

GENRES OF WRITTEN TEXTS

Poetry

Compact writing characterized by imagination and artistry and imbued with intense meaning.

* Fiction *

A narrative that is imagined rather than real and includes elements such as characters, a problem or conflict, setting, a plot with events or episodes, and a problem resolution.

Realistic Fiction

Stories that are drawn from the writer's imagination but could have happened.

Contemporary Realistic Fiction

Realistic fiction in current-day settings. Usually presents problems typical for the age of characters. May highlight social issues.

Historical Fiction

Realistic fiction set in the past. Usually focused on social and political issues of the time and how the characters see them. The setting is important.

Fantasy

Fiction that contains unrealistic or unworldly elements.

Traditional Literature

Stories, with recurring themes and motifs, that have been passed down orally throughout history:

- Cumulative tales
- Pourquoi tales
- Beast tales
- "Noodlehead" tales
- Realistic tales
- Fairytales
- Fables
- Myths, Legends, Epics

Modern Fantasy

Stories that include magic and the struggle between good and evil.

- Animal fantasy
- Magical fantasy
- High fantasy

Science Fiction

A fantasy text that involves and/or based on scientific principles.

Prose

Language that informs, shows, describes, and explains; prose employs language in a more discursive way.

* Nonfiction *

A text that is intended to provide factual information through text and visual information; contains ideas, facts, and principles; primary purpose is to communicate information.

Biographical Texts

Factual works that describe the life of a real person.

Biography

A biographical text written about a person, the "subject", by another person, the "biographer".

Autobiography and Memoir

A biographical work written by the subject about his or her own life. An autobiography usually deals with the writer's entire life or a large part of it; a memoir usually focuses on memories of a particular time, event, place, or relationship.

Factual Texts

Texts that present ideas, facts, and principles related to the physical, biological, or social world.

Underlying structural features:

- Description
- Enumeration
- Compare/contrast
- Cause and effect
- Chronological sequence
- Problem/solution
- Question/answer

Sample content areas:

- History
- Social Studies
- Health
- Science
- Sports
- Space
- Technology
- Cooking

Kinds of factual texts:

- Longer informational books
- Articles
- Internet postings

* Poetry *

Traditional Poems

Simple poems that employ rhythm and rhyme; sometimes called nursery rhymes.

Songs and Chants

Poems that represent language that is usually chanted or sung (ditties, jump-rope chants, etc.).

Forms of Poetry

- Free verse
- Lyric poetry
- Narrative poetry
- Limericks
- Cinquains
- Concrete poetry
- Haiku
- "Found" poetry
- List poems
- Formula poems