

# Genre Quest: Choose Your Adventure

## Literary Genres

Amy Allen, Brittany Bowens
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| **Grade Level** | 8th Grade | **Time Frame** | 3 class periods |
| **Subject** | English/Language Arts | **Duration** | 105 minutes |

## Essential Question

How do different literary genres shape the way stories are told and understood?

## Summary

In this lesson, students explore characteristics of different literary genres and subgenres. Then, they apply their learning by identifying those characteristics in different short stories and transform elements of a fable into a different subgenre.

## Snapshot

### Engage

Students analyze book covers to determine the genre and subgenre of the book.

### Explore

Students recall what they know about genres to identify the fictional statement hidden among the facts.

### Explain

Students relate key terms through a Honeycomb Harvest activity, then formalize their understanding of genre, subgenre, and characteristics of subgenres.

### Extend

Students read four short stories and identify the characteristics to determine the subgenre of each story.

### Evaluate

Students apply their understanding to transform a fable into a different subgenre.

## Standards

*ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)*

**CLR301:** Locate simple details at the sentence and paragraph level in somewhat challenging passages

*Oklahoma Academic Standards: English Language Arts (Grade 8)*

**8.2.R.2:** Analyze details in fiction, poetry, and nonfiction texts to identify characteristics of genres.
**8.3.W.1:** Compose narratives reflecting real or imagined experiences that:

- include plots involving complex characters resolving conflicts
- unfold in chronological or surprising sequence (e.g., flashback and foreshadowing)
- include a narrator, precise language, sensory details, and dialogue to enhance the narrative
- use sentence variety to create clarity
- emulate literary elements and/or literary devices from mentor texts

## Attachments

- Book Covers—Genre Quest - Spanish.docx
- Book Covers—Genre Quest - Spanish.pdf
- Book Covers—Genre Quest.docx
- Book Covers—Genre Quest.pdf
- Fiction in the Facts—Genre Quest - Spanish.docx
- Fiction in the Facts—Genre Quest - Spanish.pdf
- Fiction in the Facts—Genre Quest.docx
- Fiction in the Facts—Genre Quest.pdf
- Genre Notes (Model Notes)—Genre Quest.docx
- Genre Notes (Model Notes)—Genre Quest.pdf
- Genre Notes—Genre Quest - Spanish.docx
- Genre Notes—Genre Quest - Spanish.pdf
- Genre Notes—Genre Quest.docx
- Genre Notes—Genre Quest.pdf
- Honeycomb Harvest—Genre Quest - Spanish.docx
- Honeycomb Harvest—Genre Quest - Spanish.pdf
- Honeycomb Harvest—Genre Quest.docx
- Honeycomb Harvest—Genre Quest.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Genre Quest.pptx
- Multiverse Stories—Genre Quest - Spanish.docx
- Multiverse Stories—Genre Quest - Spanish.pdf
- Multiverse Stories—Genre Quest.docx
- Multiverse Stories—Genre Quest.pdf
- Short Stories—Genre Quest - Spanish.docx
- Short Stories—Genre Quest - Spanish.pdf
- Short Stories—Genre Quest.docx
- Short Stories—Genre Quest.pdf

## Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Book Covers handout (attached; one set per 14 students; print one-sided)
- Fiction in the Facts posters (attached; one set; print one-sided on 11x17” paper)
- Honeycomb Harvest tiles (attached; one set per group; print one-sided)
- Genre Notes handout (attached; one per student; print one-sided)
- Genre Notes (Model Notes) document (attached)
- Short Stories handout (attached; one per student; print two-sided)

- Multiverse Stories handout (attached; one per pair; print two-sided)
- Notebook paper
- Stickers (six per group)
- Highlighters (one per student)

15 minutes

# Engage

Using the attached **Lesson Slides**, display **slide 3**. Post the essential question on the board as students enter the room. Read it aloud at the beginning of class. Then, transition to **slide 4** and share the lesson's learning objectives.

