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TEACHER RESOURCES

Skills Assessment Tracker

Date: _____ Novel: _____

**K
E
Y**

- 1** = does not demonstrate understanding or application of the concept
2 = demonstrates some understanding and/or application of the concept
3 = demonstrates sufficient understanding and application of the concept

Skill	1	2	3	Notes
Demonstrate Understanding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plot • setting • sequence • main idea 				
Analyze Characters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • traits • relationships • growth 				
Examine Craft <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • language • literary devices • effects of choices 				
Interpret Meaning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • theme • tone and mood • intent and purpose 				

PLOT & STRUCTURE

Section Overview

While the activities in this section touch on and overlap with several literary elements, they are primarily focused on the elements of **plot** and **structure**.

Follow this outline to familiarize your students with these elements and then to examine how these elements are employed in the novel your class is studying.

Step 1 Introduce a literary element: plot.

- ✓ Help students understand what is meant by *plot*. Introduce and reinforce the concepts of plot and conflict (pages 22–23 of this guide).

Step 2 Assign pre-reading activities.

- ✓ Assign the **Before You Begin** pre-reading activities: “Plot Likes and Dislikes” (page 3 of the Student Activity Book) and “Your Takes on Topics” (page 4 of the Student Activity Book). Consult the Activity Overviews on page 26 of this guide.

Step 3 Introduce a literary element: structure. Begin reading the novel.

- ✓ Help students understand what is meant by *structure*. Introduce the concept by reading “What Is Structure?” (page 24 of this guide).
- ✓ Assign the **As You Begin** activity: “A Door to a New World” (page 5 of the Student Activity Book). Consult the Activity Overview on page 26 of this guide.

Step 4 Introduce plot devices.

- ✓ If needed, familiarize students with the concepts of turning points and the classic plot structure (page 25 of this guide).

Step 5 Read the novel, section by section.

- ✓ After each section is complete, assign the **As You Read** activities (pages 6–8 of the Student Activity Book). Consult the Activity Overviews on pages 26–27 of this guide.

Step 6 Complete the novel.

- ✓ Assign any or all of the **At the End** activities (pages 9–19 of the Student Activity Book). Consult the Activity Overviews on pages 27–29 of this guide.

Step 7 Make a more personal connection.

- ✓ Assign one or more of the writing prompts featured in “Text-to-Self Connections,” found on page 30 of this guide.

Step 8 Learn great writing from the masters.

- ✓ Assign one or more of the writing prompts featured in “Mentor-Text Writing Prompts,” found on page 31 of this guide.

PLOT & STRUCTURE

Mentor-Text Writing Prompts

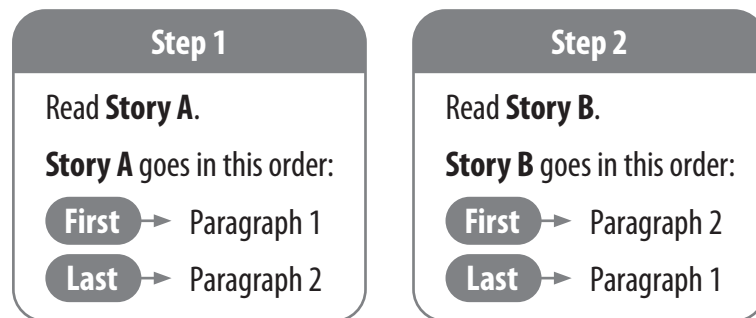
Here are some writing prompts that will get your students thinking and writing like the author of the novel they are studying.

Prompt #1 Structure the Story of Your Life

What You Read: The novel you have read was put in a specific order by the author. It may have gone in time order. It may have contained flashbacks or jumped forward in time.

It's Your Turn: Try your own experiment to see the importance of how a story is organized and ordered. Write two paragraphs.

- ♦ **Directions for Paragraph 1:** Write 2–3 sentences about the day you were born. Use what your family has told you about that day. Include the date this event happened.
- ♦ **Directions for Paragraph 2:** Write 2–3 sentences about your most recent birthday. Write about what you did to celebrate. Include the date this event happened.



