

1 Genre

Read It, Write It, Tell It Episode: “Mike Fink”

Lesson Overview

The purpose of the lessons in this unit is to help Ohio students in grades 3-7 learn the characteristics of the literary text GENRE indicators that they must master for their respective Ohio achievement tests. Special care has been taken to dovetail the lessons with the indicators and the types of questions commonly asked on Ohio tests. The lessons are divided into two sections: Grades 3-4 and Grades 5-7.

Ohio Academic Content Indicators

- 2001.EL.S05.GKG-03.BC.L03.I04 Identify and explain the defining characteristics of literary forms and genres, including fairy tales, folktales, poetry, fiction and non-fiction.
- 2001.EL.S05.G04-07.BF.L04.I06 Identify and explain the defining characteristics of literary forms and genres, including poetry, drama, fables, fantasies, chapter books, fiction and non-fiction.

Ohio Achievement/Proficiency Tests Genre Question Types

- Given a list of story elements, select the story element for the reading selection.
- Given a list of possible genres, select the correct genre for the reading selection.
- Given a list of details from the reading selection, select the detail which is a characteristic genre *X*?

Mike Fink

Episode Overview

This episode is about the legendary Mike Fink, a keelboat man who traveled up and down the Ohio River. The segment begins with information about Fink, keelboats, and river transportation in early Ohio. In the tall tale portion of the episode Mike faces river pirates, travels through time, and enlists the help of other versions of himself to defeat the pirates.

Fact

Mike Fink (1770?–1823) was a real person who worked and traveled the Ohio River in the early 1800s. The depth of the Ohio varied greatly depending on the time of year as there were no dams on the river. Keelboats could be moved via poling. Traveling on the Ohio River, rather than over land, did reduce the time a journey took and it aided commerce. River bandits or pirates did prey on people traveling the Ohio at this time.

Keelboats

Keelboats had keels or shallow v-shaped hulls rather than being flat on the bottom. They could be moved by the river's current, be rowed or be poled but, unlike rafts, they could travel upstream against the current.

- Show the students a picture of a keelboat from a text book, encyclopedia or online source such as
 - Lewis and Clark Expedition:
 - <http://www.lewis-clark.org/content/content-article.asp?ArticleID=496>
 - <http://www.lewis-clark.org/content/content-article.asp?ArticleID=963>
 - L&C Replicas Keelboat.com
 - <http://www.keelboat.com/images/photo25.jpg>
 - <http://www.keelboat.com/images/photo417.jpg>
 - Most keelboat images available online are of models or replicas of the unnamed flagship of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Many keelboats on the rivers in the late 1700s and early 1800s were smaller and less well equipped.
 - Upper Missouri River Keelboat Company: <http://www.mrkeelboat.com/expedition.html>

Episode Vocabulary

The following words used by the storyteller in the *Read It, Write It, Tell It* episode “Mike Fink” may be unfamiliar to some students.

cargo	event	rascal
challenge	festival	scuttle
delivered	goods and services	tarp
	nab	

 **Before Viewing**
Fiction vs. Non-fiction

Check to see that your students know the difference between fiction and non-fiction.

- Ask: How do you know what is non-fiction (not make-believe) and what is make fiction (make-believe). *Some children can become confused by the use of prefix “non” when non-fiction is defined as “real” and fiction is defined as “not real.” You may want to define fiction as “make-believe” and non-fiction as “not make-believe.”*
- Ask: Which of the following statements are fiction (make-believe) and which are non-fiction (not make-believe)?
 - Lions are born with sky blue fur but the fur turns to a tan color within 3 hours of their birth. *Fiction. The statement is false. Lions are not born with blue fur.*
 - Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse are cartoon characters. *Non-Fiction. The statement is true.*
 - Wooden pencils are made in factories by placing small, round rods of lead between two layers of wood and then cutting out the shape of the pencils. *Fiction. There is no lead in a pencil. Lead is dangerous when ingested. Pencils use graphite. Students who encounter wordy sentences often assume that they must be statements of fact.*
 - Read about pencils at: “The Unleaded Pencil.” <http://www.pencils.com/unlead.html>.
 - Elementary school children get so tired at school because the school day is 10 hours long. *Fiction. A school day is not 10 hours long. Students who feel that the school day is too long may decide that this is a factual statement and miss the incorrect information about the length of a school day.*

- Optional: “Fiction vs. Non-Fiction” Venn diagram. Have the children fill out the graphic organizer. Answers may vary. Accept answers that students can support.

