

Novel Study Project Ideas

Personal Response

1. Which characters in your novel were close friends? Tell how these friendships were formed. If the friendship lasted, tell why. If difficulties were experienced, try to explain why.
2. Write a note to a friend, your parents, or the principal telling them about the novel you are reading.
3. Copy a sentence from the book that reminds you of yourself. Write a paragraph explaining how it describes you. Did the actions of the novel seem true-to-life or make-believe? Give good reasons for your answer.
4. Choose a character in the novel that you would like to have as a friend. Name the character. Write a diary entry telling why you would choose this friend.
5. Write a paragraph telling something you have seen or done yourself which is similar to a situation that happened in the novel.
6. Write about a problem that occurred in the novel; for example, someone who is lost. Explain how the problem was solved or tell how it could have been solved.
7. Choose another story, television program, or movie that is similar to your novel. Write a paragraph telling how they are alike - think of the setting, the characters, the type of book, and any other similarities. Which story did you like best? Why?
8. Choose a character in this novel that you would like to be. In point form, explain ways you would have changed the novel to make life better for this character. Illustrate your ideas.
9. If there was something in the novel that you disagreed with, tell what it was. Explain why you disagreed. How would you have changed this? Explain your ideas fully.
10. What feelings did you have when you finished the novel? Make an illustration that shows your feelings. Pay careful attention to your choice of colors and shapes. Be ready to explain your illustration.
11. If your novel is about an animal, tell whether you would like this animal for a pet and explain why or why not.

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Plot

1. Briefly outline the major events as they happened in the novel. Draw several pictures in comic strip form showing the events as they happened. Write a caption for each picture. Prepare a short oral report from your outline. Be sure to tell all episodes in the order in which they were related to the novel.
2. Make flannel board figures or puppets of the characters in your novel. Use the figures to help you tell the story to the class. Give each character a voice that matches his/her personality.
3. What was the main idea of this novel? Give four reasons why you feel this is the main idea. Explain why you think this book was written.
4. Suggest a different title for each chapter in the novel. If there are no titles for each chapter, make up titles of your own to fit them.
5. Find two or three people in your class who have read this novel. Plan and create a mural that shows the main events in the story.
6. You have been asked to review your novel for a children's magazine. Write a summary of the novel. Give the novel a rating. Explain the reasons for your rating.
7. Write a newspaper article about an important event in your novel. In your article, answer these questions:
 - Who? •Where? •What? •Why? •When? •How? •Include a catchy headline!
8. Make an illustration of your favorite chapter in the novel. Explain why you liked the chapter.
9. Find one other person who has read the novel. Together, alternate the telling of either a part or the whole novel.

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Character Study

1. Choose a character in your story that did something outstanding. Write an article for a newspaper telling about this.
2. Identify the "villain" or "bad guy" and the "hero" or "good guy" of your novel. Describe each in a few sentences. Choose events in the story that support your decisions.
3. Choose a character from your novel who made a mistake. Write a paragraph to show what the character learned from these mistakes.
4. Think about one character in the novel. Write sentences telling what kind or individual this character is. Tell why you would or would not like to have this character as your friend or neighbor.
5. Think about an interesting person in the story. Write a poem about him or her. Illustrate your poem.
6. Make a wall hanging that you think a character in your novel would like to have in his or her room. Explain why this wall hanging would appeal to this character.
7. Pretend you are a character from your novel. Write about an adventure in your life. Share your story with the class, if possible, dressed as that character.
8. With two or three classmates who have read the same novel, dramatize a scene.
9. Think of a character in your novel and what he/she liked to wear. Find pictures in magazines to illustrate these and make a collage of them.
10. Most novel characters do things for a reason. What event in your novel had the greatest effect on one of the characters? What caused this character to change his/her opinion or his/her actions?
11. Sometimes authors tell about the feelings of their story characters. Sometimes they tell how the characters feel by the way they act in the story. Was someone in this novel very happy, excited, sad, brave, selfish, spoiled, helpful, funny, worried, puzzled, disappointed, or pleased? If so, tell which character had this strong feeling and tell what kind of feeling it was. Now tell what caused the character to have this strong feeling.
12. In your novel, did one of the characters "jump to conclusions", that is, make

