



Changing Genres

This activity is designed to help students retell a story with appropriate facts and relevant descriptive details, enabling them to practice their reading comprehension skills. The activity also introduces students to the concept of genre.

Overview:	Students will learn about genres as they take “Reader’s Theater” up a notch by performing a story using conventions of a different genre.
Standards addressed:	<p>Common Core Standards</p> <p>Reading Standard for Literature 3.3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.</p> <p>Reading Standard for Literature 3.6 Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.</p> <p>Speaking and Listening Standard 3.2 Determine the main idea and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively and orally.</p> <p>Speaking and Listening Standard 3.4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.</p>
Activity works best with:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual student • Small groups • Whole group
Preparation time:	Low
Materials:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer with Internet access • LCD projector • Whiteboard and marker

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<p>Preparation:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open a web browser and log in to the We Give Books website at www.wegivebooks.org. • Log in to your account and select a campaign to support. • Re-familiarize yourself with the concept of genre, including different genre types.
<p>Introduction:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students how they would explain genre. • Ensure that students include the key concept of category or group in their definition. (“Genre” is a French word meaning a “kind” or “sort” of virtually anything. It is most commonly used to describe categories of movies, art and literature. For example, movie genres consist of comedies, love stories, scary/horror, action, etc.) • Genres share a common theme or technique. Examples include fiction, nonfiction, plays, mysteries and biographies. • Genres are not always clear-cut and can be combined (fictional mysteries set in the future). • Have students create a list of genres and chart their responses. • Ask students, “What makes (one named genre) different than (another named genre)?” • Tell students that you are going to do a read-aloud and you would like for them to keep “genre” in mind while you’re reading. • Introduce the book and author.

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Activity:

- Read the book aloud to students, or ask them to read it themselves.
- Prompt students to answer key questions related to the book. Chart responses for reference.
 - What is the genre of (title)?
 - Could the story be applied to another genre?
 - What would happen if you changed the genre of (title)?
 - How would the setting change?
 - Would key interactions change?
- Tell students that understanding different genres will help them become better readers and writers.
- To apply what they have learned, let students know that you are looking for volunteers to do a “Reader’s Theater” of (title). The twist is that they are going to have to read/act the same story in a different genre.
- Have two to three students read/act the book. (Determine the number of participants based on how many characters there are and how much dialogue there is among them.)
- Before students start, give them a genre that they are familiar with (western, science fiction, etc.). Tell them they cannot change what happens to the characters.
- Give students a big round of applause at the end!
- Have the audience discuss how changes in the genre changed the story.

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Tips for expansion:

- Prepare a montage of samples of different movie genres to give students examples of voices and actions in those genres.
- This is a great reoccurring activity, especially to get all students participating throughout the year.
- Once you feel like students grasp the concept and understand different genres, have them start reading normally, and then ask them to change genres mid-read, maybe even a couple of times.
- Have students create a [Shadow Puppet](#) play of the story utilizing a different genre. You can find instructions for this project online in the Craft Projects section, among many other resources, available to you to download for free on the **We Give Books** website at www.wegivebooks.org/resources.