BRIDGES EDITION

GENRE readers' & writers' WORKSHOP™

Realistic Fiction

The Thing in the Cave

Jamal's Secret



by Dina Anastasio and Amanda Jenkins

Benchmark EDUCATION

For teachers' inspection ONLY

The Thing in the Cave

by Dina Anastasio
illustrated by Lyn Boyer



Jamal's Secret

by Amanda Jenkins
illustrated by Shawn Byous

TWO REALISTIC FICTION STORIES

Table of Contents

Focus on the Genre: Realistic Fiction 2
Meet the Characters 4
The Thing in the Cave 6
Jamal's Secret 14
The Writer's Craft: Realistic Fiction 22
Glossary 24
Make Connections Across Texts . . . Inside Back Cover

Realistic Fiction

What is realistic fiction?

Realistic fiction features characters and plots that could actually happen in everyday life. The settings are authentic—they are based on familiar places such as a home, school, office, or farm. The stories involve some type of conflict, or problem. The conflict can be something a character faces within himself, an issue between characters, or a problem between a character and nature.

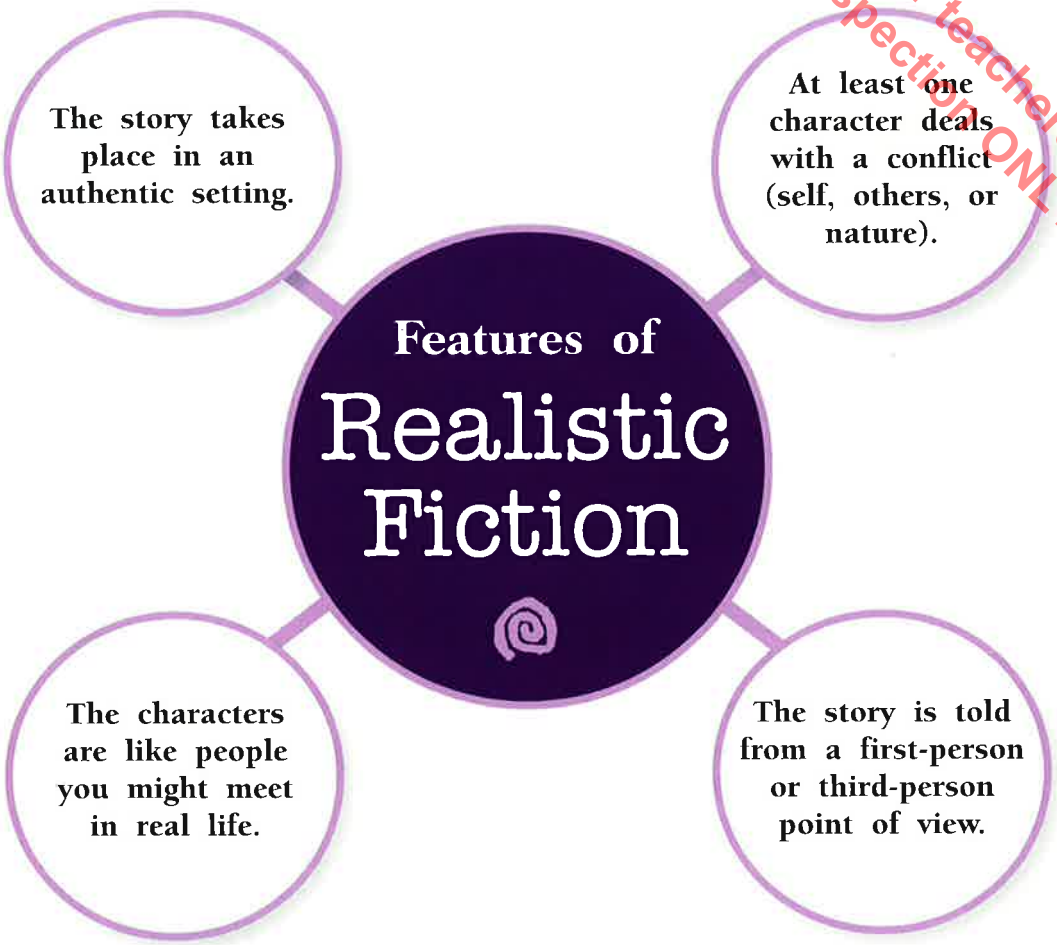
What is the purpose of realistic fiction?

Realistic fiction shows how people grow and learn, deal with successes and failures, make decisions, build relationships, and solve problems. In addition to making readers think and wonder, realistic fiction is entertaining. Most of us enjoy "escaping" into someone else's life for a while.

How do you read realistic fiction?

First, note the title. The title will give you a clue about an important character or conflict in the story. As you read, pay attention to the thoughts, feelings, and actions of the main characters. Note how the characters change from the beginning of the story to the end. Ask yourself: *What moves this character to action? Can I learn something from his or her struggles?*

For teacher's inspection ONLY



Who tells the story in realistic fiction?

Authors usually write realistic fiction in one of two ways. In the first-person point of view, one of the characters tells the story as it happens to him or her, using words such as **I**, **me**, **my**, **mine**, **we**, **us**, and **our**. In the third-person point of view, a narrator tells the story, using words such as **he**, **she**, **they**, **their**, and the proper names of the characters.

For teachers' inspection ONLY

Meet the Characters

Cave Adventures

Summer has finally arrived. Linda and her brother Jake have been coming to the same cabin on this rocky beach since they were little. Their friend Maria is back for her second summer. Cai is new to the seacoast. This summer promises new adventures since Linda and Jake's dad recently discovered a hidden cave.



