

Monroe Public Schools
Elementary Language Arts
Genre Unit
Realistic Fiction - Grade 3

Genre definition: Realistic fiction is literature containing stories that *could* happen in the real world, in a time and setting that is possible, and with characters that are true to life and behave in realistic ways.

Genre purposes: The purpose of realistic fiction is to entertain, to help understand problems and issues that might encountered in their own lives, to empathize with characters engaged in resolving problems, and recognize the complexity of human relationships.

Genre characteristics:

Realistic fiction has characters, setting, a plot involving conflict or tension revolving around a problem, and a resolution providing the conclusion. It can be humorous, adventurous, romantic and/or imaginative.

Anchor texts:

See attached book list

GLCE's:

The students will indentify and describe the elements of realistic fiction.

The students will write a realistic fiction piece that contains all of the elements of realistic fiction.

The students will explain how characters in realistic fiction express attitudes about one another in familiar classic and contemporary literature.

The students will connect knowledge, experience, and understanding of the world to themes and perspectives in realistic fiction to oral and written responses.

The students will retell the story elements of realistic fiction with relative details.

Word Study & Recognition/Vocabulary:

Vocabulary- realistic fiction, conflict, solution, and plot

Spelling:

In their published realistic fiction writing piece, student will spell frequently encountered words correctly. For less frequently encountered words students will use environmental resources such as a dictionary and a word wall.

Comprehension strategies/literary devices:

*Questioning

*Compare and contrast

*Plot

Content area connections:

Social Studies - Understanding and appreciating various cultures. (See attached booklist Multi-cultural Picture Book List for Realistic Fiction)

Realistic Fiction

Third Grade Unit

Characteristics to notice and teach (See attached information sheet for more info.)

- It “could” happen in real world
- Takes place in modern time
- Realistic setting
- Characters are true to life
- Narrative elements-character, setting, problem, solution

Possible chapter book list:

- Beverly Cleary
- *Tales of the Fourth Grade Nothing* and other Fudge books by Judy Blume
- The Kids of the Polk Street School series
- Judy Moody series
- Junie B. Jones series
- *Because of Winn Dixie*
- Amber Brown series
- Horrible Harry series
- Shiloh series
- *The Hundred Dresses*

Possible picture book list:

- *When Sophie Gets Angry- Really, Really Angry* by Molly Bang
- *The Memory String* by Eve Bunting
- *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* and other Alexander books by Judith Viorst
- *Fireflies* by Julie Brinkloe
- *The Old Dog* by Charlotte Zolotow
- And so many more....

Possible Author sets

- Patricia Polacco
- Eve Bunting
- Cynthia Rylant

Ways to teach this unit:

Day 1 – Explain this genre using the above characteristics
Read aloud a realistic fiction picture book and lead the class to notice and discuss the characteristics of realistic fiction in this story.

Day 2 – Make a chart on chart paper that is divided into these categories: title, characters, setting, problem, and solution (see chart below)

Review the story from Day 1 and fill the chart in together as a group
Then, read aloud another realistic fiction picture book, have a class discussion about the characteristics, and add this title to the large chart you started earlier today (If time permits)

Title	Characters	Setting	Problem	Solution

Days 3-10 – Continue immersing them in this genre in the same manner as long as you feel that your class needs it. During reader’s workshop, you could have a realistic fiction section in your classroom library, have literature circle groups that focus on this genre, an author study, or you could do a whole class chapter book read aloud. While you are doing this, you could have your class fill out story maps or write a response to a specific story or after a chapter in your read aloud.

Days 11-15 – Writers’ Workshop options

- You could write a class realistic fiction story
- You could have the students write their own realistic fiction book, which they might be able to be use for Young Authors.

Multicultural Picture Book List for Realistic Fiction

Chinese American

- Ashley, B. (1995). [*Cleversticks*](#).
Cheng, A. (2003). [*Grandfather counts*](#).
Lee, H. V. (1998). [*In the park*](#).
Levine, E. (1995). [*I hate English!*](#)
Look, L. (2004). [*Ruby Lu, brave and true*](#).
Nunes, S. M. (1997). [*The last dragon*](#).
Peacock, C. A. (2000). [*Mommy far, mommy near: An adoption story*](#).
Sing, R. (1994). [*Chinese New Year's dragon*](#).
Tompert, A. (1997). [*Grandfather Tang's story*](#).
Vaughan, M. K. (1996). [*The dancing dragon*](#).
Williams, V. B. (1997). [*Lucky song*](#).