Preparing for “Mike Fink”

- Say: While you watch this episode, listen for:
 - Humor: Things that are funny
 - Non-fiction: Things that could really have happened back in the past or nowadays
 - Fiction:
 - Things that could not really have happened back in the past or nowadays
 - Magic things (magicians, wizards, witches)

After Viewing

Pre/Post Questions: If the students cannot easily answer the following questions, you may wish to use the Lessons (Section 4) and/or the Extensions (Section 5) about genres.

1. What was funny?
Answers will vary. Accept reasonable responses.
2. What problem does Mike Fink have to solve?
He needs to keep the Buckeye Bandits from stealing his cargo.
3. How does he solve his problem?
He travels through time, picks up both younger and older versions of himself, and hides them on his keelboat. When the keelboat is attacked, a dozen other Mike Finks help him capture the pirates and deliver his cargo.
4. What super-human powers or abilities does Mike have?
He could push a keelboat so hard and fast that he could travel through time. He could unload all the boat’s cargo with one hand. He bent a metal beam around the pirates.
5. Did the storyteller sound like he was telling (or reciting) a poem?
No, there is no rhythm, rhyme, and he did not speak with any kind of pattern.
6. Is this story fiction or non-fiction?
Fiction, it is make-believe. Some children can become confused by the use of prefix “non” when non-fiction is defined as “real” and fiction is defined as “not real.” You may want to define fiction as “make-believe” and non-fiction as “not make-believe.”
7. Is this story a fairy tale or a folktale?
It is a folktale. It does not have magic. The main characters are human beings. There are no witches or magicians. The problem of river pirates in the story was a real problem faced by real human beings who traveled on the Ohio River in the late 1700s and the early 1800s.

4 Genre Lessons

Identifying Poetry

Use rhythm, rhyme, or patterned speech to identify poetry when they hear it.

Materials:

- Copy of an appropriate poem to display or handout. > See suggestions below in #1.
- Method of sharing: chalkboard, chart paper, computer projection.
- Optional: Genre bookmark for poetry.

Procedure:

1. Locate a poem.
 - a. Use one of the following websites to locate a poem if you do not have a suitable poem on hand.
 - b. Poetry Foundation <http://poetryfoundation.org>
 - i. “Deep in Our Refrigerator” – Jack Prelutsky
<http://poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=177560>
 - ii. “Good Morning, Dear Students” – Kenn Nesbitt
<http://poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=176552>
 - iii. “My Doggy Ate My Homework” – Dave Crawley
<http://poetryfoundation.org/archive/poem.html?id=176546>
 - c. Kenn Nesbitt’s Poetry for Kids: <http://www.poetry4kids.com>
 - d. Poetry, Songs, and Fairy Tales: <http://www.library.uiuc.edu/edx/poetry.htm>
 - e. Poetry for Upper Elementary Students: <http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/poemiddle.htm>
2. Print one or more copies of a poem. Say: Listen (or follow along) as I read this selection aloud.
3. Ask: What did you enjoy about the selection I just read to you?
4. Say: We are going to take a more detailed look at the selection. Listen for words that rhyme as I read it a second time.
5. Reread the poem.
6. Ask: Did you hear any rhyming words?
7. Make lists of the rhyming words on the chalkboard, a computer with projection capabilities, or on chart paper. You may wish to use a separate color for each different pair or group of rhyming words.
8. Say: Close your eyes. As we listen to the selection one more time, I want you to gently move one finger (or one hand) in time with my voice if you feel a beat, a pattern, or a rhythm.
9. Read the poem once more and check the students’ abilities to feel the rhythm or beat. Have the students pat out the beat/pattern/rhythm together as a group, if some children have difficulty feeling it individually.
10. Review the characteristics of poetry the class has discovered.
11. Listen to the *Read It, Write It, Tell It* “Mike Fink” episode again.
12. Ask: Is this a poem? Be ready to support your answer based on what we have discovered about poems.

