

Distance Education
Grade Six
English Language Arts

Novel Study

Novel of Your Choice

Note to the Home Instructor

Students are expected to complete two of the following three Novel Studies:

1. *Ticket to Curlew* by Celia Barker Lottridge
2. *The Trouble with Tuck* by Theodore Taylor
3. **Student's own choice**

This Novel Study is the Student's own choice. When students have decided on a novel, approval must be obtained from the teacher before the student starts the Novel Study. There is a memorandum at the back of this Novel Study that must be completed and sent into the teacher. Please wait for a response before the student proceeds.

One novel that students may consider is *Max and Me and the Time Machine*. This book has been approved in both Alberta and British Columbia, and the teacher would be sure to approve this choice. However, the student is free to consider whatever books he or she likes.

Student activities are presented in each Novel Study. You will find a common approach to activities in each one. An explanation of each strategy is provided for you so that you can provide support for the student.

Before the Students Read:

An activity is provided to motivate the students and to spark their interest in the novel that they are about to begin reading.

As the Students Read:

Students are asked to do a number of tasks as they read through the novel. These tasks include:

Reader Response Journal: The students are asked to keep a journal in which they will respond to what they have been reading after regular intervals (after two to three chapters). This homemade journal will simply be a stapled booklet of loose-leaf paper with a student-made cover. Writing in this journal will provide students with the opportunity to share what they are thinking and feeling as they are reading. Through their journals, students have the opportunity to relate their personal experiences to what characters are experiencing in the novel. The Reader Response Journal provides an opportunity for students to become more involved in the novel and to find connections with what they are reading; it challenges them to interact with what they are reading on a personal level; and it invites and values the students' thoughts, feelings, ideas, concerns, and questions about what they are reading.

Guiding questions are provided for the students to help them get started. Students do not have to answer all these questions each time they make an entry in their journal. These questions are a guide to the ways in which students can choose to respond. Each time the students write in their journal, they should try to target different questions so that they are not always responding to the same questions. What is happening in the novel at the time of each journal entry will suggest that certain questions are more appropriate at this time than others. You can help the student think about which questions make most sense to respond to at each stopping point in the novel.

The Reader Response Journal is not intended to summarize the events of the novel. As they write, students will need to refer to events and characters, but their entries should focus on their thoughts, opinions, feelings, questions, and ideas about what they have read. Wherever possible, they should try to relate their personal experiences to what they are reading.

Students should record an entry in their journals after every third chapter. If they wish to respond more often, they should be encouraged to write as often as they wish. Each entry should be at least one handwritten page in length. If students wish to write more, they should be encouraged to write as much as they want.

Each entry in the Reader Response Journal should include the following:

- a) the date;
- b) chapters read;
- c) students' responses to what they have read; and
- d) students' predictions of what they think will happen next and their evidence for these predictions. Making predictions based on story evidence and then reading to check the accuracy of their predictions involves students further in the novel they are reading, and it provides practice in applying higher-level thinking skills.

Vocabulary Log: Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own vocabulary development through the use of a Vocabulary Log. As students read their novels, they are invited to record words that are unfamiliar or new to them in their logs and then to use a dictionary and/or the context of the novel to locate a meaning for each entry. Vocabulary Logs are provided in each Novel Study.

NOVEL STUDY

Story Map: A Story Map is a visual portrayal of a novel's events in sequence. Students draw small pictures to represent the main events in the novel. They label each picture to identify the event and then link the pictures of the main events with arrows to show the order in which they happened. They can link their pictures in a circle, a line, or a winding path of their own design.

Students may use the same stopping points as they use for their journal writing to add to their Story Maps. It will provide them with a summary of story events at a glance and provide them with an opportunity to creatively present the events of the novel.

Students can use unlined paper for their maps. A sample is provided in this Novel Study.

Novel Charts can be used as an alternative to story mapping. In this option, instead of portraying story events pictorially, students summarize key information about the novel in chart form as they read. They will note information about conflict, character, setting, point of view, climax, the resolution/ending, theme, and genre. On completion of their novel, they will have an overview of all the elements of their novel.

Students will fill in information on the chart in bits and pieces. Elements such as setting and point of view will be known at the first stopping point. Data about character and new conflicts will be added as students encounter them in the novel. Other elements, such as the resolution/ending and theme, will be filled in on completion of the novel. Information can be recorded in point form, as the chart is a summary of the novel's elements. A sample Novel Chart is provided in this Novel Study.

Story Maps and Novel Charts focus on plot. Students can use the same stopping points as their journal responses to add to their maps or charts.

There are two kinds of maps that help the students focus on the characters in a novel.

