BOOK REVIEWS

1. REPORT CARDS

- Remember that a card is a brief and schematic document. Do not give unnecessary explanations. Present the information and data in a clear way for your quick reference.
- A well-structured report card is quite useful to prepare written reports and speeches.
- Areas of analysis. While you read, take notes on the following features of the book.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>PUBLISHER</th>
<th>KIND of STORY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

b. Features of the story

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NARRATOR</th>
<th>• ¿Quién cuenta la historia? ¿Participan en ella como personajes? ¿Opina en torno a la historia?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SETTING</td>
<td>• ¿Cuándo ocurre la historia? ¿Cuánto tarda en desarrollarse la acción?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLACE</td>
<td>• ¿Dónde transcurre la acción? ¿Ayuda a crear un ambiente determinado?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHARACTERS</td>
<td>• Breve descripción de principales personajes: sexo, edad, ocupación, carácter, actitud, hábitos, intereses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Héroe/Héroe. ¿Hay algún personaje que apoya al protagonista? ¿Y que se enfrenta a él?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THEME</td>
<td>• ¿Cuál es la idea, moral o sentimiento concreto que el autor parece defender en su libro?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLOT</td>
<td>• Breve resumen del desarrollo de los acontecimientos principales. El siguiente esquema puede ser útil:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Problema o carencia que desencadena la acción.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Dificultades a las que se enfrenta el protagonista para superarla.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Solución positiva o negativa a ese problema o carencia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STRUCTURE</td>
<td>• ¿Qué organiza y da coherencia a la narración? ¿Es una narración lineal y cronológica?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANGUAGE</td>
<td>1. Anota palabras y frases relacionadas directamente con el tema que trata la historia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Escoge seis frases, oraciones o palabras nuevas que hayan llamado tu atención.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Escoge un párrafo, diálogo breve, cita o reflexión que te parezca más representativa del libro.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. A BOOK REVIEW/REPORT

- Choose the features of the book which are worth mentioning. You do not need to talk or write about every single aspect of the book on your card, only the relevant ones.
- Expand the information on the card. Do you need any vocabulary or structures? Consult your reference chart on Useful Language.
- Organize the paragraphs in a logical way. This is a model paragraph plan. Use it as a reference or work on your own plan.

| INTRODUCTION (1 short paragraph) | • Are the circumstances in which you read the book worth mentioning? |
|                                  | • Give factual information on the book: |
|                                  | Title  Author  Publisher  Kind of story |
| FEATURES (1 to 2 paragraphs)    | Plot  Setting  Characters  Theme  Language  Structure |
|                                  | • Have you already decided on the features that are worth mentioning? |
|                                  | • If you want to focus on a particular element of the story, you should start a new paragraph. Avoid unbalanced paragraphs (too long or too short). |
| OPINION (1 to 2 paragraphs)     | • What are your feelings and thoughts about the story, characters, language, theme...? |
| CONCLUSION                     | • What's the balance of positive and negative aspects? Would you recommend it? |
BOOK REVIEWS
Useful language

FACTS ABOUT THE BOOK:
-TITLE- is a [novel/ short story] written by -AUTHOR-. It is published by -PUBLISHER-; and it is a -TYPE- story
It is a [love/ detective/ adventure/ horror] story. It is a [thriller/ biography/ play...]
It is a sort of ..... story It is both a ..... and a ..... story
[I'd say/ it could be said/ you could say] it is a ........ story

NARRATOR:
The story is told by...
The narrator is not [present/ involved] in the [story/ action].
We do not know who the narrator is
A character is narrating the story from his/her point of view

SETTING:
The story takes place in/at during [a time or a place]

CHARACTERS:
- To define the profile of a character (only relevant or dominant features and information about him/her) you will need a wide variety of adjectives and synonyms. Relative structures with WHO, will also be most useful to summarize relevant information on a character. An alternative way, in APPPOSITION (a phrase between commas, not using any connector, and following the noun or name of the character).

Eg.: Shirley, the protagonist, is an easy-going young woman who works for a nuclear agency.

Protagonist [Main/ Secondary] character Hero Heroine The [good/ bad] guy Villain

THEME:
The [book/ story] is about [a teenager who...]
The book tells us about...
(Apparently) it deals with the topic of [family disagreements,...]
the problem of [violence in big cities,...]
the struggle of [single mothers to fit in our competitive western societies,...]
The author seems to be in favour against...
The story reflects [life in a certain place at a certain time in history,...]

PLOT:
It is about... In the beginning ...... in the end Eventually Finally

INTEREST and DIFFICULTY:
- What's your opinion on the book or any of its parts/ features?
  In my [opinion/ view]... From my point of view... I [think/ believe/ feel]...
  I [liked/ didn't like/ enjoyed/ loved/ hated/ disliked] the book because...
  What I most enjoyed was... What I really disliked... I did not quite like [the characters]...
  The most [interesting/ exciting/ amusing...] part of the book is... I was quite interested in...
  I found it [boring/ interesting...]. I did not find it very [interesting/...]

- To be more precise when you are giving your opinion, try using REALLY, QUITE and MOST before verbs of opinion.

You will need adjectives to give your opinion on the book:

Enjoyable Funny Amusing Entertaining Interesting Amazing
Terrific Excellent Superb Worth-reading Worthwhile Slow
Absorbing Gripping Thrilling Enthralling Moving Touching
Tedious Boring Disappointing Worthless A waste of time Appalling

- Try and use alternative words to VERY before adjectives of opinion

Quite Rather Fairly A little bit Not very Extremely

- Did you find it difficult to read?

It was [easy/ difficult/ boring,...] to [read/ understand/ follow,...] The language was too difficult.

- Would you recommend it?

The book is highly recommendable... It is worth reading... I would like to recommend [this book]...
I would recommend this [as an entertaining book for those who enjoy adventures]
All in all... On balance... To sum up...