

FOCUS

READING JOURNAL TOPICS

Genre	1. Classify this type of literature. Is this type of literature (<i>genre</i>) familiar to you? How is it similar to or different from other things you have read?
Vocabulary	2. Write at least 3 unfamiliar <i>vocabulary</i> words, their dictionary definition, and the parts of speech. Then write each word in an original sentence.
Setting	3. Describe the <i>setting</i> (time and place). Why is the setting important to the plot of the story? Draw a picture of the setting. Would you like to live in this setting? Why or why not? 4. If this story takes place in another time period (past or future), compare and contrast objects found in the book with objects found in modern times. How is life different?
Characters	5. Describe one <i>character</i> . Tell what he or she looks like, how he or she acts and what others think about the character. What do you think of this character? 6. Your favorite character has just been granted 3 wishes related to the book. None of the wishes may be for more wishes. Tell what those wishes would be and why? 7. Pick a character you liked or didn't like. Why do you feel this way? What did the character do or say to make you feel this way? 8. Add a new character to the story. Describe what the character would look like and what the character would do. How would this character change the story? 9. If you could meet one of the characters, who would it be? List five questions you would like to ask him or her. Write the answers you think the character would say. 10. How does one of the characters change? Why?
Prediction	11. <i>Predict</i> what may happen next. Then read on to see if you were correct and record your findings.
Plot	12. Choose an important event in the <i>plot</i> of the story. Explain why you think the author included it. 13. How would you like the plot of the story to be different? 14. If this book has been made into a movie, how is the plot similar or different? Do you like the changes if there are any?
Conflict/Resolution	15. What is the major <i>conflict</i> (problem) in this piece of literature? How is it solved? Is the solution believable?
Description	16. Note a comparison: a <i>simile</i> (like or as), <i>metaphor</i> or <i>personification</i> that you found. Explain what is being compared, what it means and how it fits in the context of the story.
Lead	17. The <i>lead</i> is the beginning of the story. How did the author <i>lead</i> (bring) you into the story and capture your interest?
Suspense	18. How does the author build <i>suspense</i> ? Give specific details.
Point of View	19. Who is telling the story? What evidence does the author provide to support your opinion? Should he or she be telling the story? What effect does the narration have on the reader? 20. Do you think that the title is appropriate for the story? Make up a new title for the book. Explain why you chose it. 21. Does this piece of literature remind you of anything in your own life? Explain your life as well as the character's life. 22. What information in this book could be helpful to us in our lives? 23. Choose one character that made an important decision and describe that incident. Would you have made the same decision? Why or why not?
Style	24. Record any noteworthy descriptions, conversation, beginning or ending in the story? What makes them important?

Graphics	<p>25. If there are graphics (pictures, boldface type, italics, decorations, etc.) how do they add to the book and help you understand the story? Give specific details.</p> <p>26. Create a new cover for the book. Include the title, author's name, and an illustration. Write a caption telling how it represents the story.</p>
Summary	<p>27. Summarize information that you have read. Why do you find it interesting?</p> <p>28. Were you surprised by anything you read and why?</p>
Theme	<p>29. What is the author's message? What does the story mean to you?</p> <p>30. Why did the author write this story?</p>
Nonfiction	<p>31. How is the information organized? How do the headings and subheadings help you find information in this text?</p> <p>32. What information is provided through illustrations (drawings, diagrams, maps, charts, etc.)? How do they help you understand the information?</p> <p>33. Does the text have reference aides such as table of contents, index, bibliography, glossary, and appendices? Are they easy to use? How do they help you?</p> <p>34. What did you learn about this topic? What does this text make you want to learn more about?</p>
Biography or Autobiography	<p>35. What were the important events in the subject's life?</p> <p>36. What were the challenges faced by the person?</p> <p>37. What were some important actions the person took? How did the subject's actions affect others?</p> <p>38. How did the author use anecdotes, original documents, diary entries, eyewitness accounts, and interviews to make the person's life interesting?</p> <p>39. How important is the setting (place, time in history, and other events taking place at the time) to the subject's life or accomplishments?</p>
Author	<p>40. How did the author use dialogue, flashback, foreshadowing, or other ways of organizing text to make this (character) or person's life interesting?</p>