1. With a **Character Map**, students begin by placing the character's name in the centre of the map.

Students then identify a character trait or quality to place in the oval on each branch of the map. Each character trait or quality must be supported with evidence from the novel. Examples of evidence that support each trait or quality form the sub-branches for each branch of the Character Map. This evidence is placed in the circles that branch out from each oval. This provides students with a visual portrayal of the characters they meet in the novels they read. These Character Maps provide key information for character analysis and comparison. A sample Character Map is provided in the Novel Study.

2. A **Sociogram** takes the first character map one step further and shows the relationships between characters. As students read their novels and encounter new characters, they create a box for each character in which they name and describe in point form what they know about the character. They use arrows between the boxes to highlight and describe the relationships between characters.

Again, this becomes part of the process of reading and responding to the novel. The students can use their journal stopping points to add characters and relationships to their Sociograms. As they read, they will become more aware of character development and how the characters are interrelated. At the end of the novel, they will have an overview of the characters. A sample Sociogram is provided in the Novel Study.

There are two approaches to using these strategies:

1. On the first reading of their novel, students may wish to record their entries in the Reader Response Journals and Vocabulary Logs and then complete the Story Map/Novel Chart and Character Map/Sociogram on a second reading.

OR

2. Students may complete all the activities during one reading of the novel. They may wish to use the regular stopping points for responding in their journals and add to their Story Maps/Novel Charts and Character Maps/Sociograms at the same time.

Either approach is fine and will depend on the choice of the student. It is important that students use their Reader Response Journals on the first reading so that they write down their initial impressions, thoughts, and connections, and so that they can make predictions about what will happen in the novel.

These strategies encourage students to interact with the novel as they read, and once students establish the routine of reading, stopping to respond in their journals, and adding to their maps and charts, the process becomes an easy one. These strategies focus on the students' personal reactions to their novels and the key elements of vocabulary, plot, and character.

After students complete their novel:

A choice of activities is provided for students. These activities focus on character comparison and analysis, setting, point of view, theme, and plot.

NOVEL STUDY

In summary, for each Novel Study the following approach is taken:

1. Before students read, there is an activity to “set the stage.”
2. As students read their novels, they are asked to complete:
 - a Reader Response Journal;
 - a Vocabulary Log;
 - a Story Map or Novel Chart; and
 - a Character Map or Sociogram.
3. After students finish reading their novels, a choice of activities is provided for them. Instructions for each activity are provided in each of the Novel Studies. For some options, student master copies are provided in the Novel Studies, and for other options, students are asked to use loose-leaf or unlined paper.

With your assistance, your student will have the opportunity to explore the relationships, connections, and elements in the novels in an approach that fosters interaction with what they read, and that values their ideas, reactions, and opinions. Reading a novel is a personal experience. Each reader brings different experiences and background knowledge to a novel. These strategies foster reading as a personal experience that will vary from individual to individual. The activities in these Novel Studies recognize and value each reader’s interpretation and reaction to what an author has written.

Assignment Record Form for English Language Arts 6

Keep this sheet when returned—it is your report.

Teacher's comments:

If label is missing
or incorrect:

Student File Number:

Date submitted:

Apply Address Label Here

Name:

Address:

Postal Code:

Please verify that the preprinted address label is
for the correct module and section.

Language Arts 6
Novel of Your Choice Novel
Study

Mark:

Date submitted:

For School Use Only:

Assigned Teacher: _____

Assigned Code: _____

Graded by: _____

Instructions for Submitting this Distance Learning Assignment Booklet

When you are registered for distance learning courses, you are expected to submit *Assignment Booklets* for correction regularly. Submit each *Assignment Booklet* as soon as you have completed it. Before submitting your *Assignment Booklet*, please check the following:

- Are all the assignments completed? If not, explain why.
- Has your work been reread to ensure accuracy in spelling and details?
- Is the record form filled out and the correct label attached?

Mailing

1. Postage Regulations

Do **not** enclose letters with *Assignment Booklets*.

Send all letters in a separate envelope.

2. Postage Rates

Take your *Assignment Booklet* to the post office and have it weighed. Attach sufficient postage and seal the envelope. *Assignment Booklets* will travel faster if sufficient postage is used and if they are in large envelopes that do not exceed two centimetres in thickness.

Faxing

1. *Assignment Booklets* may be faxed. Contact your teacher for the fax number.
2. All faxing costs are the responsibility of the sender.

E-mailing

Assignment Booklets may be e-mailed. Contact your teacher for the e-mail address.

Before You Read:

Use the memorandum format at the back of this booklet to write a memo to your teacher announcing the book that you have chosen for this Novel Study, and to share your reasons for choosing this novel.

Note: Be sure to send a memo or talk to your marking teacher before you begin the Novel Study in order to get approval for your choice of novel.

