

# Children's Picture Book ELA End of Year Project

Students will plan, write, illustrate, and publish a unique children's picture book.



## Picture Book needs:

- Include a minimum of 5 literary devices
- Include a lesson, theme or message that is developed subtly in the book.
- 12 – 14 pages in length
- Have text on each page (you can use speech balloons as well)
- Have 8 – 14 illustrations
- Have a cover with an original title and illustration
- Look Professional (craftsmanship should be evident)

## Preparation:

- Share your favorite picture book from childhood.
- Answer the questions from the Children's Book Review Guide about your book.
- Be prepared to share your book with the class

## Step One:

- In groups of 3 share your favorite picture book.
- Share 3 reasons this is your favorite book-use examples from the book
- Discuss the Children's Book Review Guide with your group
- Decide what characteristics or guidelines are needed for a successful children's book.
- Group shares their guidelines with the class

#### Step Two:

- Discuss project: composing the text and illustrations for their own children's picture book. (refer to the grading rubric)
- Brainstorm themes that you noticed in the stories: (ie. Fear, acceptance, change, family, sharing, friendship, growing up...)
- "I Remember" Journal: Describe (using all 5 senses) a memory from childhood—can be happy, sad, scary, exciting. If the memory is incomplete you can add details (even if they are not real!) Try to stick to memories that are from the same age range as our reading buddies. It will help you realize issues that are universal to that age.
- Have volunteers share their memories
- Homework: come up with plot and character ideas for your own stories. (Hint: think about issues that your reading buddy may have told you about, or that you may have noticed while working with them)

#### Step Three:

- Expand on memory journal by brainstorming additional details.
- Print (draw) the following graphic organizers and complete them for the story you want to write:
  - o Character Map
  - o Conflict Map
  - o Resolution Map
  - o Setting Map

#### Step Four:

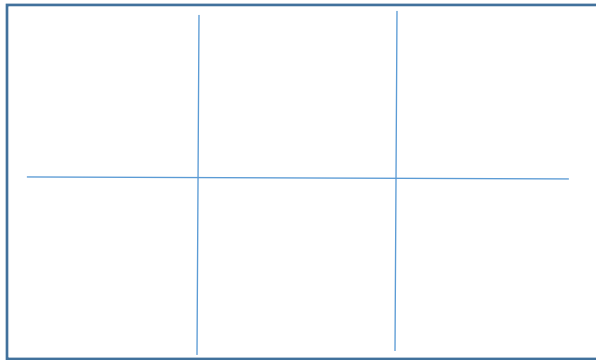
- Complete the Plot Pitch Template, complete the main ideas for the story.
- Complete the Story Map for your story (finish as homework)

Step Five:

- “Pitch” (present) your idea with a partner (or to a small group or the class)
- Answer the Plot Pitch Peer Questions on a separate sheet of paper for your partner’s story.
- Discuss and brainstorm ideas to improve the story

Step Six:

- Divide several 8.5 x 11 sheets of paper into four to six boxes. These boxes represent the pages in your book. There should be enough boxes to represent each page of the book as well as the cover. This is your story board.



Turn a single piece of paper into a story board by folding it into 6 boxes.

Create 2-3 of these so you have enough for each page of your book.

Drawings should be rough sketches, enough to know how big to draw something and fit everything into the picture

- Sketch the illustrations and text for each page and the cover in a pane of the storyboard. You should have a balance of text and illustrations.
- This is a rough draft—not the final product.
- Experiment with location, size, and amount of text and illustrations on each page.
- Discuss storyboards with a partner or a small group

Step Seven:

- Create your final product.
- Illustrate your book on a full sized piece of paper (8.5cm x 11cm ) Drawing the book full size and then shrinking it down to a half size when it is printed makes for a better looking book!

