

# Genre Charts

### Genre Chart

#### Nonfiction-Expository

A book, an article, or a story about real people or things written to explain, describe, inform, or persuade.

##### Informational Text

Articles or books about many different things in the real world, including people, events, experiments, activities, or procedures.

**Character:** The author.  
**Setting:** The real world.  
**Plot:** The author's purpose.  
**Theme:** The author's message.

##### Narrative-Nonfiction

A true story or the account of factual events or experiences.

##### Biography

A story written about a person's life. Most biographies are about people who have changed the way we live.

**Character:** The person being written about.  
**Setting:** The time and place of the person's life.  
**Plot:** The events of the person's life.  
**Theme:** The author's message about the person.

### Genre Chart

#### Drama

A story about life or a character that involves conflicts and emotions using dialogue and actions.

##### Plays

A story, typically a comedy or a drama, told through dialogue and actions. Directions and descriptions are included in the script.

**Character:** The characters in the play.  
**Setting:** Usually happens in the fictional world of the play.  
**Plot:** Directed with the goal of making the audience feel something in their hearts.  
**Theme:** Usually the problem to be solved.

##### Poetry

A thought, an idea, a feeling or an expression written with a rhythm or pattern.

<b>Free Verse</b> Poetry that follows no special form. It does not rhyme, but it does have a pattern. <b>Character:</b> No rhyme, no meter. <b>Setting:</b> Anytime, anywhere. <b>Plot:</b> The poet's thoughts and feelings. <b>Theme:</b> The poet's message.	<b>Acrostic</b> A poem that is created using every letter in a word to begin each line. Every line relates to the word. <b>Character:</b> The word being spelled out. <b>Setting:</b> Anytime, anywhere. <b>Plot:</b> The poet's thoughts and feelings. <b>Theme:</b> The poet's message.	<b>Rhyme</b> A poem that has words that rhyme when they end. <b>Character:</b> Rhyming words. <b>Setting:</b> Anytime, anywhere. <b>Plot:</b> The poet's thoughts and feelings. <b>Theme:</b> The poet's message.	<b>Haiku</b> An ancient Japanese verse form with seventeen syllables. Each line has a specific number of syllables. <b>Character:</b> Nature. <b>Setting:</b> Nature. <b>Plot:</b> The poet's thoughts and feelings. <b>Theme:</b> The poet's message.
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### Genre Chart

#### Fiction/Narrative

A pretend story or book that depicts people coping with universal problems or stories of life.

##### Adventure

A story that uses action to keep the plot moving. Exciting events occur in rapid sequence, with suspense building to the outcome.

**Character:** Heroic and virtuous.  
**Setting:** Anytime, anywhere.  
**Plot:** The hero's quest.  
**Theme:** The hero's journey.

##### Realistic Fiction

A story with imaginary characters and events that are so believable they could exist in the real world.

**Character:** Realistic and relatable.  
**Setting:** The real world.  
**Plot:** The character's problems.  
**Theme:** The character's growth.

##### Fantasy

A story that involves events that could not happen in real life. Change occurring with magic and finding magic and a common theme.

**Character:** Often heroes and villains.  
**Setting:** A magical world.  
**Plot:** The hero's quest.  
**Theme:** The hero's journey.

##### Mystery

Suspenseful stories in which clues or evidence, dialogue, messages, secrets, character's actions, fingerprints) are used to solve a puzzling case, crime, or secret.

**Character:** Often detectives and suspects.  
**Setting:** Anytime, anywhere.  
**Plot:** The investigation.  
**Theme:** The truth.

##### Historical Fiction

Stories about people and events long ago. Some parts are based on historical facts, some can be created or imagined by the author.

**Character:** Historical figures.  
**Setting:** The past.  
**Plot:** The events of the past.  
**Theme:** The past's impact on the present.

##### Science Fiction

A made believe story usually in the future, which uses elements of science.

**Character:** Often scientists and explorers.  
**Setting:** The future.  
**Plot:** The discovery of new things.  
**Theme:** The future's possibilities.

### Genre Chart

#### Fiction/Narrative

A pretend story or book that depicts people coping with universal problems or stories of life.

##### Storytelling

Oral stories handed down through generations to teach morals and values.

<b>Myth</b> A story told long ago using supernatural beings to explain real events and cultural beliefs. <b>Character:</b> Gods and goddesses. <b>Setting:</b> The real world. <b>Plot:</b> The gods' actions. <b>Theme:</b> The gods' power.	<b>Tall Tale</b> Humorous stories filled with exaggeration. These tales are passed on from generation to generation. <b>Character:</b> Often heroes and villains. <b>Setting:</b> Anytime, anywhere. <b>Plot:</b> The hero's quest. <b>Theme:</b> The hero's journey.	<b>Folktales</b> Stories handed down by word of mouth, about ordinary people. These stories teach a lesson or give an explanation. <b>Character:</b> Ordinary people. <b>Setting:</b> The real world. <b>Plot:</b> The character's problems. <b>Theme:</b> The character's growth.
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Purpose: There are four full-color Genre Charts to display the major genres for printed material: Drama, Poetry, Nonfiction, and Fiction. Each genre section encapsulates the most common types of texts read by students. For easy access and clarity, a drawing, simple definition, and detailed text structure provide a unique technique for background information.

