Characteristics of Genre

The word *genre* means type or kind. We use genres as a system to classify books by their common characteristics.

**Poetry**
1. Definition – shortened form of writing
2. Contains figurative language (similes, metaphors, personification, etc.)
3. Author’s expression of feelings and opinions
4. May follow a form or structure

**Traditional Literature**
1. Definition – stories passed down for generations by oral storytelling
2. Myths, legends, folktales, fairy tales, nursery rhymes, tall tales, epics
3. Foundation for fantasy
4. ____________________________

**Fantasy**
1. Definition – supernatural forms are used to drive the plot, setting and theme
2. Characters: talking animals, mythical creatures, magic users
3. Setting: often medieval, time travel
4. Plot: heroes on a journey or quest, often good vs. evil

**Science Fiction**
1. Definition – differs from fantasy in that imaginary elements could be possible within scientifically established or assumed laws of nature
2. Characters: mutants, robots, aliens, “mad” scientists, talking computers, etc.
3. Setting: advanced tech. cities, spaceships, other solar systems, planets, time travel
4. Plot: alien attacks/visits, time traveling, technology important experiments gone wrong
Realistic Fiction
1. Definition – events could happen in real life
2. Characters: everyday people doing everyday things
3. Setting: modern time, realistic place
4. Plot: realistic events

Historical Fiction
1. Definition - stories set in the past that try to recreate the aura of that time, reconstruct characters, events, movements, and ways of life
2. Characters: famous historical people, average people
3. Setting: pre 1970, could be historical/important sites
4. Plot: authentic historical events, average or significant people

Mystery
1. Definition – a story about crime, usually murder
2. Characters: detectives, investigators, spies
3. Setting: crime scene, detective agency, creepy house
4. Plot: crime or mysterious event + clues = solution

Biography, Autobiography, Memoir
1. Biography – story of someone’s life written by someone else
2. Autobiography – story of someone’s life written by that person
3. Memoir – a short account of the author’s experiences written by him or herself
4. 

Informational
1. Definition – Nonfiction that informs you about topics you are curious about
2. Purpose – provides information on a wide range of topics
3. Non-fiction
4. Science, crafts, sports, articles, social studies