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GENRE readers' & writers' WORKSHOP™

BOOK REVIEWS



Some Pigs and a Not-So-Big-Bad Wolf

Best Fairy Tale Ever!

Three Cheers for Two Clever Children





by Cynthia Swain

Benchmark EDUCATION

Genre: Book Reviews
Level: J/18*

GENRE readers' & writers' WORKSHOP™

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LITERARY ANALYSIS
- Respond to and interpret text
- Make text-to-text connections
- Analyze the genre

READING SKILLS
Comprehension
- Make judgments

Word Study
- Adjectives that describe characters

Tier Two Vocabulary (see Glossary)

WRITING SKILLS
Writer's Tools
- Writer's voice

Writer's Craft
- How to write a book review

THEME CONNECTIONS
- Arts and Culture

*The reading level assigned to this text is based on the genre examples only. "Focus on the Genre," "Reread," and "Writer's Craft" features were not leveled. These sections are intended for read-aloud or shared reading.

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The Readers' & Writers' Genre Workshop series includes eleven fiction and nonfiction genres. There are two titles with multiple stories for each genre.

How to use this book

1. Learn about the genre by reading pages 2–3. Get background information about the reviews on pages 4–5.
2. Read the book reviews for enjoyment.
3. Reread the book reviews and answer the questions on pages 11, 15, and 21.
4. Reread the last book review. Pay attention to the comments in the margins. See how a critic writes a book review.
5. Follow the steps on pages 22–23 to write your own book review.
6. Complete the activity on the inside back cover. Answer the follow-up questions.

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BOOK REVIEWS

What is a book review?

A book review is a composition that evaluates a book. In a book review, the reviewer, or critic, describes what happens in the book, and shares opinions about the book. The critic discusses what is good about the book, and what is bad about it. The critic uses details from the book to support his or her opinions.

What is the purpose of a book review?

Many people want to know about a book before they read it. They want to know what the book is about and if it is the "right" book for them. A book review helps readers decide whether to read a book.

