

Grade 5 English Language Arts

Week of November 9 – November 13

Lesson 2: Literature & Genres - Fiction

Fiction



Fiction is writing that is made up by the author. It might have some elements of reality, but key parts of the story are made up. The characters, plot, conflict, etc. come from the writer's imagination.

The purpose of fiction is to entertain the reader. Within the category of fiction, there is a great variety of genres.

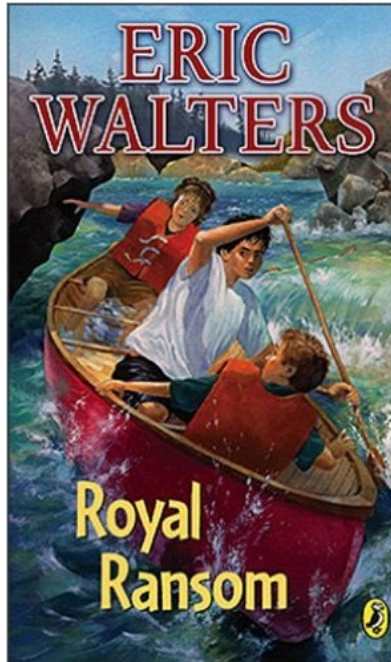
In the next set of pages, you will learn about some of the popular fiction forms, but there are many more.

Also, it is important to note that although some books and short stories are clearly only dedicated to one genre, there are some that are a mixture of genres. For example, a story could be full of adventure and set in the world of the future, so it could be considered a science fiction adventure novel.

As you complete the rest of this lesson, for each genre, add a book or movie that you think fits the genres. In a sentence or two, explain what makes you think it fits the genre.

1. Adventure	
2. Historical Fiction	
3. Humour Fiction	
4. Realistic Fiction	
5. Fantasy Fiction	
6. Science Fiction	

Adventure Fiction



Adventure stories are packed full of fast and exciting action. The main characters often have a goal they are trying to reach or a task they must complete. The plot is about going on a journey and visiting interesting places. The events that happen are more extraordinary compared to everyday life. The story can be set in the past, present or future. It can be in a realistic or fantasy setting.

The hero and the villain are usually easy to spot in an adventure story.

An example is the book *Royal Ransom* by Canadian author Eric Walters.

Jamie Ransom is a 13-year-old Cree boy who is helping his cousin with a special trekking group in Canada's North. He is excited to find out they are taking young Prince Andrew and his sister Victoria. But in the middle of the wilderness, kidnapers strike and the adults are taken hostage. The children manage to escape and must now battle their way through difficult Northern landscape to find help.

Historical Fiction



Historical fiction is a story set in the past and often around a specific event in time. The setting (the time and place) is a key component in historical fiction.

Writers of historical fiction usually research to find out what things were like during the specific time period they are writing about. They will find out what people wore, ate, how they spoke, what kind of traditions they had, etc.

The characters can be based on real people who lived during that time period or the author can create their own characters. The plot often reflects real events that happened in history.

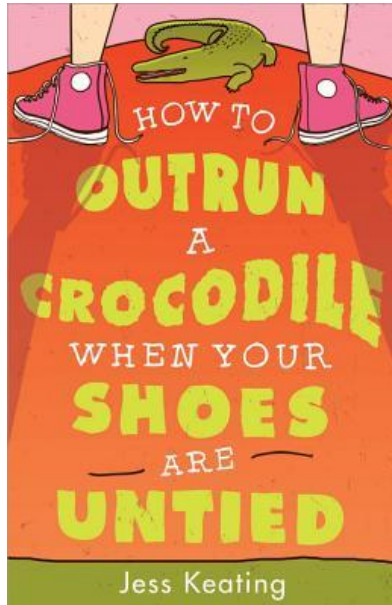
An example is the book *Rachel* by Canadian writer Lynne Kositsky.

