

NAME(S): _____

GETTING TO KNOW A NOVEL

When you first begin a novel, you usually know nothing about it. The world of the novel is filled with people you have never met and places you have never been. An author must introduce you to that world and make you want to stay in it for a long time.

The first few pages of a novel often contain a lot of **exposition**. Exposition is information that helps you understand where you are in a story and who are the characters you are reading about. It is the background information you need to know in order to understand the characters, situations, and/or settings in the novel.

Work with a partner to answer these questions about the first few pages of the novel.

1. What exposition does the author give you about the characters you meet in those first pages?

Is this information given mostly through description, dialogue, and/or actions?

2. What exposition does the author give you about the setting(s)?

Is this information given mostly through description, dialogue, and/or actions?

3. What exposition does the author give you about the situation(s) the characters are in or the events that are happening?

Is this information given mostly through description, dialogue, and/or actions?

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TIME PERIOD

The term **setting** describes not only *where* a piece of writing takes place but also *when*. The time period in which a novel is set can be a very important element that helps you understand its characters and events. Work with a partner to consider the idea of *when* this novel takes place.

1. What is the time period of this novel? Circle one.

in the past in the future in our current time

2. What clues help you determine the time period of this novel? Complete the chart.

Clues	Examples
Objects (technology, etc.)	
Culture (art, speech, etc.)	
Style (clothes, etc.)	

3. Think about how the novel would be different if it were set in a different time.

- ✦ **If the novel is set in the future or the current time:** How would the novel need to change if it were set 100 years ago? Give three specific examples.
- ✦ **If the novel is set in the past:** How would the novel need to change if it were set in today's world? Give three specific examples.

4. Think about your answer to question #3. Could the novel work in this new time period? Or would it have to be too different? Explain.