Create your good copy:

- Option 1: Type the text of your book in Book Creator, and then take pictures of your illustrations to upload into your book. The book can then be printed and you will have a glossy, finished published copy of your book.
  - Option 2: Type your book in a word document. Print off the text onto single sided full pages. These pages are your good copy pages that you will illustrate. Turn in the completed pages to me, and I will scan them and send them to the print shop for printing into half sized booklets. You do not get the glossy published look. This option requires less tech set up and trouble shooting on your end.
  - Option 3: Illustrate and your book on Book creator. You are limited by the backgrounds and images available. Students can illustrate directly on book creator using a program that is similar to Paint.
- Create your final illustrations
  - Submit your good copy to your teacher! (Either hard copy original drawings, or share your book on Book creator to your teacher)

#### Step Eight:

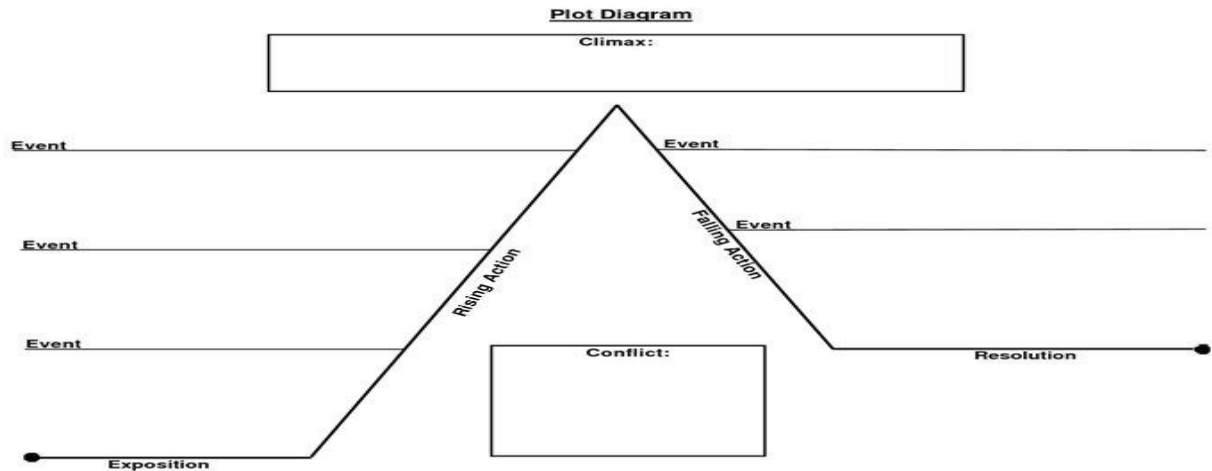
- SHARE YOUR STORY WITH THE CLASS (or with a group)
- TURN IN FINAL PRODUCT! We will be giving the good copy to your reading buddy, and you will also have a good copy of your book!

# Children's Book Review Guide

Title \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_ # of pages \_\_\_\_\_

**Step One: Complete all areas of the plot chart.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



**Step Two: Respond in writing to the questions in areas A, B, and C.**

Area A: Text

1. The text of a children's book is usually organized into simple sentences and short paragraphs. How was the text organized in the book that you have chosen to review? Explain whether this organization was sufficient for the story that this book is telling.
2. Children's book authors often employ literary tools to help make the story more vivid in the readers' minds. Commonly used literary tools are rhythm, alliteration, repetition, refrains, onomatopoeia, simile, personification, rhyme, and imagery. Identify three different areas in the text where a literary tool was employed. For each example you identify, state the type of literary tool that is used and how the employment of the tool helps support the story.
3. Identify two areas in the text that use a question or other device to help move the reader to the next page.

#### Area B: Illustrations

1. Some picture books have an illustration on the front cover that presents the main conflict or point of the story. Identify two or more elements from the front cover of the book you are reviewing and explain how they relate to the story.
2. What is the primary medium (collage, drawings, photographs, etc.) used in the illustrations?
3. Identify the illustration that in your opinion is the most effective in developing the story as a whole. Explain how two or more elements in the illustration help support and develop the story.
4. Identify two elements that are repeated throughout a majority of the illustrations. Explain how these elements support the story.

