-hangers and explain why each made you think, "I've just got to read the next chapter!"

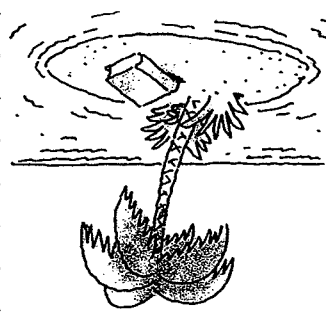


Great for Literature Circles!

OLASTIC

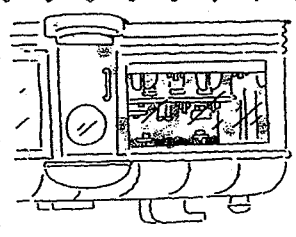
THE

Choose a Character
Discuss this! If you had deserted island with any character in this book, who would it be? Why? Who would be your last pick? Why?



#3/Character

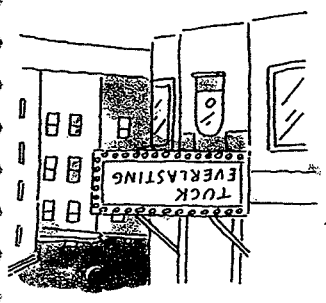
Heart-to-Heart
The main character wants to meet you at the local diner to talk about everything he or she has been going through. Think about conflicts this character faces. Then tell the main character what you think about how he or she handles them, and what you consider to be his or her greatest strength—and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



#1/Character

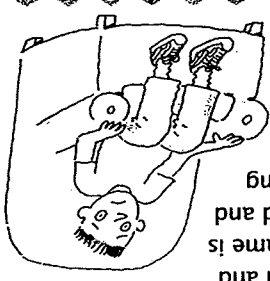
Movie Tag Line

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.



#4/Character

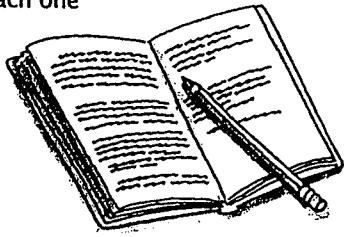
Mood Clues
Mad? You slam a door. Hurt? You cry or run away. Sad? You slump your shoulders. What you say and do communicates your mood and even your personality. The same is true for book characters. Find and discuss two character-revealing passages, and explain what each taught you about that character's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



#2/Character

Writing Ideas

Read as a writer. Skim your book, and look for words and phrases that you might want to adapt to your writing. Jot these down, and share five or six, and explain why each one appealed to you.



You Are There!

Sometimes an author describes a place with so much detail that you can see, hear, smell, and feel what that place is like. Find a scene that involves several of your senses. Read it to your partner or group, and discuss the words and phrases that stirred each sense.



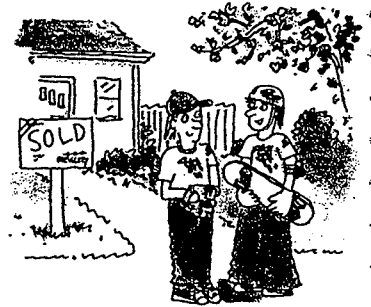
Time Travel

Find examples of flashback—when the story jumps to an earlier point in time. Discuss what you learned from this switch in time. Then discuss which words signaled to you that you were in a different point in the character's life.



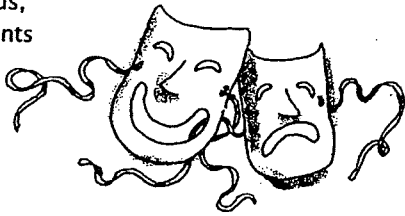
New Kid in Town

The main character is moving to your town. Will he or she fit in? Why or why not? How are his or her values and tastes different from—or the same as—those of your hometown?



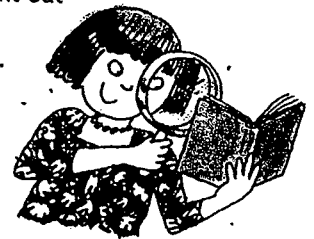
Find the Drama

What emotions did the story make you feel? Did you feel nervous? fearful? excited? worried? angry? Take turns sharing a passage that roused your emotions. Read it aloud, and then point to the words, phrases, and events that stirred a specific feeling.



Hint, Hint

Foreshadowing is a technique authors use to build suspense. It's a detail that hints of something to come. Point out several places where the author uses this technique. Is the clue so obvious it makes you realize what is going to happen, or does it just make you curious?



Creating Mood

You are directing a play based on this book. Your lighting director asks you to choose a color to help create the mood of the opening scene. First discuss and define the mood, and then pick a color. What associations do you have with this color that made it your choice?



Low Point

Answer this question from a main character's point of view.

Talk-Show Host: "What fears or worries keep you up at night? What was the lowest point in your life?"



#5/Character

Show Me the Support

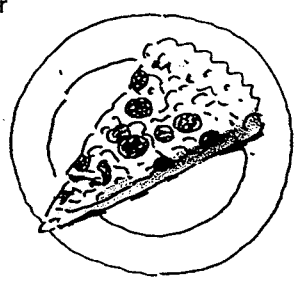
As a group, discuss several adjectives that describe the main character and pick the best one. Then scan the book for a line or a passage that proves you right. Take a vote on which section provides the strongest evidence.



#6/Character

Minor Character

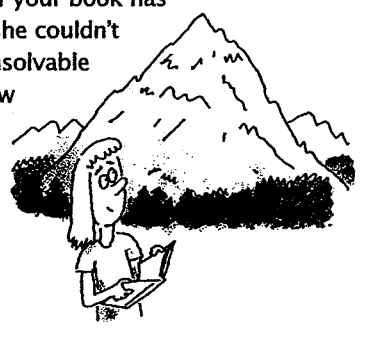
Imagine you are having pizza with one of the minor characters in your book. Think about how this character would view a conflict that the main character faced and how they would have solved it. Discuss from the minor character's point of view.



#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

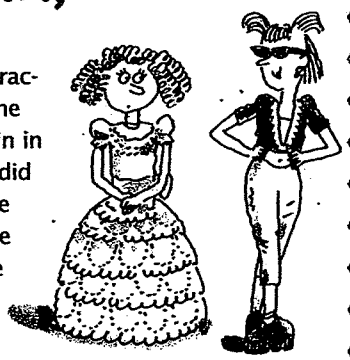
List things you cherish in life, such as free time, in-line skating, a friendship, or a favorite sport. Now list five to six things the main character values. Discuss how the plot helped you understand what the character values. Then compare your values to the character's.



#13/Setting

Past, Present, Future

In this book are the characters living in the past, the future, or do they remain in the present time? What did you learn about the time period? Do you think the world is better or worse off now?



#14/Setting

Important Scenes

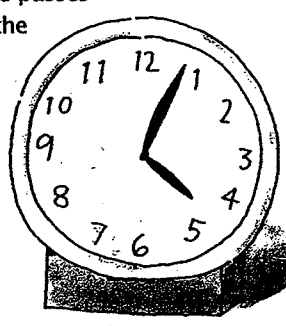
Pick your favorite character. Which settings deeply affect the character's decisions and feelings? Which create problems? Identify two or three settings and clearly explain the impact each has on the character.



#15/Setting

Clues About Time

Reflect on how much time passes in your book. Skimming the text, find and discuss passages that show how the author makes time move.



#16/Setting

You Are There!

Sometimes an author describes a place with so much detail that you can see, hear, smell, and feel what that place is like. Find a scene that involves several of your senses. Read it to your partner or group, and discuss the words and phrases that stirred each sense.



How to wet your students' appetite...

Present appropriate books regularly. In your presentations

- focus on a key scene where your main character finds himself in a difficult situation.
- focus on the main problem or conflict of the book
- link the problem to the real world around us
- do not give away the whole plot.

Ideas for your presentations:


- Describe the main character(s) and their situation/problem/desires...
- Invite students to search for solutions to the problems presented in the book.
- "Put yourself in my shoes" (How would you (the students) react if...)
- Introduce a news article or other text about current events/news that are related to the theme of the novel.
- Read the opening page(s) and stop at a cliff-hanger.
- Choose a really riveting passage (where the main character is in trouble) for a running dictation or dictogloss, then have Ss guess what the book might be about.
- Give Ss the title of the book and/or bookcover, have them ask you YES/NO questions.
- Write a postcard or letter from the main character's point of view (e.g. : describe the situation. ask for help). Ss then write back, asking further questions, giving advice...
- Read a riveting page from the middle of the book. Have Ss guess who/what/why/where...
- Be creative...

While waiting for the books to arrive ask students to write a short paragraph (100 words) including the following phrases:

- I've chosen because
- I hope that....
- I wonder if...

Name _____

The One-Person Show



Performance Planning Sheet

To get ready for your one-person performance, read your book and think about the main character. Plan your performance by filling out this sheet. Finally, practice your performance in front of a mirror.

