

COMPOSITION: Writing the First Paragraph of a Book Review

Objective:

- Students will learn how to write the first paragraph of a book review that provides background information about the story and an overview without revealing the ending.
- They will follow a structured outline to create an engaging and informative introduction to the book, which will help others decide whether to read it.

Resources/Materials:

- Week 4 Slideshow
- Sample book review (See Lesson Plan Resources - “Sample Paragraph”)

Instructions:

1. Introduction to Book Reviews (10 minutes)

- **Explain the Purpose of a Book Review:** Start by explaining that a book review gives readers enough information about a book to help them decide whether they want to read it. The first paragraph is key to introducing the book in a way that engages the reader, but it doesn’t give away the ending or spoil the story.
- **Overview of the Paragraph Outline:** Introduce the model for the first paragraph of a book review. Review the following structure and explain its components:
 - **Attention Grabber:** Something interesting or engaging to draw the reader in.
 - **Title of the Book:** In italics.
 - **Author and Biographical Information:** A little bit about the author, if relevant.
 - **Genre and Intended Audience:** What type of story it is and who would enjoy it.
 - **Main Theme:** The central message or lesson of the story.
 - **Setting:** Time and place of the story.
 - **Main Characters:** The primary characters and their role in the story.
 - **Main Events:** The events that get the story moving, but without giving away the ending.
- **Sample Paragraph:** Read the sample paragraph provided in the slideshow and work together to identify how the paragraph follows the model outline.

2. Guided Practice (10 minutes)

- **Guided Outline Creation:** Now using the myth read for literature class, *King Midas and the Golden Touch*, create an outline for the first paragraph of a book review. Write the outline on the whiteboard or model in a notebook.

Example for *King Midas and the Golden Touch*:

(Note: This example will vary depending on the story or myth chosen)

- **Attention Grabber:** " What if everything you touched turned to gold? Would you be happy with such power?"
- **Title:** *King Midas and the Golden Touch*
- **Author and Biographical Information:** author unknown; popular Greek myth
- **Genre and Intended Audience:** genre - mythology and fable; intended for children
- **Main Theme:** the dangers of greed and appreciation of what truly matters
- **Setting:** Ancient Greece, when gods and humans interacted; kingdom of Midas, a prosperous and wealthy land
- **Main Characters:** King Midas, a wealthy and powerful king; Dionysus, the god who grants Midas's wish
- **Main Events:** Dionysus visits Midas's kingdom and, in gratitude for Midas's hospitality, offers to grant him a wish. Midas, eager for more wealth, wishes that everything he touches turn to gold.
- Go through each part of the outline together and ensure that students understand how to fill out each section. For example, emphasize that the "Main Events" should provide enough information to spark interest but should avoid revealing key plot twists or the ending.

3. Independent Practice (15 minutes)

- **Model Writing the Paragraph:** Using the outline, have students work independently or in groups to write a sample paragraph demonstrating how to turn the key points into a well-organized first paragraph.
- For example:

What if everything you touched turned to gold? Would you be happy with such power? *King Midas and the Golden Touch* is a timeless Greek myth that answers this question. The author of this fable is traditionally unknown, as it comes from the rich folklore of ancient Greek mythology. This story is primarily intended for a young audience though readers of all ages can enjoy its moral lesson about the danger of greed. The story takes place in ancient Greece in the kingdom of King Midas where gods and mortals often interacted. King Midas is a wealthy and powerful ruler, who loves gold more than anything. Setting the story into action, Dionysus, a Greek god, comes to visit King Midas and in gratitude for Midas's kindness offers him one wish. Eager for more wealth, Midas wishes for the ability to turn everything he touches into gold. Readers wonder if this gift will be a blessing or a curse.

- **Highlight Key Writing Strategies:** Remind students not to give away the climax or resolution. The goal is to give enough information so that readers want to read more, without spoiling the plot.

4. Sharing and Discussion: (10 minutes)

- **Share Results:** After student(s) have completed their paragraphs, invite them to share their work.

- **Discussion:** As the student(s) presents their paragraph, discuss their strong points, effective details, and clear explanations to highlight what they did well and reinforce their understanding of the assignment.

5. Homework Explanation (5 minutes)

- **Homework:** Write the first paragraph of a book review about the realistic fiction book you just finished reading. Follow the same paragraph outline model in your curriculum guide that we used in class today. Focus on providing background information without giving away the ending.

Comm. Central Curriculum Guide Instructions:

Composition: Book Review - Wk 1 Summarizing

Day 2: Note-taking & Outlining

- Using the realistic fiction novel you just finished reading, create an outline for the first paragraph of your four-paragraph book review.
- The first paragraph will be a summary that will establish the premise of the book and context for the rest of the review.
- See the outline below and jot notes accordingly; be sure all aspects are included in your summary. It's not necessary that they are presented in the order listed.
- No spoilers: Do not give away the ending of the book (climax or resolution). The purpose is to give others enough information so they can decide to either read or not read the book.

Paragraph Outline:

- Attention Grabber
 - Title of the book (in Italics)
 - Name of the author and any relevant biographical information
 - The genre and intended audience
 - The main theme
 - The setting (time and place)
 - The main characters
 - The main events that set the story into action

Day 3: Composing

- Using your notes, type your summary following basic MLA format
 - **MLA Format:**
 - Times New Roman, 12-point font
 - Indented paragraph
 - 1-inch margins
 - Proper header (name, teacher, class, date) in the top left corner

Day 4: Revising & Editing

- Read your composition out loud.
- Make revisions:
 - Using a synonym finder, replace boring adjectives and non-precise verbs with better word choices.
 - Vary sentence openers (no more than two of the same type in a row)
- Make final edits:
 - Read aloud for word omission
 - Check grammar
 - Check spelling
 - Have someone proof-read

Day 5: Revising & Tweaking

- Read your composition out loud again. Fine tune your work further. Review Day 4 suggestions again.