Japanese American

- Bunting, E. (1998). [*So far from the sea*](#).
Johnston, T. (1996). [*Fishing Sunday*](#).
Sakai, K. (1995). [*Sachiko means happiness*](#).
Say, A. (1997). [*Allison*](#).
Say, A. (1996). [*Emma's rug*](#).
Yashima, T. (1976). [*Crow boy*](#).

Jewish American

- Adler, D. A. (1999). [*One yellow daffodil: A Hanukkah story*](#).
Blue, R. (1997). [*Good Yontif. A picture book of the Jewish year*](#).
Conway, D. C. (1994). [*Northern lights: A Hanukkah story*](#).
Edwards, M. (2004). [*Papa's latkes*](#).
Fishman, C. G. (2000). [*On Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur*](#).
Lamstein, S. M. (1997). [*Annie's Shabbat*](#).
Polacco, P. (1998). [*The bee tree*](#).
Polacco, P. (1994). [*Mrs. Katz and Tush*](#).
Polacco, P. (2001). [*The keeping quilt*](#).
Rothenberg, J. (1997). [*Inside-out grandma*](#).
Zalben, J. B. (1991). [*Goldie's Purim*](#).

Korean American

- Bunting, E. (2001). [*Jin Woo*](#).
Choi, Y. (2001). [*The name jar*](#).
Girard, L. W. (1992). [*We adopted you, Benjamin Koo*](#).
Heo, Y. (1995). [*Father's rubber shoes*](#).
Pak, S. (2001). [*Dear Juno*](#).
Recorvits, H. (2003). [*My name is Yoon*](#).
Wong, J. S. (2000). [*The trip back home*](#).

Latino/Hispanic Americans

- Ada, A. F. (1995). [My name is Maria Isabel.](#)
Brusca, M. (1993). [On the pampas.](#)
Bunting, E. (1998). [Going home.](#)
Casteneda, O. S. (1995). [Abuela's weave.](#)
Dorros, A. (1997). [Radio Man: A story in English and Spanish.](#)
Figueredo, D. H. (1999). [When this world was new.](#)
Hurwitz, J. (1999). [New shoes for Silvia](#)
Leiner, K. (2001). [Mama does the Mambo.](#)
Mora, P. (1997). [A birthday basket for Tia.](#)
Reiser, L. (1998). [Tortillas and lullabies](#)
Soto, G. (1998). [Big bushy mustache](#)
Soto, G. (1996). [Too many tamales](#)
Velasquez, E. (2001). [Grandma's records.](#)

Native American

- Joosse, B. M. (1998). [Mama, do you love me?](#)
Lacapa, K. (1999). [Less than half, more than whole.](#)
McCain, B. R. (2001). [Grandmother's dreamcatcher.](#)
Osofsky, A. (1992). [Dreamcatcher](#)
Schick, E. (1996). [My Navajo sister.](#)
Smith, C. L. (2000). [Jingle dancer.](#)

Middle Eastern American

- Heide, F. P. & Gilliland, J. H. (1995). [The day of Ahmed's secret](#)
Nye, N. S. (1997). [Sitti's secrets.](#)
Matze, C. S. (2002). [The stars in my Geddoh's sky.](#)

Vietnamese American

- Garland, S. (1997). [The lotus seed.](#)
McKay, L. (2000). [Journey home](#)
Surat, M. M. (1989). [Angel child, dragon child](#)

African American

- Adoff, A. (1992). [Black is brown is tan](#)
Bunting, E. (1999). [Smoky night.](#)
Cameron, A. (1999). [Julian's glorious summer](#)
Crews, D. (1998). [Bigmama's](#)
Diakite, P. (2005). [I lost my tooth in Africa](#)
Flourney, V. (1985). [The patchwork quilt](#)
Greenfield, E. (1988). [Grandpa's face.](#)
Hoffman, M. (1991). [Amazing Grace](#)
Johnson, A. (1999). [The wedding.](#)
Keats, E. J. (1998). [Goggles. \(Almost any EJ Keats book will work\)](#)
McKissack, P. C. (2003). [Tippy Lemmey.](#)
Pinkney, J. B. (1997). [Max found two sticks.](#)

Polacco, P. (1998). [Chicken Sunday](#).
Ringgold, F. (1996). [Dinner at Aunt Connie's house](#).
Williams, V. B. (1999). [A chair for my mother](#).
Woodson, J. (2004). [Coming on home soon](#)
Woodson, J. (1998). [We had a picnic this Sunday past](#).

<http://www.multiculturalchildrenslit.com/>

To write a realistic fiction story I must include:

- A setting that most readers can recognize.
- Characters and events that are described vividly.
- Characters who behave and speak in realistic ways.
- A central problem that is clear that the main character must solve.
- Steps in the plot that makes sense.
- A way to solve the problem.