Book title _____ Author _____

Character's name & age _____

1. What will I need to wear in order to show my audience when and where my character lived? _____

2. How will I need to speak in order to show my character's age? What kind of accent or special words will I need to use? _____

3. What kinds of props will I need? (Props include tables and chairs as well as things actors use like books and reading glasses.) _____

4. As I pretend to be this character, what will I tell the audience about who my character is, where he or she came from, what he or she thinks and feels, and what has happened in his or her life? _____

The body of Christopher Creed Elionore

I've chosen "The body of Christopher Creed" because I think it's a very interesting story that I hope will make me think later.

I hope that in the book Christopher Creed is not dead and will be found again.

I wonder if it was only because of his fellow students that he left?

I wonder if he was so depressed that he really killed himself.

I wonder if he had ever had a best friend?

I wonder why he was (hated) by everybody.

I wonder if why he didn't change schools?

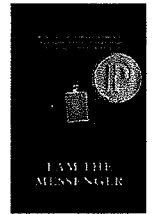


The GIVER by Lois Lowry

1. **Brainstorming:** What are the big problems in today's world?
2. **Solve the problems:** Choose a few valid problems from your list (e.g. poverty, war, divorce, unemployment....) and discuss how they could be solved in an ideal society?
3. Imagine you lived in a society without conflict, poverty, unemployment, divorce, injustice, or inequality where competition has been eliminated in favor of a community in which everyone works only for the common good.

Some details: Discuss the following conditions. What are the advantages? What are the disadvantages?

- Every family has 2 parents, a son and a daughter. The relationships are not biological, partners and children are assigned by authorities using careful observation and character analysis.
- At age 11 jobs are assigned to young people by their teachers and educators.
- Climate and weather are controlled to everyone's profit.
- Every person and his or her experience are precisely the same.



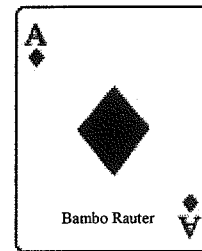
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I AM THE MESSENGER Markus Zusak

Ed Kennedy, 19, is a cab driver who gets no respect (and actually feels like he doesn't deserve any). He lives in a shack with a stinky, coffee-drinking seventeen-year-old dog named the Doorman. He's in love with his friend Audrey but she refuses to love anyone and won't sleep with Ed because she "likes him too much."

Ed becomes a hero when he points a gun at the most incompetent bank robber the world has ever seen. Soon after, he receives his first message --- an Ace of Diamonds playing card with three addresses and times written on it. Ed realizes that this is more than an invitation; it's an assignment, and he feels compelled to respond. Ed knows he's been chosen, to care and to act. But how? And by whom?

1. What would you do if you received the following card?



Teacher's Notes:

The Alchemist (Michael Scott)

Pre-reading:

1. Prepare cards with the words: (you'll need one card per student)

- Dr. John Dee
- Nicholas Flamel
- Golem
- Necromancy
- Alchemy



2. Read chapter 1 to the class

3. Hand out the cards.

Homework: Look up the word/name on your card in google /wikipedia... and prepare an A6 info-card for each one. (keywords)

4. Groups meet and share findings about the same topic, then crossgroup.

Read book by.....

Ideas for while-reading and post-reading tasks:

- Collect historical events (Great Fire of London 1666, Great Famine in Ireland, ...)
- Collect names of characters and mythical beings
For presentation: look them up in google and present the most interesting ones
- Venn Diagram: Good and Evil
Collect facts and keywords describing the good characters and the evil characters.
(looks, smells, goals, behavior...)
- Character Portrait (circle...) for the main characters.
- Map: Use a world map and mark /label all the places mentioned in the book.
- Discussion Prompt Cards: 18, 2, 3, 5, 16, 21
 - o 18 Page Turner
 - 2 Mood Clues
 - 3 Movie Tag Line (change a bit: which scenes are they going to show in the trailer?)
 - 5 Show me Support
 - 16 Setting
 - 21 Who interests you

Speak

By Laurie Halse Anderson

1. Do flap text as DICTOGLOSS (good tenses!!) guess...
2. Read them p. 3-5

What might she be referring to in "If there is anyone in the entire galaxy I am dying to tell what really happened, it's Rachel."
What might have happened that made her such an outsider?

3. Discuss: What is sexual harassment? Date-rape?

4. Hand out article "Flirting With Danger"

I read it out loud, Ss listen and may read along but MUST keep their arms folded (no writing)
Then fill in gaps.

5. Hand out info-page: Girls/Boys in the Know

Groups: write 7 Tips for Girls/Boys (1 catchy sentence or slogan about each §)

Possible tasks for book project:

- Make a sketch of her tree as you read. How does it change? Use it in the presentation.
- Include other tree symbolism e.g. "Pruning" chapter...p.186..
- Movie: Watch the movie, use movie watching tips in bonus material pages (back of book)
- Letter to Melinda
- Chapter headings: very telling. Choose a few favorite ones, explain their meaning/symbolism
- Plot mountain



Guys In The Know

When the guy is the victim

Yes, guys are raped and sexually abused. No, it doesn't mean they're gay, weak or less of a man. It's NEVER the victim's fault. Sexual violence has nothing to do with sexual orientation. Just because a guy is raped by another guy, it doesn't mean he's gay—no matter how the victim's body reacted during the attack. And, just because a gay person is raped, it doesn't mean that he is to blame for the attack. No one asks to be raped. One out of every six guys is sexually assaulted by the age of 18.

If you know someone who has been sexually assaulted, call you local rape crisis center (888) 772-PCAR. (in Pa).

Sexual Harassment

Flirting between teens is common and healthy. But, some teens have trouble knowing the difference between respectful behavior and unwanted attention. Sexual harassment is any unwanted physical or verbal advance that is sexual in nature. It leaves the recipient feeling demeaned and threatened. Approximately 80% of teens experience sexual harassment. Know a guy who disrespects women or tells sexist jokes? Do the right thing. Step in. Stop him, take a stand.

Statutory rape

Dating is a healthy part of being a teenager, but things can get complicated when age differences come into play. In Pennsylvania, sexual activity between someone under 16 years old and someone four or more years older is statutory rape. A healthy relationship requires a balance of power. The ability to drive and earn money gives the older person a lot more power in a relationship.

Alcohol and Sexual Assault

Alcohol is the most commonly used date rape drug. Sometimes, there is malicious intent to ply a girl with alcohol or to slip a drug into her drink. Other times, both people's inhibitions are lowered and their ability to clearly communicate breaks down. Regardless, it's rape unless both people consent. Alcohol is never an excuse. See a guy getting a girl drunk to sleep with her? Step in and stop it.

Online safety

There's nothing private about a "personal" Web page. Thinking of posting pictures from that party on your blog? Would you tape them up on the walls of the school cafeteria? Whatever you post can be seen by anyone with Internet access anywhere in the world, forever. The information is public domain. Even if you delete a blog, saved versions can still exist on other people's computers.

One in seven boys has met strangers from the Internet. That's not smart. Don't let online strangers trick you into thinking of them as real-life friends and don't meet them in person. Law enforcement officials estimate that as many as 50,000 sexual predators are online at any given moment. At night, the number jumps to 250,000.

Saying and hearing "NO"

It's a one-word lesson that every guy needs to learn about sex. When the answer is no, the answer is no. If it's against her will, it's against the law. It's rape. Respecting someone enough to let her control her life is more powerful than controlling her yourself. Being a guy isn't about getting some. It's about respect. Give it, get it.



Girls In The Know

Internet Safety

Think you're safe because you're in the comfort of your own bedroom chatting online? Think again. Keep your identity private. Don't give out your photograph, name, address, phone number, the name of your school, what school activities you're involved in or your parents' work schedule. All of those bits of information can become "clues" for sexual predators to find you. Most importantly, don't meet an online stranger in person. The typical teen who turns up missing from an online meeting is 15 years old and female.

Saying "NO"

Sometimes, sexual assault is the result of miscommunication. For example, the guy doesn't pick up on the girl's nonverbal signs or listen to her protests. Be assertive. Tell him what you don't want to do. Don't be afraid to say "NO" and stick by it.

Sexual Harassment

Flirting between teens is common and healthy. But, some teens have trouble knowing the difference between respectful behavior and unwanted attention. Sexual harassment is any unwanted physical or verbal advance that is sexual in nature. It leaves the recipient feeling demeaned and threatened. Approximately 80% of teens experience sexual harassment. Confront your harasser then report him/her to the school principal or guidance counselor.

Dating and sexual assault

One out of every five high school girls reports being sexually and/or physically abused by a dating partner. If your boyfriend ignores you or doesn't listen to you, it's time to get out. He might not listen when you say "NO" to sex. Move on if he acts overly possessive or jealous, because a bad temper can lead to violence. Date people who respect you.

It's estimated that 70% of all rapes and sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the victim. If someone is forcing you to have sex, use the word RAPE. This can shock your attacker back to his senses. Or, lie. Tell him you have STDs, your friends are coming back, your parents are expecting you, whatever. Trust your gut. Surviving the attack is the most important thing, whether or not you choose to fight back.

