

There are several articles linked here about different genres of young adult literature. Each week you should read a genre book from the book list (and the article that goes with it) and discuss these books in your journal. Think about these books deeply. Are they a good example of their genre or not? What do you see as the major themes in the books? What emotions or memories do these stories evoke? How might these stories be used with kids in or out of school?

Historical fiction is very popular in middle and high schools as it provides a "crossover" between disciplines like Social Studies and English/Language Arts. However, the authors of the article point out some problems or dilemmas with historical fiction. Do you see any of these dilemmas in the book you are reading? How were the dilemmas treated or resolved? How important is "truth" in historical fiction? Are there any historical figures in your book? If so, how are they portrayed?

<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/fall98/brown.html>

Mystery: Adolescents are often looking to read books that are exciting and engaging. Mysteries, horror, and action/adventure stories are quite popular. You may respond to the book you are reading in any way. However, if you are looking for an idea for this journal, try this: Write the script for a book talk. Pretend that you are going to describe this book to a class of middle or high school students. How will you hook them? What will you say? How will you summarize the book so as to capture its essence but still "sell" it?

Or, here are some questions to get you started on your journal: What type of mystery is your book? What types of YA issues are involved in addition to the mystery part? What do you think of the author's decisions about characters, problems, and plot? Does your book follow the "rules" of mysteries? Are these rules important? Why or why not?

<http://cda.morris.umn.edu/~pagem/courses/YAL/mystery.mht>

Realistic Fiction: Realistic books often include problems, controversial issues, and quests. Most censored books are realistic fiction because in an attempt to be, well, *realistic*, authors will include swearing or allusions to sex and other things that adults may not want kids to read about. Think about where you fall on this issue. Whichever side you're on, take some time to think about why the other side thinks what it does.

Respond to the book you are currently reading. Really take the time to reflect on the book and think deeply about it. Here are some questions to get you started: What are the benefits to kids of reading realistic fiction? What are the concerns? Is the book you're reading a good example of the genre? What are some of the major themes or ideas? What emotions or memories do these stories evoke? What might parents be concerned about in the book you are reading? How might you respond to such concerns?

<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/spring98/lemieux.html>

Science Fiction: Science fiction and fantasy are genres that explore human themes in alternate settings. Often complex questions about the strengths and weaknesses of our society are posed in these types of books. Speculative fiction often explores issues that might be considered too sensitive for other genres, like issues of race, class, gender, free will, cultural norms, and more.

As you read, comment on your book--what do you like and dislike about the book? What types of societal problems are explored in your book? What do you think about these problems? Are there solutions that are posed? What characters are the most compelling? What parallels do you see with our current time and place? You may reflect on anything in this journal but these are some questions to get you started.

<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/v28n2/bucher.html>

Fantasy: Like science fiction, fantasy is a genre that explores human themes in alternate settings. Often complex questions about the strengths and weaknesses of our society are posed in these types of books. Speculative fiction often explores issues that might be considered too sensitive for other genres, like issues of race, class, gender, free will, cultural norms, and more.

As you read, comment on your book--what do you like and dislike about the book? How do you think fantasy and science fiction are related and how are they different? What types of societal problems are explored in your book? What do you think about these problems? Are there solutions that are posed? What characters are the most compelling? What parallels do you see with our current time and place? You may reflect on anything in this journal but these are some questions to get you started.

<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/spring96/greenway.html>

Poetry: You were to choose a poetry book to read, either an anthology or a novel-in-verse. Talk a little bit about the book you chose. Why did you choose it? Are there particular poems or sections that appealed to you? Why? Discuss the themes in the book. How did the poetry format affect your reading?

<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/v28n3/lipsett.html>

Graphic novels are a growing form of adolescent literacy. They cover many different genres and themes. As you read your graphic novel, think about how the story is changed (or how your response to the story is changed) because of the graphic format. What is engaging and off-putting about the format? If you were going to write/draw a graphic novel, what might it be about? How does the artwork add to the story?

http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa4063/is_200501/ai_n13486821

Nonfiction: Many students read nonfiction for enjoyment. Although surveys put the number higher for boys than girls, the appeal of nonfiction transcends gender and reading level. As you read your nonfiction selection, think about the quality of the writing—does it fulfill the qualities listed in the nonfiction notes? What are some of your favorite lines or passages? What type of book did you select and why? Why have you read nonfiction in the past? What is the value in the book you are reading? What do you not like?

<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/ALAN/spring99/bode.html>