

Independent Book Projects

The Editor: You are the editor at a publishing company. Write a letter to the author of your book informing him or her of why you are accepting or rejecting their book for publication. Give specific reasons for your choice and make suggestions. (1 page minimum)

Scrapbook: Think of a book as a virtual scrapbook of people—old friends, events, special times, settings, and places. You will recreate the magic moments of your book by creating a picture scrapbook of the story it tells. You should have at least six drawings for your scrapbook. Explain each drawing about your book and add a quote that also explains the picture.

Box It: Use an empty cereal box as a form; cover it with paint or paper being careful to leave the slit and tab operational. You will need to be able to open to box. Once covered, draw an illustration to cover one of the large surfaces of the cereal box. Include on this section the name of the book, the author, and your name. Remember you are creating a "cereal box" that is related to the theme of the novel. On the back of the box write the title and a plot summary add illustrations as well. On one of the narrow sides create an "ingredients" list naming the characters. On the opposite side write a vivid description of the story's setting. Inside the box place six objects that are related to your novel. Include a sheet of notebook paper explaining why these items are significant to your story. This project must be neat and colorful.

Mythological Creature: Create a type of mythological creature to represent your book or a character in your book. Include a colorful, neat drawing of your creature on white paper. Write a paragraph or two explaining how your creature represents your book. Make sure to explain your reasons with examples from the text.

Sandwich: Make a story sandwich from paper. You will need tan, green, red, pink or light brown, yellow or orange, and purple paper for this project. You can also use construction paper, card stock, tag board, or craft foam as well. First, cut two pieces of bread out of tan paper. The top tan piece needs to have the book's title, author, illustrator, and your name on it. Second, cut a piece of tomato out of red paper. Write on it a drawing or description of the story's main setting. Third, cut a piece of lunch meat from a pink or light brown piece of paper. On it, write about the meat of the story—describe the main character. If there is more than one main character add more slices. Fourth, cut a piece of lettuce from a green piece of paper. On the lettuce leaf, summarize the book. Fifth, cut a cheese piece from a yellow or orange piece of paper. On it write what part of the story made you happy? Describe it and use a quote. Sixth, cut an onion slice out of the purple sheet of paper. Write on it whether the story was sweet or tearful? Also, What did you think of the book? Remember if you run out of space to cut another slice. See how thick your sandwich can get. You are also invited to add ingredients as well. Finally, take the second tan piece of paper that you cut and tell what you liked or didn't like about the author's style of writing this book. There you have it—a book sandwich.

House Design: Design a house that fits your novel. Write a composition as to why you chose this particular design. Include at least three examples of to support each reason you have for this particular design. Your design must either be 3-D or on 12x18 or larger paper. It must be colorful and neat. (Variation on this theme: Create a room for a character in the book. Write a composition as to why the room fits the character. This project has the same design requirements.)

Flip Book: Use 3 sheets of computer paper. Holding them together vertically, fan the sheets out. Placing one on top of the other, approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ inch apart, from the bottom of each sheet. Hold them in that fanned position and fold down all the papers from the top so there are equal sized sections. You should end up with a wider title page on top and five sections below. Place two staples on the fold line using the special long-reach stapler. Label the page edges as in the picture below: Title Page (top section): Include the title of the book, the author, your name and date, and the genre of the story. Draw a picture to represent the title of the book. Setting: Tell where and when the story took place. Include any details to help the reader learn about the time period and setting. Characters: Tell all about the main characters, who they were, and a little bit about them. Are they related? Did anyone do anything interesting, special, or courageous? Draw sketches of the characters. Problem and Solution: Choose four problems from the story and the solutions to each problem and tell about them. You can put two problems in each section. Include a sketch if it helps the explanation. Interesting Information or Timeline: In this section tell interesting things you learned from your book. You can draw or create a timeline of events if it is appropriate to the story you read. Use color, special letting, add your own personal touches and make this project something you are proud of!

Title of the Book Author Retold by (your name) Genre: Historical Date
Setting
Characters
Problem and Solution
Problem and Solution
Interesting Information and/or Timeline

Poem: Write a poem about your book. Include figurative language in your poem such as similes, metaphors, and personification. Your poem should be at least three stanzas and be published neatly on white paper. Illustrations and color are optional but would make the product look better. Variations are: 1) Write a poem about a specific event in the story, 2) Choose a familiar melody like "Mary had a Little Lamb" and change the lyrics so they pertain to the story, 3) Write a poem about your story, include characters, setting, plot, and theme, 4) Pretend you are a character in the story and write a poem from that person's point of view, 5) Write a poem about an event that happened in your story.