Alcohol and sexual assault

You probably know all about the dangers of drinking and driving. But, did you know that alcohol is the most commonly used date rape drug? When you're under the influence, it's hard to communicate what you want—and what you don't. Alcohol can impair your ability to make smart decisions, lower your inhibitions, render you unconscious and make it easy for someone to force you into a dangerous situation. If you're going to drink, use the buddy system and never leave your drink unattended.

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If your friend is raped

Believe her. Listen to her. Let her know it wasn't her fault. Let her decide who to tell and what to do. She should receive medical help. Even if she can't see any injuries, she could still be injured internally. In order for the nurse to collect evidence, the victim should not eat/drink, shower, urinate, douche or change clothes before going to the emergency room. It's a good idea to call the local rape crisis center. It's free and confidential.

FLIRTING WITH DANGER

Teens confused by issues of date rape, violence and casual sex

By Karen Eschbacher

The news trucks descended, first in Braintree, then in Canton.

In a one-week period in early February, six high school students were charged with raping four 15-year-old classmates in separate, unrelated cases.

Residents in the communities reeled at the news, shocked that the suspects, five of whom are popular athletes, faced such serious charges.

But shock quickly turned to divisiveness. Lines were drawn between those who believed the girls, and those who blamed them.

Rumors spread, along with whispers about the girls' reputations. Petitions circulated through Braintree and Canton high schools urging administrators to allow at least some of the boys back in class.

In the quiet suburbs south of Boston, it would be easy to write off these cases as isolated incidents. But in high schools across the South Shore, confusion and casual attitudes about sex are fueling risky behaviors most teenagers keep well hidden from adults.

In interviews and surveys, teenagers paint a picture of boys who force no, girls who are reluctant to call the crime rape, and a social climate that encourages victims to remain silent.

As a result, experts and teenagers agree, most cases of teen-on-teen rape go unreported.

Statistics tell a chilling story

- In a Patriot Ledger survey of 527 South Shore high school students conducted for this series, one in five said they knew someone at their school who was forced to have sex on a date to police.
- Seven percent of boys in the survey said it's OK to force a girl out on a date to have sex. That compares to only 4 percent of boys who said it was OK in a 1993 Patriot Ledger teen dating survey that asked the same question.
- Twenty percent of boys in the new survey said it is OK or sometimes OK to force a girl to have sex if they are "going together" and have had sex before. Fifteen percent of boys said the same is true if a girl consented but then changed her mind.
- Sixteen percent of Massachusetts high school girls have experienced sexual contact against their will, according to the 1999 Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey.
- More than half of all rape and sexual assault victims are females 25 or younger, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.



DEBBE TLUMACKI/The Patriot Ledger

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Reading Project: Year 5

In our reading project we are going to discuss some of the most famous novels of English and American literature. All the novels in this project require careful reading beyond the plot level. For a full understanding you will have to read between the lines and find the symbolism and allusions of the texts. In order to see these hidden beauties always read with a pencil in your hand and mark any interesting or odd passages in the margin. Discuss your selections in your readers' conferences.

Step 1: Choosing a novel

Visit Amazon.com in the internet and find the five books in our project. Read the brief plot summaries and some readers' comments, then choose the novel that interests you most. You need not order them at Amazon. All of the books are available in Graz.

The Books:

John Steinbeck, *The Pearl*
 George Orwell, *Animal Farm*
 Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*
 William Golding, *Lord of the Flies*
 J.D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*
 Ernest Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea*

Step 2: Getting Started: (Reading Diary)

Read the first chapter of your novel and write a 10-minute entry in your reading diary. Please take your reading diary very seriously. Go beyond the plot level and write about all your thoughts, associations, questions... (Check your handout "What is a reading diary?" for further instructions.) Write a second entry into your reading diary after you have read the first half of your novel, and a third one after finishing.

Your reading diary and your marginal notes in the book will be used as a basis for discussion in your readers' conferences. These notes will also help you remember your reflections later (for Matura preparation for example).

Step 3: Readers' Conferences and Workshop tasks

1. Work in your group and share your reflections and questions. Read each other's diaries and try to answer each other's questions. Ask your teacher for help in case of disagreements or open problems.
2. In each readers' conference choose 10 vocab. items that you would like to remember and write them into your vocab book.
3. Do the workshop tasks carefully and collect all the tasks in a folder.

Step 4: Preparing the Presentation

Choose one or two of the presentation tasks (see separate handout). Distribute the work load evenly among the group members and design an interesting, well-rounded group presentation. Copy your contribution for all the group members + one for your teacher.

Step 5: Presentations

Groups present their novels.

Peer-evaluation and feedback of the presentations + Assessment and feedback from teacher

Step 6: Project Folder

Organize your project folder and hand it in for final assessment. Hand in your reading diary.

Book Presentation

For our final presentations of the reading project choose one of the following tasks. Each student in your group must do a different task. Discuss which of the tasks are most meaningful in connection with your novel. Choose tasks that complement each other so that the class gets a full picture of the main themes, symbolism, background and style of your novel.

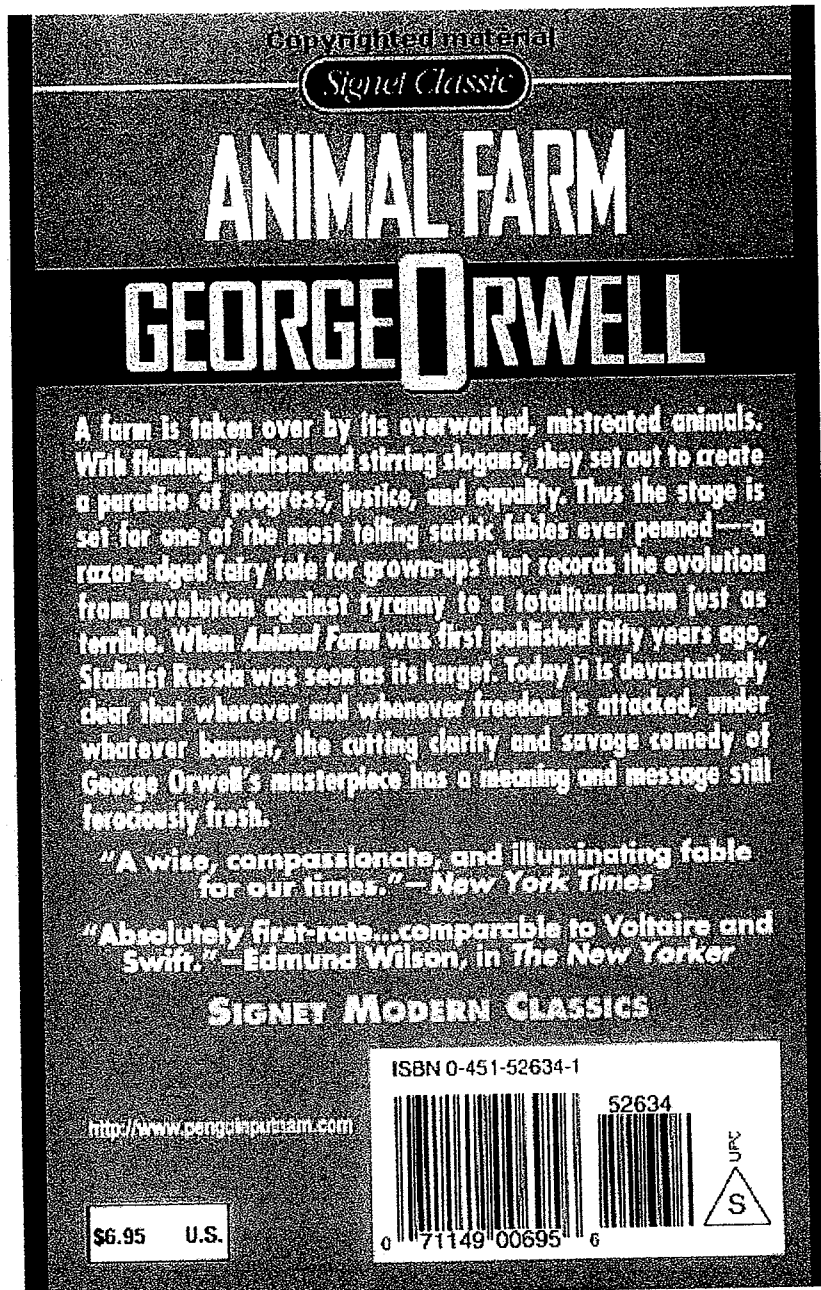
- Short biography of the author
- Present an alternative book cover and blurb (and print out all the covers and blurbs available at Amazon.com). Discuss the symbolism of these covers.
- Character portraits of the main characters. (You might want to use the *character profiles* handout. Adding a picture will make your portraits even more realistic.)
- Present the historical and cultural background of your novel. (Use visual aids)
- Write a newspaper article reporting an important incident in your novel.
- Write a poem or song-lyrics that might be used in a film or radio-play of your book.
- Act out a scene of your choice.
- Prepare a "bubble sheet" (A3 poster) where you collect important quotes from your book.
- Identity bags: Bring a bag full of objects that are somehow important to the main character of your book. Show them and explain their relevance.
- Design a board game or quiz to be played in class.
- Choose your favorite scene and imagine how it would be shown in a film. Draw a film storyboard.
- Write a summary of the book (see handout *Literature summary*)
- Find a painting or other work of art that deals with one of the main themes in your book. (Choose a painting that reflects the symbolic and metaphorical level of your book, rather than a painting that shows the setting of your story.)
- Road signs: Identify a few symbolic items in your book and draw them like "road signs". Consider the shapes and colors of road signs and make use of their symbolism. Explain the meaning of the symbol on the back of your sign (50 – 100 words).
- Alternative idea: If you have an idea of your own contact your teacher about it.

