

# Genre-Themed Writing Prompts

## Kindergarten-Grade 2

Strong writers practice composing texts in many different genres, both during school and outside the classroom. These genre-themed writing prompts are a fun and creative way to help your students develop important writing skills while also gaining familiarity with some of the most popular fiction and nonfiction genres. Responding to writing prompts can help students strengthen skills such as crafting a narrative, establishing a clear sequence of events, developing an argument, and more. It can also help young students develop stronger reading skills, especially when they are encouraged to read their written responses aloud.

This resource includes genre-themed creative fiction and nonfiction writing prompts for children in kindergarten–Grade 2. These prompts would be appropriate for use in the home as well as for classroom use. The prompts were written to encourage responders to draw from various literacy skills included in the [Common Core ELA Writing Standards](#).

In addition, this resource includes a genre guide that caregivers and educators can use to introduce writers to each genre prior to writing. This guide includes a grade-level appropriate definition for the genre, a genre-specific writing tip for students to focus on, and suggestions for further reading.

## Reflection and Feedback—Suggestions for Caregivers and Educators

When administering these prompts, provide children with ample time to respond thoroughly and carefully. After writing, there are a few different feedback methods that may be helpful.

### Independent Reflection

- Encourage writers to go back over what they have written to check for spelling, grammar, or logical errors.
- Encourage writers to read their written responses aloud. Some may have an easier time hearing mistakes than seeing them on the page.

### Peer Feedback

- If multiple children are participating in this activity, encourage them to read one another's responses. Then, have them share what they liked about the other writers' responses, and any questions they have about them.

## Caregiver/Educator Feedback

- Read over the responses. Check for the following elements:
  - Do their responses effectively address the question of the prompt?
  - Did they structure their narratives with a clear progression of events and/or ideas?
  - Did they successfully implement narrative techniques such as dialogue, descriptive language, and sensory details?
  - Do they back up any argumentative claims with logical supporting details?
  - Do their responses include clear and effective conclusions?
  - Did they demonstrate repeated or consistent mechanical errors, such as issues with spelling, sentence structure, or punctuation? If so, provide corrective feedback.
- Pick one or two areas of feedback to highlight for your writers and take time to discuss them together. You may be able to find additional resources on the web to provide practice opportunities in particular areas where improvement is needed. Be sure to also point out a few things that they are doing well in their writing.

Lastly, celebrate the writing process! Encourage writers to share their responses with friends, family members, and other loved ones. Perhaps they could send a handwritten copy of their response to a grandparent or call up a cousin and read what they wrote over the phone. And if a writer seems passionate about a specific prompt or topic, encourage them to keep writing about it, either via more guided practice or as something to do in their free time!

## Additional Resources

- For more information on writing prompts, read our [Understanding and Responding to Writing Prompts Guide](#).

# Kindergarten-Grade 2 Genre Guide

The writing prompts in this resource correspond to the following fiction and nonfiction genres:

## Fiction Genres



### Mystery

#### Definition

A made-up story in which an important fact stays secret until the very end.

#### Genre Hint

Don't rush. Tell your story step-by-step, in an order that makes sense.

#### Read more!

Some examples of books that fit into the mystery genre include:

- *The Great Pie Robbery* by Richard Scarry
- *Nate the Great* by Marjorie Weinman Sharmat
- *Pigeon P.I.* by Meg McLaren



### Fantasy

#### Definition

A made-up story that is full of magical characters, places, and events.

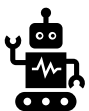
#### Genre Hint

Be creative! Fantasy stories can be as wacky and wild as you want.

#### Read more!

Some examples of books that fit into the fantasy genre include:

- *Dragons Love Tacos* by Adam Rubin
- *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak
- *Sulwe* by Lupita Nyong'o



### Science Fiction

#### Definition

A made-up story that tells about new science and inventions, such as robots, spaceships, superpowers, and more.

#### Genre Hint

Use what you know. What do you know about this topic in real life? Show how these real life ideas are affected by science fiction elements.

**Read more!**

Some examples of books that fit into the science fiction genre include:

- *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs* by Judi Barrett
- *Boy + Bot* by Ame Dyckman
- *Earth to Clunk* by Pam Smallcomb



## Fractured Fairytale

**Definition**

A made-up story that tells a famous fairytale with a twist. For example, the new story might take place in a new location or time period, or include different characters.

**Genre Hint**

Paint a picture with your words. Tell as much as you can about what your character sees and does. This will help your reader imagine the past.

**Read more!**

Some examples of books that fit into the historical fiction genre include:

- *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales* by Jon Scieszka
- *Goldilocks and the Three Dinosaurs* by Mo Willems
- *Interrupting Chicken* by David Ezra Stein



## Action and Adventure

**Definition**

A made up story in which a character goes on a quest, escapes danger, or faces other exciting events.

