Completed Genre Characteristics Bookmarks

NON-FICTION

The usual purpose of a non-fiction work is to inform.

Non-fiction:

- Has a topic or subject area.
- Has content which has been researched by the author(s).
- Sites the sources of the author's research in correct bibliographic style.
- Contains statements of fact that were true at the time the selection was written or recorded.
- Often contains labeled pictures, illustrations charts, graphs, diagrams, tables, or maps to clarify information.
- Usually has a table of contents, index, and a list of resources.

FICTION

The usual purpose of a work of fiction is to entertain.

Fiction:

- Has story elements:
  - Plot – the action or series of events that affect the main characters. One event often causes or leads to the next.
  - Theme – a general idea or insight about life.
  - Mood – emotions the author wishes readers to feel.
  - Point of view – usually one voice (the narrator, the main character) tells the story.
  - Character development – main character(s) are given personalities and physical descriptions.
- Has characters which may or may not be human beings.
- Has content that is an invention of the author(s).
- Uses pictures or illustrations to show an event or setting from the story.
- Has as a beginning, a middle, and an end.

POETRY

Poetry is a form of art. A poem uses language for its beauty, and often enhances the literal or superficial meaning of the words the poem contains.

Poetry:

- Expresses the writer's personal meaning.
- Creates an overall mood.
- Focuses on a single topic – usually from personal life.
- Uses precise and vivid words.
- Creates imaginative sensory images.
- Uses figurative language.
- Breaks lines so each image stands on its own.
- Often creates rhythm and meter (pattern/beat).

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BIOGRAPHY

A biography is a type of non-fiction that gives an account of the life of a real person – living or dead.

A biography:

- Is not written by the subject.
- Often has elements of fiction such as a narrative style and a plot.
- Is based on the author's research, not imagination.
- Sites the sources of author's research such as:
  - Written accounts.
  - Interviews with the subject and/or with others who knew the subject – if any of them are still alive.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

An autobiography is a type of non-fiction about the life of a real person.

An autobiography:

- Is written by that person.
- May have story elements similar to fiction such as a narrative style and a plot.
- Is based on the author's memories of events from his or her life and any written accounts s/he may have such as journals, diaries, letters, etc.
- Includes personal feelings and thoughts.

DRAMA

A drama is a type of writing in which actors are given parts to perform before an audience. Stage plays and motion pictures are examples of drama.

Dramas:

- Are often works of fiction.
- Have elements of a story such as plot, theme, mood, etc.
- Do not rely on the just words for effect.
- Have a script telling what each actor should say as well as directions for stage settings, props, sound effects, how the actors should move and speak their lines, etc.

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FANTASY

A fantasy is a type of fiction.

A fantasy:

- Contains elements that are not realistic such as:
  - Talking animals.
  - Magical powers.
- Is often set in a medieval universe.
- May have mythical beings such as dragons, unicorns, winged horses, phoenixes, etc.
- Downplays or ignores physical laws.
- Has the common elements of fiction stories.
  - Plot
  - Point of View
  - Theme
  - Mood
  - Character Development

Fable

A fable is a type of fiction.

A fable:

- Is usually short.
- Teaches a lesson, has a moral, or makes a cautionary point.
- Often uses animals that speak and act like human beings.

SCIENCE FICTION

Science fiction is a type of fiction.

Science fiction:

- Projects, extends, or expands known physical laws, technology and current reality to predict or suggest what might occur in the future.
- May describe technologies, ideas, or theories that are a combination of factual details the author has researched with fictional ideas from the author's imagination.
- May describe scientific theories or technological advances that are wholly imaginary.
- Has a setting in the future, in space, on a different world, or in a different universe or dimension.
- Has the common elements of fiction stories.
  - Plot
  - Point of View
  - Theme
  - Mood
  - Character Development

Completed Genre Characteristics Bookmarks

FAIRY TALE

A fairy tale is a subgroup of the kind of fiction called fantasy. Fairy tales were often created to teach children how to behave.

A fairy tale:

- Has non-human characters such as fairies, goblins, dragons, talking animals, etc.
- Gives characters magical powers such as magic wands.
- Often transforms one thing into another like a pumpkin into a carriage or a shoe into a glass slipper.
- Often takes place in an undefined time and place.
- Often has characters that are not well developed.

FOLKTALE

A folktale is a subgroup of the kind of fiction called fantasy.

A folktale:

- Uses hyperbole, that is, it has many exaggerations in it.
- Gives the main character a problem to solve that is very much like a problem that real human beings had to solve at the time the folktale began.
- Makes the main character bigger than life by increasing real human abilities (speed, intelligence, strength) to super-human size.
- Has a plot that is funny and impossible.
- Has the main character solve a problem, overcome an obstacle and/or defeat an antagonist, i.e. bad guy.
- Includes lots of action.

MYTH

Myths are a type of fiction, but their original creators thought that the stories were non-fiction.

A myth:

- Is usually sacred (religious).
- Has characters that are heroes, Gods, Goddesses, and/or non-human.
- Is often set in the distant past and/or in distant locations of the world.
- May deal with or explain the origins (beginnings) of a culture's important features such as its ceremonies, medicines, or how the culture came into being.
- May explain some feature of nature such as why the sun disappears at night.