

# Historical Fiction



**Level 12**

## Introduction

Historical fiction is a specialized (and much beloved) kind of story writing. You take a ready-made plot from actual history, and, instead of simply relating the facts, you create fictional characters who interact with historical ones so that the reader learns about the era of history in a new and entertaining way. Historical fiction is easier in some ways than other forms of storytelling because the plot is mostly given from history. You may need to imagine some details, but you don't have to create an entire world or even all of your characters.

## Tips for Writing Historical Fiction

- \* Some students will bite off a bigger chunk of history than they can chew. Make a simple plot map that shows the main points you are interested in including. If the plots are too complex, simplify them before you start writing.
- \* Real-life situations are complex, and you are writing from history. Keep the cast of characters for your story simple—no more than three main characters and only minor ones essential to the limited plot of the story itself. (For instance, if an historical figure has several siblings, but they don't come into the story, omit them altogether without any mention.) The beauty of good storytelling is that the reader feels that he knows the characters. A bewildering array is not better than a simple story that truly draws one into the exciting world of the past!
- \* In the prewriting phase, Character Sketch Maps are still an excellent idea, both for historical figures and those you add to the story. The sketches on the historical figures amount to mini-biographies; those on the fictional characters are just as described in the Story Writing section. Don't get bogged down with historical figures. The purpose of this project is the narrative, not a full-blown biography.