



# Spring Book Review Competition



**Lesson duration:**

Approximately 1 hour

**Starter – Oracy activity (10-15 minutes)**

- Listen and respond appropriately to others
- Speak fluently and confidently
- Articulate and justify answers and opinions
- Analyse, evaluate and respond to a wide range of spoken and written texts
- Communicate their own ideas effectively

**Resources**

Show the **Starter Activity Sheet** on the interactive whiteboard and read each question as a class. Ensure pupils have a copy of the **Starter Activity Sheet** cut up in sets, one between two.

Ask the pupils to think about a book they know well/have read recently/really enjoyed. Remind them that they can think about the current or a past class novel. It could be a book read in English lessons or linked to another topic. It could be a picture book or a graphic novel. It could be fiction or non-fiction. It could be a book from school or home. Give them one minute to quietly think to themselves. Invite pupils to share their ideas.

Before the pupils begin, the teacher should model answering one or two of the questions on the **Starter Activity Sheet** using the sentence stems about a book of their choice. Model confident and fluent speaking and reiterate what good listening looks like (looking at the speaker, possibly nodding/smiling, waiting their turn to respond or ask a question related to what was said).

ACTIVITY – Pupils will work in threes. Take turns to choose a face down card from the cut-up **Starter Activity Sheet**. Pupils listen to each other’s responses. After all of the pupils in the group have answered the question on the card they have picked, invite pupils to ask a further question about one of their group member’s books. The teacher can circulate during this activity. Choose intervals to stop the pupils for them to listen to a good example heard whilst circulating.

**Starter Activity Sheet** on interactive whiteboard

**Starter Activity Sheet** cut into sets of 12 cards, one set between three pupils.

Main Session (20-25 minutes)	Resources
<p>A. Show the <b>KS3/4 Template Spring into Reading Book Review Competition 2025</b> on the interactive whiteboard. Provide each child with a copy of their own.</p> <p>Focus on the section ‘Briefly Outline the Plot’. Tell pupils that this will be very similar to a blurb; it will summarise the plot without giving away the ending or any exciting parts that would spoil the reading experience. Challenge the pupils to explain the plot using a maximum of four sentences. Display/provide the sentence stems below:</p> <p>In this book, the main characters are _____.</p> <p>The story setting is _____.</p> <p>The plot starts off with _____.</p> <p>As the story unfolds, _____.</p> <p>If required, the above can be modelled by the teacher based on a book the pupils have read and are familiar with.</p> <p>B. Introduce the ‘Who is your favourite character? What do you like most about them?’ section and display/provide the sentence stems below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. My favourite character is _____ because _____.</li> <li>2. Although I like both _____ and _____, I prefer _____ because _____.</li> <li>3. One of the things I admire most about _____ is _____.</li> <li>4. What makes _____ my favourite character is _____.</li> <li>5. I find _____ more interesting than _____ because _____.</li> <li>6. A key reason I find _____ relatable is because _____.</li> <li>7. The thing I enjoy most about _____ is _____.</li> </ol>	<p><b>KS3/4 Template Spring into Reading Book Review Competition 2025.</b></p> <p><b>KS3/4 SEND Template Spring into Reading Book Review Competition 2025.</b></p> <p><b>Sentence Stem Resource Sheet (1 between 2)</b></p>

8. I connect with \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.
9. The reason I like \_\_\_\_\_ is that they \_\_\_\_\_,  
whereas \_\_\_\_\_.
10. The reason I prefer \_\_\_\_\_ over other characters  
is \_\_\_\_\_.

If required, the above can be modelled by the teacher based on a book the pupils have read and are familiar with.

C. Move to the 'What were the key themes of the book? Did you learn anything new or were there any hidden messages?' section and display/provide the sentence stems below:

1. One of the main messages in the book is \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.
2. A key theme in the book is \_\_\_\_\_  
which is demonstrated through \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The story explores the theme of \_\_\_\_\_  
through \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The story taught me that \_\_\_\_\_  
by the way the author presents \_\_\_\_\_.
5. At first I didn't realise, but after reading closely I understood that \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
6. The author highlights the theme of \_\_\_\_\_  
by \_\_\_\_\_.
7. This book made me think differently about \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.
8. A message in the story could be \_\_\_\_\_  
as shown by \_\_\_\_\_.
9. When I compare this book to others, I think it teaches us \_\_\_\_\_  
in a unique way because \_\_\_\_\_.

10. The theme of \_\_\_\_\_ is important because the readers learn

\_\_\_\_\_.

If required, the above can be modelled by the teacher based on a book the pupils have read and are familiar with.

D. Focus on the section: 'How did the book make you feel? Did you smile, cry, or laugh out loud? Share the memorable moments with us!' and display/provide the sentence stems below for pupils to choose from:

1. One of the most powerful moments in the book was when \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.

2. I felt a strong connection to the story when \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.

3. This book changed my perspective on \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.

4. I found the book humorous when \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.

5. A part of the story that made me emotional was when \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.

6. A part of the story that made me smile was when \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.

7. I was shocked when \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.

8. The story became extremely exciting when \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.

9. A part of the story that I will remember fondly is \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.

10. This book made me reflect on \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.

If required, the above can be modelled by the teacher based on a book the pupils have read and are familiar with.

E. Introduce the final section: 'Would you recommend this book to a friend? Share your final thoughts with us.' and display/provide the sentence stems below for pupils to choose from:

1. I would/would not recommend this book because \_\_\_\_\_.
2. This book would be perfect for readers who enjoy \_\_\_\_\_.
3. One reason I think people **should/should not** read this book is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
4. Overall, I found this book to be \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.
5. If I had to summarise the story, I would say it is \_\_\_\_\_.
6. I would recommend this book rather than \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Compared to others of a similar genre, this book is more/less \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_.
8. If you enjoy reading \_\_\_\_\_ genres, then you will like this book  
because \_\_\_\_\_.
9. This book reminded me of \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_,  
but I preferred it/did not enjoy it as much because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

If required, the above can be modelled by the teacher based on a book the pupils have read and are familiar with.

### Independent task (20 mins)

Pupils complete the **KS3/4 Template Spring into Reading Book Review Competition 2025** or **KS3/4 SEND Template Spring into Reading Book Review Competition 2025**.

Give the pupils the **KS3/4 Sentence Stem Resource Sheet** to support their writing.

### Plenary (5-10 mins)

Display genres: adventure, historical, romance, sci-fi, fairytale, fantasy, graphic novel, mystery and myths.

Ask the pupils to categorise their book into the correct genre. Use partner/group talk.

If time, repeat the starter activity encouraging pupils to replace their card if they have already. This could be done in groups or as a whole class.