Do both stories make sense? Does changing the time order change the story a lot?

Prompt #2 When One Storyline Meets Another

What You Read: Most novels have a main storyline. But other things are happening in the world of the novel at the same time as the events of the main storyline. These other events are a part of other storylines, and the author has to decide which parts of other storylines to weave into the novel.

It's Your Turn: Think about yourself and one of your friends in your class. You are both here now, and you are both about to do this writing experiment. That is the main storyline of the moment. But when today started, you were each in a different place where different things were happening. When you tell the story of you both being in class today, how much of the other events should you include? Write an outline or a short version of this story. What details will you include about your morning and the time leading up to class? What details will you include about your friend's morning?

CHARACTERIZATION & POINT OF VIEW

Text-to-Self Connections

Here are some writing prompts that students can use to relate the events of the novel to experiences in their own lives.

#1 Most Like You

Which of this novel's characters is most like you? Which is least like you? Divide a page in half. On each half, answer one of these questions. Use evidence from the book to explain your choices.

#2 Highs and Lows

Just like characters in novels, most people experience good things and bad things. Write about a high point in your life? How did you react to it at the time? How do you feel about it now?

#3 Acting Older

Young people in novels often face moments when they must act older than their age in order to overcome adversity (or when they do something that is too grown-up and get themselves in trouble because of it). When was a time that you feel you acted older than your age? Describe what you did and what happened as a result.

#4 Supporting Characters

The main characters in novels can face some tough times. But they usually have a character (or many characters) who support them and help them to succeed. Write about someone in your life who has helped you. If possible, choose someone who you didn't think would be so helpful but turned out to do just that. Write about what happened and how it made you feel.

#5 One Way and Then Another

Some characters in novels act one way when they are with some people and another way when they are with other people. Did you notice that in the novel you read? Have you ever noticed someone doing that in your life? Have you ever noticed yourself doing that? Write about a time when you noticed this. Compare the time in your life to the situation in the novel when it happened.

SETTING & GENRE

Activity Overviews

page 44

Activity 44: Your Favorite Stories

Name: _____ Date: _____

Your Favorite Stories

You are about to read a novel. What kind of a reader are you?

1. Which of these types of stories do you most like to read? (Fill in one answer.)

☐ Stories that take place in a time long ago. ☐ Stories that take place in a time just like now. ☐ Stories that take place in a time far from now.

Why do you think these are your favorite types of stories?

2. Which of these types of stories do you most like to read? (Fill in one answer.)

☐ Stories about things that could happen in your world. ☐ Stories about things that could only happen in a made-up world.

Why do you think these are your favorite types of stories?

Title: "Your Favorite Stories"

Use: Before You Begin the Novel

Type: Individual

Student Instructions: Think about yourself as a reader. Choose from the option given and explain the types of stories you like to read.

Teacher Notes: Use this activity as the basis for a class discussion about students' preferences. Do most students like stories that take place in the current time or another? Do most like realistic fiction or fantasy?

page 45

Activity 45: Begin Here

Name: _____ Date: _____

Begin Here

Many books begin by telling you about a place.

Title of the Novel: _____

1. In one short sentence, name the setting in which the novel begins.

2. From the first few pages of the novel, collect quotes about this setting. Find two sentences or phrases that mention the look of the world in which the novel's opening is set.

3. Would you say that the way the author describes the place makes it sound like a good or bad place to live? (Fill in good, bad, or neither.) Explain your answer. If your answer is good or bad, tell how the author shows you this.

good _____ bad _____ neither _____

Title: "Begin Here"

Use: As You Begin the Novel

Type: Individual

Student Instructions: Examine how the author introduces the novel's setting. Find quotes describing the look of the novel's world. Determine if the setting is described as a good place, a bad place, or one that is neither good nor bad.

Teacher Notes: Discuss the final question as a group to determine if all students are on the same page with how they interpret the author's introduction of the setting.

page 46

Activity 46: On Locations

Name: _____ Date: _____

On Locations

Where does the action take place in this section of the novel? (With a partner, list all the different places described in this section of the novel.)