As You Read:

The activities that you are required to complete as you read are described in this section. Make sure that you read this section carefully before you begin to read your novel.

1. **Reader Response Journal:** In this journal, you have the opportunity to respond to what you are reading. This is where you can express what you think and feel as you read. You can use loose-leaf paper to make your own Reader Response Journal. The cover page of this journal should include the following information:

- The title of the author and novel
- Reader Response Journal
- Your name

Here are some questions for you to think about as you write in your journal:

- a) What did you feel as you read? What made you feel this way?
- b) Did the characters feel or experience anything that reminded you of something that has happened to you? How did your experience and reactions compare to the characters in the story?
- c) What was your opinion of a character's action or reaction? What would you have done? How would you have reacted?
- d) In what ways are you similar to the characters? In what ways are you different?
- e) What questions did you have as you were reading? What did you wonder about?
- f) Did what you were reading remind you of anything you already know about or have read? Share this connection.
- g) What did you like? What did you dislike?
- h) What makes sense? What does not make sense?
- i) Is there a quote that appeals to you? Record the quote and respond to it. Why did you choose it?

NOVEL STUDY

- j) What is your opinion of the author's writing style? How did the author capture your interest? What images did the author create that appealed to you? How did the author create suspense? How did the author create believable characters? What did you think of the writer's use of language?

You do not have to answer all these questions each time you write in your journal. These questions are a guide to the ways in which you can choose to respond. Each time you write, try to target different questions.

For example, if you respond to questions b) and c) in your first entry, try to respond to different questions in your second entry. What is happening in the novel at the time of each entry in your response journal will point you toward certain questions. You can ask yourself which questions make most sense to respond to at each point in the novel where you stop.

Your journal is not intended to summarize the events of the novel. As you write, you will need to include events and characters, but your entries should focus on your thoughts, opinions, feelings, questions, and ideas about what you have read. Wherever possible, try to relate your personal experiences to what you are reading.

Because you are reading a novel of your own choice, you will have to select stopping points where you make journal entries. You may wish to make journal entries after every two or three chapters, depending on the book's length. You should aim for five to six journal entries.

Each journal entry should include:

- a) the date;
- b) chapters read;
- c) your response to what you have read; and
- d) your prediction about what will happen next in the novel and your evidence for this prediction.

Each journal entry in your Reader Response Journal should be at least one handwritten page long. If you want to write more, go ahead.

2. **Vocabulary Log:** You will find a Vocabulary Log at the back of this Novel Study. It is set up like this:

Page Number	Word	Definition

As you read the story, record words that are new or unfamiliar in your Vocabulary Log. You can use a dictionary to locate the meaning of each word. You may be able to determine the meaning of the word from the novel. The purpose of this log sheet is to help you identify and learn new vocabulary, so use the log only for those words that are unfamiliar to you.

NOVEL STUDY

3. **Novel Chart:** When completing a Novel Chart, you can add information as you read through the novel the first time, or you can go through the novel a second time and fill in your answers. On the Novel Chart found at the back of this Novel Study, outline in point form the setting, conflicts, characters, point of view, climax, genre, resolution/ending, and the theme/lesson/message.

Setting (The place and time.)	Conflicts (List the problems in the order they occur.)	Characters (List with a brief description of who they are.)
Point of View (Who is telling the story?)	Climax (The most exciting point of the action.)	
		Theme/Lesson/Message (What can you learn from the novel?)
Genre (History, adventure, mystery, science fiction, fantasy, or biography.)	Resolution/Ending (How are the main problems resolved?)	

When you are finished this chart, you will be able to see all the important information about the novel you are reading.

4. You will complete a map for the main characters in the novel by choosing either a) or b).
- a) Complete an individual **Character Map** for each of the main characters. You can find a full-size Character Map at the back of this Student Booklet. Make as many copies as you need, or draw your own. Add more branches to your character maps if you wish.

Place the name of a character in the middle box. In each of the four circles next to the name, write a word to describe the qualities and personality of this character. In the outer circles, provide evidence from the story in point form to support the qualities you named. What actions did the character take that proved these qualities?

