Book Reviews
by Carrie Smith and Steve W. Dunn
How to Use This Book with Children

1. Read about book reviews (pages 2–3).

2. Read what to include in a book review (pages 4–5).

3. Read aloud the story “The Tortoise and the Hare” (pages 6–9) and invite children to respond and retell the characters, setting, and plot.

4. Read aloud and discuss the mentor book reviews (pages 10–11).

5. Read aloud the story “Jake Learns the Rules” (pages 12–14) and invite children to respond and retell the characters, setting, and plot.

6. Use the book reviews graphic organizer (page 15) to practice telling or writing book reviews about “Jake Learns the Rules.”

7. Review the steps for writing a book review and the writer’s checklist (page 16).

8. Use the write-on/wipe-off book review frame on the inside back cover of the book to model writing your own reviews of “The Tortoise and the Hare” and “Jake Learns the Rules.”

9. Model writing reviews of other books before asking children to write their own book reviews.

10. Support children as they write their own book reviews in small groups or independently.
What Is a Book Review


A book review tells what the writer thinks about a book. This is an opinion.

Who Reads Book Reviews?

Many people read book reviews.

They read book reviews in newspapers, in magazines, and online.

Some people read reviews to help them choose a book.
What Should You Include in a Book Review?

Tell the title and author. Share your opinion. Give a reason for your opinion. Then give your recommendation.

The Three Billy Goats Gruff is by Brenda Parkes.

Three goats want to cross a bridge. A troll won’t let them pass. The big goat pushes the troll in the water so they can go across.

You won’t get bored reading this story.

It has great action.

I definitely recommend this book to all readers!

What Parts of a Book Can You Review?

You can review many parts of a story. You can review the characters. You can review story events and illustrations, too.

Characters

Story events

Illustrations

Like

Don’t Like
The Tortoise and the Hare
by Aesop

One day Hare told Tortoise, “You know, Tortoise, I am faster than you.”

Tortoise smiled. “Let’s have a race. Let’s see who wins.”

They set off. Hare was soon far ahead.
“I have hours before Tortoise catches me,” he thought. “I’ll take a nap. Then I’ll finish the race.”

Hours later, Tortoise passed sleeping Hare. He was about to cross the finish line when Hare woke up.

Hare ran as fast as he could, but Tortoise beat him. “You may be faster than me,” said Tortoise, “but slow and steady wins the race.”
Now write your review. You can write about the characters.

**Summary**

**Character(s) and Setting:**
Hare and Tortoise are in the forest.

**Problem:**
Hare says he is faster than Tortoise. They have a race in the forest.

**Resolution:**
In the end, Tortoise beats Hare and teaches him a lesson.

**Opinion**
I don’t like Hare at all.

**Reason**
He brags, and it isn’t nice to brag.

**My recommendation**
Read to find out how Tortoise gets the better of Hare.

You can write about the events.

**Title and author**
The Tortoise and the Hare was written by Aesop.

**Opinion**
Hare thinks he is better than Tortoise because he can run faster. They race in the forest. Hare learns that faster isn’t always better.

**Reason for your opinion**
I like when Hare takes his nap and Tortoise passes him.

**Recommendation**
This part shows you can win if you don’t give up.
Read this story. It has a good lesson for everyone.
Marta had a dog named Jake. Marta loved Jake, but her parents did not. Jake chewed their shoes. He did not listen when they said, “No!” Marta had an idea. She followed rules. Jake needed to follow rules, too. Marta and her dad took Jake to pet school.
Now Jake doesn’t chew shoes. Now Marta’s parents love Jake as much as Marta does—well, almost as much.
First, Write Your Own Book Review

1. Read the book.
2. Tell the title and author.
5. Give a reason for your opinion.
6. Give your recommendation.

Next, Review Your Checklist

- I remembered to . . .
  - Tell author and title.
  - Give a summary.
  - Give my opinion.
  - Give a reason for my opinion.
  - Give my recommendation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Review: ______________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character(s) and Setting:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolution:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opinion</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reason</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>My Recommendation</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GENRE: Book Reviews

Book Reviews

Do you like to share your opinions about stories you have read? You can share them in a book review. Find out the features of a book review and read sample reviews. Then write your own reviews to share with others.

Carrie Smith

is an award-winning novelist and author of short stories. She has also written and edited hundreds of books for children. She lives in New York City.

Steve W. Dunn

is a former teacher and principal. He now works with teachers and principals across the country on how to help their students become better readers and writers.

Enjoy all of these My First Readers’ & Writers’ Genre Workshop titles!