This is a student guide to completing a book report... or is it? There are two closely related terms to be aware of here. Book Reports and Book Reviews. Many people use both terms in the same breath but there are important differences. A book report is completely factual. It includes information on the author, title, place and year of publication as well as a summary of the content of the book. A book review, on the other hand, is much more personal. It is really an expression of the reader's opinion of the work, or of specific aspects of the work. The review will probably include much of the same factual content as the report, but it is the reader's personal opinions that are most important. For the purposes of this guide we will be dealing with the book report. A short section toward the end of this guide will give you some ideas for book reviews.

Choosing Your Book

Perhaps your teacher has assigned a specific book for you to read. If this is the case you can skip this section and move on to Reading the book. If you are able to pick the book of your choice you must first decide whether you want to read fiction or non-fiction. Do you love reading history books, or do you prefer novel reading? This is an important question to ask yourself. If you do a book report on a book which you dislike several problems arise. Firstly, you are not going to enjoy writing a report on such a book. Secondly, your report is going to be almost entirely negative. Whether this is an accurate reflection of the book or not the reader of your report will probably be turned off by your attitude. There is nothing wrong with selective criticism, but a book report which criticizes the author and his work at every turn is self defeating. So, choose your book carefully. The result will be more pleasureable, both for yourself and for whoever reads your report.

Here are some links to book report pages on the Internet. You should find some good ideas about the type of book you want to read on these pages. Many of the reports are very simply constructed. However, they should give you some ideas both about the types of book you might want to read, as well as how you might want to construct your report.