

## Celebrating Literacy Using the News

**The following activities correlate to the Florida Standards for grades four through 12.**

**Language Arts:** LAFS.K12.L.1.1; LAFS.K12.L.1.2; LAFS.K12.L.2.3; LAFS.K12.L.3.4; LAFS.K12.L.3.5; LAFS.K12.L.3.6; LAFS.K12.R.1.1; LAFS.K12.R.1.2; LAFS.K12.R.1.3; LAFS.K12.R.2.4; LAFS.K12.R.2.5; LAFS.K12.R.2.6; LAFS.K12.R.3.7; LAFS.K12.R.3.8; LAFS.K12.R.3.9; LAFS.K12.R.4.10; LAFS.K12.SL.1.1; LAFS.K12.SL.1.2; LAFS.K12.SL.1.3; LAFS.K12.SL.2.4; LAFS.K12.SL.2.5; LAFS.K12.SL.2.6; LAFS.K12.W.1.1; LAFS.K12.W.1.2; LAFS.K12.W.1.3; LAFS.K12.W.2.4; LAFS.K12.W.3.9; LAFS.K12.W.4.10



Literacy Week is a wonderful time to start a reading journal. While you are reading books and newspaper articles this year, write down questions, thoughts and your opinions about what you have read. Through your reading you can explore new concepts and ideas. While you are keeping your journal, read the *Tampa Bay Times* at least twice a week, along with your books. You can read news, sports, comic strips or even advertisements. What are your thoughts about the things you read in the newspaper? To begin your journal, write about something that you have read in the *Times* that directly affects your life. Share some of your journal entries and thoughts with your peers and family.



Superheroes are characters featured in novels and graphic novels. A graphic novel is a story made up of comic content. Can you turn an everyday person or situation into a graphic novel? Look in the *Tampa Bay Times* for a photo or advertisement that catches your attention. In your journal, write down the points that are shown in the photo or ad. Write down as many details as you can so you can change your facts into a graphic novel. Be sure to include creative images, dialogue and details in your result. Share your graphic novel with your family and friends.



What kind of books do you like to read? Do you like fiction or nonfiction, or do you prefer informational texts such as newspaper and magazine articles? What can you learn from reading diverse types of books? What can be learned from reading the *Tampa Bay Times*? Look through the articles, cartoons, advertisements and photos in the *Times*. Cut out headlines, words, photos and images that unlock some secrets. Create a collage with the words and images you have collected. On the back of the collage, explain, in a fully developed paragraph, what the items shown represent and what you have learned. Use specific examples to highlight your points. Share your collage with your family and classmates.



Compassion is an important character trait that you find in many fictional characters. Compassion can be a complicated character trait for some people. There are examples of compassion all around us, though. Look through the pages of the *Tampa Bay Times* to find an article, a photo and a cartoon that show a person or character being compassionate. In your journal, write down why this character or person is compassionate. As an additional activity, write about a character in one of the books you are reading that is compassionate. Write a blog or Facebook post about what you have learned and share the information with your friends, family and classmates.



Choose one of your favorite book characters and place that character in your community. The character can be from any type of book, including science fiction, graphic novel or poem. Find an article in the *Tampa Bay Times* and put your character into the situation described in the article. Write a brief paragraph about what the character does in the situation presented in the article. Illustrate your story and share it with your classmates and family.



Build a world for a science fiction short story you would like to write. Base your world on an event you read about in the *Tampa Bay Times*. Some of the questions to consider:

- What are the characteristics of your world's planet?
- What is its gravity like?
- How far is it from its sun?
- What is its tilt?
- What is the geography like?
- What is the climate like?
- What is the biology (flora and fauna)?
- Who are the inhabitants? Are they sentient? Are they human? If not, what are they like biologically? How many races are there? How many genders?
- What effect have climate and geography had on the evolutionary development of your creatures?
- What is your world's history?
- What level of technology is there?

To help with your world building, use the following world-building web links: [www.amazingstoriesmag.com/2013/12/art-scienceworld-building-tools-needmake-believable-world](http://www.amazingstoriesmag.com/2013/12/art-scienceworld-building-tools-needmake-believable-world) and [www.sfga.org/2009/08/fantasy-worldbuildingquestions](http://www.sfga.org/2009/08/fantasy-worldbuildingquestions). When you have completed this activity, give a brief presentation on your world to your class.

Adapted from “World-Building Lesson Plan” by Ben Cartwright on [AboutSF.com](http://AboutSF.com).





Twisting history and the future are common elements of science fiction writing, but altering the present can be fun, too. With a partner, read through the articles in this week's *Tampa Bay Times*, choose 10 articles and alter them just a bit to turn them from news to science fiction. On a piece of paper, briefly summarize each article. Then write a paragraph showing an alternate view. In order to create an alternate view, you will need to change some factual element of the story. Share your best attempts with your classmates.



As a journalist for your school newspaper, you are assigned the job of writing a newspaper article about one of the Sunshine State reading books. A good journalist must begin with six key questions: who, what, where, when, why and how. Before you plan your character interview, find an article in the *Tampa Bay Times* and answer each of those six questions about that article. Now that you see the pattern for a newspaper article, write a newspaper article about your favorite book.



Many books focus on people encountering conflicts in their lives and communities, especially the Sunshine State reading books. Discuss conflicts you face – in your community or at home – with your class. Write about a conflict in your journal that you have faced. On a separate page in your journal, write about a conflict the character in a book you are reading faces. Next, look for an article in the *Tampa Bay Times* that focuses on an issue or concern that affects people in your community. Read the article carefully. Think about the author's purpose and the main idea of the writing. Explain what the main points of the article are in a summary. Be sure to include the following information: the main points, the author's purpose, the details that support the author's purpose and key words that indicate the author's purpose.

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