

A 30-Minute Book Response to a Novel

A. Take out a novel you've recently read.

B. Take notes:

1. Name of the main character
2. Some distinguishing features of that character; e.g. age
3. Place where the story takes place; e.g. name of city or country; countryside/town/city
4. When the story takes place; e.g. winter/summer; World War 2; 1990s
5. The life problem for the main character; e.g. parents get a divorce; has to make new friends in a new school; surrounded by war; meets someone who challenges their world view
6. Who you think would like the story; e.g. students in grades 6 - 10; teenaged boys
7. Some keywords that could be subject headings; e.g. Friendship; Family life; Schools; Dating; War; Historical fiction; Fantasy fiction; Dragons

C. Look at some reviews by other students. (See examples below.)

D. Write a short review of your novel.

This is due at the end of this class.

Perkins, Mitali. Monsoon Summer. New York: Delacorte Press, 2004.

Jasmine unwillingly leaves California when her mother decides the family should spend the summer helping at an orphanage in India. She misses her best friend Steve and has no interest in her mother's charitable projects. Of course, she changes her mind and all turns out well in this novel perfect for seventh to ninth grade students who want a story of adventure, mystery and romance.

[California; India; Entrepreneurs; Mothers and daughters; Dating (Social customs); Friendship; Family life; Voyages and travels]

Perkins, Mitali. Bamboo People. Watertown, Mass.: Charlesbridge, 2010.

Chiko's father is a doctor, imprisoned for resisting the Burmese government. Tu Reh's father is a fighter with the Karenni resistance, a minority people persecuted by the Burmese government. The two boys meet in the jungle when Chiko is forced to join the army and Tu Reh runs away from a refugee camp to help his father. Readers of War Brothers by Sharon McKay and Shattered by Erica Walters will appreciate this political novel filled with compassion and hope. *[Fathers and sons; Burma; Survival; Soldiers; Refugees; War stories; Courage]*

Gavin, Jamila. See No Evil. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008.

Twelve-year-old Nettie enjoys a wealthy life with her parents in London, England. There are servants, private ballet lessons and travels around the world. But when her favourite tutor mysteriously disappears and she meets the son of a household employee, Nettie starts to suspect that her father's wealth is coming from trafficking in illegal aliens. Full of suspense, this story may appeal to readers who appreciated The Boy in the Striped Pajamas. [*London (England); Illegal immigrants; Sex role; Suspense stories*]

Paulsen, Gary. The Car. San Diego: Harcourt Brace, 1994.

Fourteen-year-old Terry wakes up one morning to discover that his parents have disappeared. The next day, his mother calls and says that she is tired of fighting with his father and is not coming back. She hangs up and his father calls. He is tired of being married to his mother and is not coming back. He hangs up, leaving Terry alone in a shabby rented house with only a little over a thousand dollars he has saved up from mowing lawns and a car kit his father does not want. Terry has his own mechanic's set of tools, so he builds the car and sets off, leaving Ohio behind and heading west to find his uncle in Oregon. But on the way, he meets two Vietnam War veterans who change his view of life. A young adult novel with some swearing and realistic references to the violence of war, this novel will be appreciated by readers of Sunrise over Fallujah by Walter Dean Myers, Shattered by Eric Walters and Purple Heart by Patricia McCormick. It might be helpful to look at the picture book Patrol: An American Soldier in Vietnam by Walter Dean Myers before reading this memorable story by rightly acclaimed author Gary Paulsen. [*Soldiers; Vietnam conflict; Automobiles; Voyages and travels; Young adult fiction*]

Ruiz Zafon, Carlos. Prince of Mist. New York : Little, Brown, 2010.

Thirteen-year-old Max Carver and his fifteen-year-old sister Alicia, along with their friend Roland, battle for their lives against an evil magician in a small seaside town during World War II. While not as compelling as The Midnight Palace, another novel by the same author, this story is nevertheless full of action and suspense and will be enjoyed by readers twelve to fourteen years old. [*Historical fiction; Supernatural; Shipwrecks; Friendship; Moving, Household*]