

# 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! Some students like to take notes on the Note-Taking Sheet\* as they read to help them remember the book and to make writing the review easier.
2. **Write your review.** You may use the blank Writing Organizer\* to help organize your writing. You may write your review in Word or Google Docs and then copy and paste the text into the Kidblog text screen. You can also 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. Here is the format for the fiction Book Review.

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

**2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph** – describes the “background” of the story. It should include the following information woven together in a logical order:

- **Important information about the main character** – his everyday life, family, personality, wants/hopes/fears/internal struggles, character traits

- **A description of the setting** – when and where the book takes place, the uniqueness of the setting, and the mood or atmosphere

In some stories you will also give some information about the **antagonist** in the story. It can appear in the “background” paragraph or in the “problem” paragraph.

**3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph** – describes how the main problem in the story begins and develops. This section also describes 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.

**Last paragraph** – This paragraph describes your opinion of the book. You will make **three 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.

3. **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.
4. **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.
5. **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 review which includes the following:
  - a. the title and author,
  - b. the subject of the book and some of the interesting details you learned,
  - c. things that surprised you when you read the book,
  - d. 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!

**After your review has been published, you will add a color-coded square to your recording sheet on our Kidblog bulletin board! Congratulations!**

## **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!
- Do not choose books that were used in instruction during a previous grade (e.g., *By the Great Horned Spoon*, *Tiger Rising*, *Number the Stars*).
- 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.
- Try something new! Check out a variety of genres – realistic fiction, historical fiction, biography, science fiction, nonfiction, etc. You might find a new genre that you love!
- If you are addicted to a series of books, go for it! Read and review them all!
- A great place to find new ideas for books is by reading other students' reviews on Kidblog.
- Check out a book from my classroom library. Must make sure you "sign out" the book. Return the book to the "Book Box" 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 as homework.

### **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... most students exceed the minimum number! Many students from the Class of 2017 read and reviewed 12-15 books during the year, and 3 students actually reviewed 28 books each! 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, and the theme.
  - Use the Writing Organizer\* to outline 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 gist of the book.
  - Don't be tempted to "paraphrase" the blurb on the back of the book, or 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. Take 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, 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.*

