

BOOK REPORT

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT – R. LACOUMENTAS

To compose an outstanding book report, the writer must identify the story's key ideas and supporting details. In addition to analyzing the various story elements, the write must provide editorial comments and responses.

Use the following topic outline to write a descriptive, organized book report in paragraph form. Make an outline first!

Begin with a clear introduction that includes the underlined title of the book and its author, a brief summary, and your reaction to the story. Use the body of your review to address all FOUR of the literary elements outlined below. End your report with a strong concluding paragraph that restates your position and gives your opinion.

Remember, an excellent paper is clear and focused. Don't write just to fill space. Choose strong main ideas and develop them with support and relevant details. **Include appropriate examples and quotations (with page references in parentheses) for support.** Quotations should be used in moderation, not overused. Don't forget to share your own insights.

Use a variety of expressive words and phrases. Good example: Anne's aversion to her red hair may be a typical childhood sentiment, but this situation is an important symbol throughout the story." (WOW! ☺) Weak example: "One of the symbols in this book is Anne's red hair." (Boring...☹)

Indent the beginning of each paragraph one inch, but don't add extra space between paragraphs. Leave one-inch margins on all sides of the paper. Proofread for complete sentences and correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Report should be type-written. Spacing should be 2.0.

COVER SHEET (Centre all information)

- A. Title (*Italicize* novel titles)
- B. Author
- C. Genre (Adventure Fiction)
- D. Skip a few lines and put your name, teacher's name (R. Lacoumentas), period, and date

INTRODUCTION (Paragraph 1)

- A. State the title of the book (*italicized*)
- B. State the author
- C. Present the main idea (theme) of the story. Give a BRIEF summary of the story.
- D. State your reaction/evaluation

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LITERARY ELEMENTS

SETTING

- A. Describe the setting in detail. Be as specific as possible. Be sure to include sensory images. (What do you see, hear, touch, and/or smell in this setting?)
- B. Does the setting influence the plot and/or theme? Why is this setting significant?
- C. Does the setting change? If so, how is that change important? Explain.

CHARACTERIZATIONS

- A. After briefly describing the physical appearance of the main character, identify and describe one personality trait of this character. Use a direct quote to show/prove that character trait. Provide the page number where you find the example. Explain the significance of that quotation.
- B. Identify and describe a second personality trait of the main character. Use a direct quote to show/prove that character trait. Provide the page number where you find the example. Explain the significance of that quotation.
- C. Identify and describe a third personality trait of the main character. Use a direct quote to show/prove that character trait. Provide the page number where you find the example. Explain the significance of that quotation.
- D. After briefly describing the physical appearance of one dominant antagonist, identify and describe one personality trait of this antagonist. Use one direct quote to show/prove this personality trait, providing the page number where you find the example. Explain the significance of the quote. Explain how this antagonist affects the main character and story.

THEME

- A. Identify the theme/main idea of the book.
- B. Give at least two specific examples from the book that support your idea about the theme. Use one direct quote. Provide the page numbers where you find the examples.
- C. Discuss the significance of the theme in your life.

SYMBOLISM

- A. Identify and explain a significant symbol in the book. Provide the page numbers where you find the examples. Discuss how this symbol added meaning to the story.
- B. Identify and explain another significant symbol in the book. Provide the page numbers where you find the examples. Discuss how this symbol added meaning to the story.

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CONCLUSION

- A. Address the effectiveness of the writing. How was it powerful, disturbing, motivating, and/or beautiful? Provide at least one example or direct quote that supports your position. Provide the page number where you find this example.
- B. Explain your position about the author's style of writing. Where did the author employ fresh figurative language to describe someone or something? What about vivid action verbs? Concrete nouns? Use direct quotes and provide page numbers where you find the examples.
- C. Describe any weaknesses you found. For instance, did the writer leave you wanting to know more about something or someone? If so, explain. Were any parts confusing? What else?
- D. How has this story confirmed or changed your way of thinking? What is your overall evaluation of this book? Would you recommend it to others? Why or why not?

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ELEMENTS OF A STORY (MINI-LESSON)

SETTING: the time and place of the story. The time might be a specific year, season, historical period, or even the future. The place might be a country, city, region, landform, water body; or even a specific room or building. Setting can also be used to tell the reader about the characters or to set the atmosphere for the story.

CHARACTERS: who the story is about. Characters can be people, animals, or fantasized beings. Some stories will have more than one main character. The main character in a literary work is called the **protagonist**. The character who opposes the protagonist is called the **antagonist**.

THEME: a general statement expressing an idea or insight about society, human nature, or the human condition. One story may have more than one theme. *Themes are not presented directly.* One way to discover the theme of a story is to observe what the main character learns. In other words, you must figure out the theme yourself. Themes should be declared in one complete sentence. For example, “Evil is punished and good is rewarded,” or “Good friends are worth more than gold.”

SYMBOLISM: an object that stands for an idea, feeling, or belief. Often, in stories, objects take on symbolic meanings. For example, a journey can symbolize life; black can represent evil or death; water may represent a new beginning; a lion could be a symbol for courage.

GENRE: The French word for the form or type of literature. There are several genres, each having their own characteristics.

- **Adventure:** can be considered a genre category, but adventure is also found in the plots of most other genres
- **Biographies:** are stories of a real person’s life, written or told by another person. An autobiography is written or told by that person.
- **Fantasies:** contain elements that are not realistic, such as talking animals, magical powers, or mythical beings.
- **Realistic Fiction:** involves real individuals with real problems involved in a realistic manner in modern times.

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- **Science Fiction:** often tells about science and technology of the future involving partially true laws or theories of science. It is usually set in the future, in space, or on another world or dimension.
- **Historical Fiction:** is centered around an historical situation and set in an historical period.
- **Horror Fiction:** is intended to scare or unsettle. It is usually based on the intrusion of an evil, misunderstood, supernatural element. Descriptions are often morbid, gruesome, or exceptionally suspenseful.
- **Legends and Myths:** are often based in part on historical events. They usually explain something about humans, natural phenomena, or the world. They often pertain to the actions of the gods.
- **Mysteries:** involve a puzzling event or situation that needs to be solved. Characters often investigate wrongdoing or obtain secret information.
- **Non-Fiction:** is a representation of a subject which is composed of facts. Non-fiction can be any subject and include how-to books, science books, history books, biographies, and much more.
- **Fables:** are usually very short tales used to teach a moral lesson, often with animals as characters. One animal/character usually displays a fault. The moral is stated in one sentence.
- **Fairy Tales:** are about fairies or other magical creatures, usually for young children.
- **Folk Tales:** involve real people or a typical situation, but use unusual occurrences or humor to resolve an issue, or make a point about life. Folk tales were originally handed down by word of mouth. They have no known creator. Tall tales are folk tales in which the main character is bigger than life in some way.