**Genre Hint**

What goes wrong? Tell what problems get in the main character's way.

**Read more!**

Some examples of books that fit into the action and adventure genre include:

- *Finding Wild* by Megan Wagner Lloyd
- *The Day the Babies Crawled Away* by Peggie Rathmann
- *The Bear's Sea Escape* by Benjamin Chaud

## Nonfiction Genres



### Personal Narrative

#### Definition

A true story based on the writer's own life.

#### Genre Hint

Show don't tell. Give lots of details that show what you saw, heard, smelled, and felt.

#### Read more!

Some examples of books that fit into this genre include:

- *Finding Wild* by Megan Wagner Lloyd
- *The Day the Babies Crawled Away* by Peggie Rathmann
- *The Bear's Sea Escape* by Benjamin Chaud



### Informational

#### Definition

A text written to tell facts about a real life topic.

#### Genre Hint

Be specific. Pretend you are talking to someone who has never heard of this topic. What do they need to know?

#### Read more!

Some examples of books that fit into the informational genre include:

- *Joan Procter, Dragon Doctor* by Patricia Valdez
- *Birds Make Nests* by Michael Garland
- *Magnets Push, Magnets Pull* by David A. Adler



### How-To

#### Definition

A text that tells how to do something, like cooking, crafting, or playing a sport.

#### Genre Hint

The order of your story matters. Be sure to tell your answer in a step-by-step order. It will be helpful to use words like first, next, and last.

**Read more!**

Some real-life examples of how-to texts include:

- Recipes
- Board game instructions



## Persuasive

**Definition**

A text that is written to make the reader agree with the author's opinion.

**Genre Hint**

Prove your point. Give lots of reasons why your opinion is best. This will help you change your reader's mind.

**Read more!**

Some real-life examples of persuasive texts include:

- Commercials



## Letter Writing

**Definition**

A text written to a specific person and sent via the mail or the internet.

**Genre Hint**

Who are you writing to? A letter is written to a specific person. Write in the same way you would talk to this person.

**Read more!**

Some real-life examples of letter writing include:

- Postcards
- E-mails
- Text messages

## Kindergarten-Grade 2 Writing Prompts

The writing prompts that are listed below are also included on the pages that follow on lined sheets you can print and hand out to children to write their responses.

### Fiction

Write a story about a kid who loses their favorite toy. Where did they last see it? Where do they look for the toy? Do they find it?

*Genre hint: Don't rush. Tell your story step-by-step, in an order that makes sense.*

Imagine that you have your very own dragon. What would it look like? Where would it live? Where would you fly with it? What other special powers does it have?

*Genre hint: Be creative! Your story can be as wacky and wild as you want it to be.*

What would happen if aliens visited your school? What would they look like? What would they do? How would the students react? Write a story about what would happen.

*Genre hint: Use what you know. What happens at your school in real life? How would aliens affect these events?*

Do you know the story of the three little pigs? How would it change if the pigs were different animals? What would they make their houses out of? Would the Big Bad Wolf be a different animal too? Write your answer starting with the words "Once upon a time..."

*Genre hint: Paint a picture with your words. Tell as much as you can about what happens in your story.*

Pretend that you are exploring a jungle far away. What do you see, hear, and smell? What animals do you find?

*Genre hint: What goes wrong? Tell what problems get in the main character's way. Are there animals in the jungle? Scary plants? Bad weather?*

### Nonfiction

Write a true story about the best trip you have ever taken. Where did you go? What did you do there? What did you see? Who did you go with?

*Genre hint: Show, don't tell. Give lots of details that show what happened on your trip. For example, describe what you saw, heard, smelled, and felt.*

What is your favorite kind of animal? What does it look like? Where does it live? How does it move? What does it eat? Write everything you know about this kind of animal.

*Genre hint: Be specific. Pretend you are talking to someone who has never heard of this animal. What do they need to know?*

What is your favorite game or sport to play with friends? Tell how the game is played from start to end. What do you do first? What do you do next? What do you do after that? Don't leave anything out!

*Genre hint: The order of your story matters. Tell your answer step-by-step. Use words like first, next, and last.*

Which season do you think is the best: winter, spring, summer, or fall? Write a response telling why that season is better than the rest. What is the weather like? What can you do during that season? Be sure to use lots of details.

*Genre hint: Prove your point. Tell lots of reasons why this season is best. This will help you change your reader's mind.*

Do you have friends or family members who live far away? Choose one of these people and write them a letter. Tell them what you have been up to, and don't forget to ask questions about how they are doing!

*Genre hint: Who are you writing to? A letter is written to a specific person. Write in the same way you would talk to this person.*



