Additional ideas for the readers of *Animal Farm* and *Brave New World*

- Present the basic principals of propaganda and advertising (use visual aids)
- Give a propaganda speech about any topic of your choice. Then explain the methods you have used.
- Present to pros and cons of genetic engineering (use visual aids)

Animal Farm

by
George Orwell



Task 1. Reading diary and readers' conferences

When reading *Animal Farm* keep these main themes of the story in mind. Underline or mark any passages that show how freedom is attacked and tyranny is established. When writing your **reading diary** focus your reflections on these issues and note the typical behavior of the different animals.

Task 2. A cross-section of human society (part one)

In this fable you will come across quite a few different kinds of animals representing a cross-section of human society. Look at the list of animals below and attribute the adjectives from the box to the animals as they are seen in the eyes of man. As you go along add additional information about the animals. What roles do they play on Animal Farm?

deceitful, gentle, aggressive, trustworthy, venerable, reliable, lazy, industrious, patient, smart, fair, cunning, simple, foolish, shrewd, sociable, easy-going, envious, obstinate, courageous, timid, quarrelsome, innocent, ambitious, wise, good-natured, bright, conceited, generous, thrifty, cruel, talkative, stupid, friendly,

Animal	Attribute normally given by man	Role on Animal Farm (during Major's speech and later on)	Evidence, Page references
pigs			
hens			
dogs			
pigeons			
sheep			
cows			
horses			
goat			
donkey			
ducklings			
cat			
raven			
rats			
rabbits			

Task 3: Old Major's Speech

Reread Old Major's Speech. It can be divided up into eight different parts showing a clear, logical build-up. Mark the parts in the margin and find a heading for each part. Then sum up the *Principles of Animalism* in a list.

All the animals were now present except Moses, the tame raven, who slept on a perch behind the back door. When Major saw that they had all made themselves comfortable and were waiting attentively, he cleared his throat and began:

"Comrades, you have heard already about the strange dream that I had last night. But I will come to the dream later. I have something else to say first. I do not think, comrades, that I shall be with you for many months longer, and before I die, I feel it my duty to pass on to you such wisdom as I have acquired. I have had a long life, I have had much time for thought as I lay alone in my stall, and I think I may say that I understand the nature of life on this earth as well as any animal now living. It is about this that I wish to speak to you.

"Now, comrades, what is the nature of this life of ours? Let us face it: our lives are miserable, laborious, and short. We are born, we are given just so much food as will keep the breath in our bodies, and those of us who are capable of it are forced to work to the last atom of our strength; and the very instant that our usefulness has come to an end we are slaughtered with hideous cruelty. No animal in England knows the meaning of happiness or leisure after he is a year old. No animal in England is free. The life of an animal is misery and slavery: that is the plain truth.

"But is this simply part of the order of nature? Is it because this land of ours is so poor that it cannot afford a decent life to those who dwell upon it? No, comrades, a thousand times no! The soil of England is fertile, its climate is good, it is capable of affording food in abundance to an enormously greater number of animals than now inhabit it. This single farm of ours would support a dozen horses, twenty cows, hundreds of sheep—and all of them living in a comfort and a dignity that are now almost beyond our imagining. Why then do we continue in this miserable condition? Because nearly the whole of the produce of our labour is stolen from us by human beings. There, comrades, is the answer to all our problems. It is summed up in a single word—Man. Man is the only real enemy we have. Remove Man from the scene, and the root cause of hunger and overwork is abolished for ever.

"Man is the only creature that consumes without producing. He does not give milk, he does not lay eggs, he is too weak to pull the plough, he cannot run fast enough to catch rabbits. Yet he is lord of all the animals. He sets them to work, he gives back to them the bare minimum that will prevent them from starving, and the rest he keeps for himself. Our labour tills the soil, our dung fertilises it, and yet there is not one of us that owns more than his bare skin. You cows that I see before me, how many thousands of gallons of milk have you given during this last year? And what has happened to that milk which should have been breeding up sturdy calves? Every drop of it has gone down the throats of our enemies. And you hens, how many eggs have you laid in this last year, and how many of those eggs ever hatched into chickens? The rest have all gone to market to bring in money for Jones and his men. And you, Clover, where are those four foals you bore, who should have been the support and pleasure of your old age? Each was sold at a year old—you will never see one of them again. In return for your four confinements

and all your labour in the fields, what have you ever had except your bare rations and a stall?

"And even the miserable lives we lead are not allowed to reach their natural span. For myself I do not grumble, for I am one of the lucky ones. I am twelve years old and have had over four hundred children. Such is the natural life of a pig. But no animal escapes the cruel knife in the end. You young porkers who are sitting in front of me, every one of you will scream your lives out at the block within a year. To that horror we all must come—cows, pigs, hens, sheep, everyone. Even the horses and the dogs have no better fate. You, Boxer, the very day that those great muscles of yours lose their power, Jones will sell you to the knacker, who will cut your throat and boil you down for the foxhounds. As for the dogs, when they grow old and toothless, Jones ties a brick round their necks and drowns them in the nearest pond.

"Is it not crystal clear, then, comrades, that all the evils of this life of ours spring from the tyranny of human beings? Only get rid of Man, and the produce of our labour would be our own. Almost overnight we could become rich and free. What then must we do? Why, work night and day, body and soul, for the overthrow of the human race! That is my message to you, comrades: Rebellion! I do not know when that Rebellion will come, it might be in a week or in a hundred years, but I know, as surely as I see this straw beneath my feet, that sooner or later justice will be done. Fix your eyes on that, comrades, throughout the short remainder of your lives! And above all, pass on this message of mine to those who come after you, so that future generations shall carry on the struggle until it is victorious.

"And remember, comrades, your resolution must never falter. No argument must lead you astray. Never listen when they tell you that Man and the animals have a common interest, that the prosperity of the one is the prosperity of the others. It is all lies. Man serves the interests of no creature except himself. And among us animals let there be perfect unity, perfect comradeship in the struggle. All men are enemies. All animals are comrades."

At this moment there was a tremendous uproar. While Major was speaking four large rats had crept out of their holes and were sitting on their hindquarters, listening to him. The dogs had suddenly caught sight of them, and it was only by a swift dash for their holes that the rats saved their lives. Major raised his trotter for silence.

"Comrades," he said, "here is a point that must be settled. The wild creatures, such as rats and rabbits—are they our friends or our enemies? Let us put it to the vote. I propose this question to the meeting: Are rats comrades?"

The vote was taken at once, and it was agreed by an overwhelming majority that rats were comrades. There were only four dissentients, the three dogs and the cat, who was afterwards discovered to have voted on both sides. Major continued:

"I have little more to say. I merely repeat, remember always your duty of enmity towards Man and all his ways. Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy. Whatever goes upon four legs, or has wings, is a friend. And remember also that in fighting against Man, we must not come to resemble him. Even when you have conquered him, do not adopt his vices. No animal must ever live in a house, or sleep in a bed, or wear clothes, or drink alcohol, or smoke tobacco, or touch money, or engage in trade. All the habits of Man are evil. And, above all, no animal must ever tyrannise over his own kind. Weak or strong, clever or simple, we are all brothers. No animal must ever kill any other animal. All animals are equal.

"And now, comrades, I will tell you about my dream of last night. I cannot describe that dream to you. It was a dream of the earth as it will be when Man has vanished. But it reminded me of something that I had long forgotten. Many years ago, when I was a little pig, my mother and the other sows used to sing an old song of which they knew only the tune and the first three words. I had known that tune in my infancy, but it had long since passed out of my mind. Last night, however, it came back to me in my dream. And what is more, the words of the song also came back—words, I am certain, which were sung by the animals of long ago and have been lost to memory for generations. I will sing you that song now, comrades. I am old and my voice is hoarse, but when I have taught you the tune, you can sing it better for yourselves. It is called *Beasts of England*."

Old Major cleared his throat and began to sing. As he had said, his voice was hoarse, but he sang well enough, and it was a stirring tune, something between *Clementine* and *La Cucaracha*. The words ran:

*Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland,
Beasts of every land and clime,
Hearken to my joyful tidings
Of the golden future time.
Soon or late the day is coming,
Tyrant Man shall be o'erthrown,
And the fruitful fields of England
Shall be trod by beasts alone.
Rings shall vanish from our noses,
And the harness from our back,
Bit and spur shall rust forever,
Cruel whips no more shall crack.
Riches more than mind can picture,
Wheat and barley, oats and hay,
Clover, beans, and mangel-wurzels
Shall be ours upon that day.
Bright will shine the fields of England,
Purer shall its waters be,
Sweeter yet shall blow its breezes
On the day that sets us free.
For that day we all must labour,
Though we die before it break;
Cows and horses, geese and turkeys,
All must toil for freedom's sake.
Beasts of England, beasts of Ireland,
Beasts of every land and clime,
Hearken well and spread my tidings
Of the golden future time.*

Task 4: Old Major's audience – a cross section of human society (part 2)

Use your notes of task 2 and your reading diary to answer the following questions bearing in mind that *Animal Farm* is a fable in which each animal type represents a particular human type.