Place students into pairs and move to **slide 5**. Have pairs take out a sheet of paper and number it 1–7. Give each pair one page of the attached **Book Covers** handout. Preview the activity by explaining to students that they are expected to look at the book cover on their handout, discuss with their partner which subgenre they believe their book cover belongs to and why, then pass their handout along to the next pair. The goal is that at the end of the activity, they will have reviewed all seven book covers.

Display **slide 6**, which shows the number and name of the book for quick reference and a list of subgenre options. Have pairs identify the genre and subgenre for each corresponding book cover number on their paper. Give students approximately 1 minute to review the first book cover, then direct them to pass their handout to the next pair. For the remaining six book covers, reduce the discussion time to approximately 30 seconds.

Once students have reviewed all seven book covers, ask for volunteers to share their thoughts for the genres and subgenres for each book, then transition to **slide 7** to share the correct genres and subgenres.

10 minutes

# Explore

Place students into groups of 3–4 and show **slide 8**. Introduce the Fiction in the Facts strategy and preview the activity. Explain to students that they are going to visit six posters, each containing three statements, where two statements are true, and one is false. Once they identify the false statement, they are to place a sticker next to that false statement. Provide each group with six stickers.

Direct each group to a poster and begin the activity. Have students rotate to each poster and repeat placing the sticker on the statement that is fiction. Give groups approximately one minute at each poster.

After all rotations, have students return to their seats. Bring the class together for a whole-group discussion. Show **slide 9**, displaying the three statements from Poster 1 and ask the class which statement they thought was fiction. Ask for volunteers to share their reasoning. Then, transition to **slide 10** to reveal the false statement.

Repeat this for each poster using **slides 11–20**. Use this time to make note of any misunderstandings and be sure to address them during the next phase of the lesson.

25 minutes

# Explain

Have students continue to work in their groups of 3–4. Display **slide 21** and introduce the Honeycomb Harvest strategy. Give each group a set of the attached **Honeycomb Harvest** tiles. Direct students to arrange their hexagonal tiles so that the sides of related hexagons are touching. Tell students they have ten minutes to arrange their tiles, then play the 10-minute timer on the slide.

### Teacher's Note: Guiding the Activity

As students work, circulate the room. Listen to groups' discussions and ask groups to share their reasoning for making certain connections.

As time allows, invite groups to share their connections and their reasonings.

Give each student a copy of the attached **Genre Notes** handout. Show **slide 22** to share an example of how some of the Honeycomb Harvest tiles are related. Use this slide to introduce the relationship between genre, subgenres, and characteristics of subgenres.

Transition through **slides 23–24** to review the nonfiction subgenres: *autobiography, biography, informational writing,* and *persuasive essay*. Review these to the extent that students need. These are already printed on their handout, as they are intended as a review.

Move to **slide 25** and review the fiction subgenres: *fantasy, historical fiction, realistic fiction,* and *science fiction*. Facilitate a discussion about these different subgeneres and have students write some of these characteristics on their handout. Remind students that each subgenre does not always have all of these characteristics, and some of the characteristics overlap with other subgenres—as they hopefully noticed in their Honeycomb Harvest activity—but these characteristics are strong indicators of that subgenre.

Repeat this again using **slide 26** for the folklore subgenres: fable, fairy tale, myth, and tall tale. Use the attached **Genre Notes (Model Notes)** document as needed.

### Optional Differentiation

For students needing additional support, consider using the attached Genre Notes (Model Notes) document to create a modified version of Genre Notes handout for those students.

25 minutes

# Extend

Show **slide 27**. Give each student a highlighter and a copy of the attached **Short Stories** handout. Introduce the Why-Lighting strategy and preview the activity. Explain that students are to read each short story and that while they read, they are to highlight characteristics that help them identify the subgenre of the story. Tell students to also make note of the reasoning for what they highlighted. Clearly communicate to students how you would like them to indicate this: in the margins of the handout, on a separate piece of paper, etc. Give students approximately 15 minutes to read and annotate the four short stories.

When everyone is finished, display **slide 28**. Have students compare their work with a neighbor. Give students a few minutes to discuss what they highlighted and why they found it important, and which subgenre they determined for each story.

