

Biography/Memoir

Diary Entry

If the subject of your biography or memoir had kept a diary, what do you think he or she would have written about? Put yourself in the person's shoes for this assignment. Choose three important events from the person's life and write a one-page diary entry about each.

MATERIALS

lined paper, construction paper, markers or crayons

DIRECTIONS

1 Find a biography or memoir that interests you and is at an appropriate reading level for you. Have your book approved by your teacher.

Book Title: _____

Author: _____

2 Look for important events that you might write about in your diary entries. Briefly describe each event and write the page numbers below.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

3 Review the list of events and circle three events you would like to write about.

DUE DATES
Book approved _____
Book finished _____
Project finished _____

4 Imagine that you are the person in the biography or memoir and that you have just experienced the first event. Think about how to describe this event from the character's perspective.

✿ How would the character describe what happened?

✿ What did the person see or hear?

✿ How did the person feel as the event was happening?

✿ How did the person feel once the event was over?

✿ How did other people react to the event?

5 Write a rough draft of the journal entry from the character's point of view. (This is called writing in first person.) Try to make the writing sound as if the character had written it. Think about the kind of language he or she would have used.

6 Write rough drafts of your diary entries for the other two events you chose. Look over the questions in step 4 to help you decide what to include.

7 Revise your writing and write a final draft.

8 Make a cover for the diary. Decorate the diary in a way that reflects the character's personality and the time period in which he or she lived. Write the person's name on it and your name below it.

Biography/Memoir

Dress-Up Day

Imagine that the person you read about walked into your classroom and introduced himself or herself. What would he or she say? How would the person talk, act, and dress? For this project, you will prepare a short presentation as if you are the subject of your biography or memoir. In your presentation, you will answer questions that your classmates have about this person.

DUE DATES
Book approved _____
Book finished _____
Project finished _____

MATERIALS

clothing that the subject of the book might have worn (or drawing materials to illustrate this), index cards

DIRECTIONS

- Find a biography or memoir that interests you and is at an appropriate reading level for you. Have your book approved by your teacher.

Book Title: _____

Author: _____

- Read the questions that your classmates prepared. Write the answers on the index cards. If you do not know an answer, use what you know about the person to guess how he or she might have responded.

- Take notes on the subject of your book. Include information about the following:

* family

* hometown

* date of birth (and death, if applicable)

Name: _____ Date: _____

✿ personality and character traits

✿ important accomplishments

✿ goals

✿ obstacles

✿ major events in the person's life

✿ contributions to society

4 Write a one-page monologue that you will present to the class. Write as if you are the person talking about himself or herself—for example, "I was born in 1877." Incorporate the information from your notes as well as the answers to your classmates' questions.

5 Read your monologue aloud and then revise it. Time yourself presenting your speech and make sure it takes about five minutes. Revise as necessary. Write your final draft neatly on index cards. You will turn in your index cards, so write your name or initials on each one.

6 Practice your speech so that you do not need to read from the index cards. (You may refer to them, but you should be able to make eye contact for most of your presentation.) Practice speaking and acting as you imagine the person would have.

7 Find out what the person looked like and how he or she dressed. On the day of your presentation, you will either dress in a costume to look like the person or bring in a large, colorful picture of him or her that you've drawn.

Biography/Memoir

Time Capsule

Imagine that the subject of your book made a time capsule to let future generations know about his or her life. What would the person have included? Create a time capsule and write a brief description of each item inside.

DUE DATES
Book approved _____
Book finished _____
Project finished _____

MATERIALS

shoe box, white construction paper, 3- by 5-inch index cards, markers or colored paper, found objects

DIRECTIONS

1 Find a biography or memoir that interests you and is at an appropriate reading level for you. Have your book approved by your teacher.

Book Title: _____

Author: _____

2 Brainstorm a list of important people, places, objects, and events in the person's life.

3 Imagine that you are that person and you are creating a time capsule. Refer to the list from the previous question to give you ideas about the objects you might include. The objects you choose can represent the people, places, and events that were important to the person. They can also represent the person's interests or aspects of his or her personality. You may include actual objects or drawings of them if the objects are unavailable. Include at least five objects or drawings.

4 For each item, write a short paragraph from the character's perspective about why you included it. Write each explanation on an index card and attach it to the appropriate object.