Questions: (answer on a separate sheet)

- What do we learn about Old Major, the oldest pig on the farm?
- What can we deduce from the fact that the pigs and the dogs occupy the best places in the audience?
- In any society there are many different types to be observed. Which animals seem to represent the middle class?
- There is only one animal who seems to be alert. Who is he?
- Which two animals appear last in the barn?
- What is their role in society?
- Who does not turn up at the meeting?
- Who in your opinion are the most important animals on the farm?

Now ask your teacher for the solution sheet and compare your answers with the solutions.

Chapter II

Task 5: *Rebellion at Manor Farm*

Use this headline and write a short newspaper article for the *Willington Tribune*. Bear in mind that the language used in news items is different from that in the story. (about 200 words)

Task 6: Changes

List the changes that resulted from the rebellion.

e.g. Traces of Jones' reign like chains, whips and knives were disposed of.

Task 7: The Seven Commandments

The seven commandments contain the most important laws of animalism. Major's wish was that the animals should not be corrupted by contact with humans or the adoption of their habits. List the seven commandments (see table next page)

As you go along you will see that the pigs start breaking them at a very early stage. Note all these violations (keywords) and add the page numbers under the commandment that was broken.

The Seven Commandments	
1.	Violations:
2.	Violations:
3.	Violations:
4.	Violations:
5.	Violations:
6.	Violations:
7.	Violations:

Task 8: Character portraits

Start collecting information about the main characters in the story. Keep a separate page for each of these animals so that you can add information as you continue reading. Start with the characters' names and note down your associations with it. Orwell chose these names very consciously and was aware of the symbolism associated with them. As you go along note interesting facts about the animals' behavior, their attitudes and their role on Animal Farm. Always note page references in order to locate specific quotes later.

Compare your notes and associations in the readers' conferences.

By the end of the project you must have character portraits of the following animals:

- Old Major**
- Boxer
- Clover
- Mollie
- Benjamin
- Napoleon**
- Snowball**
- Squealer**

Chapter III

Task 9: Reread Squealer's speech.

Read it aloud to your partners as if you were actually giving the speech to a large audience. Slip into Squealer's role. How does he behave? Consider gestures, facial expression, voice, posture...

Find five adjectives or nouns to describe Squealer as you see him after this speech and add them onto your 'Squealer'-page.

What does his name tell us? Check the verb 'to squeal' in your dictionary and add a sample phrase to your vocab list.

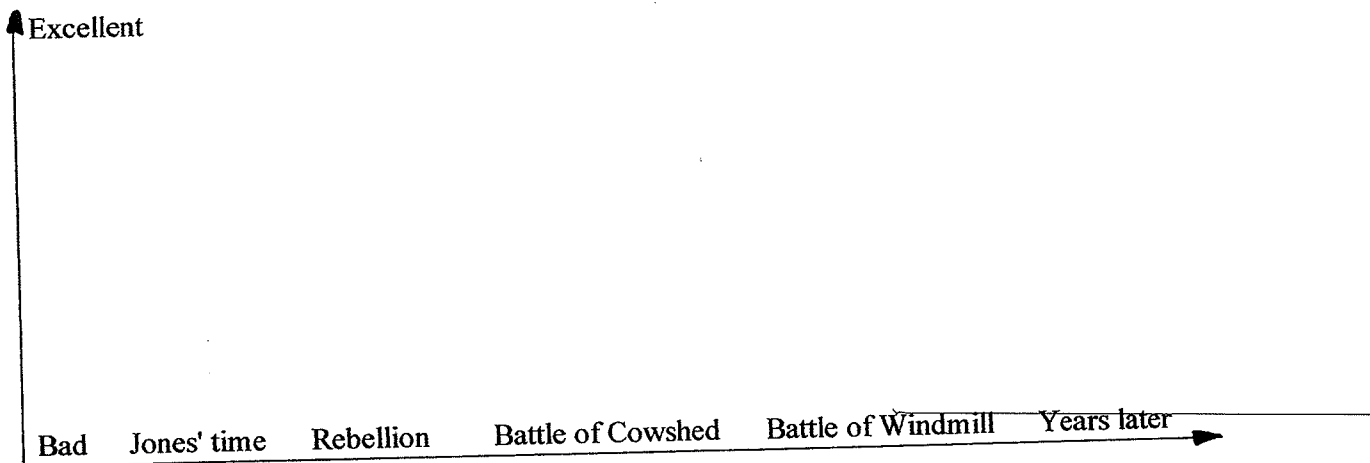
"Comrades!" he cried. "You do not imagine, I hope, that we pigs are doing this in a spirit of selfishness and privilege? Many of us actually dislike milk and apples. I dislike them myself. Our sole object in taking these things is to preserve our health. Milk and apples (this has been proved by Science, comrades) contain substances absolutely necessary to the well-being of a pig. We pigs are brainworkers. The whole management and organisation of this farm depend on us. Day and night we are watching over your welfare. It is for your sake that we drink that milk and eat those apples. Do you know what would happen if we pigs failed in our duty? Jones would come back! Yes, Jones would come back! Surely, comrades," cried Squealer almost pleadingly, skipping from side to side and whisking his tail, "surely there is no one among you who wants to see Jones come back?"

Task 10: After chapter X

Only very few animals can remember the old days before the Rebellion. Most of them have died and only Clover, Benjamin, Moses and some pigs are left over from the old times. The farm is run more efficiently and is getting more and more prosperous. The windmill has been completed. Electricity is not used for the animals' benefit but to work a corn mill. And a second windmill is being built. The animals work as hard as ever and the old promises concerning warm stables, etc. being strictly against Animalism anyway have long been forgotten.

The farm is richer but the animals are as poor as ever, they work harder for less pay and the surplus goes to the pigs and the dogs, just as it used to go to Jones in former times.

Draw a graph of the developments on Animal Farm. Use two colors, one for the situation of the Farm, another one for the situation of the animals.



Task 11:

The literary form of *Animal Farm*

Notes

Animal Farm has been described as an allegory, a fable and a satire. Look at the definitions below and highlight all the elements that apply to *Animal Farm*. Write short explanatory notes in the margin.

Allegory, fictional literary narrative or artistic expression that conveys a symbolic meaning parallel to but distinct from, and more important than, the literal meaning. Allegory has also been defined as an extended metaphor. The symbolic meaning is usually expressed through personifications and other symbols. Related forms are the fable and the parable, which are didactic, comparatively short and simple allegories.

Fable, short literary composition in prose or verse, conveying a universal cautionary or moral truth. The moral is usually summed up at the end of the story, which generally tells of conflict among animals that are given the attributes of human beings. The fable differs from the parable, also a short narrative designed to convey a moral truth, in that the fable is concerned with the impossible and improbable, whereas the parable always deals with possible events. Both fables and parables are forms of allegory.

Satire, in literature, prose or verse that employs wit in the form of irony, innuendo, or outright derision to expose human wickedness and folly. Satires are intended to tax weaknesses and to correct vice wherever found.

Task 12: Propaganda

On *Animal Farm* propaganda has been used excessively to gain power and control the masses. Squealer could be said to be the 'minister of propaganda' on the farm. Answer to following questions to understand his tricks and methods. (Use a separate sheet.)

- When does Squealer, the 'minister of propaganda, appear? When is he absent?
- What are the tricks of his profession? In what ways is he useful to the ruling class?
- Analyze those verbal expressions which characterize his propagandist machinations as well as the animals' reactions to them. Choose a few specific examples of Squealer's speeches.

Then compare your findings with the solution sheet. At this point you might also be interested in finding out more about methods of propaganda. Read some of the information provided on the teacher's desk or check one of the following internet sites. If you want to earn extra points summarize your findings (200-300 words).

The Propaganda Page,
<http://carmen.artsci.washington.edu/propaganda/contents.htm>

Advertising Techniques,
<http://www.entrenet.com/~groedmed/namedu/adtech.htm>

Task 13: Summary

Follow the instructions on the summary writing sheet and write a short summary (3-5 paragraphs) of the novel.

Task 14: Historical Context

WHO IS WHO ON ANIMAL FARM

FACT SHEET:

READ THE FOLLOWING EXTRACTS FROM A HISTORY BOOK AND RELATE THESE INCIDENTS TO 'ANIMAL FARM'.
FIND OUT WHICH CHARACTERS ORWELL WANTED TO DEPICT IN HIS BOOK.