Differentiating Fairy Tale from Folktale

Materials:

- Handout: “Cinderella vs. Babe the Blue Ox.”
- Text of “Cinderella” and “Babe the Blue Ox.” See suggestions in #4 below.
- Display method: chalkboard, chart paper, computer, etc.
- *Read It, Write It, Tell It* episode “Mike Fink”
- Optional: Genre Bookmarks: Folktale and Fairy Tale

Procedure:

1. Say: Today we will work with the literary genres folktales and fairy tales.
2. Duplicate the “Cinderella vs. Babe the Blue Ox” handout. The handout compares a version of the fairy tale, “Cinderella” to a version of the folktale “Babe the Blue Ox.”
3. Say: The last column of this handout is blank. Let’s compare these two stories and see if we can find any differences between the two.
4. If the students are not familiar with the stories, read “Cinderella” and “Babe the Blue Ox” to the students. The following sites have the text used for the “Cinderella vs. Babe the Blue Ox” handout that accompanies this unit.
 - a. “Cinderella”: <http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0510a.html#perrault>
 - b. “Babe the Blue Ox”: <http://www.americanfolklore.net/folktales/mn3.html>.
 - c. Other websites with Cinderella and Babe the Blue Ox versions include:
 - i. “The Cinderella Story Lesson Plans and Teaching Ideas”: <http://www.webenglishteacher.com/cinderella.html>
 - ii. “Cinderella Folktales: Variations in Plot and Setting”: http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=419
 - iii. “The Project Gutenberg eBook of The Marvelous Exploits of Paul Bunyan by W.B. Laughead”: <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext04/bunya10.txt>
 - iv. “Paul Bunyan”: <http://www.searchlit.org/stories/6134.php>
5. Discuss and explain the similarities and differences between folktales and their subgroup fairy tales.
6. Create a list of the characteristics of folktales and fairy tales. You may wish to duplicate one or more of the genre bookmarks provided in this unit.
7. Say: We will watch the “Mike Fink” *Read It, Write It, Tell It* episode a second time. Decide if this episode is a fairy tale or a folktale. Write a paragraph supporting your decision based on what the class has learned about the two genres and on details from the episode.