5 Decorate a shoe box in a way that represents the subject of your biography. You might cover it in paper and draw on it, glue pictures on it like a collage, or otherwise decorate it. Write the title, author, and your name on the box.

Fiction

The Main Character's in Town!

Imagine that you are a reporter for your local newspaper. The editor has just called to give you your latest assignment. You have been asked to interview a special visitor to your town—the main character of the book you just read!

DUE DATES	
Book approved	_____
Book finished	_____
Project finished	_____

MATERIALS

lined paper

DIRECTIONS

- 1 Find a fictional book that interests you and is at an appropriate reading level for you. Have your book approved by your teacher.

Book Title: _____

Author: _____

- 2 Write a paragraph describing the main character of the story. Include the character's age, hometown, occupation, hobbies, personality traits, and so on.

Name: _____

Description: _____

- 3 Think about what you would like to ask the character and what the newspaper's readers would want to find out about him or her. Write at least five questions that will reveal interesting and important information about the character. Write the questions on the next page. If the question requires a yes or no answer, ask the character to explain his or her responses. Base some of the questions on events in the book, such as:

- "How did you feel when...?"
- "What did you hope would happen when...?"
- "Why did you...?"

4 After you have written the questions, put yourself in the character's shoes and write a rough draft of your answers on the lines labeled "Response." Use information from the story in the character's responses. If you need more room, use the back of this page or another sheet of paper.

Question 1: _____

Response: _____

Question 2: _____

Response: _____

Question 3: _____

Response: _____

Question 4: _____

Response: _____

Question 5: _____

Response: _____

5 Proofread your questions and answers and add any additional information that will make your writing stronger. Then write a final draft on a separate sheet of paper.

Fiction

Write a Picture Book

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be a picture book author or illustrator? This activity will give you a chance to find out. Imagine that you are going to rewrite the book you just read for a first- or second-grade child. What are the most important events of the book? How could you describe them in a simple way?

DUE DATES
Book approved _____
Book finished _____
Project finished _____

MATERIALS

8½- by 11-inch white construction paper (cut or folded in half to form 8½- by 5½-inch sheets), markers or crayons, stapler

DIRECTIONS

1 Find a fictional book that interests you and is at an appropriate reading level for you. Have your book approved by your teacher.

