

Dante von Foerster, 36

Mrs. Kragen

2nd period English

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Plot and Setting in *The Phantom Tollbooth*

Format and Length

Follow the Format Guidelines and the Editing Hints meticulously. Start by following the directions for the heading and title (see the sample above). Make sure you use the date the project is *due*. You will receive a separate grade for how well you follow the Format Guidelines.

These reading projects are required to be more than one full double-spaced typed page and no more than two full double-spaced typed pages. (In other words, you will turn in two pages.) If you hand in a paper that is too long or too short, I will hand it back for you to fix—and it will be LATE.

Mechanics

As with any formal paper, avoid first and second person pronouns. In other words, do not use: *I, me, my, mine, myself, we, us, our, ours, ourselves, you, your, yours, yourself* or *yourselves*.

Do not use contractions or slang.

Keep your tenses consistent. Write the whole paper in the present tense, or write the whole paper in the past tense. Do not switch back and forth.

You will receive a separate grade for mechanics. That grade will count for ten times as much as a regular assignment.

Finishing

Spell check and grammar check. Get multiple readers. Ask your parents for help and *listen to what they say!* Fix everything to the best of your ability. Once you have the best final draft you can make, print then do a word count and write the number of words at the top on the right. Staple your pages on the top left. Hand in your paper on time!

INTRODUCTION (10%)

paragraph ONE

You need an introductory paragraph. Always put the book title and author in the first paragraph. Please note that you use *italics* for book titles, not an underline.

Make sure your introduction includes a thesis statement. Do not announce what you are doing: “This is a project on the plot and setting of *The Phantom Tollbooth*.” Instead, write a thesis that reveals your topic without making an obvious announcement.

In *The Phantom Tollbooth*, Norton Juster’s fantasy novel, Milo traveled to the Lands Beyond and spent several days on an adventurous journey where he learned the value of learning. He ended up fighting the Monsters of Ignorance and freeing the Princesses of Rhyme and Reason from their prison, the Castle in the Air.

Your introductory paragraph should have a hook that grabs the reader’s attention. It brings up everything you are going to talk about and does not include topics you are not going to discuss.

BODY (80%)

You will write several paragraphs in the body of your paper. These book projects are not book reports. In a classic book report you tell lots of knowledge and comprehension level information. In these projects I am looking for analysis level thinking.

paragraph TWO

Start the body of your paper with a paragraph addressing the book’s setting in terms of time and location (10%). If no specific time is given, look for information that will help you make inferences. What span of time is covered—days, weeks, or years? If the span of time is short, can you tell what season it is? If you can’t tell the year, can you tell the era—ancient, old-fashioned, current, or futuristic? If no specific location is given, give general information. If the setting ranges over many locations, tell about the different locations. If the book is a fantasy, say so.

paragraph THREE

Then write one paragraph about the plot, focusing on the beginning of the story. The terms in bold are *required*:

- ***the inciting incident*** (10%)
- ***internal and/or external conflict*** (10%)
- You can also add information on the background or exposition, but you don't need to.

paragraph FOUR

Write another paragraph about the plot, focusing on the end of the story. The terms in bold are *required*:

- ***the climax*** (10%)
- ***the resolution to the conflict(s)*** (10%)
- You can also add information on the rising action or falling action, but you don't need to.

paragraph FIVE

Write one more paragraph about the plot, focusing on how the author used literary devices to make the plot more compelling. The terms in bold are *required*:

- ***suspense, foreshadowing, flashback, and/or a surprise ending*** (10%)
- You must do at least *one* of the four. You may do more, but you don't need to.

paragraph SIX

Finally, write one paragraph to show how the author used the setting to accomplish at least one of the following things (10%):

- to create a mood
- to show the reader a different way of life
- to make the action seem more real
- to be the source of the conflict or struggle in the book
- to symbolize an idea

In *that* paragraph (paragraph SIX) add two or more *short* examples from the book—no more than two or three lines per quotation—to support your statements (10%). These quotes should add specific, relevant detail to a general statement you make. Again, do not make an announcement, “This quote shows how the author used the setting to symbolize ideas.” Make your quotations flow naturally. Note the page the quotation came from, following the format shown below.

Throughout *The Phantom Tollbooth*, Norton Juster used the setting to symbolize ideas. When the main characters jumped to Conclusions, they literally jumped to an island called Conclusions and had to swim back—but, as one character pointed out,

“You can swim all day in the Sea of Knowledge and still come out completely dry. Most people do” (169-70). The irony, of course, was that Milo was finally starting to gain an appreciation for learning. So when he swam in the Sea of Knowledge, he got soaking wet.

CONCLUSION (10%)

paragraph SEVEN

At the end, write a concluding paragraph giving, briefly, the main ideas you want the reader to remember. It is your last chance to drive your point home. Again, do not announce “in conclusion.” The fact that you are concluding should be obvious from what you say and the way you say it. Do not add anything new that you did not include in your paper.

You will receive a separate grade for content. That grade will count for ten times as much as a regular assignment.