#### Area C: Characterization

1. What is the easily identifiable dominant trait of the story's main character?
2. Identify a character trait of the main character that is established through the text.
3. Identify a character trait of the main character that is established through the illustrations.
4. Identify two character traits of the main character that young children identify or sympathize with.
5. What was the main problem that the main character faces in the book? How is this problem similar to a problem that most children have faced before?
6. Sometimes a children's book character will solve the main conflict on his or her own. How did the character in the book you selected turn to self-reliance to solve the main conflict of the story?

**Step Three: Share your responses in steps one and two with your peers. Rate the Book giving a score of 1-10 (1 for poor, 10 for fantastic) in each category:**

Plot: \_\_\_\_\_ Illustration: \_\_\_\_\_ Text: \_\_\_\_\_ Characterization: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Guidelines for a Successful Children's Book**

Plot	Characters	Illustrations

## Brainstorming the Conflict

1. What is the conflict? In one sentence, describe the conflict the main character will face in your story.
2. How will it be dealt with? In the left column, list actions that the main character will take to deal with the main conflict. In the right column, list complications that would or could result from the action listed in the left column.

Action	Complication

## Plot Pitch Template

Use the template below as a guide for organizing the text of your story.

- This template is a suggestion of how the text of a 14-page children's picture storybook could be organized. It does not include the illustrations.
- Boxes 1 and 8 are one-page spreads. \*Boxes 2-7 represent two-page spreads

1 Introduce characters. Establish the setting.	2 Introduce the main conflict.	3 Actions taken to deal with the conflict. Resulting complications.	4 Actions taken to deal with the conflict. Resulting complications.
5 Actions taken to deal with the conflict. Resulting complications.	6 Climax. Presentation of the correct action for solving the conflict.	7 Examination of the main character's feelings.	8 Resolution. ("Tuck in" the main character.)



## **Plot Pitch Peer Questions**

Use the following questions to help develop feedback during the plot pitch peer session activity.

1. Does the main character have one or more identifiable traits that appeal to children?
2. Is the conflict something that a child will understand?
3. Does the main character attempt at least three different actions in an endeavor to solve the conflict?
4. Is the conflict resolved through the main character's self-reliance?
5. Overall, does the plot have "turnability" potential? Will the reader be drawn in by the plot and want to turn each page to find out what happens next?
6. Will the reader care about what happens to the main character?
7. Where are the more exciting places?
8. Where are the places that need more "zip" added to them?

## Your Plot Outline

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Introduce character and setting	2. Into main conflict
3. Intro main conflict	4. Actions taken to resolve conflict
5. Resulting complications	6. Actions taken to resolve conflict
7. Resulting complications	8. Actions taken to resolve conflict
9. Resulting complications	10. Climax, correct action for conflict
11. Climax, correct action for conflict	12. Examination of main character's feelings
13. Examination of main character's feelings	14. Resolution

# Tips for Writing a Children's Picture Storybook

## Definition

Children's Picture Storybook—A work written for children that uses both text and illustrations to present a simple plot.

## Format

Most picture books average 30 pages, consisting of 14 to 16 two-page spreads. A spread is the two pages of an open book.

## Text

- The text of a children's book should be organized into simple sentences and short paragraphs.
- The use of active verbs will keep the story vivid in the reader's mind.
- Children's book authors employ literary tools to help make the story more vivid in the reader's mind. Rhythm, alliteration, repetition, refrains, onomatopoeia, simile, personification, rhyme, and imagery are commonly used devices.
- Consider ending each page with a question or other method that sparks the reader's curiosity for what will happen next.
- Repeating a phrase throughout the story will help hold your reader's attention.
- Use a question at the end of the page to help move your reader to the next page.

## Illustrations

- Some picture books have an illustration on the front cover that presents the main conflict or point of the story.
- The illustrations are usually created after the text has been written.
- Illustrations serve as a partner to the text.