Book Title: _____

Author: _____

2 Write a brief summary of the beginning, middle, and ending of the book:

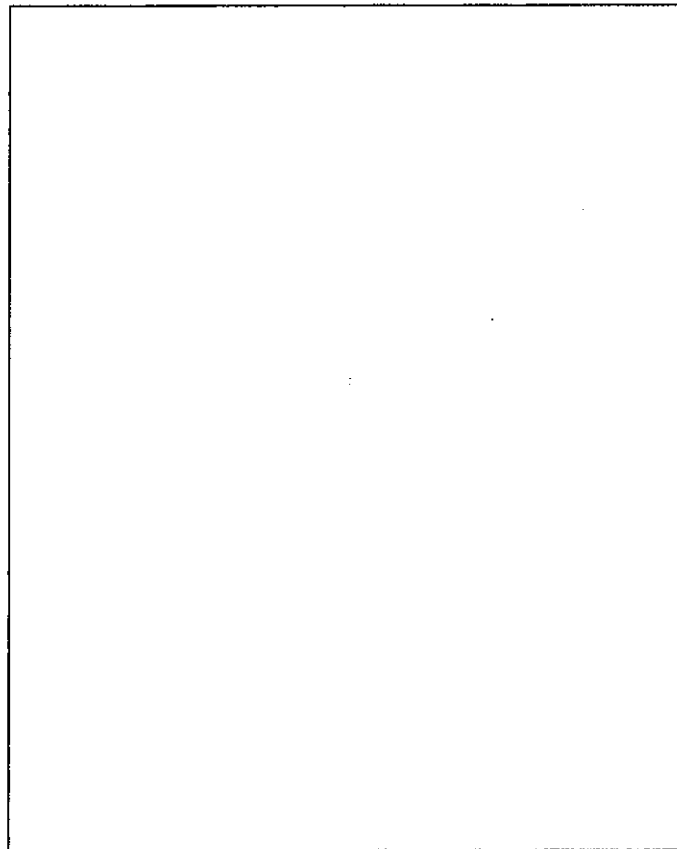
Beginning: _____

Middle: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Ending: _____

- ❸ Read your summaries and think about how you can rewrite the information as a story for children. Write a rough draft of the story, using language that a first- or second-grade student could understand. (If you are having a difficult time simplifying the story, you might retell your favorite chapter or episode instead of the whole book.) Plan to include about a paragraph of text on each page. Include dialogue and some details to make the story interesting. Decide how you will illustrate each page. Revise your story to make your writing stronger.
- ❹ Transfer the story onto white paper. Draw and color a picture on each page.
- ❺ Add a cover and write the title of the book, your name, and the original author's name—for example: "Black Beauty," retold by (your name), original story by Anna Sewell. Draw and color a picture on the cover. Sketch the cover below before creating your final copy. Arrange the pages in order with the cover on top and staple along the left side.



Fiction

Spend a Day

What if you could spend the day in the setting of your book? Which character would you choose to be your tour guide? For this project, you'll describe three activities that you would do during your visit and draw a picture of each of them.

MATERIALS

lined paper, unlined paper, crayons or colored pencils

DIRECTIONS

- 1 Find a fictional book that interests you and is at an appropriate reading level for you. Have your book approved by your teacher.

Book Title: _____

Author: _____

- 2 Write a few sentences describing the setting (time and place) of the book.

- 3 List the main characters and write a few sentences describing each one. Use another sheet of paper for additional space.

DUE DATES
Book approved _____
Book finished _____
Project finished _____

- 4 Now look at your character list and circle the character that will be your tour guide.
- 5 Imagine that this character has planned three activities for you to do. What do you think he or she would choose? Consider the places in the book as well as the time period. Think about activities this character enjoyed in the book. Write three activities on the lines.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

- 6 Write a one-page description of each activity for your rough draft. Describe what you saw and did, as well as your reactions to each activity. You might also include dialogue between you and the character. Did you meet any of the other characters?
- 7 Draw and color an illustration to go with each activity.
- 8 Revise your writing, and write a final draft.
- 9 Add a cover with a title (for example, "My Day With Jo," From *Little Women*). Write your name on the cover, and staple everything together.

Science Fiction/Fantasy

Design a Game

Imagine that you work for a toy company and you have been asked to design a board game. The game should be based on the book you just finished and should include information about the characters, setting, and story. When you have finished your game, your classmates will have a chance to play it.

MATERIALS

cardboard or posterboard, markers, glue, construction paper, dice, index cards or paper, playing pieces, lined paper, small resealable plastic bags, brass fasteners or paper clips

DIRECTIONS

- 1 Find a science fiction or fantasy book that interests you and is at an appropriate reading level for you. Have your book approved by your teacher.

Book Title: _____

Author: _____

- 2 Write the characters' names, along with a sentence identifying each one.

- 3 In a sentence or two, describe the setting of the story.

DUE DATES

Book approved

Book finished

Project finished

Nonfiction

Photo Album

Imagine that you are a photojournalist who took photographs of everything in your book. Choose four of these photos to include in an album. The photos should show the most important people, places, events, or objects from the story. You will draw the photos and write a caption for each.

DUE DATES
Book approved _____
Book finished _____
Project finished _____

MATERIALS

four 3- by 5-inch index cards (or white paper cut to that size or larger), large sheets of construction paper, markers or crayons, glue or tape

DIRECTIONS

- Find a nonfiction book that interests you and is at an appropriate reading level for you. Have your book approved by your teacher.

Book Title: _____

Author: _____

- Make a list of the most important people, places, events, and objects in the book.

- Choose the four most important or interesting items on your list. Draw and color an illustration of each one to create a "photo."

- Write an interesting caption to describe each photo. Each caption should be at least three sentences. In the caption, explain why the image shown is important in the book.

- Fold a sheet of construction paper in half, like a book. On the front, write a title for your album. Include the book title, author, and your name.

- Open the album and glue the photos inside. Glue a caption beneath each one.

Nonfiction

Souvenirs

Have you ever bought a souvenir to remind you of a place you've visited? After you finish your nonfiction book, you'll choose four important places or events from it. For each place or event, you'll explain its importance and design a souvenir.

DUE DATES
Book approved _____
Book finished _____
Poster finished _____

MATERIALS

3- by 5-inch index cards (or paper cut to that size), white paper, markers or colored pencils

DIRECTIONS

- Find a nonfiction book that interests you and is at an appropriate reading level for you. Have your book approved by your teacher.