Set in the 18th Century, Rachel and her family escaped slavery in America and are now making a life in Nova Scotia. But living in Canada is not as easy as they hoped. The land is barren, the winters are harsh and many people are racist toward her family. Rachel and her family are determined to keep on trying their best, despite the challenges.

Humour Fiction

The goal of humour fiction is make you smile and laugh. The setting is often the present day. The main character is usually the person who is the target of hilarious troubles or the one who is causing them.

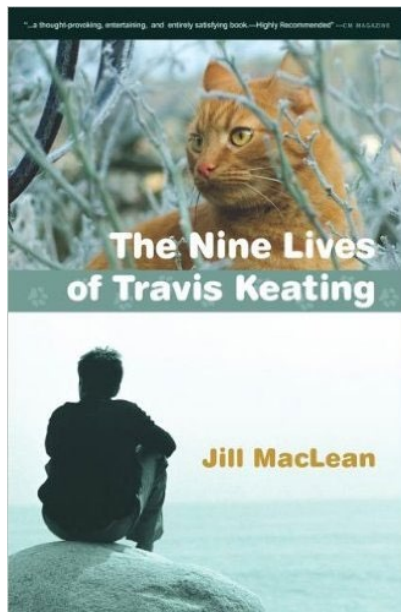
Although comedy fiction (as it is also known as) aims to be funny, there can still be a serious message or events that happen in the story.



An example is *How to Outrun a Crocodile When Your Shoes Are Untied* by Canadian author Jess Keating.

“Twelve-year-old Ana’s social life is officially on the endangered list: she lives in a zoo (mmm, elephant droppings!), her best friend has moved to New Zealand, and junior high is miserable. All Ana wants is to fade into the background. Yeah, that’s not going to happen. Luckily, Ana finds new friends who help her discover her true seventh-grade self and even help her pass her math finals!”

Realistic Fiction



Realistic fiction includes short stories and novels that feel like they could have happened in real life. The setting is in the present day or the very near past (usually within the last ten years).

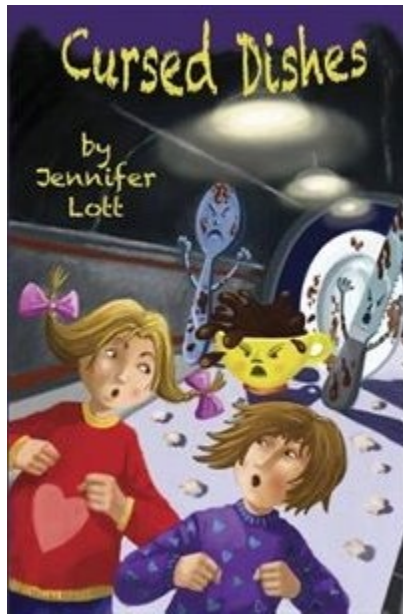
Realistic fiction happens in the context of our real world and follows all the “rules” of our existence. If the story starts out like it’s in our modern day world, but then you find out the main character owns a dragon and has a best friend that is a mermaid – the story is not realistic fiction. It is fantasy.

Realistic fiction has characters that are like real people. They encounter modern day problems and react to situations like real people would. These stories sound like they could be true. The conflicts dealt with are often common problems such as having trouble fitting in, bullying, moving to a new city, etc.

An example is *The Nine Lives of Travis Keating* by Canadian author Jill MacLean.

Travis has agreed to live with his dad for a year in a tiny community in Newfoundland. The sixth grade student is having trouble making friends and the local bully is already eyeing him up. Travis was feeling down about his life, but things change when he discovers a colony of abandoned cats. Travis puts his energy into helping the cats and ends up helping himself in the process.

Fantasy Fiction



The fantasy genre has fantastic characters or settings that don't exist in real life. Both imaginary creatures and talking animals are often part of fantasy. The settings could be magical or on another world.

Within the fantasy category, there are subgenres. High fantasy involves a made-up world that is mostly based on the author's imagination. An example is *The Hobbit*. Urban fantasy involves a real world setting with magical or supernatural elements such as the Harry Potter series. All fantasy books and short stories involve characters and events outside the boundaries of the real world.

