How to Read Fiction

A well-crafted story can provide entertainment, hold up a mirror to society, teach us about ourselves, and let us exercise our imaginations to travel anywhere in time and place.

Enduring Understandings

• Fiction weaves together the elements of character, plot, and setting.
• Conflict is essential to fiction.
• Fiction explores characters’ motives and actions as they deal with conflict.
• Fiction explores universal truths about human experience.
• Literary elements work together to convey themes in fiction.
• Reading fiction can be a means of self-discovery.

Vocabulary List

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Character</th>
<th>Climax</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
<th>Falling Action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mood</td>
<td>Narrator</td>
<td>Novel</td>
<td>Plot</td>
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<td>Point of View</td>
<td>Rising Action</td>
<td>Setting</td>
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<td>Theme</td>
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Fiction Essential Questions

• How is fiction like life?
• Why do people create fiction?
• How does the author make the characters come to life?
• Why do main characters face problems?
• Why do characters change?
• How does conflict lead to change?
• What characters do you relate to, and why?
• How do you figure out the theme?
• How does the author hook and hold the reader’s attention?
• How does point of view affect the story?
• How would the story change if the narrator changed?
• How is style important to the telling of a story?
Model Children’s Books

*Pink and Say*—Patricia Polacco

*Show Way*—Jacqueline Woodson

*Jumanji*—Chris Van Allsburg

*The Sandwich Swap*—Queen Raina

Historical Fiction Essential Questions

- In what ways may events in historical fiction connect to real history?
- How do authors of historical fiction make the time period and the characters come alive?
- What types of insights about life in a given time period might an author provide?
- How do authors help us draw comparisons between life today and life in another period of time?

Model Children’s Books

*When Jessie Came Across the Sea*—Amy Hest

*Pink and Say*—Patricia Polacco

*Cats in Krasinski Square*—Karen Hesse

*That Book Woman*—Heather Henson

*Baseball Saved Us*—Ken Mochizuki

*Show Way*—Jacqueline Woodsom

*The Butterfly*—Patricia Polacco

Fantasy Essential Questions

- How does life in the fantasy world help us learn about the real world?
- What kinds of conflicts typically occur in fantasy narratives?
- What is believable about the story?

Model Children’s Books

*Shrek*—William Steig

*A Day with Wilbur Robinson*—William Joyce

*Zathura*—Chris Van Allsburg

*Freefall*—David Wiesner
Where the Wild Things Are—Maurice Sendak
Alice—Whoopi Goldberg

Science Fiction Essential Questions

- How does the author use advances in science or technology to tell us the story?
- Would you want to live in the world of this story? Why or Why not?
- What message about life in the present time might the author be presenting?

Model Children’s Books

Aliens Love Underpants—Claire Freedman
Mars Needs Moms!—Berkeley Breathed

Realistic Fiction Essential Questions

- How does the author make the story seem real?
- Are there any characters that you relate to in the story? Why or why not?
- What does the author want readers to remember about the story?

Model Children’s Books

Thunder Cake—Patricia Polacco
Grandpa’s Face—Eloise Greenfield
Aunt Claire’s Yellow Beehive Hair—Deborah Blumenthal

Mystery Fiction Essential Questions

- What role does suspense play in mysteries?
- What qualities make a mystery successful or unsuccessful?

Model Children’s Books

Tuesday—David Wiesner
Grandpa’s Teeth—Rod Clement
Mysteries of Harris Burdick—Chris Van Allsburg