## Characterization

- The main character should have one or two easily identifiable dominant traits.
- Present the traits of your characters through both the illustrations and text.
- Young children should be able to easily identify with the dominant traits.
- Avoid using text to present detailed descriptions of what the characters look like. Let the illustrations present the physical details of the character.

## Conflict

- Limit your story to just one conflict that the main character must overcome.
- The main character should be able to deal with the main conflict in concrete terms.

- The main character should resolve the conflict him- or herself.
- Four of the most common types of conflict are individual vs. individual, individual vs. society, individual vs. nature, and individual vs. self.
- Some of the most common concerns of children include acceptance by others, family dynamics, physical growth (especially size and looks), and fear of the unknown (e.g., learning something new, participating in a new activity, going to a new place, getting lost).

### **Plot**

- A solid, well-developed plot is essential to creating a good children's book.
- The resolution of the conflict should teach a lesson. However, the lesson should not be told in a didactic way but instead be presented indirectly through the plot.
- Jump right into the main conflict of the story.
- Flashbacks should be used with caution

# Story Map

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**McREL**

## Story Map

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Climax:**

**Events: Rising Action**

**Falling Action**

**Conflict:**

**Resolution:**

**Setting:**

**Author's Theme:**

Major Characters: \_\_\_\_\_

Major Characters: \_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

11. \_\_\_\_\_

12. \_\_\_\_\_

13. \_\_\_\_\_

14. \_\_\_\_\_

**Blackline Masters**

Note: From *Classroom Strategies for Interactive Learning*, by Doug Buehl, 1995, Schofield, WI: Wisconsin State Reading Association. Copyright © 1995 by the Wisconsin State Reading Association. Reprinted with permission.

## **Publishing Tips**

Keep these tips in mind as you prepare to write the final copy and publish your children's picture book.

### **Text tips:**

- Proofread the text before placing it in the final copy of your book. The short, compact nature of children's picture books does not leave room for error. Even one mistake in the text can ruin the entire work.

### **Illustration tips:**

- Pay attention to copyright for the images that you use.
- Don't worry that your artwork is not "good enough" to use as illustrations. The illustrations should serve as a visual communication of the plot. Simply drawn stick figures are all that are needed if the story is well written. The children's book *Harold and the Purple Crayon* is a good example of this.

### **Book-binding tips:**

- Staple the book on the side. Then glue a strip of ribbon or construction paper over the staples for a more aesthetically pleasing look.
- Tape the pages together. Again, you can decorate the spine with ribbon or construction paper.
- Sew the book together with needle and thread. See <http://www.sff.net/>

## Grading Rubric for the Children's Picture Storybook

	3	2	1
Cover	Title and illustration on cover clearly relate to the story and entice readers to pick up the book.	Title and illustration clearly relate to the story.	Title and illustration are poorly done or do not relate to the story.
Text	The font and legibility of the text do not interfere with or disrupt communication of ideas to the reader in any area of the work.	The font and legibility of the text interfere with but do not disrupt the communication of ideas to the reader.	The font and legibility of the text interfere with and disrupt the communication of ideas to the reader.
Grammar and Spelling	There are no grammar or spelling errors anywhere in the work.	One or two grammar or spelling errors occur in the work.	Three or more grammar or spelling errors occur in the work.
Use of Literary Devices	Three different literary devices are used in the work.	Two different literary devices are used in the work.	One or no literary devices are used in the work.
Plot Development	All five areas of the plot (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution) are present and are clearly developed.	One of the five areas of the plot (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution) is not present and/or is not clearly developed.	Two or more of the five areas of the plot (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution) are not present and/or are not clearly developed.
The Illustrations Support of the Plot	The illustrations help present the plot throughout all areas in the work.	The illustrations help present the plot in a majority of areas throughout the work.	The illustrations help present the plot in only a minority of areas throughout the work.
Execution of Illustrations	Illustrations are neat and visually pleasing throughout the entire work.	Illustrations are neat and visually pleasing throughout a majority of the work.	Illustrations need more details and attention to visual appearance.

Total: \_\_\_\_\_ x 5 = \_\_\_\_\_/105