

Literary Focal Points

Author

What do you know about the author? How can you tell? What is the author trying to tell you in your book? What did the author have to know about to write this book? What sorts of things does the author like or dislike?

Characters

Who are the main characters in your story? Do you like them? Tell me why. (Do you dislike them? Tell me why.) Choose one character. Why is this character important in the story? Do any of the characters change? In what way? Do any of the characters do things that you think are good? Do any of the characters do things that you think are wrong?

Plot

Tell me the main things that happened in your story. Were you able to guess what was going to happen at the end? Can you think of another way your story might have happened? Can you think of another way your story may have ended?

Setting

Where does the story take place? Tell me what the place was like. Have you ever been to a place like this? Did the story take place a long time ago/in the future/now?

Mood

How do you feel while reading the book? Why did you feel that way? What was the funniest part? What was the saddest part? What was the most exciting thing that happened or the strangest thing that happened? What do you remember most about the story?

Style

What special words does the author use to help you hear/see in the story? Tell me about any pictures the author has left in your mind. What do you like about the way the author has written the story?

Theme

Why do you think the author wrote this book? Do you think there is a message in this story? What is it? So, what is the embedded theme?

Illustration

Who is the illustrator? Do you like the illustrations? Why? Why not? What (if anything) did the illustrations add to the text? If the illustrations were not there, would there need to be more words? Why? What do you think the illustrator needs to know in order to illustrate this story?

Conflict/Resolution

Who has a problem? Is there one problem or more than one? How is the problem solved? How do you know? Which type of conflict is in your book? (Man vs. man, man vs. himself, man vs. nature)

Point of View

Who is telling the story? How can you tell? Which point of view is used? (First person – author uses "I", Third person narrative or third person omniscient) If the point of view were different, how would the story change?