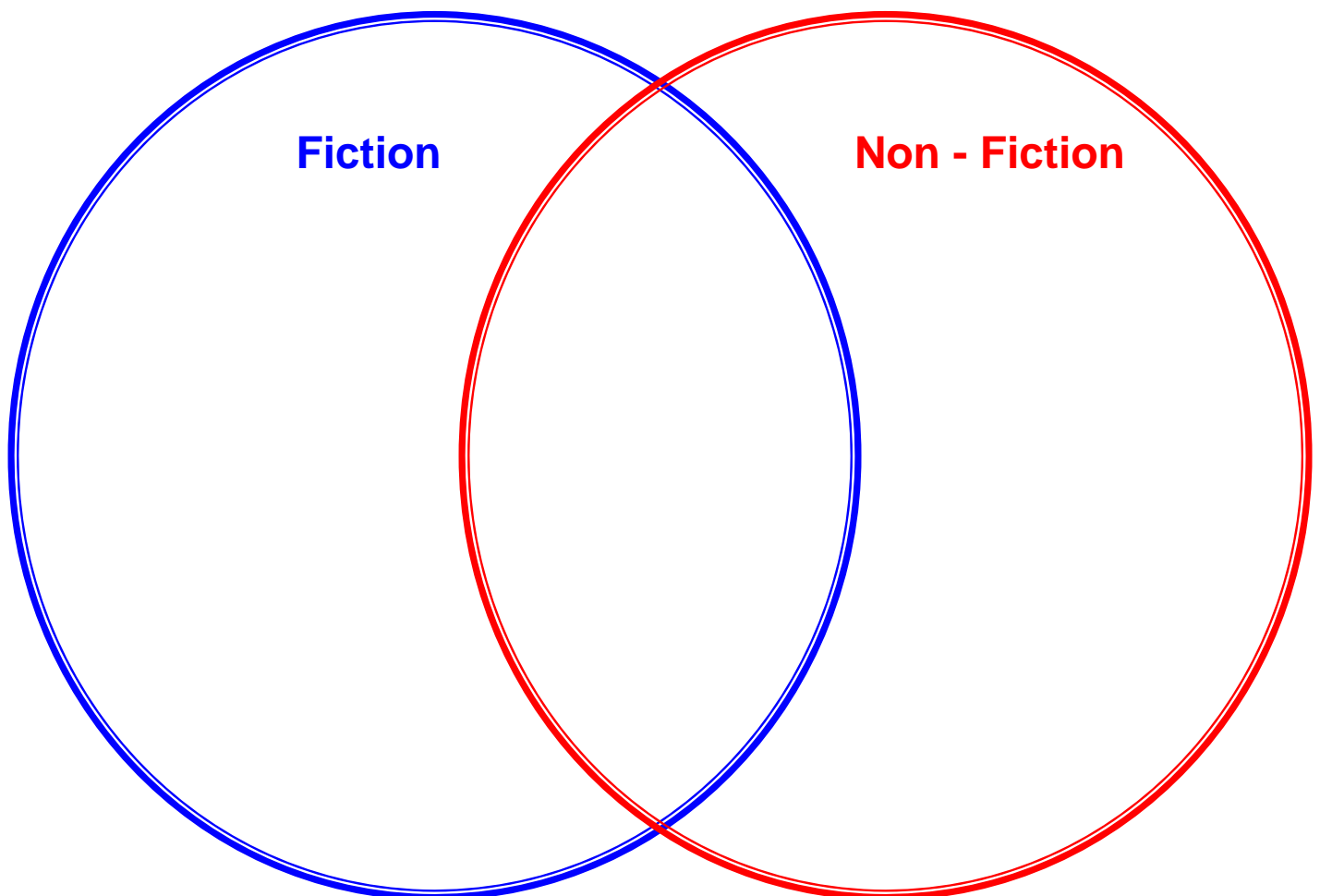
Fiction vs. Non-Fiction

Name: _____

Date: _____

Use the terms and phrases listed below. All of the terms are characteristics of fiction, non-fiction, or both fiction and non-fiction. Write each term or phrase in the Venn Diagram below so that the characteristics are correctly positioned.

An encyclopedia	Has a main character	Invention of the author(s)
Has a setting	Usual purpose: Inform	Has a topic or subject area
Facts	Predict the future	Usual purpose: Entertain
Enjoyable to read	Make-believe	Researched by the author(s)
Illustrations depict an event or a setting	Illustrations help readers understand content	