Find out for who or what the following allegorical names stand:

ALLEGORICAL NAMES		
Old Major	prophet of the revolution	
Napoleon	man of power	
Snowball	powerful orator / theorist	
Squealer	sophist	
Moses	religious prophet	
Manor Farm	exploitation	
Mr Jones	capitalist	
Animal Farm	socialism	

Lenin was a fanatic in politics. Stalin is a mechanic in politics. Lenin believed. Stalin had passion but not fanaticism. His passion is for destruction, construction and power but not for improvements in human society or in the human being. Stalin has no vision of the perfect man; he craves the perfect robot. Lenin was no romantic in the German mystic, myth-loving sense, but he was inspired by a dream of a new society; he had Utopia even though his means were sordid and violent and hence self-defeating. There is no romance in Stalin, no Utopia.Stalin has some of Lenin in him but more of Hitler.

Lenin admitted his mistakes in public. He had enough authority to weather mistakes. But in a speech on January 26, 1924, Stalin said Lenin was 'always right'. This made it possible for Stalin to claim the same perfection. Stalin cannot err; the Communist state can do no wrong. That is the Kremlin credo. It sentences intelligence to death. The only permissible mental process in Stalin's Russia is the justification of what the government has already done. Stalin's infallibility makes the purge a permanent feature of Soviet life. Since the dictator is infallible, the system he has created is infallible, the more so since it is based on an infallible doctrine. Therefore if anything goes wrong in the Soviet Union it must be due to the ill will of a subordinate who maliciously perverts the system. And that is treason. It recognizes only heresy or hostility. Hence the perpetual purge. The purge is a device to deflect blame from Stalin.

The older generation remembered Trotsky as the young man who appeared suddenly, like a bright star, during the 1905 anti-monarchist revolution. The younger generation fought victoriously under Trotsky in the 1918-1920 civil war. His personality, if theatrical, had a strong public appeal. His presence excited. His speeches excited. His speeches stirred the heart and brain. The country coupled Trotsky with Lenin as the two men who made the 1917 revolution. Today Trotsky is passed over in silence by Russian historians. Stalin himself laid the basis for this falsification of history: 'All the critical work of organizing the insurrection,' Stalin wrote in the Pravda on November 7, 1918, the first anniversary of the Bolshevik insurrection, 'was conducted under the immediate direction of comrade Trotsky.' But in his book 'History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), first published anonymously in 1938 and then under his name, Trotsky disappears altogether as an active organizer of the revolution; the little he did was in order 'to disrupt and destroy'.

If Stalin had the charm to win he might dispense with some of his power to kill. But he is a poor speaker. His voice is colourless. He drinks water after every short paragraph and keeps pumping his forearm up and down for emphasis. Nor does he exude personal warmth. He cannot evoke devotion. He therefore depends on fear. He has it and he communicates it to others.

Trotsky was banished from Russia in January 1928. He went into exile and was assassinated in Mexico in 1940. Stalin adopted Trotsky's original conception of industrializing Russia one year later.

In 1919, Trotsky complained to Lenin that Stalin had been drinking wine from the well-stocked cellars of the Czar in the Kremlin.

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Soviet Union, which roughly coincided with the inauguration of the first Five Year Plan (1928) in which capital-producing industries (steel-mills, electric generating plants, and so on) were to receive preference over the production of consumer goods; in *Animal Farm* this is alluded to in the decision to build the windmill.

The first Five Year Plan was accompanied by a good deal of hardship and rationing, and many of the better-off farmers (known as the Kulaks) refused to co-operate and some went so far as to slaughter their draft-animals; in the story, this is alluded to in the "egg rebellion" of the hens (67), and Stalin's ruthless suppression of the Kulaks also finds its parallel in Napoleon's actions.

Meanwhile, by the 'thirties, the communists in Russia had found that their country could not be made wholly self-sufficient and they started entering into trade relations with the rest of Europe and even with the United States (as Napoleon did with his farm neighbours), while the superior party officials, now entrenched in power by the secret police, began to enjoy privileges and material comforts denied to the ordinary Russian workers (in the same way as the pigs—supported by the dogs—moved into the farmhouse, started sleeping on beds, and drinking whisky).

Although Stalin entered into a non-aggression pact with Hitler's Germany, the Nazis suddenly invaded Russia in 1941 and destroyed much of what had been built-up before they were driven back. In the same way, although Napoleon started to trade with Frederick, the latter attacked Animal Farm and blew up the windmill before being forced to retreat.

At first, too, the Soviet Union did not recognize any religion and persecuted adherents of the established Orthodox church. But by 1944 Stalin was writing conciliatory letters to the Pope and was allowing the Orthodox church in Russia to conduct services so as not to alienate the support of those older folk still religious in sentiment. Moses, the tame raven, stands for the Russian Church, once a pillar of the Tsarist régime. When the pigs have consolidated their own position as rulers over the farm, Moses is allowed to return, and with his tales of Sugarcandy Mountain brings some solace to the oppressed animals.

The final scene of Napoleon entertaining his neighbours in the farm-house possibly suggests the various meetings between Stalin, Churchill and other war-time leaders held on Russian soil during World War II, at more or less the same time as Orwell was writing *Animal Farm*.

Other textual parallels will readily come to mind from a close reading of the book. The full extent of Stalin's abuse of power only became public knowledge in Russia after the dictator's death in 1953, and was not very widely known even outside Russia before that date, so that in writing of Napoleon's excesses, Orwell was focusing attention on an aspect of totalitarian oppression which was inadequately understood.

SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

HISTORICAL PARALLELS AND ALLUSIONS

IN *Animal Farm* Orwell did something towards restoring the allegory to its rightful place as a force in literature. Many events in the story are allusions to the recent history of Russia. These parallels should not be carried too far, but some of the more obvious ones should at least be noted.

In Russia before the Revolution of 1917 there was undoubtedly a good deal of genuine mass discontent against the Tsarist régime, both in the towns and countryside, and the spontaneous overthrow and expulsion of Jones is akin to the uprising by the Bolsheviks. Previously, the philosophy of the Revolution had been worked out and spread by Karl Marx (d. 1883), whose *Communist Manifesto* is represented in the story by the "Seven Commandments", and by Marx's disciple, Lenin (d. 1924), who became the first president of the new régime in Russia. Old Major (whose appearance is confined to the opening chapter) represents a fusion of Marx and Lenin: he propounds the ideals of Animalism and after his death his skull is exhumed for public honour just as the embalmed body of Lenin was put on display in Moscow.

The rest of the world was concerned lest Communist upheavals spread beyond Russia's borders, and both the U.S.A. and Britain sent troops to assist in the overthrow of Lenin's party, but by 1921 this "counter-revolution" had failed completely; and soon the western powers had recognized the new régime and started to establish diplomatic relations with it. These trends find their parallel in the story with the return of Jones aided by his neighbours, their rout in the Battle of the Cowshed, and the giving up of the pretence (58) that Animal Farm (Soviet Union) was still called the Manor Farm (Tsarist Russia).

Once the threat of counter-revolution had been stilled, the communist leaders were confronted with economic chaos: the countryside was in ruins from the civil war and foreign invasion, urban industry was at a much lower level than it had been before the Revolution, and malnutrition and starvation were widespread. But there was much enthusiasm for the new order, "everyone worked according to his capacity" (27), and between 1921 and his death in 1924, Lenin managed to restore some semblance of prosperity—and this period of consolidation has its parallel in the events described in Chapter 3 of *Animal Farm*.

Lenin's death was followed by a bitter struggle for power between Stalin (Napoleon) and Trotsky (Snowball), leading to Trotsky's expulsion from the

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Girl with a Pearl Earring



Discuss all the questions in your reading group and write your answers into your book-project folder. Number your answers clearly so you can quickly find them or cut up this sheet and glue the questions into your reading diary.. Your project folder will be assessed for completeness, clarity of organization and content.

Before Reading the Novel:

1. Look at the painting for several minutes. What is your impression of the girl? Who is she? What is she thinking right now? Write an inner monologue following the girl's thoughts. Write at least one A4 page.

While Reading the Novel:

2. Read slowly and carefully and watch out for passages where Griet describes Vermeer's paintings. What makes them so fascinating? (Note page numbers for later reference)
3. Do you think Griet was typical of other girls her age? In what ways? How did she differ? Find at least 5 adjectives that describe her character.
4. Fill in a character profile for Griet (use the character profile sheet).
5. In many ways, the primary relationship in this novel appears to be between Griet and Vermeer. Do you think this is true? How do you feel about Vermeer's relationship with his wife? How does that come into play?
6. Draw a sociogram for Vermeer. Which of the characters are very close to him? Which of them understand his art, which don't?
7. Do you think Griet made the right choice when she married the butcher's son? Did she have other options?
8. Though *Girl with a Pearl Earring* appears to be about one man and woman, there are several relationships at work. Which is the most difficult relationship? Which is the most promising? Fill in the grid below.