**Sample Student Responses:**

- The first story was science fiction. I highlighted “cybernetic arm” and “Titanium joint.”
- The second story was fantasy. I highlighted “sorceress” and “married the king.”
- The third story was realistic fiction. I highlighted “force myself to read” and “It’s fine. Everything is fine.”
- The fourth story was historical fiction. I highlighted “Redcoats” and “lobster scoundrels.”

30 minutes

# Evaluate

Have students find a partner or assign students partners. Display **slide 29** and give each pair a copy of the attached **Multiverse Stories** handout. Preview the activity by explaining to students that they are to select a well-known fable, identify key elements from the fable (characters, setting, conflict, climax, and resolution), select a new subgenre, then change those key elements from the fable to fit the new subgenre.

Direct students to navigate to and select a fable from read.gov/aesop/001.html, which is the ebook of Aesop's fables from the Library of Congress. Use slide 29 to review the meaning of the key elements: *characters*, *setting*, *conflict*, *climax*, and *resolution*. Give students time to ask clarifying questions about the meaning of those terms. There is a brief description of each of those terms on their handout for quick reference.

Move to **slide 30** and let pairs know they can transform their fable into one of the following subgenres: *science fiction*, *fantasy*, *historical fiction*, or a *tall tale*. Encourage pairs to use the Genre Notes from earlier in the lesson and consider the characteristics of their selected subgenre when changing the elements of their fable into the selected subgenre.

Transition through **slides 31–38** to give students an example of how to complete their handout and emphasize the differences between the subgenres. Here, "The Tortoise and the Hare" is the selected fable. And after identifying the key elements of the original fable and having selected science fiction for the new subgenre, the right column contains the changed key elements. For example, show slide 31:

- **Characters & Setting (Fable):** In a far away time when animals could talk, an impulsive hare encounters a steady tortoise in the countryside.
- **Characters & Setting (Sci-Fi):** On the high-tech planet Neo-Terra, the steady Cyber-Tortoise (Model CT-01) and the boastful Hyper-Hare (Unit HH-9) line up for the Great Interplanetary Race through asteroid fields and shifting gravity zones.

Ask students to identify genre characteristics in each column, then move to slide 32 that has those subgenre characteristics highlighted.

Repeat this process using slides 33–34:

- **Conflict/Problem (Fable):** The Hare teases the Tortoise's slowness, leading to a foot race to prove if speed or perseverance matters more.
- **Conflict/Problem (Sci-Fi):** The sleek Hyper-Hare teases the slower Cyber-Tortoise, claiming superior upgrades and speed will guarantee victory in the galaxy's most dangerous race.

Repeat this process using slides 35–36:

- **Climax (Fable):** The overconfident Hare naps midway through the race while the Tortoise steadily continues to pass the Hare.
- **Climax (Sci-Fi):** Midway through the course, the overconfident Hyper-Hare enters standby mode to recharge, while the Cyber-Tortoise keeps moving with calm, consistent programming.

Repeat this process using slides 37–38:

- **Resolution (Fable):** The Tortoise crosses the finish line first, teaching that slow and steady wins the race.
- **Resolution (Sci-Fi):** When Hyper-Hare reboots, it finds Cyber-Tortoise has already crossed the finish line, proving that steady systems and reliable code outperform flashy shortcuts and overconfidence.

After pairs have completed their element changes, show **slide 39**. Have pairs write a short paragraph explaining their reasoning for why and how they changed those key elements to fit their selected subgenre. Have pairs also address why they chose the subgenre they selected.

**Optional Differentiation**

To increase the rigor of this activity, consider having students use their changed key elements as an outline and have them write the short story before they write their reflective paragraph. Also consider having students work independently, instead of in pairs.

## Resources


- Aesop. (n.d.). *A list of the fables*. The Æsop for Children. https://read.gov/aesop/001.html
- Bernard, R. (2019, July 30). Book. [Illustration]. Noun Project. https://thenounproject.com/icon/book-2920121/
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Fiction in the facts. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/60
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- K20 Center. (2021, September 21). K20 Center 10 minute timer. [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gy-1Z2Sa-c