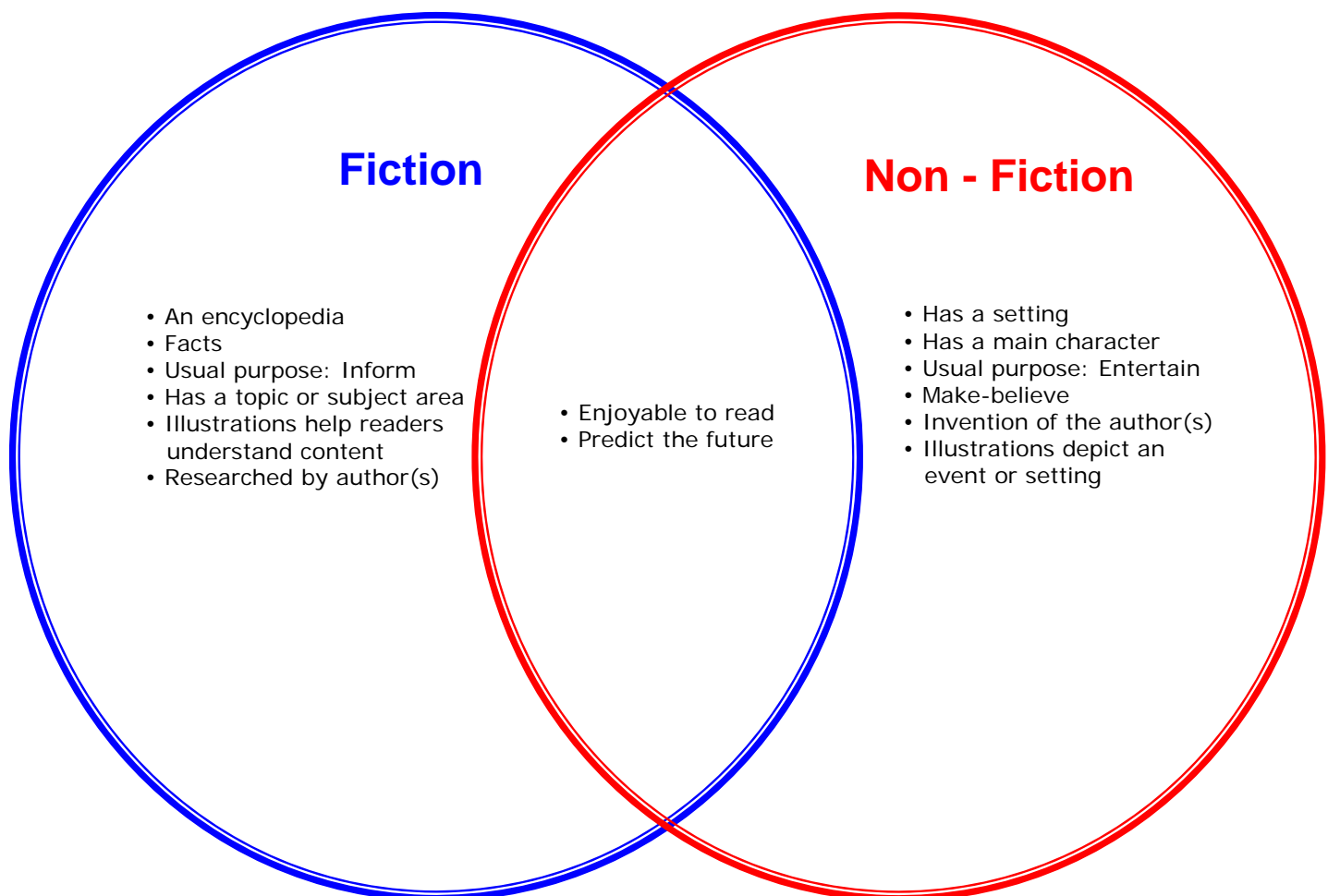
Fiction vs. Non-Fiction Answer Key

Name: _____

Date: _____

Use the terms and phrases listed below. All of the terms are characteristics of fiction, non-fiction, or both fiction and non-fiction. Write each term or phrase in the Venn Diagram below so that the characteristics are correctly positioned.

An encyclopedia	Has a main character	Invention of the author(s)
Has a setting	Usual purpose: Inform	Has a topic or subject area
Facts	Predict the future	Usual purpose: Entertain
Enjoyable to read	Make-believe	Researched by the author(s)
Illustrations depict an event or a setting	Illustrations help readers understand content	



Accept answers that students can support. For example: Authors of historical and science fiction often spend many hours researching factual information. Some children may enjoy reading one type of text but not the other. Many texts, both fiction and non-fiction, never try to predict the future. Biographies and autobiographies have main characters.

Genre Bookmarks

NON-FICTION

Characteristics of non-fiction:

- Usually written to inform.
- Has a topic or subject area.
- Has content which has been researched by the author(s).
- Lists the books and other resources the authors used to learn about the topic.
- Has statements of fact that were true at the time the selection was written or recorded.
- Often has labeled pictures, illustrations charts, graphs, diagrams, tables, or maps to clarify information.
- Usually has a table of contents in front and an index in the back.

FICTION

Characteristics of fiction:

- Usually written to entertain.
- Has story elements:
 - Plot – the action or series of events that affect the main characters. One event often causes or leads to the next.
 - Theme – the story’s main idea, lesson, or statement of truth.
 - Mood – emotions the author wishes readers to feel.
 - Point of view – usually one voice (the narrator, the main character) tells the story.
 - Character development – main character(s) are given personalities and physical descriptions.
- Has characters that may or may not be human beings.
- Is an invention of the author(s).
- Uses pictures or illustrations to show an event or setting from the story.
- Has a story with a beginning, a middle, and an end.

POETRY

Characteristics of poetry:

- Shares the writer’s personal meaning and feelings.
- Creates an overall mood.
- Focuses on one topic – usually from the author’s life.
- Uses precise and vivid words.
- Often creates imaginative images for the senses: sight, touch, hearing, taste, and smell.
- Uses figurative language.
- Breaks lines so each image stands on its own.
- Often has a pattern or beat (rhythm, meter).
- May have rhyming words.

