

How to Write a Book Review

What is a book review?

A book review is a short piece of text that describes the basic plot of a book, tells whether the reviewer liked the book (or not), and provides a recommendation to readers. Book reviews will vary in length, with different expectations in each grade level:

- 1st Grade: 3 sentences
- 2nd Grade: 5-6 sentences
- 3rd Grade: 6-8 sentences
- 4th Grade: 8-10 sentences
- 5th Grade: 10-14 sentences

There are three parts to a book review:

- Summary – retell the story, but don't give away the end of the book!
- Evaluation – tell whether you liked the book or not, and give reasons. For example: "I liked this book because it was funny when Sam I Am said he didn't like green eggs and ham, but when he tried them, he liked them!"
- Recommendation – Do you recommend this book? If you do, who do you think will enjoy it? The recommendation can be as simple as: "If you like books about _____, you will like this book!" If you do not recommend the book, offer a similar book that someone might enjoy more.

Other tips for writing book reviews:

- Your first line should be an attention grabber!
- Your last line should be memorable.
- Don't give away the end of the book!

Florida State University Schools Elementary Reading Challenge



"The more you **read**
the more **things** you know.
The more that you **learn**
the more **places** you'll go."
-Dr. Seuss

Mission and Purpose

The mission of the FSUS Elementary Reading Challenge is to inspire students to become lifelong readers. Students will learn to select fiction and non-fiction books that are appropriate for their age, interests, and reading abilities.

| WHY READ 20 MINUTES AT HOME? | | |
|--|---|---|
| Student A Reads | Student B Reads | Student C Reads |
| ❖ 20 minutes per day. | ❖ 5 minutes per day. | ❖ 1 minute per day |
| ❖ 3,600 minutes per school year. | ❖ 900 minutes per school year. | ❖ 180 minutes per school year. |
| ❖ 1,800,000 words per year. | ❖ 282,000 words per year. | ❖ 8,000 words per year. |
|  |  |  |
| ❖ Scores in the 90 th percentile on standardized tests. | ❖ Scores in the 50 th percentile on standardized tests. | ❖ Scores in the 10 th percentile on standardized tests. |
| If they start reading for 20 minutes per night in Kindergarten, by the end of 6 th grade, Student A will have read for the equivalent of 60 school days, Student B will have read for 12 school days, and Student C will have read for 3. | | |
| WANT TO BE A BETTER READER? SIMPLY READ. | | |

Five Finger Method for Choosing a “Just Right” Book

The Five-Finger Method is based on the idea that fluent, independent reading can only happen when at least 97% of the words are familiar or easily decoded. If more than three percent of the words are difficult for the reader, comprehension begins to break down and it’s difficult to get meaning from the text without help.

How to find a “Just Right” book:

- Open a book to a page in the middle and start reading.
- Put one finger up for every word you don’t know.
 - If you are holding up one, two, or three fingers, you’ve found a “Just Right” book.
 - Four fingers in the air means that you might need a little help.
 - Five fingers means the book may be too frustrating right now, so you should choose a different book.

Reading Challenge Cards

Reading Challenge cards contain spaces for 20 books. Each time a student reads a book in one of the categories, he/she will write the title of the book in that space, and rate the book by coloring in the stars in the space.

An adult (parent, teacher, or librarian) will initial in the circle indicating that the student read the book. When the student completes a card, they will bring it to the library to show Ms. Underhill and receive a book charm for their library keychain. Students will keep their completed cards in a folder so they can keep track of all the books they read this year.

On each card, books are suggested by category or by author, not by specific title. This serves several purposes: it exposes students to a variety of literary genres, authors, and book series; it leads them to read books that provide background knowledge for topics they are learning in the classroom; and it encourages them to use the library catalog to find books.

Students may read the books on the reading challenge cards in any order they choose. The books can come from any source, including the FSUS Library, the public library, their classroom library, home library, or bookstore.

Books read in class by a teacher, by the librarian, by a parent, or for class assignments may count. Each book counts only once during the year; you may not repeat books on multiple reading challenge cards.

While it may be possible to read 20 books in a few days, it is not recommended. Students should savor their reading, think about what they have read, talk about it with parents, teachers, or friends, and ENJOY it. Therefore, students may not complete and return their reading challenge card before two weeks has passed. This is not a race. Students should challenge themselves to do their very best.

Once students have written the book title on their reading challenge card and had it initialed by an adult, they should add the book to their BiblioNasium shelf and write a book review for it.

BiblioNasium



We are pleased to tell you that we have enrolled all of our elementary students on a website called BiblioNasium. BiblioNasium connects educators, parents, and the kids to create a reading community that will encourage your child to read more. Kids can keep track of their favorite books, log their daily reading, and win virtual awards.

Although you do not need to join as a parent, there is a parent component, and you and your child can access BiblioNasium from home. As a parent you will then be able to monitor your child’s independent reading and even set up family reading challenges. If you wish, you may also want to give your child permission to connect online with friends to see what others are reading, to read book reviews, and to receive and recommend books. Unless you give your child permission to connect with other friends outside of FSUS, your child will only be able to share book reviews and recommendations with FSUS students and teachers.

To help your child log in from a home computer:

Go to www.biblionasium.com (or click the BiblioNasium link on the FSUS Symbaloo: fsus.symbaloo.com)

1. From the top right-hand corner, select “Login with Destiny.”
2. For “Location” choose Florida from the drop-down menu.
3. In “Schools in Florida (FL)” type FSUS Library, and click on “Log In.”
4. Students will use the same log in information as they use for Successmaker, Discovery Education, and STAR Reading:
Username **fsusXXXXX** (last 5 digits of their Student ID number)
Password: **fsus2016**

To join as a parent:

1. Go to www.biblionasium.com
2. From the top right-hand corner, select “Join Us” and follow the instructions for creating a parent account. You will first be asked to provide your child’s username and password (see above). That will connect your account to your child and to your child’s classroom.

For more help learning how to log in to BiblioNasium, and how to add books to the bookshelf, you may view screencasts on the FSUS Symbaloo page. Go to fsus.symbaloo.com, and look for the links to the BiblioNasium How To videos, located on every grade level page in the top 2 rows.

To read BiblioNasium’s Privacy Policy, please visit

<https://www.biblionasium.com/privacy>