	Griet	Maria Thins	Vermeer	Catharina	Tanneke
Griet					
Marie Thins					
Vermeer					
Catharina					
Tanneke					

Explaining the Symbolism in the Novel:

9. The issue of "seeing" is central in the novel. Griet tries form much of the novel to manipulate all that she sees into a sort of harmony, beginning with the soup vegetables she so carefully arranges so that they will not "fight when they are side by side." Likewise, Vermeer's art relies upon his ability to see the universal in even the most prosaic settings. Griet's father cannot see at all, and not coincidentally, he is perhaps the novel's most tragic and impotent figure. What does "seeing" mean to the novel's other characters? Which of the characters "see" a lot? What do they "see"?
10. Explain the significance of the camera obscura in the novel? Reread the passages where Vermeer explains how he uses his new invention. In what way does Chevalier's novel achieve a similar effect.
11. Explain the significance of the 8-pointed star in the Market place.
12. Griet always covers her hair carefully with her cap. She doesn't want anyone to see her wild hair, not even Pieter or Vermeer. What is she hiding? What changes in her life when Vermeer accidentally sees her hair?
13. What is the significance of the pearl in the novel and in the painting? Would the girl be the same without the pearl earring? Try to cover it up in the painting and look.

The Painting and the Novel:

14. Find out more about Vermeer and the painting that inspired the novel. Search the internet.
15. Look again at Vermeer's painting, "Girl with a Pearl Earring". In what ways has your perception of the painting changed as a result of reading the novel? Are you more likely to attach particular emotions to the girl's ambiguous expression? Does the girl look more explicitly melancholy now? More amorous? Explain.

The Role of Women:

16. Read the short extract from *A Room of One's Own* where Virginia Woolf writes about Shakespeare's imaginary sister Judith. Discuss the role of women at that time. What were their options? What was expected of them? How has the situation changed? Write a 5§ essay comparing the lives and times of Griet, Judith and young women in the 21st century.

GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING

by Tracy Chevalier

INTRODUCTION

In mid-career, the renowned 17th century Baroque artist Johannes Vermeer painted "Girl with a Pearl Earring," which has been called the Dutch Mona Lisa. *Girl with a Pearl Earring* tells the story behind the advent of this famous painting, all the while depicting life in 17th century Delft, a small Dutch city with a burgeoning art community.

The novel centers on Griet, the Protestant daughter of a Delft tile painter who lost his sight in a kiln accident. In order to bring income to her struggling family, Griet must work as a maid for a more financially sound family. When Jan Vermeer and his wife approve of Griet as a maid for their growing Catholic household, she leaves home and quickly enters adult life. The Vermeer household, with its five children, grandmother and long-time servant, is ready to make Griet's working life difficult. Though her help is sorely needed, her beauty and innocence are both coveted and resented. Vermeer's wife Catharina, long banished from her husband's studio for her clumsiness and lack of genuine interest in art, is immediately wary of Griet, a visually talented girl who exhibits signs of artistic promise. Taneke, the faithful servant to the grandmother, proves her protective loyalty by keeping a close eye on Griet's every move.

The artist himself, however, holds another view entirely of the young maid. Recognizing Griet's talents, Vermeer takes her on as his studio assistant and surreptitiously teaches her to grind paints and develop color palettes in the remote attic. Though reluctant to overstep her boundaries in the cagey Vermeer household, Griet is overjoyed both to work with her intriguing master and to lend some breath to her natural inclinations—colors and composition—neither of which she had ever been able to develop. Together, Vermeer and Griet conceal the apprenticeship from the family until Vermeer's most prominent patron demands that the lovely maid be the subject of his next commissioned work. Vermeer must paint Griet—an awkward, charged situation for them both.

Chevalier's account of the artistic process—from the grinding of paints to the inclusion and removal of background objects—lay at the core of the novel. Her inventive portrayal of this tumultuous time, when Protestantism began to dominate Catholicism and the growing bourgeoisie took the place of the Church as patrons of the arts, draws the reader into a lively, if little known, time and place in history.

A Little Background

The Baroque period is remembered less by one specific style of art than as a period of time. Derived from the Portuguese "barocco" for "irregular pearl," Baroque was comprised of many diversions from Biblically based Renaissance painting. The Protestant Reformation unleashed artists from rote depictions of scenes from the Bible and allowed them to venture into increasingly more interesting domestic domains. Ladies of the day would pose before silent musical instruments in rooms adorned with the trappings of success, like maps of newly explored territories and shelves with expensive volumes of books. As the merchant class gained monetary status in the community, so did their desire to be painted, just as royalty was just a few decades earlier.

Jan Vermeer (1632-1675), a native of Delft who never left the small city, relied on the bourgeoisie for his living. A converted Catholic for his wedding day, Vermeer struggled to support a large family. Many of his paintings depict the wives or daughters of his Protestant patrons caught in the middle of common household actions—pouring a pitcher of water, writing a

letter, or playing an instrument. He strove for realism, going so far as to blend sand in his paints to create an accurate texture of bricks in the famous portrait of his hometown, "View of Delft."

The most well known departure from Vermeer's calculated paintings is the intriguing, mysterious subject of "Girl with a Pearl Earring," thought to be painted in 1665. In the painting, a young woman, adorned in an unusual head wrap and wearing a prominent pearl-drop earring, turns to face the painter over her left shoulder—eyes sympathetic and slightly lowered, mouth demurely parted. The moment captured by the painting is captivating—sexually charged yet undeniably innocent. This is the subject of Chevalier's novel, *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. The novel both recognizes the painting's historic and artistic intensity and monopolizes on that intensity to create a fascinating story of a young girl in a small city during a unique period of time. Few authors could make the leaps necessary to enliven a centuries-old painting for modern readers. Tracy Chevalier achieves all this and more, keeping her audience wondering what the novel's outcome will bring as well as what facts their art history texts hold. Readers and art lovers alike will find this novel engaging, evocative, and insightful.

ABOUT TRACY CHEVALIER

Raised in Washington D.C., Tracy Chevalier moved to England in 1984 after graduating from Oberlin College in Ohio. Initially intending to attend one semester abroad, she studied for a semester and never returned. After working as a literary editor for several years, Chevalier chose to pursue her own writing career and in 1994, she graduated with a degree in creative writing at the University of East Anglia. Her first novel, *The Virgin Blue*, was chosen by W. H. Smith for its Fresh Talent promotion in 1997. She lives in London with her husband and son and hopes to see all of Vermeer's thirty-five known paintings in her lifetime (thus far, she's seen twenty-eight of them).

AN INTERVIEW WITH TRACY CHEVALIER

Everyday life in 17th century Delft is so vivid in *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. How did you conduct your research? Where?

Most of it, I confess, was done in my armchair. I read a lot (especially Simon Schama's *The Embarrassment Of Riches: An Interpretation of Dutch Culture in The Golden Age*) and looked at a lot of paintings. Luckily 17th-century Dutch paintings are mainly scenes from everyday life and so it was easy to see what houses looked like inside and how they were run. I also went to Delft for four days and just wandered around, taking it in. Vermeer's house no longer exists, but there are plenty of 17th-century buildings still left, as well as the Market Square, the Meat Hall, the canals and bridges. It's not hard to get an idea of what it was like then.

Little is known of Vermeer's life—at least compared with other Baroque painters like Rembrandt. Why did you choose Vermeer's work to write about?

I chose Vermeer's work because it is so beautiful and so mysterious. In his paintings, the solitary women going about their domestic tasks—pouring milk, reading letters, weighing gold, putting on a necklace—inhabit a world that we are getting a secret glimpse at. And because it feels secret—the women don't seem to know we're looking at them—it seems also that something else is going on underneath, something mysterious we can't quite grasp. The fact that so little is known about Vermeer was happenstance—happily so, as it turned out, for it meant I could make up a lot without worrying about things being "true" or not.

Were you inspired by this particular painting or by Vermeer's work in general?

I was inspired specifically by this particular painting, though I know his other work as well. A poster of this painting has hung on the wall of my bedroom since I was nineteen and I often lie in bed and look at it and wonder about it. It's such an open painting. I'm never sure what the girl is thinking or what her expression is. Sometimes she seems sad, other times seductive. So, one morning a couple years ago I was lying in bed worrying about what I was going to write next, and I looked up at the painting and wondered what Vermeer did or said to the model to get her to look like that. And right then I made up the story.

Is *Girl with a Pearl Earring* a true story? To what extent is it based in fact?

It isn't a true story. No one knows who the girl is, or in fact who any of the people in his paintings are. Very little is known about Vermeer—he left no writings, not even any drawings, just 35 paintings. The few known facts are based on legal documents—his baptism, his marriage, the births of his children, his will. I was careful to be true to the known facts; for instance, he married Catharina Boines and they had eleven surviving children. Other facts are not so clear-cut and I had to make choices: he may or may not have lived in the house of his mother-in-law (I decided he did); he converted to Catholicism at the time of his marriage but not necessarily because Catharina was Catholic (I decided he did); he may have been friends with the scientist Antony van Leeuwenhoek, who invented the microscope (I decided he was). But there was a lot I simply made up.

You chose to give your novel the same title as the painting. Is there a greater purpose for this? What sort of a relationship do you see the novel and the painting having?