Contain Yourself: A variation on box it. In this one choose a container: a plastic bag, a manila envelope, a can, an oatmeal box, etc. Decorate your container to convey some of the major details, elements, or themes found in the book. The contents of your container should include: **Questions**—write ten questions based on the book. Five of the questions can be about general content. Five must be harder and require more thinking. **Vocabulary**—create a 20-word glossary of unfamiliar words from the book. **Things**—include five things that have a connection to the story. Include a sheet of notebook paper explaining why these items are significant to your story.

Concentration: You will need 30 index cards to create a concentration style game related to the book you have just finished. Choose 14 things, characters, or events that played a part in the book and create two cards that have identical pictures or each of those two things. Mark two remaining cards as wild cards. Then write why these things were significant to your story.

Book Cover: Create a new book cover for your book. On the 1st page(front) cover have a picture to represent things in your book, create a new title for your book, and include your author's name somewhere on this page. On the 2nd page(back) cover have a summary explaining what your book is about and have at least two comments (blurbs) people would make after reading your book (for example: "Best book I've ever read. This author MAKES you live in his world. A must read! - NY Times). Write or type an explanation as to how the cover ties into the book. What is it representing? (½ page). Explain your new title. How does it tie into your book? Why did you give your book this new title? (½ page)

Drawings : Use the blank drawing paper to create 4 different pictures to represent the book you read. Make sure to explain the meaning of each picture by using your own thoughts and evidence from the text. Each explanation needs to be approximately at least 5 sentences long and include a quote and details.

Advice Letter: Write a letter to "Dear Abby" from one of the character in your book. The letter should address a problem the character is experiencing. The letter should also elaborate on how the character became involved in the problem, how he/she feels about it, how then life has changed, and what they want from Abby—not just help—be specific. (1 page minimum)

T-Shirt: Design a t-shirt on either a real t-shirt (or a paper t-shirt provided by your teacher) for your book. Make sure that it has pictures and quotes from the book. Write a composition explaining why you would design the shirt this way. Be specific and use examples. (1 page minimum) Variation: If an article of clothing is significant in the story use that article instead of the t-shirt. For example, create your own version of the traveling pants for *The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants*.

Cartoon: Create a three to six paneled cartoon over your book. Make it look like the Sunday edition of the newspaper by using color and ink. Use 11x17 paper to create it on—all professional cartoons begin this large and are shrunk to fit in the newspaper. Make it colorful and neat. Then write a composition explaining your cartoon. Remember to use evidence from the text as to why you made the choices you did. (1 page minimum)

Graphic Novel: You've seen it in novel form; now make it into a comic book version! Your graphic novel may be shortened to an 8 to 16-page book done on white 8 ½ x 11 paper. It may be drawn in black and white or use color. Once you have completed your novel, write a composition about the choices you made in creating your graphic novel. (1 page minimum)

Storyboard: Divide a white sheet of paper into nine boxes. As you read your novel, periodically draw scenes in the squares to create a storyboard that will summarize the events of the novel. Then write at least 1 page as to why you chose to create your storyboard in the way you did. Make sure to use evidence and quotes from the text to help support your answers.

Reader's Theatre: Decide which part of the book is the climax/turning point. Create a play version of this important event in your novel. Then write at least 1 page as to why you made the choices you did. Recruit some classmates and perform for the class.

One Pager: A one pager is a way of responding to a piece of writing on a single sheet of paper. It represents your own written and graphic interpretation of what you have read. It may be very literal, just based on the facts or the information of the piece, or it may be a symbolic representation of the piece. It helps you as a reader to visualize what you are reading. The one pager must be done on white unlined paper, must fill the entire page, must be done in ink or typed (no pencil), must include the title and author of the piece, and must use color pencils or markers unless the piece demands black and white only. On the page itself you must have two or more quotes from the reading (passages you like or think are important), have a graphic representation (drawing, magazine picture, or computer graphic) that ties to the piece you read and the quotes you chose, and must include a personal response to what you have read (comment, interpretation, evaluation, etc). In other words you are creating a page with pictures and thoughts about the novel.

Artwork: create a drawing, painting, or sculpture of the main character with a setting from the novel in the background. (You can also dress up as the character and take a picture as well.) Include at least three of the main character's favorite things in the artwork and label them. Make sure to attach a sheet of paper with an explanation as to why you chose the items and setting. Make sure to use quotes and examples from the text to explain your choices as to why you felt these were important.

Flag: Countries around the world have national flags with which their citizens identify. Flags are symbolic. The American flag shows our beginnings (13 colonies=13 stripes) and our unification (50 stars), both of which are important themes to the USA. Color schemes are also important symbols in a flag. White represents purity and innocence. Red represents hardiness and valor, and blue represents vigilance, perseverance, and justice. Some flags have symbolic objects, and mottos (proverbs, or aphorisms: statements that expresses an adopted principle or truth) as well. Your job is to create a flag from either cloth or paper for your novel or a main character based on its theme or main idea. Your flag should be large and colorful. You should choose your colors carefully. The flag should also have three important symbols within it and also have a motto. It should be accompanied by a 1 page composition explaining the theme, symbols, and motto with details from the text.