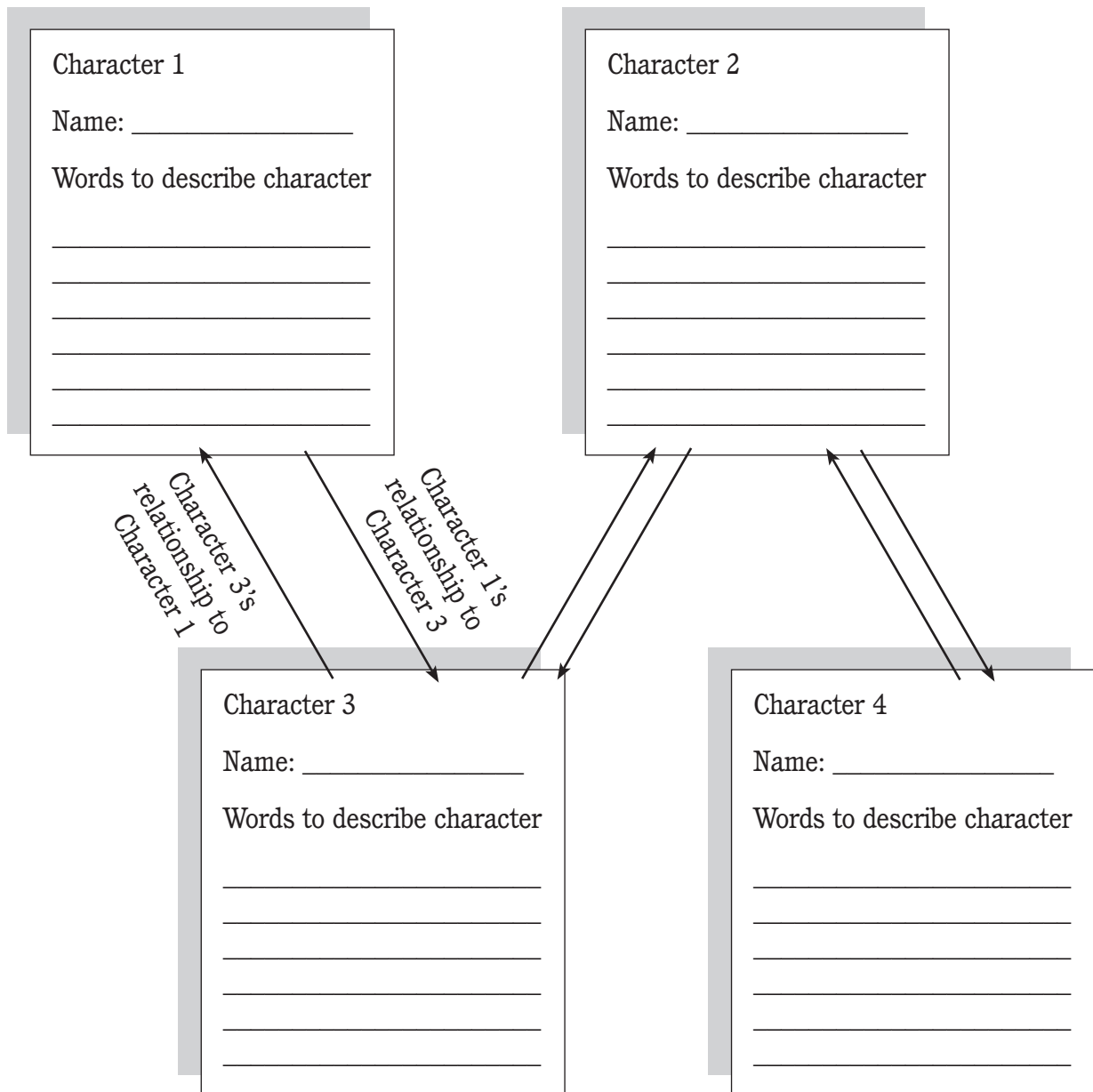
Example:

NOVEL STUDY

OR

- b) Complete a **Sociogram**, such as the one below, that shows the relationships between the main characters of the novel. On a large piece of paper, draw a box or circle for each of the main characters that you meet in the novel. Within each box or circle, record the character's name and words to describe the character. Draw arrows from one character to another and write phrases above and below the arrows to describe the relationships.

Draw boxes or circles for each character in the middle of your sheet of paper so that you have enough room.



You will have four ongoing tasks as you read:

- a) Reader Response Journal
- b) Vocabulary Log
- c) Novel Chart
- d) Character Map or Sociogram