Genre Bookmarks

FAIRY TALE

Characteristics:

A fairy tale is a part of a kind of fiction called fantasy. They were often created to teach children how to behave.

A fairy tale:

- Has non-human characters such as fairies, goblins, dragons, talking animals, etc.
- Gives characters magical powers such as magic wands.
- Often changes one thing into another like a pumpkin into a carriage or a shoe into a glass slipper.
- Often the reader can't tell the time and place of the story.
- Often has characters that are not well developed.

FOLKTALE

Characteristics:

A folktale is a part of the kind of fiction called fantasy.

A folktale:

- Has many exaggerations in it. Another name for exaggeration is hyperbole.
- Gives the main character a problem to solve that is very much like a problem that real human beings had to solve at the time the folktale began.
- Makes the main character bigger than life by increasing real human abilities (speed, intelligence, strength) to super-human size.
- Has a plot that is funny and impossible.
- Has the main character solve a problem, overcome an obstacle and/or defeat an antagonist, i.e. bad guy.
- Has lots of action.

FABLE

Characteristics:

• A fable is a type of fiction.

A fable:

- Is usually short.
- Teaches a lesson, has a moral, or shows what can happen because of a character's thoughtless choices or poor behavior.
- Seeks to keep real human beings from making costly mistakes.
- Often uses animals that speak and act like human beings.

Genre Bookmarks

DRAMA

Characteristics:

A drama is a type of writing in which actors are given parts to perform before an audience. Stage plays and motion pictures are examples of drama.

Most dramas:

- Are works of fiction.
- Have elements of a story such as plot, theme, mood, etc.
- Do not rely on the just words for effect. Often has props, physical action, sound effects, etc.
- Have a script telling what each actor should say as well as directions for stage settings, props, sound effects, how the actors should move and speak their lines, etc.



Extension Activities

Genre • Online Resources

- “Genre Study: A Collaborative Approach” Grades 3-5
 - http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=270
 - Resources at this site include bookmark templates for the genres: fantasy, historical fiction, science fiction, realistic fiction, and mystery
 - A list of suggested books for each genre listed above
- “Ideas for Teaching Literary Genres”
 - <http://www.kimskorner4teachertalk.com/readingliterature/genres/menu.htm>
- “Resources for Readers and Teachers of Appalachian Literature for Children and Young Adults”
 - <http://www.ferrum.edu/applit/>

Ohio Instructional Management System

- <https://ims.ode.state.oh.us>. Use the IMS Quick Search:
- Select Lesson Plans, Content Area: English – Reading ▼, Grade Level: as desired ▼, Keyword: type Genre Study. Click Search.

“Genre Study,” Grade Three

- Students develop an understanding of genre by participating in small- and whole-group activities.

Ohio Resource Center • Reading http://www.ohiorc.org/search/search_adv.aspx

- Advanced Search: Choose Free Text and ORC Number from the drop down menus and type the ORC Lesson number in the center box. Scroll down and click Submit. For example:
Search for resources that...contain in the

“Using *Snowflake Bentley* as a Framing Text for Multigenre Writing,” Grades 3-4

- ORC Lesson# 4461
- *Snowflake Bentley*, a Caldecott Medal-winning book about Wilson Bentley, is an example of a multigenre picture book. Along with the biographical text are large, colorful woodcuts and sidebars describing Bentley's experiments with microphotography and other biographical data.

“Found Poems/Parallel Poems,” Grades 6-7

- ORC Lesson# 1353
- Learning to recast the text they are reading in a different genre helps make students more insightful readers and helps develop creativity in thinking and writing. This lesson requires students to construct poems using key ideas and phrases from a short story or novel.

Mike Fink Episode Follow-up Suggestions

- Research factual details mentioned in the episode:
 - When did the real Mike Fink live?
 - How long were keelboats used on American rivers?
 - Compare and contrast keelboats and flatboats.
 - Learn more about river pirates on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers in early America
- Identify figurative language in the episode: Examples might include:
 - [Fink] could make the boat go so fast that he beat others in a race by traveling through time.
 - [Fink] could unload all the cargo with one hand while eating a dozen pies with the other.
 - [Fink] poled the keelboat so hard that he would lift it right out of the water and land it on shore.
 - whale of a wingding