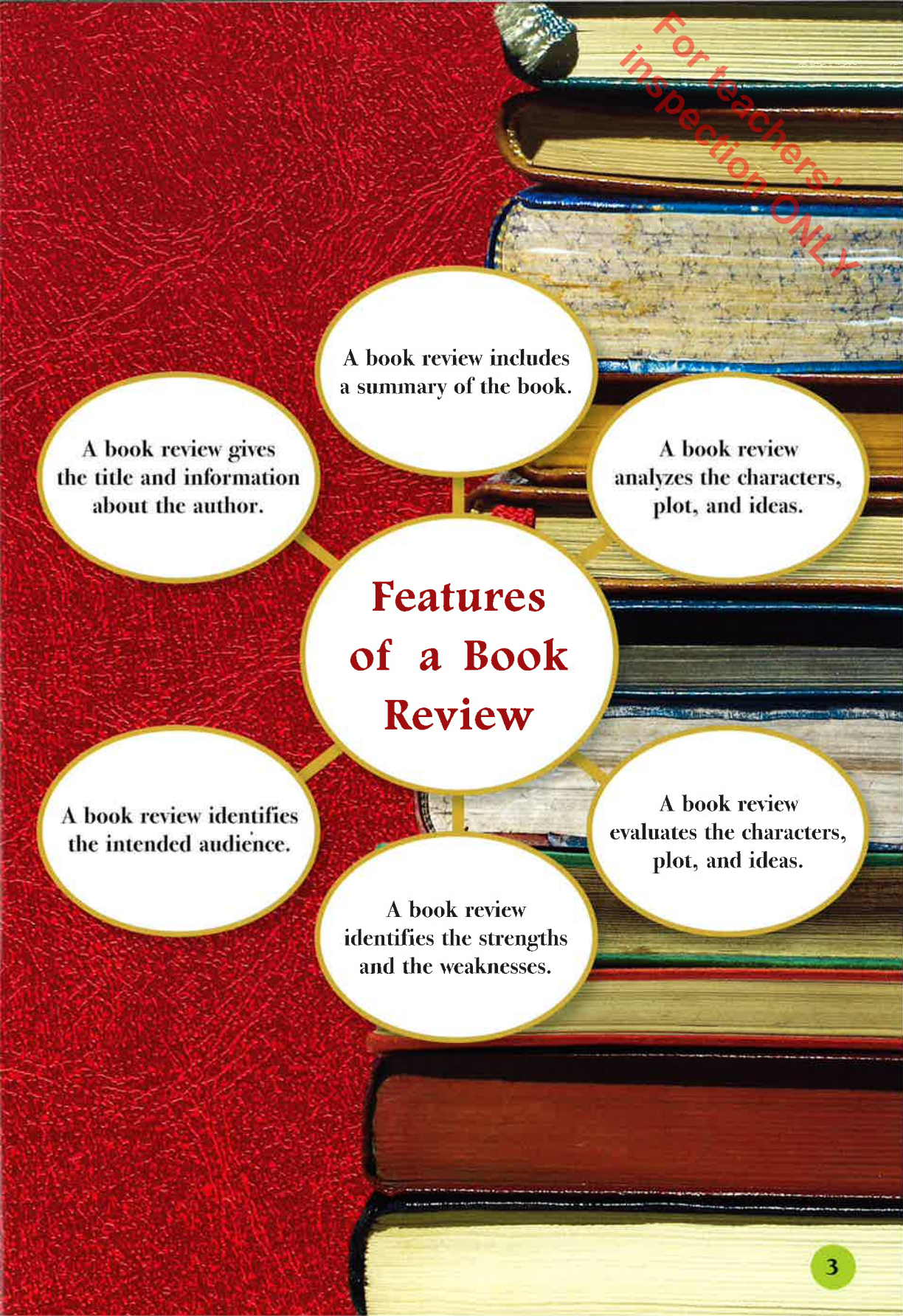
Who is the audience for a book review?

When an author writes a book, he or she has an audience in mind. The audience is all of the people interested in the subject. When a critic writes a book review, he or she has an audience in mind, too. The critic writes to all of the people who might want to read the book that he or she is reviewing.

How do you read a book review?

Pay attention to the plot, characters, and subject matter. Ask yourself, "Would this book interest me? Did it interest the reviewer? How can I tell?" Think about how the reviewer rated the book. What did the critic like? What did he or she not like? Did he or she give good reasons for his or her opinions? After you read a review, ask yourself, "Do I want to read the book now?"

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What Did Critics Think of



The Brothers Grimm?

