



PROJECT

Time Travel is Nerve-Wracking: Science Fiction and Fantasy Writing

Session 2 of 4

Setting and Story Mountain

Students use posters as inspiration to jumpstart a science fiction world of their own creation. After brainstorming plot and setting, students draft opening paragraphs.

YOU WILL NEED

- Plot and Setting — Handout
- Opening Scene — Handout
- Story Mountain — Handout
- Science Fiction and Fantasy — Slideshow

STEP 1 (6 Minutes)

Warm Up: 826LA (6 minutes)

Illustrations from 826LA’s Time Travel Mart posters serve as inspiration for students as they brainstorm setting and plot for their stories. You can project these images for students using the “Plot and Setting” slideshow or print the “Plot and Setting” handout to distribute (both materials included in project download). For each illustration, students discuss the following questions with their groups and then record their answers on the handout.

1. What would be the opening line of your story if this were the cover?
2. What would be the last line?

For additional inspiration, you may also project or purchase additional [826LA Time Travel Mart posters](#) to use for this activity:

- Visit New New World
- Tour Pangaea
- The Fountain of Youth

STEP 2 (7 Minutes)

Setting Introductions

Students now switch to considering their own stories and describe the world around their characters, using their worksheet to guide them. On their handouts, students respond to the following questions:

- What would you describe to a designer to make a cover for your book?
- What details should they include to get the setting of your story *just* right?

Remind students not to forget that SETTING is both place *and* time!

STEP 3 (15 Minutes)

Story Mountain Group Review and Parts 1-2 Completion

Go over elements of plot as a class using the “Story Mountain” handout. Depending on whether you have passed out “Plot-O-Matic” and “Plot and setting” handouts to students yet, remind students they should not begin filling out their worksheets just yet.

1. The Beginning
2. The Build-Up
3. The Ultimate Moment
4. The Resolution
5. The Ending

Then, using their character brainstorms, students answer the questions on the “Plot and Setting” handout about what their characters want. Students then fill in the first TWO plot points on their “Story Mountain” handouts: conflict (“The Beginning” and “The Build-Up”) . Students will have an opportunity to complete climax, falling action, and resolution next session.

STEP 4 (12 Minutes)

Writing the Opening Scene (12 minutes)

From there, students write the opening to their stories using sensory details and descriptive language with the “Opening Scene” handout! Students will consider the planning they’ve already done to answer the following questions:

- Where does the story take place?
- What is happening when the story opens?
- Who is the narrator? From what perspective is the story being told?