Linda, 12, is a big talker with big ideas. She loves technology and gadgets, and hates that the cabins do not get TV reception or the Internet.



Jake, 11, is a smart boy who enjoys playing tricks and shooting hoops on the basket outside the cabin.



Maria, 10, is an only child. She lives with her divorced mother. She likes to bake and cook, and usually has her nose in a book.



Cai, 11, is spending the summer with his grandma. He likes to swim, fish, and play with his dog Tucker.

Oak Street Kids

Five kids couldn't be more different than Jalissa, Jamal, Brooke, Luke, and Tia. But they have some things in common, too! They all live in the Oak Street Apartments. They all have parents who work during the day. They are in the same afterschool "club" run by the manager of the apartment building, Ms. Tilly. That's why the Oak Street Kids have made a deal: They will always stick together and help one another.

For teachers' inspection ONLY

Tools Writers Use

Simile

Does the word **simile** (SIH-muh-lee) remind you of the word **similar**? Things that are similar are alike in some way. Similes compare two things using the words **like** or **as**. Writers use similes to describe how the characters look and act, or compare parts of the setting to familiar objects and animals.



Jalissa, 10, likes drama and excitement, and is Jamal's twin sister.



Jamal, 10, is calm and easygoing, the opposite of his twin sister.



Brooke, 11, can always be counted on to organize and take charge.



Luke, 11, may not be a top student, but he's loyal and fun.



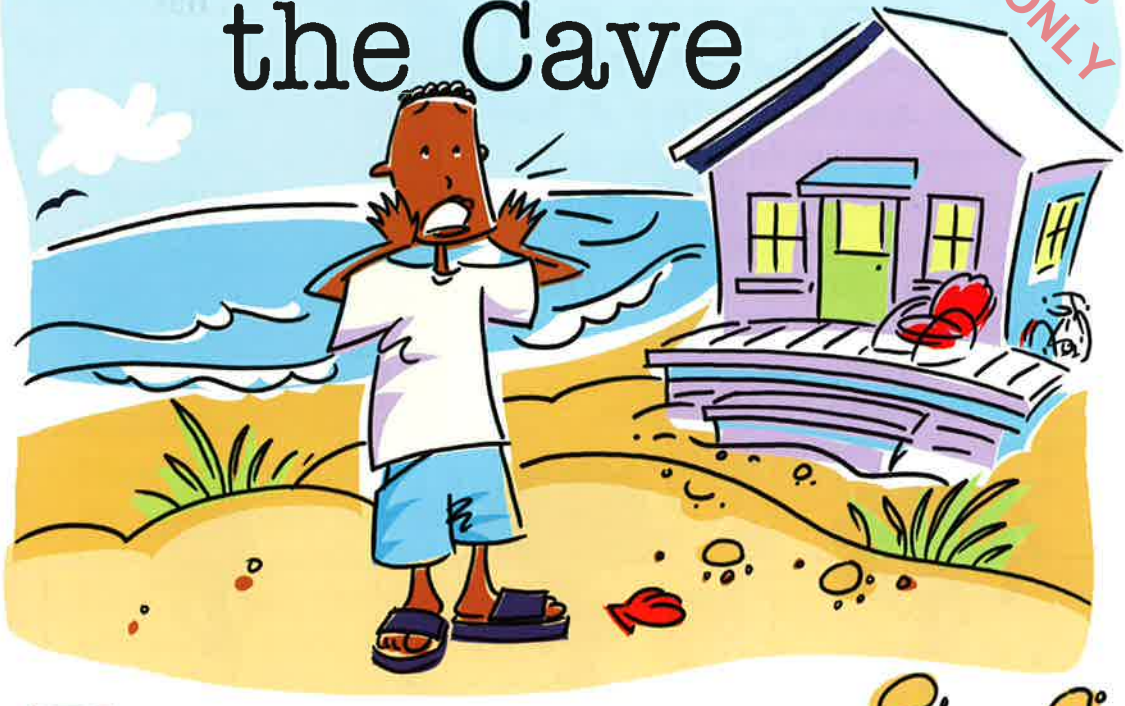
Tia, 9, loves every kind of sport.



Ms. Tilly is the no-nonsense manager of the Oak Street Apartments and takes care of the kids after school.

For teachers' inspection ONLY

The Thing in the Cave



Tucker! Where are you? Come home, boy!" Tucker is my dog. He's a Jack Russell terrier. He loves to play with me. But he loves chasing birds more.

Here's what happened: We were sitting on our cabin steps. We were staring out at the waves. "What should we do," I asked, "for today, and the next six weeks?" Then a seagull landed on the sand. The seagull stood there like a statue. It watched us. We watched it.

Tucker's ears stood up. He barked. But the gull didn't move. Tucker barked again. Then he ran after that bird.

For teachers' inspection ONLY

I thought Tucker would stop when the bird was in the air. Nope. Tucker chased the bird down the beach. I couldn't see my dog anymore. That got me worried.

Why was I so **concerned**? Tucker and I had only been at the beach for one day. Would he find his way back to the cabin? I didn't want to lose my only friend. It was the first day of vacation.

I walked down the beach. I saw a red-haired boy. He was building a sand castle. I asked the boy if he had seen my dog. The boy said he hadn't seen any dogs. Then he asked if I'd like to help with the castle.

"Later," I said. "I have to find Tucker."

"My name is Jake," the boy said. He scooped sand from the moat.

"I'm Cai," I said. "See you later." I went back to looking for Tucker.

Farther down the beach was a dark-haired girl. She was reading a book.