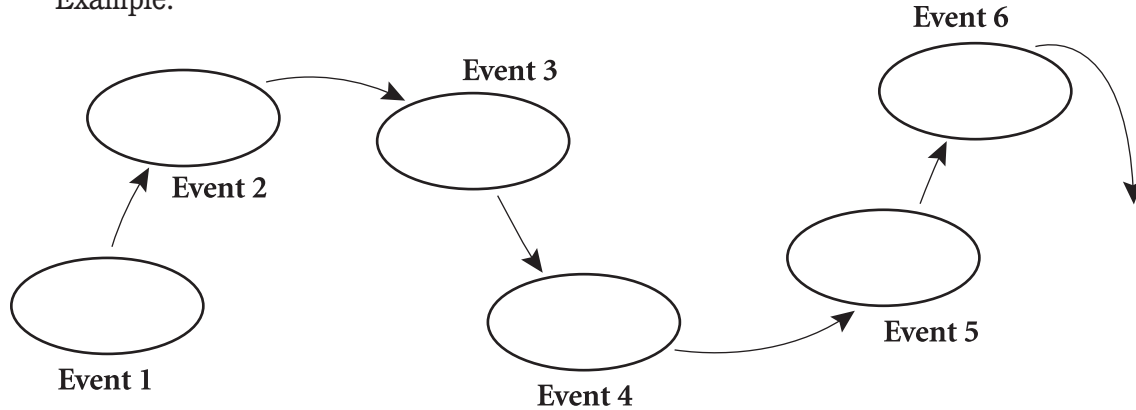
Set up regular stopping points so that you can complete these tasks. You must complete your Reader Response Journal and Vocabulary Log on your first reading of the novel. You can do all of your tasks on the first reading if you want, or you can go back and reread parts of the novel or the whole novel and finish the other tasks as you go through the book a second time.

When You Have Finished Reading Your Novel.

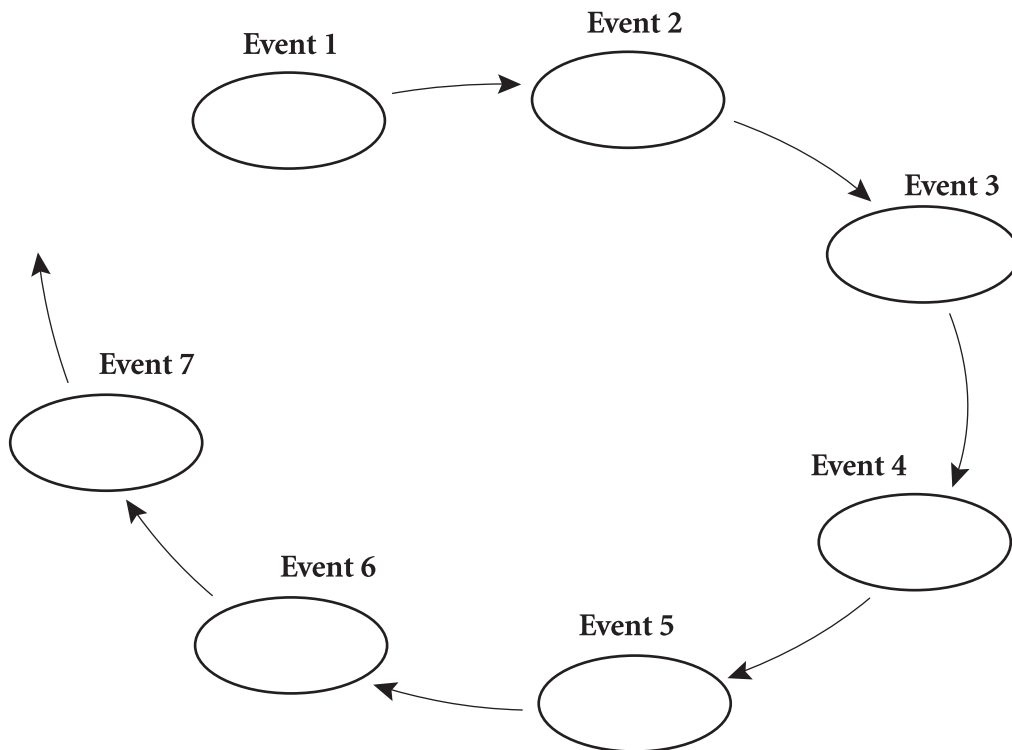
Choose four of the following activities:

1. **Story Map:** On a sheet of unlined paper, draw a small picture to represent each of the main events in the novel. Label each picture to identify the event. These pictures do not have to be detailed; their job is to represent the novel's plot. Then link the pictures in the order that they happened in a circle, a line, or a winding path of your own design.

Example:



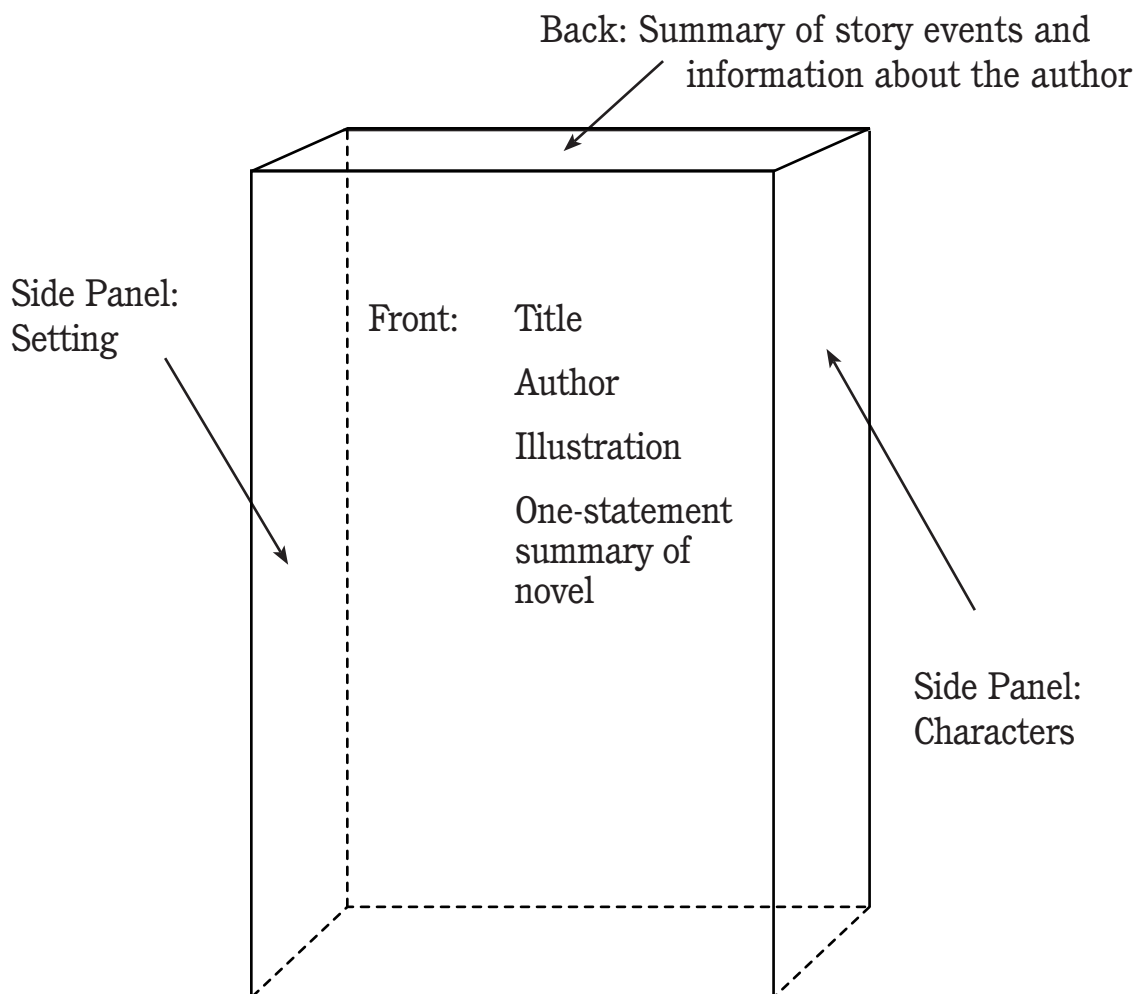
OR



2. **Cereal Box Book Talk:** Breakfast cereal will never be the same! Cover a cereal box with paper. On the panels, present the following information:

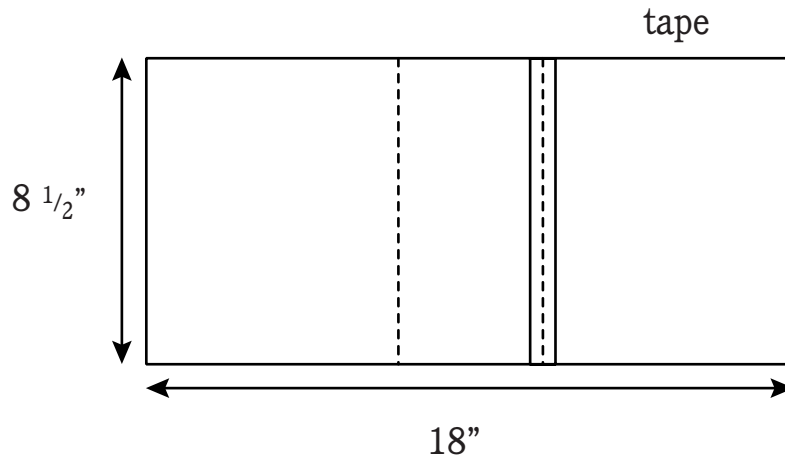
- a) front panel: novel title, author, illustration, one-statement summary of the novel
- b) one side panel: list of characters
- c) other side panel: description of the novel's setting
- d) back panel: story summary and information about the author

Inside the cereal box, place an object that represents something important that happened in the novel. Attach a brief explanation of what the object stands for and why you chose this object. You can open both ends of the cereal box to flatten it for mailing.

