Book report templates for middle school: 6th, 7th and 8th grade

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Free book report templates for 6th, 7th and 8th grade: the form for each, the outline, a worked example on a Greek myth and a shorter review version.

A 6th grade book report is built on a thesis: one sentence on what the book is really about, then a summary, the kind of conflict, how the main character changes with evidence, the theme, and an evaluation. Seventh grade adds context and a literary device, and 8th grade asks for analysis rather than retelling, with a comparison near the end. Peabody has a free template for each grade (6th, 7th, 8th), each with the form, an outline, a worked example on a Greek myth your student can read free, and a shorter review version. Like the rest of Peabody they are free through the end of 2026, and they print: nothing is typed on the page.

The three grades side by side

- Opens with · 6th grade: a heading and a thesis · 7th grade: context and a thesis · 8th grade: a thesis
- The story · 6th grade: a summary · 7th grade: a plot summary · 8th grade: a short summary: the analysis is the report
- Character · 6th grade: how the main character changes, with evidence · 7th grade: what the protagonist and antagonist want, and why · 8th grade: motives, choices and their consequences
- Theme · 6th grade: the message, and the turning point that shows it · 7th grade: the theme, with two pieces of evidence · 8th grade: how the ending supports the theme
- New this year · 6th grade: the kind of conflict and how it builds · 7th grade: one literary device and what it does · 8th grade: a comparison with another version or book
- Ends with · 6th grade: an evaluation · 7th grade: a conclusion · 8th grade: a conclusion and an evaluation

Read down a column for one grade; read across a row to watch one skill grow.

6th grade: a thesis

The heading box asks for the title, author, genre and "one sentence on what the book is really about". That sentence is the thesis, and the tip on the page puts it well: a thesis is something a reader could disagree with. "This book is about King Midas" is a topic. "Midas learns too late that the people he loves are worth more than gold" is a thesis.

The conflict box offers four kinds: character against self, against another character, against society or against nature. The worked example, on King Midas and the Golden Touch, picks

the first:

> Character against self: Midas's own greed is the enemy. It builds from a wish, to food he cannot eat, to losing his daughter.

The outline: an introduction ending in the thesis; the summary; conflict and character change, with evidence; the theme; the evaluation.

7th grade: context and a device

Seventh grade asks when and where the story was first told, and why the two main characters want what they want. The example is on Arachne the Weaver, a Greek myth at level 11 in Peabody's library, and its theme box shows what "two pieces of evidence" means:

> Pride spoils a gift. Evidence: Arachne's boast is what starts the contest; and her cloth is never shown to be worse, so it is her pride, not her skill, that is punished.

Two different moments in the story, not one moment said twice: that is the page's tip for this grade. The device box suggests irony, foreshadowing, a symbol, or an explanation of how something came to be. A student names one and says what it does in the story.

The outline: an introduction with context and thesis; a plot summary; motives; the theme, with two pieces of evidence; the literary device; a conclusion.

8th grade: analysis and comparison

By 8th grade the summary box says it plainly: "Short: the analysis is the report." The new box is a comparison with another version, a film, or another book with the same idea. The example, on Icarus and Daedalus, sets Peabody's retelling beside Ovid's:

> Ovid's version has a sadder ending: there, Icarus does not survive. Peabody's gentler ending keeps the warning and gives Icarus a second chance, which changes the myth from a tragedy into a lesson.

That is why the tip on this page says comparing two versions is the easiest way into analysis: ask what changed, and what the change does. Myths and fairy tales suit this year well, because so many of them have been told more than once.

The outline: an introduction and thesis; a short summary; character analysis; the theme and the ending; the comparison; a conclusion.

The review version

All three grades share a shorter review for books read for fun: a verdict (a rating and one sentence that sums the book up), what works (two things, with an example of each), what doesn't, and "read it if…", which names another book it is like.

Books at the right level

On Peabody's ladder, 6th grade is level 11, 7th is level 12 and 8th is level 13. Each page lists the free stories at that level in the library and the kids' lists that fit, such as the top 25 books for a 6th grader and books to read before high school. A level is measured from a story's own text, never from a student. After 8th grade, the high school template turns the report into a short literary analysis.

Questions teachers ask

Can I print one for the whole class?

Yes. Each template is a print page with the form, the outline and the example, and nobody has to sign up. The guide to book reports by grade sets all ten grades, kindergarten to high school, side by side, which helps with a mixed group.

Why are the worked examples all myths?

The examples are written on Peabody's own free stories, so a student can read the story before reading the example. And old stories carry the context and the other versions these grades ask about: all three examples name the Roman poet Ovid, who told these myths about 2,000 years ago.

Should students copy the example?

As a model of shape, yes; as words, no. The example is there to show how long a thesis is and what evidence looks like on the page. A student writing about a different book has nothing to copy, and the shape is what transfers.

Free at peabody.kids/blog/book-report-templates-middle-school