

It's a Mystery

Standard

Read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, aesthetic) of human experience.

Strategies

Graphic organizer

Choice board

Objective

Students will read and analyze a mystery novel and then create a project about it.

Materials

Mystery Setting reproducible

Mystery Plot reproducible

Mystery Choice Board reproducible

Project Organizer reproducible

Book Review reproducible

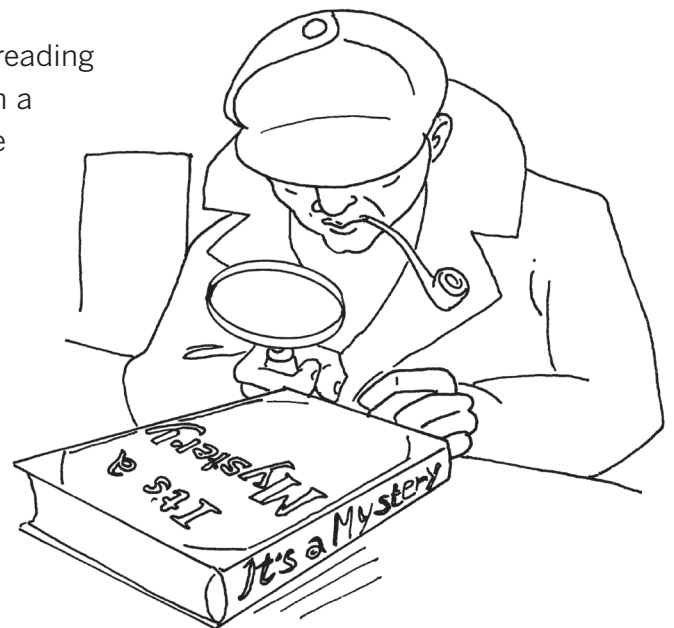
collection of mystery novels at different reading levels

assorted supplies for student projects

index cards

With their intriguing characters and their gradually unfolding storylines, mysteries get even the most reluctant students excited about reading. They are great for teaching critical thinking skills and engaging higher-order levels of learning. In this activity, students put both their deductive reasoning and their creative thinking to work as they read, analyze, and interpret mysteries.

1. Collect a variety of mystery novels at different reading levels to meet students' needs. You may assign a specific novel to students or have them choose their own. Students may work by themselves or with a partner.
2. Give students a specific timeframe to finish their novel. Have them plan ahead, counting the number of chapters in their book and deciding how many chapters they must read per day or per week to meet that goal.

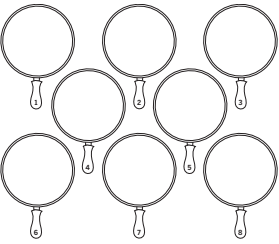


Name _____ Date _____

Mystery Setting

Directions: Use this organizer to keep track of the different settings as you read your mystery. List any changes in the setting after you read each chapter.

Book Title: _____



On another sheet of paper, summarize the settings of your mystery book. Be descriptive and detailed. Tell how each setting contributed to the mystery and added intrigue to the plot.

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3. Provide time for students to read their novel in class as well as at home. Have them complete the **Mystery Setting** and **Mystery Plot reproducibles (pages 29–30)** as they read, filling in details after each chapter. (They will need more than one copy of the reproducibles if they have more than eight chapters.)
4. After students finish reading their novels, have them choose and complete a project from the **Mystery Choice Board reproducible (page 31)**. Then give them a copy of the **Project Organizer reproducible (page 32)** to plan and organize their project.
5. Provide time for students to share their finished projects with the class, or set up a display table of the projects for students to explore during free time.

Ideas for More Differentiation

Encourage students with a high degree of mastery to read more than one mystery novel and complete a **Book Review reproducible (page 33)** for each one. Place the finished reviews in a three-ring binder in alphabetical order by title. Encourage classmates to read the book reviews before deciding whether or not to read a particular book.

Name _____ Date _____

Book Review

Directions: Imagine you are an important literary critic. Write a review of the book you just read, completing the information below. (Remember not to give away the ending or any surprises in the plot.) Color the stars to show your rating from 1 to 4. Color all four stars to show your highest recommendation.

Title of Book: _____ What I Liked: _____

Author: _____

Number of Pages: _____


Synopsis: _____

What I Didn't Like: _____

Rating: _____

I would recommend this book to a friend (circle one):

YES MAYBE NO

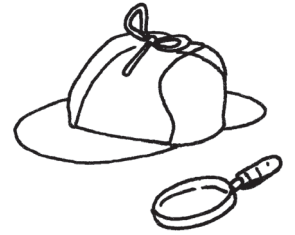


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Mystery Choice Board

Directions: Choose a project for your mystery novel. Work by yourself, with a partner, or with a group. List the supplies needed to complete the project.



Write and present a news interview of key witnesses and suspects.	Create a board game that includes clue cards and problem-solving challenges.	Work with classmates to act out a court trial in which the villain is being tried for his or her crime.
Design and write a front-page newspaper article about the mystery and how it was solved.	Create a movie poster and commercial for the book's movie release.	Pretend you are a spy, and create a dossier of one of the key characters.
Illustrate a comic book or cartoon strip of your mystery story.	Write at least five entries that could appear in the main character's diary.	Create a police flowchart, following the action of the mystery from introduction to solution.

Supplies Needed:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