Newspaper: Pretend you are a reporter and interview a character about an important happening in your book. Then create a newspaper page that includes your interview, at least one ad, a weather report, and an editorial. All articles should be related to the events, characters, and setting in the book. Use some artwork and photos to make your page newspaper like, and make sure your spelling is correct!

Diary: Pretend you are a character in the book. Write a diary entry for each chapter. Each entry should tell about what the main character has done, learned, and felt during the chapter. Make sure to include dates, characters, and settings as well.

Compare and Contrast: Write a composition comparing and contrasting your novel to another you have read. How are the two books similar? Different? Remember that you should have a minimum length of 1 page.

Changes: Choose one character in the book. Think about how the character was like in the beginning of the book and how they were like at the end of the book. Write about how the character changed. What were the events that led up to the change? This activity will require lots of proof from the text! (1 page minimum)

Sequel: What happens next? Write a sequel to the story. Include information about the sequel's plot, setting, and main characters. Or you may either write another chapter of the book—a conclusion to the conclusion. (1 ½ page minimum)

Collage: From magazines and other print resources, create a collage of the novel's story. Then write 1 page about why you chose the images you used.

Diorama: Create a 3-D scene from your novel. Then write at least one page about your choices.

Paper Bag Report: Use a brown paper shopping bag, a gift bag, etc. On the front place the title of the book, author, your name, and an illustration. On the back of the bag place the names of the main characters, the setting, and the theme of the book. In the inside of the bag place at least eight objects that represent a character, the setting, problems, events, or solutions. For each object write why you chose the item on either a post-it note or on the back of the object.

Game: Create a game that tells the main events of the novel and details about the characters. Start by creating a pathway with a start and a finish. On the squares of the pathway, place the main events of the story; include conflict and resolution in pictures and words with some squares remaining blank. If your book is an informational book include facts from your book. Perhaps a true or false question will be needed to move forward? You will need to invent how the game is played, so include directions for the game and game pieces as well. The title of the book, date, and author need to appear on the board as well as your name too.

Demonstration: Demonstrate how make or do something from the novel. Make sure that you have step by step directions written out to pass out to the class. Write a paragraph explaining the connection your demonstration has to the novel.

Display: Put together a display of other books the author has written. Your display should be on poster board or on a project display board. It should have biographical information about the author and a paragraph on each of the books as well.

Time Capsule: Make a time capsule for one of the characters in you novel. Use a shoebox or a box of similar size to hold your objects. Decorate your box with the title, author's name, your name, the character's name, and illustrations or pictures relating to the character. Your capsule should contain at least eight objects. Write at least 1 page explaining the significance of these objects and why people would find them interesting 50 to 100 years from now.

Songs: Write and perform a song that pertains to the story. Write at least 1 page explaining the significance.

Puppet Show: Using the characters from your book, create 3-4 puppets and write a puppet show over a favorite part of your book. Perform to the class.

Radio Advertisement: Write and record a radio advertisement that would make people want to read your book. Write at least 1 page explaining the significance.

Photography: Take photographs and put together a photo show based on something from your story. Next to each picture write an explanation as to what each picture represents.

Rewrite: Rewrite a chapter from a different character's point of view. Try adding sound effects and recording it on tape.

Fact Finding: Research into a related topic that you have discovered in your book. Then create either a poster or 8-16 page picture booklet to tell about the facts and how they are related to the book.

Picture Book: Create an illustrated picture book version of your novel. It must be neat, colorful, and written for children.

Life Cycle: Study the life cycle of an animal mentioned in the book—either real or imaginary. Create a poster illustrating its life cycle.

Report: Research and prepare a traditional two-page report on the author's life and work. You must have at least two pictures in the report. **BE WARNED** this must be done in **your own words**. You may find details from the Internet, but **you must reword** those details into **your own thoughts**. Copying and pasting from the Internet, books, or any other print source is plagiarism and **will result in a zero grade** with **NO MAKE-UPS**. All reports **must have** a bibliography page.

Windsock: Use 12x18 white construction paper. Measure down 4" from the top of the paper and draw a line. Cut out strips the width of a ruler up to the line. Leave a ruler space between each strip, cutting out every other strip. Write the name of the book and the author on the top 4" of the paper. Draw a picture of the setting, the main characters, or an event in the story in this top part. Be artistic, colorful, and creative. Label each strip with the category heading (setting, main idea, main event, problem or solution). Write the setting, characters, the main events, problems, or solutions sideways on the strips, saving the first strip for glue and the last one for the genre (realistic fiction). Form a circle with the first strip glued under the last strip. Punch two holes for string, tie together with string or yarn and hang from the ceiling.

Run it by Your Teacher: If you have an idea for a project run it by me, your teacher. I am always looking for cool things to add to this list.