



# Games for Creative Writing

## Report Game

A report of an event and a fictional narrative differ: A fictional narrative uses style, structure, and detail to create a consistent world with its own meaning, whereas a report simply gives a factual account of a happening in the real world.

The world created by a fictional narrative may resemble the real world to a greater or lesser degree. Realistic fiction resembles the real world a great deal, but even realistic fiction *creates* a world out of the author's imagination. (Also, note that many critics consider the "real world" itself to be a fiction, that is, a conventional construction).

Actually, even a journalistic report contains interpretation, because, at the very least, the reporter must select and arrange the details of the report, as well as choosing the words. The goal of reporting, however, remains a factual account without literary effects. In contrast, the goal of fictional narrative is to present events and experiences in a meaningful way.

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For this game, select a report of an incident from a newspaper. Use a news story, not a column, article, editorial, or *any* interpretive writing. Free-write about the account you've chosen—what happened, when and where it happened, who it happened to, and why it happened.

Now, write a brief fictional narrative, making use of both the report you chose and your free writing. Your narrative should be 200–400 words long. It will only be an incident, not a completed story. Your narrative could relate something that happened before, during or after the event in the report. It may be primarily description, dialogue, or action.

You are free to invent or alter details of the report. You may write the narrative as poetry (see CP, p. 102, #1) or prose. Remember Henry James's advice to **show** the reader rather than telling. **Your words should help the reader experience what you're writing about, rather than just giving the reader information about it.**

Hand in a clean copy of the report (identifying the source) and a printed copy of your narrative. Your narrative should be typed, on one page, in 10 or 12 point type.