Mystery Story Without an Ending

Students Will Paint Pictures with Words of Contemporary Themes Using Any Time Frame, and Occurring Anywhere

Level - Junior High School/Senior High School

Originated By:
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Kathryn Has Retired After 37 Years of Teaching

Introduction
Students will have two parts to this project. First they will compose a Mystery Story without using tired words. Second they will use this story plus illustrations to create a book.

Their stories are started in March and are due at least two weeks before the end of the school year so they can be read to the class. This project is started after the students have had a chance to hone their writing skills on other writing projects. Morning is the best time to work on the project.

Materials Needed for Each Student

1 Bare Book #2705
1 Line Guide #GD27 - optional

Reference Materials
Internet
Books
Magazines
Newspapers

Author’s Tips
* If writing text in books, use line guides to have text come through in straight lines. Place line guide in back of sheet you want to write on.
* Some Students tend to procrastinate. Because this grade is weighted so heavily, these students must be encouraged to keep on track.

Helpful Hints
* Make sure students have clean hands when working on their books. Using our slip-on jackets will protect and help keep the covers clean until completion of the project.
* To ease writing in straight lines, try our line guides. The guide is slipped under the page, and the student can see the line through the paper.
* Excess glue could make the pages stick together if not allowed to dry before closing the book.
* Permanent markers tend to bleed through the pages.
* Pasting pictures and postcards inside Bare Books works very well, however pasting too much into the books may cause the binding to bulge.
* To protect the finished covers, try our adhesive covers or slip-on jackets. You may also use a spray finish available at your local hardware store.

Treetop Publishing
800-255-9228 www.barebooks.com
Let’s get started...

I always begin my lesson telling the class that writing is painting pictures with words, and that they need to have an idea for setting, characters, and a plot figured out before they begin. Their book can deal with contemporary themes using any time frame (past, present, future) and occur anywhere. Their stories may not contain any tired words such as: big, small, hot, cold, good, bad, nice, etc.

Front and back covers are designed by the students. Student books are required to be at least 14 pages. How many extra pages used depends on how descriptive and detailed the student wants to be. Students can design their own illustrations, use pictures from magazines, the internet, or any other source can be incorporated in describing their story. Students may use someone else’s help, but must acknowledge that help.

I always show students examples of books done the year before and that really stimulates their desire to start theirs. (These are borrowed, as all students keep their masterpieces.)

Page Layout

The first page lists Name, Author, Illustrated by, School Name and Address. The specific instructions on the rest of the layout are to make it varied. Pages should be mixed up, ie:

Students are allowed to write their text or generate it on the compute and then cut and paste it in the book.

This grade is worth 25% of their Language grade for the 4th quarter.
Example

Long ago, in a realm far far away, there was a group of adventurers. They went by the names of: Dayis, Ranadil and Ravenwind. They were venturing to Kanor Castle in Kunark on the planet of Norrath. This fortress was a very treacherous place and those who dared to go in never came out. Lord Karnor an undead ruler, had a law that stated that if anyone were to serve him thy must die to show their loyalty.

While the group was traveling, they could hear tremendously loud screams coming from the thick stoned redan. Ravenwind was getting worried and kept murmuring “Why oh why am I doing this?”, while Ranadil joked around to keep his fear inside of him. Then leader Dayis announced, “There it is. Karnor Castle. The most dangerous structure in all of Norrath.” Everyone became nervous and fearful, wondering what was going to happen as no one had the slightest clue as to what to expect.

Back inside an execution was taking place. The group before them had interfered with the law and was attacked by Karner himself. He had slaughtered them with his weapon, and now you could hear him laugh his evil cry of victory from miles away. Karnor was a large giant of a man, equipped in blood red and ebony covered armor and wielded the great blade of Innoruk with pride.

The group of adventurers had just arrived at the iron gates where a stench of flesh from the dark elves, ogres and barbarians permeated the air. Dried blood was splattered over the thorn-tipped doors and battle worn walls. Then Dayis uneasily asked if they were ready to enter. Both replied, “Yes.” Next he commanded, “Move in!” and they crept cautiously into a dark, mysterious looking hallway, and there was dead silence. Everyone asked, “What happened here?” as they moved into the passageway. They could now hear a faint echo of a thumping heart and the sound grew louder as they proceeded inward. Suddenly, they heard what sounded like a blade edge scratching against the stony wall. Turning around quickly they noticed that Karnor had been stalking them the entire time. He raised his steel sword of death and took one ferocious swing. As he swung his blade you could hear the screams of the victims he had slain. Luckily, he missed them by a hair. Elevating the enormous weapon again, Karnor was preparing to strike again when all of a sudden...

We read the books to one another with the principal and some guest teachers in attendance. After they were read and I had a written personalized tribute to the author on the inside front cover, the students were allowed to take their books home.