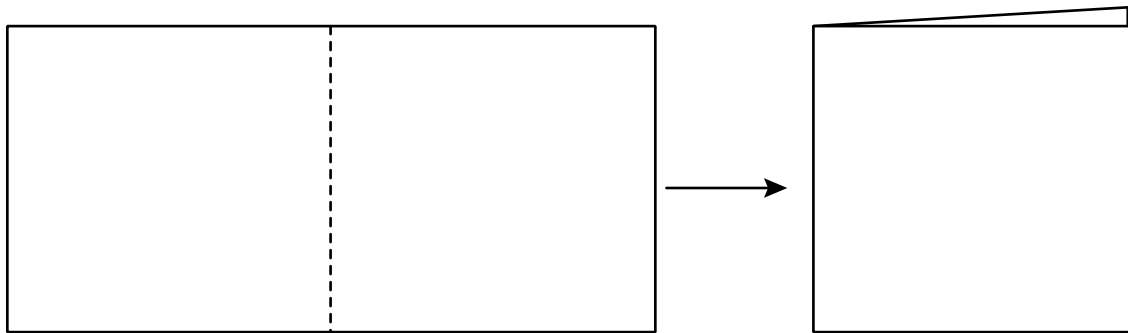


NOVEL STUDY

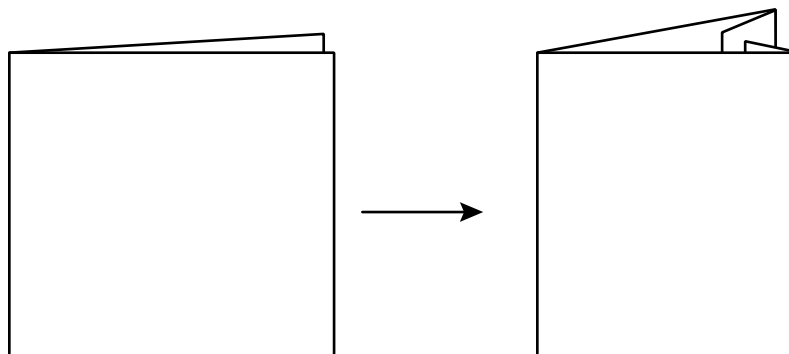
3. **Book Jacket:** Design a book jacket for your novel. Tape two 8 1/2 x 11-inch sheets of paper together. Overlap them so that they measure 8 1/2 x 18 inches.



Fold this paper in half.



Once the paper is folded in half, fold in the ends to make a front and back flap.



On the front of your book jacket, you need the title, author, and an illustration for the novel. On the inside flap, you need a story summary. On the back flap, you need information about the author. On the back of the book jacket, you have several options. You can:

- a) continue your illustration or create a second illustration;
 - b) present a picture or sketch of the author;
 - c) present other titles written by this author; or
 - d) present an exciting **excerpt** from the novel that would capture the interest of other readers. An excerpt is a passage taken directly from the story.
4. **Book Review:** Your opinion matters! What you say about a book can turn other readers onto a book or turn them off! Write a review of the novel you chose to read. Begin with the title and author of your book and then let the following questions guide you as you write.
- a) What is your book about? Make this very brief—a paragraph at the most.
 - b) Which characters appeal to you the most? Which appeal to you the least? Why do you feel this way?
 - c) What appealed to you the most about the author's writing? How well did the author:
 - i. create realistic characters?
 - ii. create suspense?
 - iii. write exciting action?
 - iv. write realistic dialogue?
 - v. create word pictures so that you felt you were there? Did you like the language that the author used?
 - vi. keep you interested and involved in the story? Did you want to keep reading? What made you want to keep reading?Give examples to support your answers for c).
 - d) Was there anything that you did not like about the author's writing? Could you make any suggestions for improvements?
 - e) Is this a book that you would recommend to other readers? Why or why not? Be as specific as you can.
 - f) Overall, how would you rate this book?

NOVEL STUDY

Your opinion is the most important part of a book review. Be sure to support your opinion with evidence from the novel.

You can choose to present the review that you have written in one of the following ways:

- You can print or type your review in column format so that it is ready to be published in a newspaper or magazine. Use your own paper for this option.
- You can be a radio announcer and record your review on audio cassette so that it is ready to be aired on a radio program. Use your own cassette for this option.
- You can be a TV broadcaster and record your review on videotape so that it is ready for airing over the network. Use your own videotape for this option.

If you choose the second or third option for the review, submit your written script with the audio cassette or videotape.

5. **Write a Script:** Select an incident from the novel and rewrite it as a script for a play. Your task is to translate the action of the incident you have chosen into:

- a) dialogue between characters;
- b) stage directions for their movements; and
- c) any necessary explanations by a narrator.

