Book Talk Presentations

*Objective: I can prepare a presentation that informs and engages an audience.*

Although we teachers are happy to recommend good books to you, the reality is that in your future, you’ll need to rely on other sources to figure out what’s worth reading: friends, family, online reviews, book clubs, bestseller lists, and more.

In this activity, we are going to practice reading skills (like summary) as well as persuasive speaking skills (such as using enthusiasm). **You will get to give a book talk on a great book** – a single title, series, or a collection – and try to convince the rest of the class that we should read it!

Directions

1. Sign up for a book, series, or collection (see details below). Please get teacher approval before signing up for a book that someone else is already presenting; let’s try to avoid repeats!
2. As needed, read or reread at least one book that you’re recommending. You need to know it well enough to summarize it, answer your peers’ questions, and show detailed enthusiasm for it.
3. Complete the graphic organizer/brainstorm page to help you think about what to include in your short presentation.
4. Draft\* your book talk as a mini-speech, using that graphic organizer for help.
5. Practice if needed in advance, and give your book talk aloud in class on your assigned day!
	1. NOTE: Your actual book talk CAN deviate from your prepared script/draft. It’s okay if you don’t say the exact same words; don’t feel that you need to memorize this!

\*Note: Get approval from me before adding any spoilers in your book talk, especially over characters who die or how the book ends!

Options for Book Talks

There are a few different ways you can complete this assignment:

* **Single Book Title**: Choose just one book to pitch to the class. If you do this option, then you’ll probably want to give more in-depth summary of the plot, characters, and/or other characteristics of it.
* **Book Series**: Choose an entire series (three books or more) to pitch to the class. You won’t have time to go into extreme detail about each one, but you will want to give us “enough” details to make it seem interesting.
* **Collection\***: Choose three or more books that relate to each other in an interesting way, and pitch them to the class. Collections could include…
	+ Books by the **same author** (but not necessarily a series)
	+ Books in the **same genre**, or with similar characteristics
	+ Books that discuss the **same topic**, **theme**, **time period**, or **setting**

\*NOTE: In general, this project is about recommending FICTION books. However, if you choose the Collection option, then you are allowed to include nonfiction books that are relevant.

Book Talk Signups

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| Name(s) of Student(s) | Circle: | Title(s) or Collection You’ll Advertise |
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Book Talk Signups (Continued)

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Book Talk Graphic Organizer

Directions:

* Answer all questions in a detailed manner.
* When you’re done with this page, go type up the draft of your mini-speech/book talk!

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| Title(s) and Author(s):  |

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| Genre | Connections: Check all that apply | Demo: During the Book Talk, I could or should…  |
| * Realistic
* Sci-Fi
* Fantasy
* Historical
* Mystery
* Other:
 | * Reminds you of, or is similar to, another book: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* This is a good one to read if you liked \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* This is similar to books by another author we know: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* This book has a movie version
* This book is based on another book or story: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Other:
 | * Hold up the book
* Pass it around the room
* Discuss the (good/bad) cover art
* Do a character impersonation
* Use a non-book visual aid (a prop, photo, map, image, poster, etc.)
* Ask a question or take a poll to get audience involvement
* Other:
 |
| Length (in pages) |
|  |
| Difficulty level | Experience: Check all that apply | Explain: Why did you choose this book? |
| * Easy
* Medium
* Difficult
 | * This book grabs you from the beginning and stays exciting.
* This book starts slow, but it gets better (more exciting) later.
* You won’t be able to put this book down!
* I didn’t think I would like it at first, but I really did!
* Other:
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| Year published |
|  |

Summary: Write a first-draft plot summary (that could be revised later)

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Book Talk Rubric

Title(s) of Book(s): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Partner(s): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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|  | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Summary(RL.2) | Student writes an accurate, detailed summary of the book(s) that is engaging to the audience.  | Student can generally summarize the relevant details of the book(s) in order to engage an audience.  | Student partially or inconsistently completes the task in a grade level appropriate manner. | Student does not show grade level quality understanding of the task and/or text.  |
| Reading Comprehension(RL.10) | Book talk’s quality shows that the student understands literal and deeper levels of text(s) and can explain and/or analyze both. | Book talk’s details generally show that the student understood the book(s) on literal and/or critical levels.  | Student partially or inconsistently completes the task in a grade level appropriate manner. | Student does not show grade level quality understanding of the task and/or text. |
| In-Class Discussion(SL.1&4) | Student uses at or above grade appropriate speaking skills to clearly express ideas and engage the audience.  | Student uses grade appropriate speaking skills (i.e. eye contact, posture, volume) to present and/or discuss the book.  | Student partially or inconsistently completes the task in a grade level appropriate manner, such as minor issues with speaking skills.  | Student does not show grade level understanding of the task and/or text. |

