

Why Are Books Written?

Exploring Creativity

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Grade Level	2nd Grade	**Duration**	2-3 Class Periods
Subject	English/Language Arts		
Course	Oklahoma Young Scholars/Javits		

Essential Question

Why do authors write books? How are books written?

Summary

Students are introduced to several reasons books are written, identifying the purpose of a series of different books. Students watch a video interview of a child author. Through a series of pictographs, students then discover the many ways people have made books, from pictures to words on tablets, stones, and paper. Inspired by why and how books are written, students create a book of their own.

Snapshot

Engage

Students identify the purposes of a series of different books.

Explore

Students watch a video interview of a child author -*OR*- Students are read one of 5 suggested children's biographies about authors.

Explain

Students discover the many different ways that people have made books, from pictures to words on stone tablets, scrolls, and paper.

Extend

Students make their own book with a clear beginning, middle, and end.

Evaluate

Students read their books out loud to their peers and reflect on several of the reasons books are written.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 2)

2.PC: Print Concepts: Students will demonstrate their understanding of the organization and basic features of print, including book handling skills and the understanding that printed materials provide information and tell stories.
2.3.R.1: Students will determine the author's purpose (i.e., tell a story, provide information).
2.3.W.1: Narrative: Students will write narratives incorporating characters, plot (i.e., beginning, middle, end) , and a basic setting (i.e., time, place) with guidance and support.

Attachments

- 4-Panel Comics Template—Why Are Books Written.docx
- 4-Panel Comics Template—Why Are Books Written.pdf
- 6-Panel Comics Template—Why Are Books Written.docx
- 6-Panel Comics Template—Why Are Books Written.pdf
- Brainstorming Sheet—Why Are Books Written - Spanish.docx
- Brainstorming Sheet—Why Are Books Written - Spanish.pdf
- Brainstorming Sheet—Why Are Books Written.docx
- Brainstorming Sheet—Why Are Books Written.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Why Are Books Written.pptx
- Story Structure—Why Are Books Written - Spanish.docx
- Story Structure—Why Are Books Written - Spanish.pdf
- Story Structure—Why Are Books Written.docx
- Story Structure—Why Are Books Written.pdf
- Suggested Books about Authors—Why Are Books Written.docx
- Suggested Books about Authors—Why Are Books Written.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Selection of library books
- Brainstorming Sheet (attached; one per student)
- Story Structure (attached; one per student)
- Plain Paper
- Construction paper
- 1-hole punch
- Colored pencils
- Crayons
- Markers
- Sturdy string or cord (for book binding)
- Suggested List of Children's Books about Authors (attached; optional)
- 4- and 6-Panel Comic Book Templates (attached; optional)

10 minutes

Engage

Teacher's Note

Prepare the lesson by finding and checking out of the school or a public library at least 4 or 5 books obviously written for very different purposes. For example, a book about an historical event or period, a book of poetry, a book about how to make a go-kart, a book about dragons, a book about how to do karate, a book about how to run a marathon, etc. These books can fall under one or more categories of why books are written: 1) to inform or teach, 2) to entertain, 3) to inspire or motivate, 4) to record events, 5) to share feelings. You may think of others to add to this list.

Begin the lesson with **slide 2**, asking students "Why are books written?" Have them speak out as many reasons as they can think of. Give them 3–5 minutes to think of reasons of their own.

Teacher's Note

You may want to hide **slides 3 and 4.**

After students have been given ample time to brainstorm their own ideas, display **slide 5** showing three reasons authors have given for why they write books.

Read through each of the reasons slowly. After all 3 reasons are presented, go to a pile of library books and show them one at a time, reading the title and a brief description and asking students to determine what reason they think each book was written.

20 minutes

Explore

Briefly go back and display **slide 2** with the title of the lesson as the prominent question they will be exploring in more depth.

Go to **slide 6** and tell students that every author might give a different reason for writing their book, but that one author was asked this question in an interview. Play the video "Meet this Amazing 10-Year-Old Author." After students have watched the video, go to **slide 7** and ask them to discuss with an Elbow Partner what reasons the author gave for why they wrote their own book.

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=SaOzDmUb-EI

Teacher's Note

Alternatively, skip slides 6 and 7 and read aloud any one of the five books from the attached list of **Suggested Children's Books about Authors**—entirely or in part, depending on the length of the biography selected. After reading all or part, start a discussion with students, asking them what the book revealed about why the author wrote their book(s). Did they write to entertain? Did they write to inspire or share their feelings? Did they express one or more reasons? Which ones seemed most important?

