

ENGAGE NOW!

October 2015—Lawrence Butti

SUBJECT AREA: ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

TITLE: Independent Reading Presentations (Book Talks)

GRADE LEVEL: 9-12

TIME: Varies depending on number of students

OVERVIEW:

One of the most important practices we can cultivate in our students is independent reading. Along with the actual process of reading is the valuable step of having students reflect on and share their experiences with classmates. To that end, I have students engage in a formalized book talk. First we brainstorm what kinds of information in general they might want to share with the class. We extend that to discuss works we have already read in class. Finally, I model a book talk for them using a book I have recently read. Though some students want to use Powerpoint, I usually don't allow it as they tend to have become overly reliant on it. We do, however, look at book trailers that have been posted on the YouTube and assess their effectiveness, faithfulness to the book, use of language, music, graphics, and visuals. I have encouraged students to create these as a supplement to their talks.

I have included the rubric I use to assess their talks as well as elements to include in each talk. Another handout lists elements again and includes links to YouTube book trailers. Finally, I have included a reflection students must complete at the conclusion of the talks.

Usually, I schedule one or two a day, depending on the size of the class and the time I have available for this. That structure, though, might take as long as a month. Be flexible to fit this into a time that works for you and your students.

Though this structure lends itself easily to works of fiction, non-fiction texts have also been the subject of many successful book talks, with some tweaking of the project overview.

CONNECTION TO COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS:

READING

RL 10.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL 10.2

Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

RL 10.3

Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

WRITING

W.10.4

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

SL.10.4

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

Book Talk Rubric

	4	3	2	1	SCORE
Information: title, author, genre, characters, conflict, theme, author's purpose	Well organized, informative, and detailed with much information about the author, characters, events/ideas & purpose	Mostly organized, informative, and detailed with some information about the author, characters, events/ideas & purpose	Somewhat organized. Lacks detailed information. The purpose is not clearly stated.	Did you read the book? Inaccurate or minimal content with little or no information about characters, events, ideas, or purpose.	
Reading an Excerpt	Excerpt was well-explained and significant; length was appropriate; clear evidence of preparation.	Excerpt was explained and important; length was appropriate; some evidence of preparation.	Excerpt not explained and/or importance was unclear; length was too brief/long; little evidence of preparation.	No explanation of passage or importance; inappropriate length; seems to be read for the first time.	
Your opinion	Explanation of opinion supported by clear details from the text.	Explanation of opinion supported by some details from the text.	Explanation of opinion mentions few details from the text.	Confusing expression of opinion (or no opinion) with no detail from the text.	
Presentation Style: eye contact, clarity, volume, pace, body language, enthusiasm	Clearly confident and practiced, with appropriate body language. Frequent eye contact with the class; moderately paced; loud, clear & very enthusiastic.	Some evidence of confidence and practice, with appropriate body language. Some eye contact; pace, volume, and clarity were mostly good. Some enthusiasm detected.	Little evidence of confidence and practice; body language negatively affects presentation. Little eye contact; clarity, pace and/or volume need improvement. Minimal enthusiasm.	Clearly unpracticed, with inappropriate body language. Virtually no eye contact. Mostly read. Clarity, volume, and/or pace had a negative impact on the presentation. No enthusiasm.	
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Book Talks: Present a 5 minute book talk to the class based on the book you are reading.

1. title and author
 2. general author info (other books, relevant background)
 3. genre
 4. plot
 5. characters
 6. conflict
 7. setting
 8. theme
 9. author's purpose
 10. recommendation* (don't forget this part)
 11. Read a brief excerpt (The first time you read this aloud should not be when you are in front of the class. Be ready with the selected page(s).)
 12. Answer any questions.
- 
- Be concise

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE . . .

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Or . . . create a book trailer!!!

Wintergirls

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2HA4QJ3JIWQ&list=PLlp8c0bsiNvv1n97CfO3FsKWZuoIWIKGq>

Behind the Beautiful Forevers

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7vVIWt8yUbl&list=PLlp8c0bsiNvv1n97CfO3FsKWZuoIWIKGq&index=56>

Of Mice and Men

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Ye-REkHgrQ>

Life of Pi

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hquResJ4Ucl>

War Horse

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-6jPZxyUjl&list=PLGyir7E7djmgpY4ZstqTFF1GIOL4KDR3e>

The Outsiders

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0izmGO60fW4>

Outliers

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGh-x2CeuoQ&playnext=1&list=PLlp8c0bsiNvv1n97CfO3FsKWZuoIWIKGq&feature=results_main

Book Talk Reflection

(quiz grade)

1. Book I'd most like to read
2. Book I'd least like to read
3. Presentation I enjoyed the most