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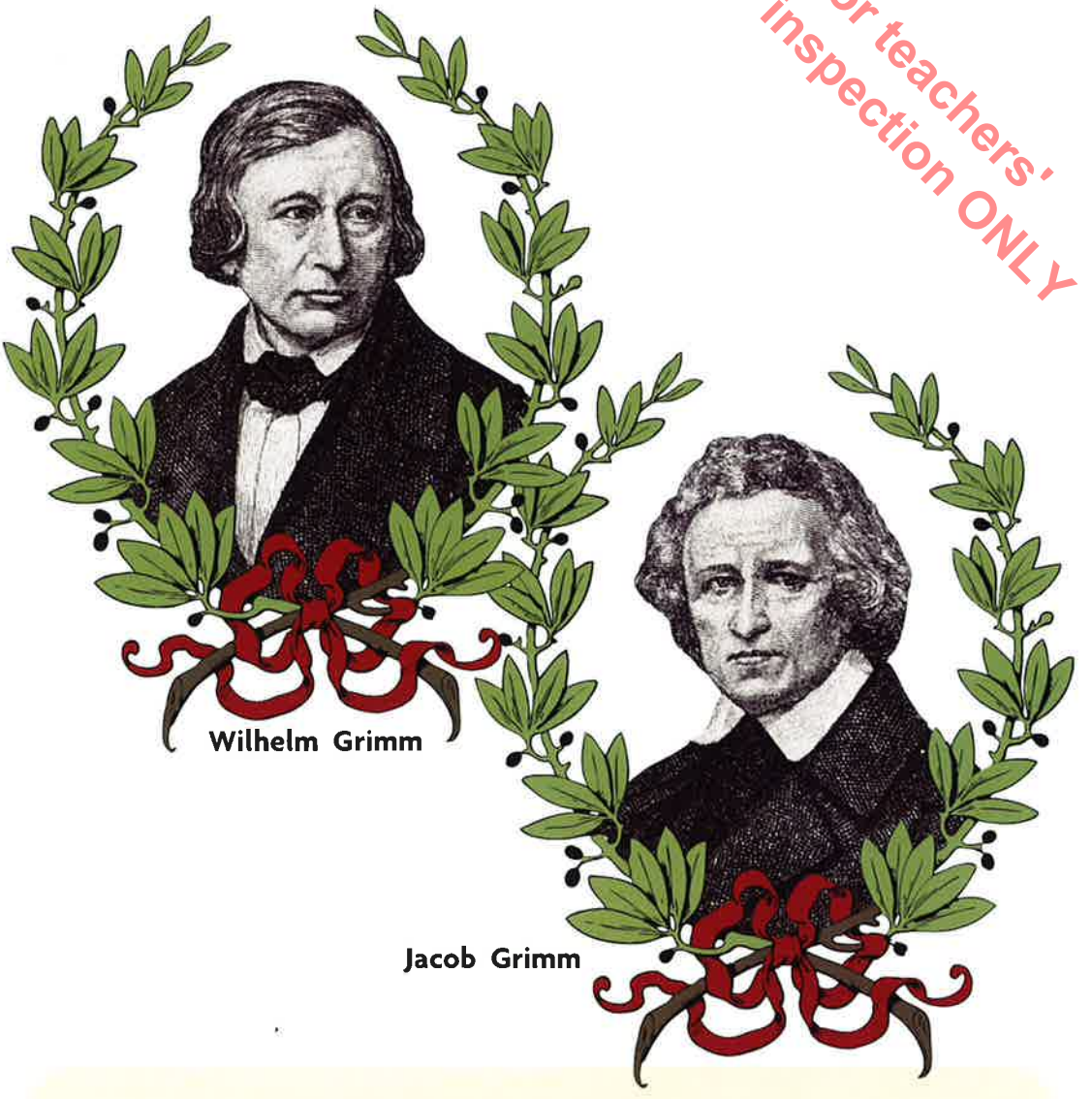
The Brothers Grimm lived in Germany during the 1800s. They wrote several books, but they are best known for their fairy tales. Many tales, such as "Rumpelstiltskin," "Snow White," and "Hansel and Gretel," have become favorites.

Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm traveled around Germany to find fairy tales. They met with peasants and villagers and heard many stories. The brothers wrote down the stories they heard. In 1812, they published a book called *Tales of Children and the Home*.

Critics loved the stories. A famous English writer wrote a review of the Grimms' fairy tales. He said that these stories were not just for children. They were also for adults. He believed that the stories had lessons for people of all ages. A critic for a major newspaper said their book was one of the "great books of the world."

The reviews that these critics wrote let people know about the book and helped to make it popular. For almost two hundred years, people have loved these stories. You have probably read or heard many fairy tales from the Brothers Grimm. What do you think of these tales? Do you believe that the Grimm brothers created one of the great books of the world?

