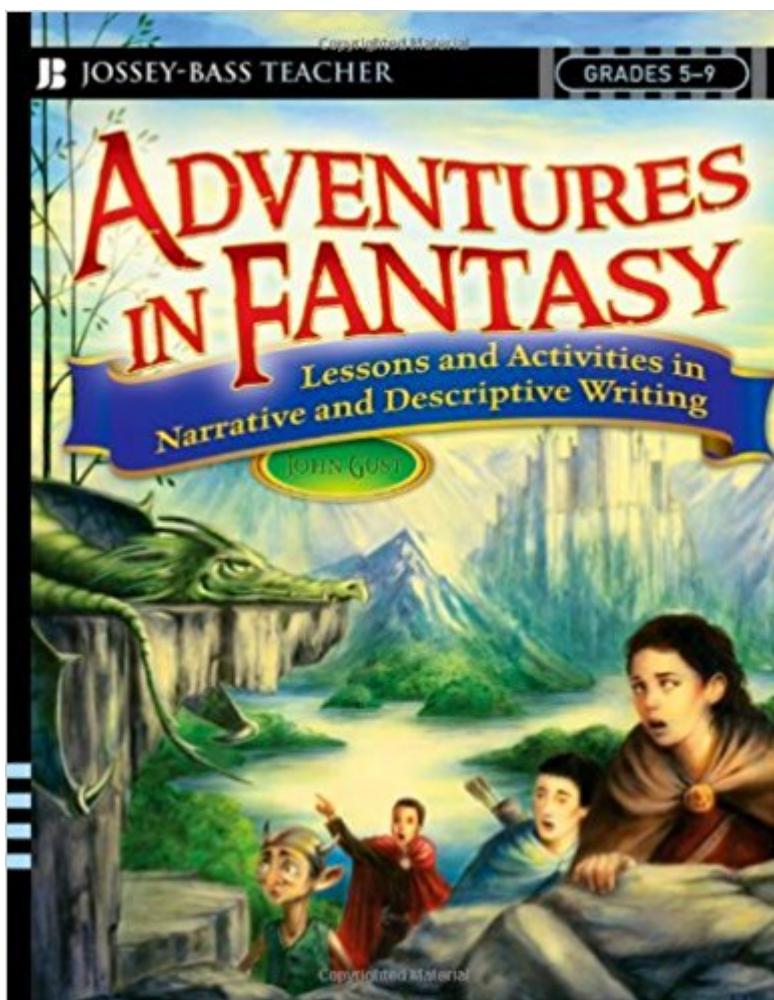


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# Adventures In Fantasy: Lessons And Activities In Narrative And Descriptive Writing, Grades 5-9



## **Synopsis**

Adventures in Fantasy offers an exciting approach to teaching narrative and descriptive writing that stimulates a student's creativity and imagination. Filled with mini-lessons, reading projects, and hands-on writing activities, the book shows teachers step-by-step how to introduce students to the art of creating a complete story in the fantasy/adventure genre. Before fleshing out their stories, however, students are asked to construct actual maps of their "fantasyland" and then to write a travelogue describing the setting in vivid detail. This initial fantasizing encourages students to be wildly inventive in creating the drama, ogres, villains, heroes and heroines featured in their story, and on the way they learn about the mythic journey.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Using this book's framework parents or teachers can create story writing projects that could take up a number of weeks and actually be fun for an entire class or family. (RoundTableReviews, 05/01/08)

"Follow step-by-step, or pick and choose from Gust's exhaustive strategies for teaching setting, characterization, plot, dialogue, figurative language, and mechanics. A treasury of information and imagination for middle-grade writing teachers whose goal is to provide students with a means to discover the joy and accomplishment of good story writing." -David Gifaldi, Vermont College faculty member; fifth-grade teacher, Vancouver, WA School District; and author of Listening to Crickets "Gust describes how he engages his students in order for them to achieve the creation of

their own highly skilled, adventurous fantasy writing journey. Humorous, thoughtful, engaging and practical, Gust provides hope that our children can experience this same educational transformation on the road to becoming real writers. More than mere strategies and activities, he has drawn the secret map and all we need to do is follow." â "J. Cynthia McDermott, Ed.D., program chair, Teacher Education, Antioch University, Los Angeles "Teachers, students, writers, prepare yourselves! John Gust's Adventures in Fantasy will propel you into a world like no other: your imagination and the wonderful power that lies within it. This mage of fantasy, constructivist teaching, and creative writing leads you on a heroic journey that surpasses the noble quest to be stronger, more confident writers."â "Bruce Frost, children's author and fourth-grade teacher at South River School, Marshfield, Massachusetts

Although written for a classroom setting, this book has proven great for instructed home school(middle to high school) or self-education(high school). Also great for co-op classes. Some pages will need to be copied for multiple students. The author allows copies to be made for the classroom, but you should be aware that Adventures in Fantasy is not a workbook, it is a guide. Specifically a teacher's guide, but very readable by older students or proficient readers in early middle school. Although this book is meant to guide a child through a creation of fantasy, the author has done an excellent job at avoiding content that parents may object to. There are fantastical creatures, but there are no overt anti-religious teachings. Everything is handled from a very 'make believe' perspective. I am a devout Christian and found nothing offensive. It is simply a book that encourages students to use their imaginations and write well. The literary content of the book is well laid out and easy to teach/retain. Each element is well explained and helpful guiding information is provided. The author then provides a page for the student to work out the major details of the element. No book is perfect or 100% complete in instruction. At home, I used this book as a primary text with one child and as a supplement with another. Adventures in Fantasy is a great place to start with reluctant writers because most children love fantasy. They get to make the rules for a world that they can make sense of, very different from reality. The book is well written, enjoyable, and easy to implement.

This book does not read well on Kindle, the key pages of lesson material are too small to read, but if you can read it on iPad, you can zoom in and it's okay. I would prefer the hard copy of the book instead, that way you could photocopy the forms to use in the classroom. Kindle needs to allow you to copy pages to PDF as many workbooks are available on Kindle now. Even though, I was

disappointed with my purchase for my Kindle reader, I would probably re-buy this book in hardcopy format. It is well laid out and easy to follow. It has simple steps for getting kids in the classroom to participate in creating fantasy stories by starting with a fantasy world, it will also teach them the key elements and functions of the fantasy genre. I like to get the class to create a shared world, then we all set our stories in that world, this way they can combine into an anthology, which you could get printed up for them. I would also recommend this book for any writer starting out in the fantasy genre.

My son and I both went through the exercises in this book, going over all sorts of things, from plot structures to punctuation to parts of speech to transitions. It was a great way to cover a wide range of topics, and my son had a great deal of fun with it.

This is the first, comprehensive book on teaching fantasy writing to upper elementary-aged students that I've been able to find! Adventures in Fantasy takes students through a writing journey that captivates and empowers young authors. Gust provides all of the necessary tools: reproducible pages guiding students through the development of theme, formation of multi-dimensional characters, the creation of a plot line, using figurative language, effective transitions, and editing with revision. The rubrics he includes promote useful dialogue. I would highly recommend this book to anyone who wants to teach the "how to" of fantasy writing!

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