

# What Stars Are Made Of

This includes lesson plans for academic research writing and nonformal journal entries. They can be used together or independently.

## Academic Research Writing Lesson Plans

(Lessons can be done as students read the book or after students finish the full text)

The writing lesson plans below are intended to be an introduction to academic research writing or a review for students who are still working on basic concepts and is most appropriate for grades 5<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup>.

### Lesson 1: Preview the Novel

(Before students have read any of the novel)

#### **Infer:**

Look over the novel. What do you think it will be about? Read over the synopsis on the back. What do you know about Turner syndrome? (It's okay if you don't know, we can learn together)

#### **Imagine:**

Imagine what will happen in the story and then write your own mini story of what you think will happen in this book. (7-10 sentences)

### Lesson 2: Topic sentences

(After reading pages 1-27)

This assignment can be discussion-based where students discover the answer together or individually done as an assessment.

Your thesis or main claim should respond and answer the prompt and each of your topic sentences should respond to your prompt with a specific reason. In this assignment we will focus on writing strong topic sentences that respond and answer the questions using clear and concise language.

Answer the questions below. Make sure to rephrase the question in your answer so your reader knows the question even if they don't see it.

Example: Who are the main characters of the novel?

Answer: Libby and her older sister Nonny are the main characters in *What Stars Are Made Of*.

Questions:

1. What does Libby think the surprise will be?
3. Why did Libby's mom switch from playing piano to baking?
3. How are Libby and Nonny different?

4. What is Turner Syndrome?
5. How is Turner syndrome different from Down Syndrome?
6. How does Libby's relationship with her family relate to your family?
7. How would you feel if you had similar experiences to Libby?

### **Lesson 3: Citing Sources and Writing Quotes**

(After reading pages 28-79)

For this assignment, the questions may have a variety of answers and page numbers are given for each question to help instructors guide students. Page numbers for each question do not necessarily need to be given to the students as the questions are written in the order that they appear in the text. The goal of this assignment is to use the text as a vessel for teaching citations so that students can build on this skill in later lessons that require more critical thinking.

**Step 1: Full Citation:** Using the format below, write the correct citation for Stars. (This may be done as a class if students are unfamiliar with citations)

Last Name, First Name. *Title of Book*. Publisher, Publication Date.

**Step 2:** Answer the following questions from the book with quotes that have correct in-text citations and punctuation. You may paraphrase the text or use a direct quote.

**Example:**

What is the surprise that Libby receives when she gets home?

- Paraphrase: Libby learns that her sister is pregnant when she comes home from school (Allen 34).
- Direct Quote: When Libby arrives home, her sister is nauseous because “she was pregnant” (Allen 34).

Questions:

- What is one side effect of Turner Syndrome? (39-46)
- Why is winning the Smithsonian contest so important to Libby? (47-50)
- Describe the trick Nonny uses to help Libby make friends.
- Why is Cecilia Payne a great choice for Libby’s project? (61- 69)
- What is one fact Libby learned about Soman culture? (75-77)

### **Lesson 4: Writing Strong Paragraphs**

(This lesson can be done at any point in the text after students have completed the previous lesson)

Students will write a paragraph about a significant woman in history. You can have students research and choose their own person from the website below or assign specific women and print out copies that students use in class.

**Lesson Goal:** Find an article on a significant woman in history and write a paragraph that answers the question: What significant impact did the woman you chose have on others?

### **Step 1: Research**

Find a significant woman in history using the website below. Take notes on basic facts about who she is and what makes her important or impressive.

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/history/topic/women-heroes>

Alternate option (if technology is limited)

Annotate the article about the woman you are writing about and highlight or underline text evidence that reveals what makes her impressive or significant.

### **Step 2: Write**

Your paragraph should have:

A topic sentence that states and answers the question.

Two pieces of evidence with correct in-text citations and punctuation.

A sentence of elaboration that explains each piece of evidence

Sentence starters for elaboration:

This means...

This is important because...

Therefore it is clear that...

She impacted others because...

The impact of this was significant because...

## **Lesson 5: Brainstorming the Final Paper**

(This lesson can be done at any point in the text after students have completed the previous lesson)

Note: Students will need computers for this lesson.

Students will use the following websites and any additional resources you have at your school for their research.

Spend some time reaching about various women who seem impressive. Choose five women and for each person write down their name, profession, and two impressive facts.

Websites:

- <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/history/topic/women-heroes>
- <https://libguides.nypl.org/african-american-women-writers-of-the-19th-Century>
- <https://www.agnesscott.edu/lriddle/women/women.htm>
- <https://womenshistory.si.edu/herstory>

## **Lesson 6: Researching the Final Paper**

(This lesson can be done at any point in the text after students have completed the previous lesson)

Using the resources at your school or community library work with students to identify scholarly sources such as .edu websites or scholarly journals to complete research on their chosen person.

## **Lesson 7: Writing the Final Paper**

(This lesson can be done at any point in the text after students have completed the previous lesson)

Students and teachers can use Purdue for help with formatting correct citations:

[https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/mla\\_works\\_cited\\_page\\_basic\\_format.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_works_cited_page_basic_format.html)

Write a standard informative essay about a significant woman in history.

Your essay should include:

- An introduction with a strong thesis.
- Body paragraphs that each have a strong topic statement, evidence from a variety of sources and your own analysis of your evidence.
- A strong conclusion
- A works cited page with correct citations

## **Journal or Small Group Questions**

Page numbers are given for each question to help instructors guide students. Page numbers for each question do not necessarily need to be given to the students as the questions are written in the order that they appear in the text.

1. Libby starts by explaining her family. Pick one special person in your family or friend group and describe them. (1-16)
2. Libby dreams of being a scientist. What do you dream of becoming? (17-29)
3. Libby admires Cecilia Payne. Describe someone you admire. (30-70)
4. Libby wants to be audacious. Do you consider yourself audacious? Why or why not? (71-90)
5. Libby makes friends with Talia in an unusual way. Describe how you made friends with one of your friends. (91 – 132)
6. Talia works on a poem for Poetry. Write a poem or a rap about something you are passionate about. (133- 162)
7. What are some things that make you scared and what helps you have the courage to overcome them? (178)
8. Libby is different from others in a few ways. What are some traits or characteristics that make you feel different? (any point in the text)
9. Who is someone that you admire that most people have probably never heard of? Why do you admire them? This can be someone famous or someone you know. (Any point in the text)
10. Reflect on the ending of the novel. What did you learn? How was this different from other novels you liked? What did you like or dislike? What do you admire about Libby, Nonny, or Talia?