Title of the Novel: _____

Page numbers in sections: from page _____ to page _____

4. Now that you have listed the novel's settings, discuss each question below. On the lines provided, write a summary of your discussion.

Discussion Question #1: Are the settings in this section mostly indoor or outdoor? Is there a reason for this? Explain.

Discussion Question #2: Which is the most important setting in this section of the novel? Why is this setting important to the character or the plot of the novel?

Title: "On Locations"

Use: As You Read the Novel

Type: Collaborative

Student Instructions: With a partner, list all of the locations in which the action takes place in each section of the novel. Practice speaking, listening, and summarizing as you and your partner discuss the types of locations and determine which is the most important.

Teacher Notes: A copy of this activity should be distributed to students after they have finished reading each section of the novel. Have students focus on and complete the top portion of the activity before moving on to the bottom portion.

page 47

Activity 47: A Sense of Place

Name: _____ Date: _____

A Sense of Place

Authors use descriptive language to make settings come to life. Look at how the author of this novel did this for a scene from the section you have just read.

Title of the Novel: _____

Page numbers in sections: from page _____ to page _____

5. From the scene you just read, write down the sensory details that the author uses to describe the setting.

Sight: _____

Sound: _____

Touch: _____

Taste: _____

Smell: _____

Title: "A Sense of Place"

Use: As You Read the Novel

Type: Individual

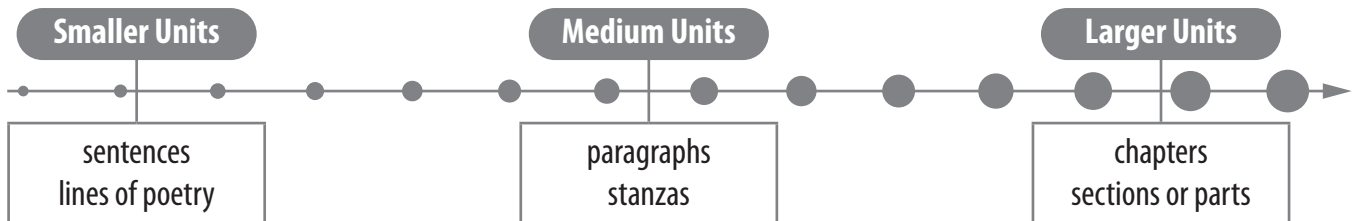
Student Instructions: Use this activity to focus on one passage in which the setting is very important. Name the setting, and then list the sensory details the author uses to help the reader get a "sense" of the place.

Teacher Notes: A copy of this activity should be distributed to students after they have finished reading each section of the novel. Consider having at the ready a list of passages that feature the use of sensory details to describe setting.

Spotlights on Writing Craft (CONT.)

Spotlight On Organization and Structure

An author can use many different methods of organizing text. Text can be organized in different types of units of different sizes. Here is a diagram showing those units, from the smallest on the left to the largest on the right:



An author can vary the lengths of all these in order to create a stylistic effect or to serve the plot in some way. Long sentences and paragraphs may be used to paint a fuller picture of a setting, while shorter sentences and paragraphs may be used to make a shocking moment or action stand out and demand the reader's attention. Chapter lengths can also vary, and the way those chapters begin and end can be used to great effect. The beginnings of chapters can be written in such a way to draw the reader further into the chapter, while the endings can be written to compel the reader to continue reading in order to find out what happens next.

Spotlight On Word Choice

The average novel contains over 40,000 words. That is a lot of word choices that an author must make. Each word must fit in with every other word in the novel. Good writing is not about using the longest or most difficult words. In literature, a word is only as good as how it serves the purpose and artistry of the story.

Think about the following three pieces of writing. Which one best communicates the moment being described?

#1 Being an acquaintance of Kip's has been a most unsatisfactory experience. He seems disinterested in avoiding shenanigans that cause me abject embarrassment. I've even been accused of petty theft due to his actions!

#2 During last week's math lesson, Kip tripped me just to get a laugh from half the class. I fell flat on my face in front of everyone. Last summer, he stole \$6 from Bill the Bully and blamed it on me. No, Kip is not what you would call a great friend.

#3 That Kip. Not a friend. He's done bad stuff. I remember.