Directions: When introducing text for an individual student, a small group, or to the whole class, the teacher refers to the Genre Chart(s). She may show the book, read the title and ask the students to use the charts to figure out the genre. To scaffold this activity, she may ask students to choose from two genres, instead of deciphering the entire chart. The teacher usually reads the definitions for the two genres for added support before the students give their guesses. Once the correct genre is chosen, then the teacher and students read the text structure on the chart for that particular genre. What a wonderful activity to provide text structure background for students who have little or no experience with a particular genre.

# Genre Chart

## Nonfiction-Expository

A book, an article, or a story about real people or things written to explain, describe, inform, or persuade.



### Informational Text

Articles or books about many different things in the real world, including people, events, experiments, activities, or procedures.

**Topic:** The big idea or what the entire text is about.

**Main ideas:** The most important ideas to support the topic. These ideas are organized by time, sequence, or categories and can be easily identified by the headings/dark type.

**Supporting Details:** Evidence, facts, events, statistics, actions, definitions, and descriptions that support each main idea.

**Conclusion:** Summary of the important points. The author may try to persuade, enlighten, shock, inform, or challenge the reader.

**Features:** Maps, charts diagrams, photos, tables, graphs, table of contents, glossaries, indexes.

### Narrative-Nonfiction

A true story or the account of factual events or experiences.



#### Recount

To Narrate an experience giving the facts, details, and order of events.

**Character:** The person writing the story is a participant or an observer.  
**Setting:** The time and place of the experience.  
**Plot:** The order of events of the experience.  
**Outcome:** The end of the experience and its importance.

#### Autobiography

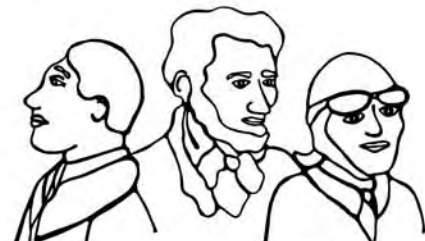
A story written by the author about his or her life.

**Character:** The person writing the story.  
**Setting:** A specific time in the author's life and place where the story occurs.  
**Plot:** High or low points of his or her life.  
**Outcome:** The end of a specific time in the author's life.

#### Biography

A story written about a person's life. Most biographies are about people who have changed the way people live or think.

**Character:** A person other than the author.  
**Setting:** A specific period in a person's life and place where the story occurs.  
**Plot:** High or low points of his or her life.  
**Outcome:** The end of a specific time in the main character's life.



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# Genre Chart

## Drama

A story about life or a character that involves conflicts and emotions using dialogue and actions.

### Plays

A story, typically a comedy or a drama, told through dialogue and actions. Directions and descriptions are included in the script.

**Character:** Relationships, tension, and conflicts are developed through the character's dialogue.  
**Setting:** Typically suggestive due to limited space on the stage.  
**Plot:** Structured with acts and scenes that depict events, steps, or attempts to solve a problem.  
**Outcome:** Typically the problem is solved.



## Poetry

A thought, an idea, a feeling or an expression written with a rhythm or pattern

### Free Verse

Poetry that follows no special form. Often it will rhyme, but not always.

#### Vital Question

If a poem doesn't rhyme,  
How do you know  
It's a poem?

If it's about sunsets and flowers,  
Well okay.

But some of them  
Might be about...

Termites, and rats, cockroaches,  
Earwigs, bedbugs and silverfish.  
Battalions of cooties, and more like

An exterminator's report  
Than a poem.

So how do you know

It's a poem,  
If it doesn't rhyme?

By Bernice and Charles Korman

### Acrostic

A poem that is created using every letter in a word to begin each line. Every line relates to the word.

H eat  
O ppressive  
T orrid

### Rhyme

A poem that has words that rhyme when their ending syllables have similar sounds.

Roses are red,

Violets are blue,

You bring warmth to my heart,  
So I love you.

### Haiku

An ancient Japanese verse form with seventeen syllables.

Each line has a specific number of syllables:

5 syllables

7 syllables

5 syllables

Sunlight on the meadow.

Nature's warm blanket of life.

Streaming down on all.

### Cinquain

A five line poem describing a particular subject in a specific pattern.

Dog

Has tail

Wagging at owner

Panting for attention

Barking

### Limerick

A funny, nonsense, five-line verse. The first and second line rhyme, and the fifth line usually ends with a surprise or humorous statement.

There once was an angry king,  
Who suddenly started to sing.  
The queen clapped and cheered,  
When the king no longer sneered.  
Oh what a wonderful thing!



### Concrete

A poem that creates a picture or includes a picture.

### Alliteration

The repetition of sounds in words close together, most especially in the beginning of words.

Susie sees  
the sunshine  
sparkling like silver  
on the seashore

mountain

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# Genre Chart

## Fiction/Narrative

A pretend story or book that depicts people coping with universal problems or stories of life.



