

# Kidblog Book Reviews

Read books you enjoy. Write reviews and post them on Kidblog. Other students can read your reviews and add their comments!



## Fiction Books or True Narratives:

1. **Read** and enjoy your book! Most students take notes on the Note-Taking Sheet\* as they read. The notes help them remember the book and make writing the review easier.
2. **Write your review.** Use the blank Writing Organizer\* to help organize your thoughts. Then write your review. You can write it in Word or Google Docs, and then copy and paste the text into the Kidblog text screen. Or you can write the review directly in Kidblog with “New Post.” Just remember to “Save Draft” before you close out of Kidblog if you are not finished.
3. Here is the format for the fiction Book Review.

**1<sup>st</sup> paragraph – State the title, the author’s name, and write a summary of the main problem/situation** facing the main character. The last sentences of this paragraph should identify the **author’s message (theme)** of the book.

**2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph – Describe the setting and main characters of the story.** Weave together the following information in a logical way.

- **Important information about the main character** – his/her everyday life, family, personality, motivations, internal struggles, hope/fears, character traits
- **A description of the setting** – when and where the book takes place, the uniqueness of the setting, and the mood or atmosphere

This paragraph can be broken into 2 paragraphs, if needed.

**3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph – Describe how the main problem in the story begins and develops.** If the story has a clear antagonist, briefly describe him/her in this paragraph. Describe how the main character responds to the problem and the character traits s/he exhibits as s/he responds. Do NOT give away all of the exciting events of the book or the ending! This paragraph typically ends with a question or two to entice the reader!

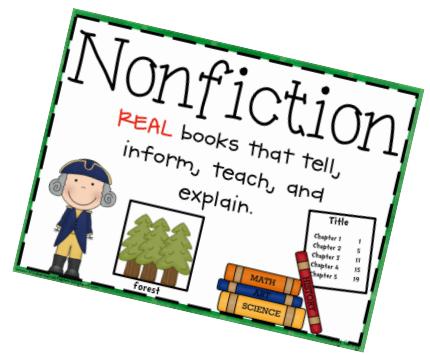
**4th paragraph – This paragraph describes your opinion of the book.** You will make **3 main points about the book**, and each point must be supported by specific evidence from the text or your personal reflections. At the end of your review, you can rank the book on a scale of 1-10 and make a recommendation.

4. **Revise and edit your post.** Make sure you have included ALL required information. Make sure the review is organized and f-l-o-w-s. Fix incorrect sentences, misspelled words, and errors in punctuation or capitalization.
5. **Click “Review.”** I will be notified that you have posted a review. I will read your review and give you comments for editing and revising.
6. **Revise** per my comments by clicking “Edit.” Make ALL corrections. Then select “Publish.” I will double-check that revisions have been made and publish your review for the class to see!



## Nonfiction (Informational) Books or Biographies:

1. Read and enjoy your book!
2. Write a 2-3 paragraph review which includes the following:
  - a. the title, author, and subject of the book,
  - b. a description of how the information in the book is organized,
  - c. a summary of the main ideas of the book,
  - d. things that surprised or interested you when you read the book,
  - e. the reason you chose this book and your opinion of the book, with specific reasons.
3. Revise and edit your post to fix incorrect sentences, misspelled words, and errors in punctuation or capitalization.
4. Click "Review."
5. After you have received my writing advice, revise your review. Click "Publish." I will check your work and publish your review for your classmates to see!



## Kidblog Book Review FAQs

### **When will I read the books?**

- Most of the reading will be done in your 20 minutes of nightly reading.



### **Which books may I choose?**

- Choose books at your independent reading level that you want to read! It's that simple! Please do not choose books that are far below your reading level. Challenge yourself!
- Try something new! Check out a variety of genres – realistic fiction, historical fiction, biography, science fiction, fantasy, nonfiction, etc. You might find a new genre that you love!
- Throughout the year, read a book from at least 3 different genres.
- Do not choose books that were read or used for instruction during a previous grade. (*By the Great Horned Spoon, Tiger Rising, Number the Stars, etc.*)
- Sorry, but no graphic novels or books in which 1/3 or more of the content is drawings.
- Books need to be at least 100 pages in length.
- If you love a series of books, go for it!
- A great place to find new ideas for books is by reading other students' reviews on Kidblog.
- My classroom library is "open." You may borrow any book! I ask that (1) you take good care of the book by storing it in a plastic bag, and (2) promptly return it when you are finished.
- Visit the Pacific Library at lunch recess or after school to check out a book.



### When will I write the Kidblog reviews?

- Most of the writing will be done at home during your homework time.

### How many reviews should I write?

- The minimum number of reviews is one per month. I will give you the exact due dates for the reviews to be submitted each month. But... many students exceed the minimum number! Shoot for the stars!

### Do the book reviews affect my report card grades?

- Yes. By reading books, you are strengthening your reading comprehension skills. I will assess whether your reviews show that you are meeting the 5<sup>th</sup> grade expectations for understanding characters, settings, themes, and plots. I will also assess whether you are meeting 5<sup>th</sup> grade writing standards.

### Is it hard to write a Kidblog book review?

- At first, writing the reviews will be challenging. You will find them easier and faster to do as the year goes along. The more reviews that you write, the easier it will be!
- There are several things you can do to make Kidblogs easier to write.
  - As you read, take notes on the Note-taking Sheet\* about the main characters, the setting, the plot, and the theme.
  - Use the Writing Organizer\* to outline your thoughts and ideas for your review.
  - Review the Kidblog sample\* and these instructions BEFORE you start to write. Double-check that you have included everything required.
  - Remember that you are writing the review for someone who has NOT read the book. Give enough information so they will understand the main idea of the book.
  - Don't be tempted to "paraphrase" the blurb on the back of the book, an on-line review, or another student's review of your book. It will be obvious to me, and you will have to start over. Do your OWN thinking! I want to read YOUR ideas.
  - **Don't simply "re-tell" the events of the story.** Use higher-level thinking skills to draw conclusions about the setting, characters, plot, and theme.
  - Reread your review after you write it. Revise the sentences so they f-l-o-w in a logical order and tell a story. Fix errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and capitalization.
  - Learn from your mistakes. Learn from my comments on your first book reviews and don't make the same mistakes twice.

### Can I write a review on a book that someone else has already reviewed?

- Of course! Make sure, however, that your review reflects your ideas and writing. It should not be similar in words or ideas to someone else's review.

### Can I select my own background, avatar, header, and fonts on Kidblog?

- Yes! Be creative and have fun!

\* Instructions, the Note-Taking Sheets, and the Writing Organizer can also be found on the Kidblog home page. You can download them there.