



Understanding a simple book review

CAPS: Grade 4, Term 3

Writing and Presenting

Writes a simple book review using a frame:
Selects appropriate content



Note

A book review gives a brief outline of a book that you have read.
You also need to give your personal response to the story.

An example of a book review using a writing frame:

Title: Ruby Sings the Blues

Author: Niki Daly

The characters: The important people or animals in the book are ...

Ruby
Bernard (a guitarist)
Zahara (an Afro-pop singer)

The setting: The story takes place ...
at school and in Ruby's neighbourhood.

The plot: This is what happens in the story ...

Ruby is so loud, she drives everyone crazy. When her teacher suggests that Ruby might make life easier by turning down the volume, Ruby turns it up instead – and drives away all her school friends. Ruby feels really blue – until Bernard and Zahara, who live in the basement, offer to give her singing lessons. Not only does Ruby learn to be quieter, she also learns to sing with feeling – Ruby practises “sharp, zooming notes, like the sounds of the city... and gentle, breathy notes like a cool evening breeze.”

Theme: The message of the story is that ...

Ruby embraces her overpowering voice, even though she doesn't fit it. She changes something that is not very pleasant (her loud voice) to something beautiful... with a lot of practice. She finds her unique talent, through the use of her music. Anyone can overcome challenges.



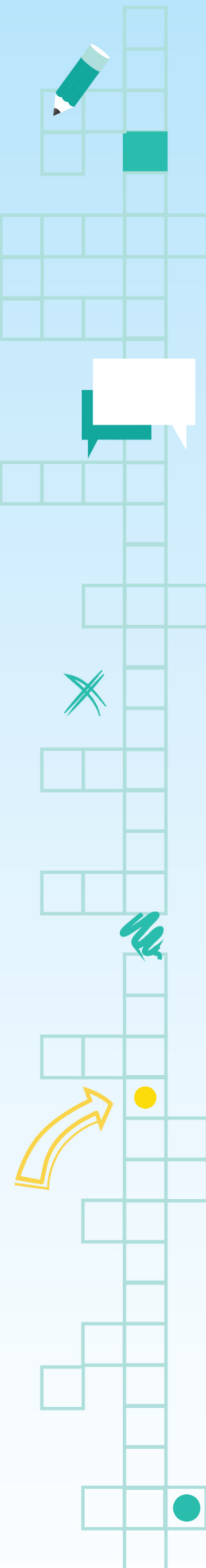
“Ruby is so loud no one wants to be around her until two Afro-pop musicians in her building teach her to control the volume of her voice through singing.”

What I liked? The best part of the story is ...

when Ruby doesn't give up on herself. She is just awesome in her school concert.

Recommendation: I would/would not tell a friend to read this book because ...

it is inspiring. The pictures in the book are colourful: Colours “of pale olives and grey-blues dominate the early pictures, but once Ruby starts to sing, rich reds and blues splash across the scenes.” The story shows us that we are all unique, and have our own talents; and that practice makes perfect.





Activity 1

Help Themba match these book review words with their meanings. The first one has been done for you.

Write any new words that you have learnt into your personal dictionary.

Example

Author = **The person who writes the story.**

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|------------------|---|
| ① Author | The events that take place in the story. |
| ② Title | Suggesting whether or not the book should be read. |
| ③ Characters | The person who writes the story or book. |
| ④ Setting | What the story is about – the message in the story. |
| ⑤ Plot | The book's name. |
| ⑥ Theme | The place and time in which the story takes place. |
| ⑦ Recommendation | The important people or animals found in the book. |



Activity 2

Now it's over to you: Choose a book or story that you have read this year. Write your book review in the writing frame found on the next two pages.



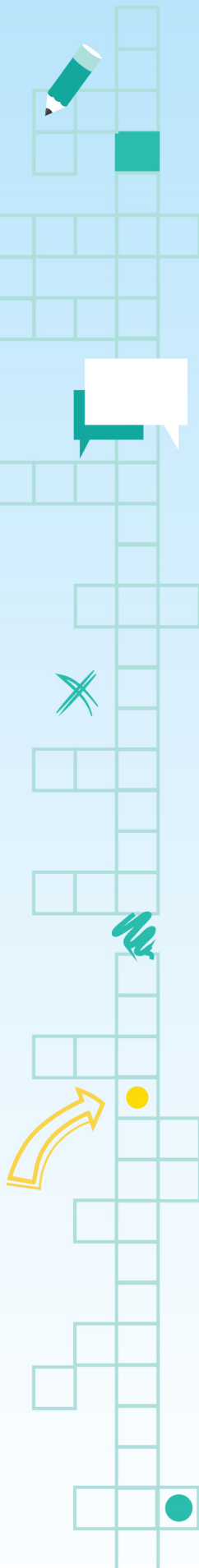
My book review

Title:

Author:

The characters: The important people or animals in the book are ...

The setting: The story takes place ...





The plot: This is what happens in the story ...

Theme: The story is about ...

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What I liked? The best part of the story is ...

Recommendations: I would/would not tell a friend to read this book because ...

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Teacher Tip

You can introduce this lesson by reading the book review found in the dictionary lesson: *The Singing Chameleon*. Discuss the features of a book review (see example used in this lesson).