### Adventure

A story that uses action to keep the plot moving. Extraordinary events occur in rapid sequence, with suspense building to the outcome.

**Characters:** Hero(s) and Villain(s).

**Setting:** Any time and any place.

**Plot:** Good characters usually encounter evil characters, creating a lot of exciting events and suspense.

**Outcome:** The problem is usually solved and good prevails.



### Historical Fiction

Stories about people and events long ago. Some parts are based on historical facts, some can be created or embellished by the author.

**Characters:** Famous historical characters, real or imaginary.

**Setting:** Time and place long ago.

**Plot:** Important events that happened

**Outcome:** Must not change the facts of history.



### Realistic Fiction

A story with imaginary characters and events that are so believable they could exist in the real world.

**Characters:** People that are so life-like they could exist in the real world.

**Setting:** Usually set in the present in a real location.

**Plot:** The main character usually must overcome some difficulties while trying to solve his/her problems.

**Outcome:** The problems are usually solved.



### Mystery

Suspenseful stories in which clues or evidence( dialogue, messages, secrets, character's actions, fingerprints) are used to solve a puzzling event, crime, or secret.

**Characters:**Hero/detective/protagonist/villain/ antagonist/ suspects/ victims/witnesses.

**Setting:** The time and place.

**Plot:**Two major parts using  
1. Clues to solve the mystery within a sequence of suspenseful events.

2. The characters response or actions from these events.

**Outcome:** The mystery is solved. The motive or secret for the event or crime is revealed.



### Fantasy

A story that involves events that could not happen in real life. Courage, overcoming evil, and finding one's self are common themes.

**Characters:** Make believe characters with unreal powers.

**Setting:** Usually takes place in another time in make-believe lands.

**Plot:** Good characters usually encounter evil characters.

**Outcome:** The problem is usually solved and good prevails.



### Science Fiction

A make-believe story usually in the future, which uses elements of science.

**Characters:** May include aliens, robots, strange creatures, and/or real people in an environment of advanced technology.

**Setting:** Usually in the future, in space, on other planets, or a futuristic Earth.

**Plot:** Good characters usually encounter evil characters.

**Outcome:** The problem is usually solved and good prevails.

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# Genre Chart

## Fiction/Narrative

A pretend story or book that depicts people coping with universal problems or stories of life.

### Storytelling

Oral stories handed down through generations to teach morals and values.

#### Myth

A story told long ago using supernatural beings to explain real events and cultural beliefs.

**Characters:** Animals, gods or people.  
**Setting:** Place and time in the past.  
**Plot:** Events or problems in the story.  
**Outcome:** The solution is either a lesson or an explanation.

#### Folktales

Stories handed down by word of mouth, about ordinary people. These stories teach a lesson or give an explanation.

**Characters:** Ordinary people.  
**Setting:** Place and time in the past.  
**Plot:** Events or problems in the story.  
**Outcome:** The solution is either a lesson or an explanation.



#### Legend

Famous stories passed down from earlier times which can not be proven, but have real historical characters and are popularly accepted as true.

Legends explain values such as honesty, like the legend of George Washington cutting down the cherry tree.

**Characters:** Historical characters.  
**Setting:** Place and time in the past.  
**Plot:** Events or problems in the story.  
**Outcome:** The solution is either a lesson or an explanation.

#### Tall Tale

Humorous stories filled with exaggeration. These tales originated in North America when settlers relied on narratives to believe in the *American Dream*.

**Characters:** Real or unreal characters with amazing abilities, skills and bigger than life physical or personality traits.  
**Setting:** Place and time in the past.  
**Plot:** Many bigger than life problems that need to be solved.  
**Outcome:** The main character overcomes obstacles or achieves prosperity.

#### Fairy Tale

Stories that are set long ago in enchanted lands that have children or young adults as heroines or heroes that rise to royalty. Usually fairy tales begin with "once upon a time" and end with "they lived happily ever after"

**Characters:** Princes, princesses, witches, queens, giants, elves, dragons, fairies.  
**Setting:** Long ago in an enchanted land  
**Plot:** A generous and kind hero or heroine prevails over deception through hard work, love, mercy and kindness.  
**Outcome:** The "good" characters are rewarded and the "bad" characters are punished.

#### Pourquoi Tales

Provides explanations for natural phenomena.

**Characters:** Usually animals.  
**Setting:** Time and place in the past.  
**Plot:** An event that explains natural phenomena.  
**Outcome:** The solution is the explanation.

#### Trickster

Tales that involve a clever character who outsmarts others, especially those more powerful.

**Characters:** Usually animals.  
**Setting:** Time and place in the past.  
**Plot:** The trickster has a problem that seems inescapable. The trickster uses his wits and cleverly tricks himself to safety.  
**Outcome:** The trickster solves the problem.

#### Fable

Short stories, usually with animal characters, which focus on teaching a moral or lesson.

**Characters:** Usually animals with human traits.  
**Setting:** Place and time in the past.  
**Plot:** Events or problems in the story.  
**Outcome:** The problem is solved and the moral is stated at the end.

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