Book Title: _____

Author: _____

- List the important places and events in the book. Write a sentence about each, explaining why it is important. Use the back of this sheet if you need more room.

- Circle the four items on the list that you feel are the most important in the book. Design a souvenir to represent each of the circled items. Think about the souvenirs you've seen in gift shops: T-shirts, key chains, paperweights, mugs, magnets, statuettes, postcards, bumper stickers, and so on. Sketch your design and then draw and color a final copy. Draw each one on a separate sheet of paper.

- Next, consider the following questions: Why did you choose the four items that you circled? What did you learn about them in your book? Why are they important to remember? Why should others learn about them? How do your souvenirs represent the places or events that you chose? Write a paragraph that explains the significance of each.

- Revise each paragraph and then copy a final version onto an index card (one index card per souvenir).

Mystery

Character Cards

Here's a way to keep track of all the characters—make trading cards for them. These cards will look like baseball cards but will show different kinds of information.

MATERIALS

5- by 8-inch index cards (or paper cut to this size)

DIRECTIONS

- 1 Find a mystery that interests you and is at an appropriate reading level for you. Have your book approved by your teacher.

Book Title: _____

Author: _____

- 2 List the characters here.

- 3 Circle the characters that are most important to the story. (Even a character that seems to have a small part might be very important in the end.)

- 4 Make a character card for each of the characters you circled. (You should make at least five cards.) On one side of the index card, draw and color a picture of the character. Write the character's name below or above your picture.

- 5 On the back of each card, include the following information. You may need to look up some of this information in your book. If you can't find the exact information, write "Information not available."

- ✧ Name and approximate age
- ✧ Home
- ✧ Occupation (job)
- ✧ Physical description (what the character looks like)
- ✧ Role in story (how the character is involved in the mystery)
- ✧ Suspicious or unusual behavior

DUE DATES
Book approved _____
Book finished _____
Project finished _____

Historical Fiction

Story Quilt

Can you think of any objects that have special meaning to you? Do they remind you of a person or an important event? Now, think about the historical fiction book that you read. Were there any significant objects in the story? In literature, these objects are called symbols. They are symbolic of something important. For this project, you'll make a quilt that shows four symbols from the book.

MATERIALS

large square sheet of white construction paper, ruler, markers or colored pencils, scissors, wrapping paper (optional)

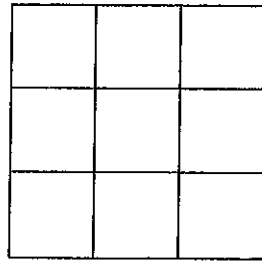
DIRECTIONS

- 1 Find a book of historical fiction that interests you and is at an appropriate reading level for you. Have your book approved by your teacher.

Book Title: _____

Author: _____

- 2 Measure and draw light pencil lines to divide the white paper square into thirds across and lengthwise. This will create nine equal squares for your paper quilt.



- 3 Look through your book to help you remember objects that were important to the story. These objects should represent something significant, like a person or an event. List at least six of them below.

DUE DATES

Book approved

Book finished

Project finished

Historical Fiction

Comic Strip

For this project, you'll create a comic strip based on a part of the historical fiction book you read. Your comic strip should include illustrations as well as text. Look at real comic strips for ideas.

MATERIALS

large sheets of white construction paper, thin markers or colored pencils, ruler

DIRECTIONS

- 1 Find a book of historical fiction that interests you and is at an appropriate reading level for you. Have your book approved by your teacher.

Book Title: _____

Author: _____

- 2 Choose an important or exciting part of the book that you would like to retell in your comic strip. Find a part that will allow you to include action and dialogue. Write a one-paragraph summary of this part of the book.
- 3 Refer to your summary as you sketch your comic strip. Decide what you will include in each panel. Your comic strip should include about eight panels in all. If you have difficulty drawing the characters, you may draw stick figures. Make sure to give them some identifiable characteristics so that the reader can tell them apart. Also make sure that the sequence of events is clear and easy to follow.
- 4 Position a sheet of white construction paper horizontally and draw eight boxes of equal size. (You might need to make some larger and some smaller, depending on what you will include in each.) Draw and write in pencil first, then copy over with pen or thin marker. Keep the illustrations and text as neat as possible. Then, color your comic strip.
- 5 Give your comic strip a title. Write your name, the book title, and the author's name on your project.

DUE DATES
Book approved _____
Book finished _____
Project finished _____