An example is the book *Cursed Dishes* by Canadian author Jennifer Lott.

The story is about Charlotte and Eileen who keep leaving their dirty dishes around the house. Their older sister is tired of cleaning up after them and uses magic to teach them a lesson. The dirty dishes are coming to life and following the two sisters everywhere! How will they break this spell?

Science Fiction



Science fiction is about imagined innovations in science or technology. It may include ideas and inventions that do not exist, but there is a basis in real scientific principles or theories.

Authors may research a specific branch of science and then make predictions about what it could lead to in the future – and how it could impact society. The plot often revolves around events or problems that have not happened before.

The setting is often in the future, and it can also be in another universe or even another dimension.

An example is *Wake* by Canadian author [Robert J. Sawyer](#) who is known worldwide for his work in the science fiction field.

Caitlin Decter is your everyday teenager who happens to be a genius at math and blind. Scientists have created a new implant to restore sight, and she is one of the first people to get it. Through this device she is able to see the world of the Internet in a way no one else can see. She is also able to sense a mysterious consciousness -- that is growing in cyberspace.

More on Genres

Read the following book summaries and see if you can figure out which genre they are. All the books listed are by Canadian authors.

	Genre
<p>1) <i>The Prince of Neither Here Nor There</i> by Seán Cullen</p> <p>This book is about Brendan Clair who lives in Toronto and is having an awkward start to high school. As he tries to fit in, a strange woman visits him and he finds out that he is not human – he’s a faerie. Brendan discovers mystical realms in his city and learns his destiny is to help save the human race.</p>	
<p>2) <i>The Tiffin</i> by Mahtab Narsimhan</p> <p>This story is about a boy named Kunal who lives in Mumbai, India. He lives in a difficult foster home and decides he has had enough. Full of hope for a better life, he heads out on a search to find his mother.</p>	
<p>3) <i>Naomi's Road</i> by Joy Kagawa</p> <p>This book looks at the internment of Japanese-Canadians during World War Two through the eyes of a young girl named Naomi. The Canadian government ordered all Japanese-Canadian on the coast of BC to be relocated to labour camps in the interior of BC or to Alberta. Naomi copes with losing her home in Vancouver and the racism of the time period.</p>	
<p>4) <i>Quista</i> by Aviva Bel’Harold</p> <p>Danay lives on the water planet of Uma’Three. She feels like an outsider because her skin dries out in the water and she doesn’t have second lungs like everyone else. But she realizes her problems are small when the Emperor arrives to perform loyalty tests and her best friend is taken away. Danay must find strength within herself as she does all she can to save her friend.</p>	
<p>5) <i>Barkerville Gold</i> by Dayle Campbell Gaetz</p> <p>Rusty, Katie, and Sheila are budding detectives who are visiting Barkerville – a town known for its gold rush history. The three friends are searching for clues to find a fortune in missing gold, so they can return it to the rightful owners. But could their lives be at risk? There is talk in town that a miner went missing because the gold was cursed a hundred years ago.</p>	
<p>6) <i>28 Tricks for a Fearless Grade 6</i> by Catherine Austen</p>	

<p>Dave Davidson is on mission to help all his friends lose their fears. But his ideas lead to all sorts of hilarious mishaps and hijinks. A friend says he was afraid of public speaking. Dave's solutions are to get friends to hold up cue cards, get laryngitis or forge a note from a therapist.</p>	
<p>7) <i>Shipwreck!</i> By Frieda Wishinsky</p> <p>Sarah and Albert are two young friends from Liverpool, England who are excited to be sailing to Canada - an adventure of a lifetime back in 1914. It's early in the morning when they feel the ship, <i>Empress of Ireland</i>, give a sharp jolt...and then it begins to tilt! Passengers scream and run for lifeboats. Find out how Sarah and Albert survive this disaster at sea.</p>	