The novel has the same name as the painting because the painting is the culmination of the story; its creation is what the story is leading up to. It also points up the earring, which is important as a symbol because it represents the world Griet gets drawn into and ultimately rejected from. The novel could not exist without the painting. I would never have written it, and I don't think it would have the same resonance with readers if the painting didn't exist.

Do you paint? If not, how did you learn about the process and tools?

I don't paint, though I did take a painting class while writing this book so I could find out a little about how it's done. I was absolutely awful at it, but I learned a lot. I also read about Vermeer's painting technique, and spoke with the woman who restored the painting for the 1996 Vermeer exhibition. She was able to explain to me some of the finer details of how he painted. As for the paints and how they were made, I found some old books about making paints and learned from them. I also bought some linseed oil (which is mixed with pigment to make paint) and left the bottle open as I was writing so that I could smell what they would have smelled.

17th century literature reflected religious and social changes just like 17th century painting. Milton's radical *Paradise Lost* was published during this time. Did you consider this sort of thing when writing an historical novel?

I didn't consider *Paradise Lost*, but clearly religious change in the Netherlands at the time was a very important issue. The Dutch had just thrown off the rule of the Catholic Spanish and were keen to distance themselves from Catholicism. Protestantism suited their natures. The Dutch Catholics were tolerated but were seen as slightly outside the system, which is fascinating when you consider that Vermeer actually converted to Catholicism, and so chose to be a maverick. You have to consider religious and social change when writing historical novels. They are essential to the push and pull of the story. In fact, all my novels are historical and set during periods of great social change. My first novel, *The Virgin Blue* (published in Britain), is set during the 16th

century Reformation in France, and the novel I'm working on now is set in England at the beginning of the 20th century and up through World War I.

While reading the novel, I couldn't help examining and re-examining the painting every few pages. Did you write the novel with the painting at hand?

Oh yes. With all his paintings, in fact. I kept the catalogue from the 1996 Vermeer exhibition almost permanently open. Most of the characters' looks are based on people in his other paintings. In fact, if you want to see which paintings link to which people, check out the book's website at www.pearlearring.com.

Did you know how the story ended before you started writing?

Yes. I had the whole story worked out (except for the odd detail) before I started writing. This is unusual for me. Often I know only some of the story before I start writing. This book was a dream to write because of that and because the style is so spare.

Why the camera obscura? It plays such an important part, lending all sorts of ideas about technology and foreshadowing what's to come.

*For more information on the camera obscura, visit the book's website at www.pearlearring.com.

The camera obscura is a tangible representation of a different way of looking. Griet has the capacity to look in a different way, but she needs Vermeer to show her how. He does that partly with the help of the camera obscura. It also reminds us that in order to see clearly you have to focus, shut out the world and look at one corner of a room. That is what Vermeer's paintings do—they reveal the world in a room. That is also what the novel tries to do—it is deliberately narrow and focused, and in it is a whole world.

An Excerpt from Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*, Chapter 3

Be that as it may, I could not help thinking, as I looked at the works of Shakespeare on the shelf, that the bishop was right at least in this; it would have been impossible, completely and entirely, for any woman to have written the plays of Shakespeare in the age of Shakespeare. Let me imagine, since facts are so hard to come by, what would have happened had Shakespeare had a wonderfully gifted sister, called Judith, let us say. Shakespeare himself went, very probably,—his mother was an heiress—to the grammar school, where he may have learnt Latin—Ovid, Virgil and Horace—and the elements of grammar and logic. He was, it is well known, a wild boy who poached rabbits, perhaps shot a deer, and had, rather sooner than he should have done, to marry a woman in the neighbourhood, who bore him a child rather quicker than was right. That escapade sent him to seek his fortune in London. He had, it seemed, a taste for the theatre; he began by holding horses at the stage door.

Very soon he got work in the theatre, became a successful actor, and lived at the hub of the universe, meeting everybody, knowing everybody, practising his art on the boards, exercising his wits in the streets, and even getting access to the palace of the queen. Meanwhile his extraordinarily gifted sister, let us suppose, remained at home. She was as adventurous, as imaginative, as agog to see the world as he was. But she was not sent to school. She had no chance of learning grammar and logic, let alone of reading Horace and Virgil. She picked up a book now and then, one of her brother's perhaps, and read a few pages. But then her parents came in and told her to mend the stockings or mind the stew and not moon about with books and papers. They would have spoken sharply but kindly, for they were substantial people who knew the conditions of life for a woman and loved their daughter—indeed, more likely than not she was the apple of her father's eye. Perhaps she scribbled some pages up in an apple loft on the sly but was careful to hide them or set do not go to heaven. Women cannot write the plays of fire to them.

Soon, however, before she was out of her teens, she was to be betrothed to the son of a neighbouring woolstapler. She cried out that marriage was hateful to her, and for that she was severely beaten by her father. Then he ceased to scold her. He begged her instead not to hurt him, not to shame him in this matter of her marriage. He would give her a chain of beads or a fine petticoat, he said; and there were tears in his eyes. How could she disobey him? How could she break his heart? The force of her own gift alone drove her to it. She made up a small parcel of her belongings, let herself down by a rope one summer's night and took the road to London.

She was not seventeen. The birds that sang in the hedge were not more musical than she was. She had the quickest fancy, a gift like her brother's, for the tune of words. Like him, she had a taste for the theatre. She stood at the stage door; she wanted to act, she said. Men laughed in her face. The manager—a fat, looselipped man—guffawed. He bellowed something about poodles dancing and women acting—no woman, he said, could possibly be an actress. He hinted—you can imagine what. She could get no training in her craft. Could she even seek her dinner in a tavern or roam the streets at midnight? Yet her genius was for fiction and lusted to feed abundantly upon the lives of men and women and the study of their ways. At last—for she was very young, oddly like Shakespeare the poet in her face, with the same grey eyes and rounded brows—at last Nick Greene the actor-manager took pity on her; she found herself with child by that gentleman and so—who shall measure the heat and violence of the poet's heart when caught

and tangled in a woman's body?—killed herself one winter's night and lies buried at some cross-roads where the omnibuses now stop outside the Elephant and Castle.

That, more or less, is how the story would run, I think, if a woman in Shakespeare's day had had Shakespeare's genius. But for my part, I agree with the deceased bishop, if such he was—it is unthinkable that any woman in Shakespeare's day should have had Shakespeare's genius. For genius like Shakespeare's is not born among labouring, uneducated, servile people. It was not born in England among the Saxons and the Britons. It is not born to-day among the working classes. How, then, could it have been born among women whose work began, according to Professor Trevelyan, almost before they were out of the nursery, who were forced to it by their parents and held to it by all the power of law and custom? Yet genius of a sort must have existed among women as it must have existed among the working classes. Now and again an Emily Brontë or a Robert Burns blazes out and proves its presence. But certainly it never got itself on to paper. When, however, one reads of a witch being ducked, of a woman possessed by devils, of a wise woman selling herbs, or even of a very remarkable man who had a mother, then I think we are on the track of a lost novelist, a suppressed poet, of some mute and inglorious Jane Austen, some Emily Brontë who dashed her brains out on the moor or mopped and mowed about the highways crazed with the torture that her gift had put her to. Indeed, I would venture to guess that Anon, who wrote so many poems without signing them, was often a woman. It was a woman Edward Fitzgerald, I think, suggested who made the ballads and the folk-songs, crooning them to her children, beguiling her spinning with them, or the length of the winter's night.

This may be true or it may be false—who can say?—but what is true in it, so it seemed to me, reviewing the story of Shakespeare's sister as I had made it, is that any woman born with a great gift in the sixteenth century would certainly have gone crazed, shot herself, or ended her days in some lonely cottage outside the village, half witch, half wizard, feared and mocked at. For it needs little skill in psychology to be sure that a highly gifted girl who had tried to use her gift for poetry would have been so thwarted and hindered by other people, so tortured and pulled asunder by her own contrary instincts, that she must have lost her health and sanity to a certainty. No girl could have walked to London and stood at a stage door and forced her way into the presence of actor-managers without doing herself a violence and suffering an anguish which may have been irrational—for chastity may be a fetish invented by certain societies for unknown reasons—but were none the less inevitable. Chastity had then, it has even now, a religious importance in a woman's life, and has so wrapped itself round with nerves and instincts that to cut it free and bring it to the light of day demands courage of the rarest.

To have lived a free life in London in the sixteenth century would have meant for a woman who was poet and playwright a nervous stress and dilemma which might well have killed her. Had she survived, whatever she had written would have been twisted and deformed, issuing from a strained and morbid imagination. And undoubtedly, I thought, looking at the shelf where there are no plays by women, her work would have gone unsigned. That refuge she would have sought certainly. It was the relic of the sense of chastity that dictated anonymity to women even so late as the nineteenth century. Currer Bell, George Eliot, George Sand, all the victims of inner strife as their writings prove, sought ineffectively to veil themselves by using the name of a man. Thus they did homage to the convention, which if not implanted by the other sex was liberally encouraged by them (the chief glory of a woman is not to be talked of, said Pericles, himself a much-talked-of man) that publicity in women is detestable. Anonymity runs in their blood.