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| **Turn-In Guidelines** | **Effort Considerations** | **Self-Assessment** |
| * Rubric
* Graphic organizer
* Book talk draft
 | * Turned in on time
* Other:
 | What did you do well?What should/could you still revise? |
| **Teacher Comments:** |
|  |

Sample Book Talk #1

Directions:

Read this book talk, and discuss its positives and negatives. What grade would you give this? Why? What should be edited, added, deleted, or revised?

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| *Death by Bikini*, by Linda Gerber The YA novel *Death by Bikini*, by Linda Gerber, is a modern mystery that is so good, you’ll feel like you are watching TV. Unlike a lot of mystery books, this one doesn’t get too boring, too dark, or too complicated and hard to follow. Even if you don’t usually like mystery, you’re probably going to like this one.  The story is about a girl named Aphra who lives on a resort in Hawaii with her father, who runs it. The setting alone makes the book better, because it helps you feel like it’s summer, or like you’re watching an episode of Hawaii Five –O. One day, a dead body of a resort guest appears on the hotel’s beach, and suddenly Aphra gets tied up solving the mystery of who the killer is before he or she strikes again. (I would tell you more, but I can’t without risking serious spoilers!) If you like watching forensics TV shows and don’t mind very minor gross details while they gather clues for the murder, then you’ll be able to handle this book.  In addition to the main murder plot, there are some subplots that also make you keep turning the pages. First, we find out that Aphra’s mom left them under mysterious circumstances, so we are left wondering if and when she will appear in the book. Also, there’s a guy named Seth who is staying at the hotel with his family, and Aphra is torn about whether or not she likes him and whether or not he is a murder suspect. However, the romance is minimal, so readers who don’t dig romance will still like this book. Those two plots just add to the suspense.  The best part of the book is that it’s the first book in a trilogy. You can stop at the end of the first book if you want to, or you can keep going to read the others, which are set in France and Seattle. Those two books also deal with the same fun subplots, show you more places around the world, and have mysteries with death on the line.  Overall, this is a quick and painless read for literally anyone. Give it a try – you won’t regret it! |

Sample Book Talk #2

Directions:

Read this book talk, and discuss its positives and negatives. What grade would you give this? Why? What should be edited, added, deleted, or revised?

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| *To Kill a Mockingbird*, by Harper Lee Sometimes in life, there are books that really pay off in the second half, and TKAM is one of them. On one hand, this book has won a bunch of awards, is one of the most commonly read novels in American schools, and stays on the best-seller list all the time, so it must be good. However, this book isn’t a completely easy walk in the park, either. So buckle up people, because if you hang on tight, this book will be worth the ride.  TKAM is about a girl named Scout who is growing up in Alabama in the 1930s, along with her dad, brother, and the family’s nanny, Calpurnia. There’s also a neighbor kid named Dill. The book contains a series of little stories that happen over several summers, all building up to a big, dramatic climax when the kids have to survive an attack from a bad guy. Most of the little stories are about the mystery of an albino neighbor named Boo Radley, who is supposedly a murderer. In the stories, the kids either deal with Boo Radley, learn lessons from other characters, or deal with a murder trial in which their dad is a lawyer.  In order to fully appreciate this book, you have to know up front how it’s set up. TKAM is a novel that has a lot of characters and subplots that come together and make more sense at the end. Harper Lee has multiple themes in the book that all become clear in the final three chapters or so; unfortunately, that means that sometimes in the beginning and middle of the book, you won’t always know where the plot is going or why a little subplot or episode was important. Honestly, you just have to keep reading and trust that, at the end, everything will come together. At the end of the book, you’re able to look back and realize that everything that happened was either helping to build up a theme or helping Scout grow up. I’m not going to lie – the first few chapters are pretty boring, but you just have to keep going. The book will be worth it by the end.  Despite the plot that starts a little slow, this book has endured over time for a reason. It has a lot of beautiful description, builds complex themes over time, has really memorable characters, and has gorgeous themes about life and how humans should treat each other. It was really ahead of its time when it was written, and the way it handles race means that it is still relevant now. Don’t get intimidated by how long this book is, and don’t give up too soon in the first half. By the ending, you’ll be glad you kept going.  |