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Wilhelm Grimm

Jacob Grimm

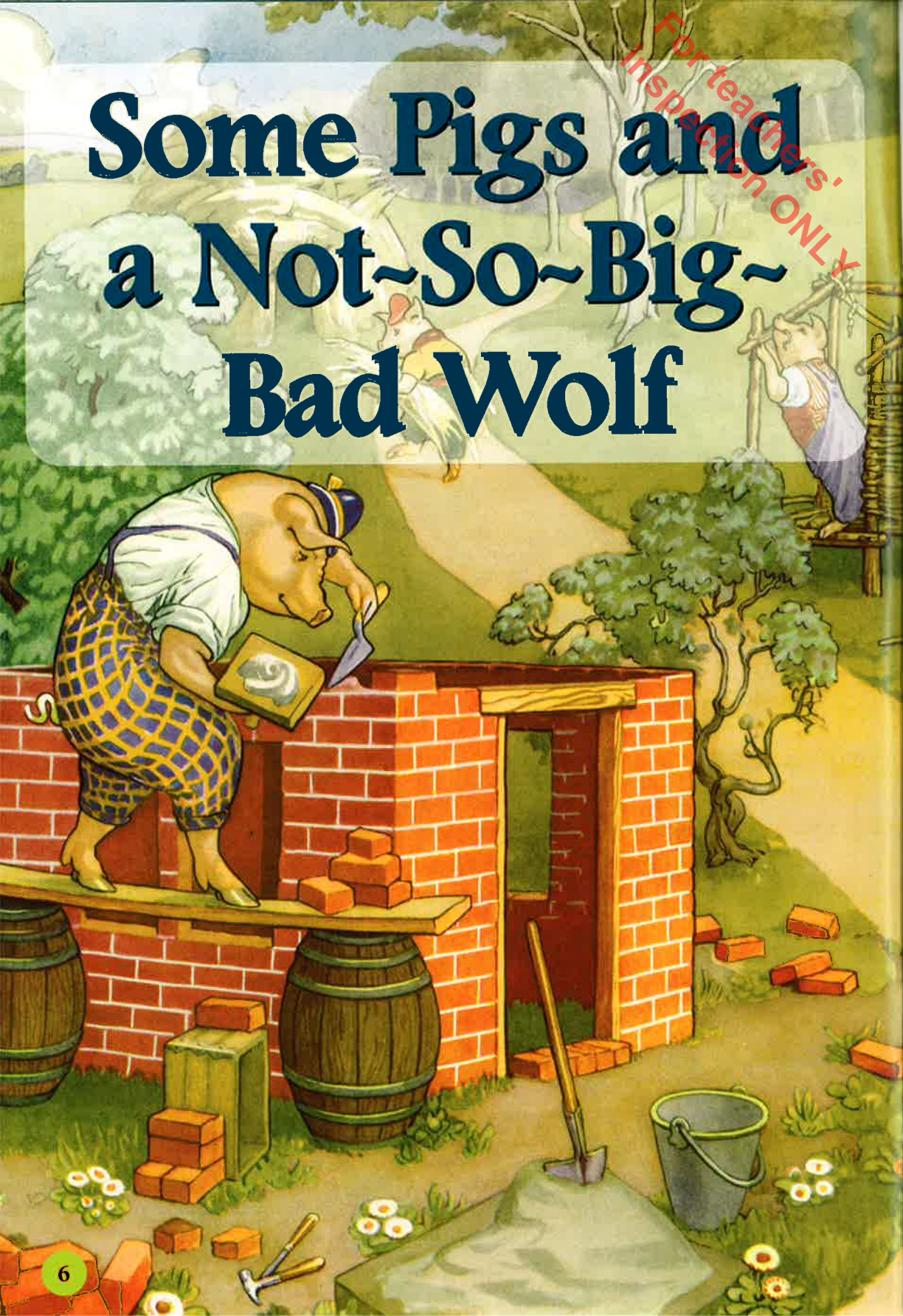
Tools Writers Use

Writer's Voice

A book review gives the opinion of one person, the critic. A good book review has a distinct voice. Readers feel as if the book reviewer is speaking directly to them. The critic may create a voice by:

- sharing his or her thoughts and reactions to the book
- using the first-person point of view
- including personal judgments
- expressing emotions such as humor, boredom, and excitement
- writing the way he or she would speak

Some Pigs and a Not-So-Big Bad Wolf



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