20 minutes

Explain

Go to **slide 8** and introduce the idea that books come in many shapes and sizes. Play the short video "It's a Book by Lane Smith" to jumpstart the conversation about how books are a special way to tell a story.

Embedded video
https://youtube.com/watch?v=x4BK_2VULCU

Using **slides 9–14**, explain to students that all through history people have made books in many ways. They may have used papyrus and inks, a scroll, pen and paper, a printing press, or a computer. Ask students to look at each of the different books and describe what shape/kind they are and what reason these different kinds of books might have been written.

Teacher's Note

While displaying the five pictographs, be sure to ask questions about what students are seeing in every "book." For example, you can ask questions like the following:

What is happening in the papyrus story of the mummies?

What is the lady doing in the illuminated manuscript?

What is different about how you would read a scroll or a comic?

What are the different devices you could read an ebook on?

Additionally, consider consulting a valuable resource like *The History of Making Books*, a history of books for younger readers, listed in the resources below —or the Wikipedia entry on the history of books: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_books#:~:text=The%20earliest%20forms%20of%20writing,introducing%20greater%20durability%20and%20accessibili

Teacher's Note

This might be a good place to end the session. Another strategy could be to go to slide 14 and prepare students for the project of making their own book for their own reason during the next class. Prepare them with the attached Brainstorming Sheet and Story Structure handout.

40 minutes

Extend

Go to **slide 15**. Pass out (or ask students to take out) their **Brainstorming Sheet**. Explain that every book has a *Why* (Topic) as well as a *Where* and *When* (Setting). Have students use the Brainstorming Sheet to answer those important questions, as well as to choose the words they might use in their own books.

Next pass out (or have them take out) their **Story Structure** handout. Explain that every story has a *beginning*, *middle*, and *end*. Have them use the three sections of the handout to plan their story.

Go to **slide 16**. Help walk students through the directions on the slide for making a simple book from several pieces of paper, a scroll, or a comic from the various attached **4- or 6-Panel Comics Templates**. Hand out either plain paper or construction paper as students desire, a hole punch, sturdy string or cord for making the book, colored pencils, crayons, and markers for them to color and decorate their books. Circulate through the room to help them with making holes in their paper. Encourage students to help one another in getting the cord or string through the outer two holes as described on the slide.

After students have created their books, ask several volunteers to read and show their books to the class.

Go to **slide 17** and, using the Exit Tickets strategy, ask students to revisit the question, *Why are books written?,* naming out any of the reasons they can remember, as well as the reason(s) that they wrote their own books.

10 minutes

Evaluate

Evaluate students' learning based on how engaged they are with creating their books. Formative assessment is also happening continually through discussions among students, small groups, and the whole class. In addition, use an Exit Tickets strategy to document students' ideas about what they have learned. This strategy can serve as both an assessment and a reflection piece for students.

Resources

- AHC Arts and Crafts. (2018). Book Making crafts for kids. https://www.artistshelpingchildren.org/bookmaking-crafts-make-books.html
- The British Museum. (2016, August 15). Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs overview. *Smarthistory*. https://smarthistory.org/ancient-egyptian-hieroglyphs/
- The British Museum. (2015, December 11). Hunefer's judgement in the presence of Osiris. *Smarthistory*. https://smarthistory.org/hunefers-judgement-in-the-presence-of-osiris/
- History of Books. (2024). In *Wikipedia*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_books#:~:text=The%20earliest%20forms%20of%20writing,introducing%20greater%20durability%20and%20accessibility.
- The History of Making Books. (1996). *Scholastic Voyages of Discovery.* Scholastic.
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Bell ringers and exit tickets. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/125
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Elbow partners. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/116
- MacKids Books. (2011). *It's a Book by Lane Smith - Book Trailer* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x4BK_2VULCU
- The Real Daytime. (2015, March 15). *Meet this amazing 10-year-old author!* [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/SaOzDmUb-EI
- Solly, M. (2021, October 20.). The unheralded women scribes who brought medieval manuscripts to life. *Smithsonian Magazine.* https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/the-unheralded-women-scribes-who-brought-medieval-manuscripts-to-life-180978902