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decisions or do something without having all the information? Name the character. Describe the event in the novel when this happened. Tell what information this character was

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Extending Story

1. Prepare an interview with a partner. One person will take the part of the author, and the other will take the part of the reporter. The reporter will ask the author about parts of the novel; for example, "Who is the main character in your book?" The author will respond with information from the novel.
2. Give a three-minute book talk about your novel to your classmates. Be ready to answer their questions.
3. Prepare a three-minute book talk about your novel. Tape-record your talk and make it available for others to enjoy.
4. Make a comic strip about a chapter or part of your novel that may be especially funny. Put the conversation in speech balloons.
5. If you learned how to make something as you read your book, write out the directions and draw a picture of it so that your classmates will be able to make it too.
6. Make a poster advertising your novel. Remember that the words and the pictures are equally important in sending the message. Use bold colors and a simple design.
7. Write an evaluation of your novel. Tell what you liked and what you didn't like about the novel.
8. Write a poem about the character from your novel. Illustrate your poem.
9. Look for more information about something you found interesting in the novel that the author did not explain well enough. Research information on this topic. Write a report on this topic. Include illustrations. Present the report to your class.
10. Alone or with a student in your class, create a dance that expresses the moods and feelings shown in the story.

Word Study/vocabulary Development

1. Select examples of good descriptive phrases or sentences from your novel. Illustrate any two of these.
2. Sometimes authors use special language to help you understand what is happening. Perhaps you have heard or read the expression: It's raining cats and

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dogs.

- Find other expressions of this kind and write them down.
- Explain what each expression means.

3. Select an important or exciting part in your novel. Find a page about this important or exciting happening. Practice reading this page orally and with expression. Read the page aloud to the class.

4. Using the Crossword Magic computer program, make a crossword puzzle or word search using new words that you have learned from reading your novel.

5. A glossary explains the meaning of unusual words.

- Find unusual words in your book.
- If you don't know the meaning of the word, look it up in a dictionary.
- Make a glossary of the unusual words in your novel.

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The Outline of Your Book Report

You have read your book. Your next step will be to organize what you are going to say about it in your report. Writing the basic elements down in an outline format will help you to organize your thoughts. What will you include in the outline? Follow whatever instructions your teacher has given you. If you are on your own, however, the following guidelines should help.

Let's assume for the moment that you've chosen a work of fiction. We'll start with a description of the book. The description should include such elements as:

1. The setting—where does the story take place? Is it a real place or an imaginary one? If the author does not tell you exactly where the story is set, what can you tell about it from the way it is described?
2. The time period—is the story set in the present day or in an earlier time period? Perhaps it is even set in the future! Let your reader know.
3. The main character(s)—who is the story mostly about? Give a brief description. Often, one character can be singled out as the main character, but some books will have more than one.
4. The plot—what happens to the main character? **WARNING!** Be careful here. Do not fall into the boring trap of reporting every single thing that happens in the story. Pick only the most important events. Here are some hints on how to do that. First, explain the situation of the main character as the story opens. Next, identify the basic plot element of the story--is the main character trying to achieve something or overcome a particular problem? Thirdly, describe a few of the more important things that happen to the main character as he/she works toward that goal or solution. Finally, you might hint at the story's conclusion without completely giving away the ending.

The four points above deal with the report aspect of your work. For the final section of your outline, give your reader a sense of the impression the book made upon you. Ask yourself what the author was trying to achieve and whether or not he achieved it with you. What larger idea does the story illustrate? How does it do that? How did you feel about the author's style of writing, the setting, or the mood of the novel. You do not have to limit yourself to these areas. Pick something which caught your attention, and let your reader know your personal response to whatever it was.

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