For example:

Narrator: Sarah and Tom are exploring in an old abandoned farmhouse.

Sarah: Tom! Where are you?

Tom: I'm back here ... must be one of the bedrooms.

Sarah: Come quickly! See what I've found!

(Tom rushes to find Sarah in the old kitchen.)

You can use loose-leaf to complete this option.

6. **News Story:** Identify the climax or the most exciting point in your novel.

Option A: Write a front-page news story with a headline and pictures to capture this important moment in the story. This is breaking news and you have front-page coverage!

Use loose-leaf or unlined paper for this option. Your news story should be presented in columns with a catchy headline and boxes for the pictures. Look at front-page stories in actual newspapers for ideas.

Option B: You are a radio or TV broadcaster. It is your job to write the news stories to be aired on the evening news. Write a script to inform your audience about the climax of your novel. Then record your broadcast on audio cassette or videotape. As a news reporter, you must report the facts of the incident, but you must also capture the excitement of the moment.

7. **Letter to a Character:** Write a letter to one of the characters in your novel. This letter may be to a character that you admire or to a character that you dislike. Let the following questions provide you with ideas.
- What did you admire or dislike about the character? Why?
 - How do you compare to the character? Would you have behaved or reacted as the character did? Why or why not?
 - What would you have done the same as the character? What would you have done differently?
 - Why would you want to meet the character?
 - What would you like to do with the character?
 - What would you like to share with the character about your life and your experiences?

You can use loose-leaf for this option.

8. **Letter to the Author:** Write a letter to the author of your novel. Let the following questions guide you.
- What book did you read that was written by the author?
 - What were your favourite parts of the book? Why?
 - Were there any parts that you did not like? Why?
 - Who were your favourite characters? Why did they appeal to you?
 - What characters did you dislike? Why?
 - What do you like about the author's writing?
 - What do you not like about the author's writing?
 - Would you make any changes to the story? What would they be?
 - Can you make any recommendations to the author for future writing?

You can use loose-leaf for this option.

NOVEL STUDY

9. **Interview a Character:** You are a reporter for a news program. Write the script for an interview with a character from the novel. You need to think what questions you would ask this character. You also need to think about how this character would answer your questions. Set up the interview in the following format:

Reporter: Introduction of character and first question.

Character: Response.

Reporter: Comment on response; second question.

Character: Response.

You can use loose-leaf paper for the writing of this script.

When your script is complete, invite a parent or friend to play the part of the character. You can play the reporter. Record the interview on audio cassette or videotape. This might be the start of a career for you in radio or television journalism!

Vocabulary Log

Novel:

Author:

Page Number	Word	Definition

Novel Chart

Title:

Author:

Setting (The place and time.)	Conflicts (List the problems in the order they occur.)	Characters (List with a brief description of who they are.)
Point of View (Who is telling the story?)	Climax (The most exciting point of the action.)	
		Theme/Lesson/Message (What can you learn from the novel?)
Genre (History, adventure, mystery, science fiction, fantasy, or biography.)	Resolution/Ending (How are the main problems resolved?)	

Character Map

Novel Study - "Novel of Your Choice"**Home Instructor Feedback Sheet**

Answer the following questions and send in this sheet with your student's completed assignments and Assignment Record Form.

1. List the name and author of the novel chosen by your student.

2. In your view, why did your student choose this novel for the novel study?

3. In your view, which question did the student find the most challenging?

4. This novel study had questions where the student had to choose one part to answer. What difficulties did your student have with making a choice on these type of questions.

Novel Study - "Novel of Your Choice"

Student Feedback Sheet

Answer the following questions and send in this sheet with your completed assignment and Assignment Record Form.

1. Provide the name and author of the novel you chose to read.

2. Why did you choose this novel to read?

3. Which question did you find the most difficult using the novel of your choice?

4. Which question did you find the easiest using the novel of your choice?

Checklist for “Novel of Your Choice”

Make sure you send in all these items.

Are you sending some assignments electronically and others through the mail? If so, please notify your teacher so your marks will not be given until all materials have been received.

- Assignment Record Form
- Assignment 1: “Reader Response Journal”
- Assignment 2: “Vocabulary Log”
- Assignment 3: “Novel Chart”
- Assignment 4: “Character Map” or “Sociogram”
- Assignment 5: Choose four (4) from the following (indicate which four you have chosen):
 - (1) Story Map
 - (2) Cereal Box Book Talk
 - (3) Book Jacket
 - (4) Book Review
 - (5) Write a Script
 - (6) News Story - Option A or Option B
 - (7) Letter to a Character
 - (8) Letter to the Author
 - (9) Interview a Character
- Home Instructor Feedback Sheet
- Student Feedback Sheet
- Checklist for “Novel of Your Choice”