

A list of literary genres as defined by the California Department of Education

TASK:

Match the names of literary genres with their definitions. When you are finished ask your teacher for answers.

Genre	Definition
Drama	Stories composed in verse or prose, usually for theatrical performance, where conflicts and emotion are expressed through dialogue and action.
Fable	Narration demonstrating a useful truth, especially in which animals speak as humans; legendary, supernatural tale.
Fairy tale	Story about fairies or other magical creatures, usually for children.
Fantasy	Fiction with strange or other worldly settings or characters; fiction which invites suspension of reality.
Fiction	Narrative literary works whose content is produced by the imagination and is not necessarily based on fact.
Folklore	The songs, stories, myths, and proverbs of a people or „folk” as handed down by word of mouth.
Historical fiction	Story with fictional characters and events in a historical setting.
Horror	Fiction in which events evoke a feeling of dread in both the characters and the reader.
Humour	Fiction full of fun, fancy, and excitement, meant to entertain; but can be contained in all genres.
Legend	Story, sometimes of a national or folk hero, which has a basis in fact but also includes imaginative material.
Mystery	Fiction dealing with the solution of a crime or the unraveling of secrets.
Poetry	Verse and rhythmic writing with imagery that creates emotional responses.
Science fiction	Story based on impact of actual, imagined, or potential science, usually set in the future or on other planets.
Short story	Work of fiction so concise that it supports no subplots.
Tall tale	Humorous story with blatant exaggerations, swaggering heroes who do the impossible with nonchalance.
Biography/ Autobiography	Narrative of a person’s life, a true story about a real person.
Essay	A short literary composition that reflects the author’s outlook or point.
Nonfiction	Informational text dealing with an actual, real-life subject.