

# Isabel Allende

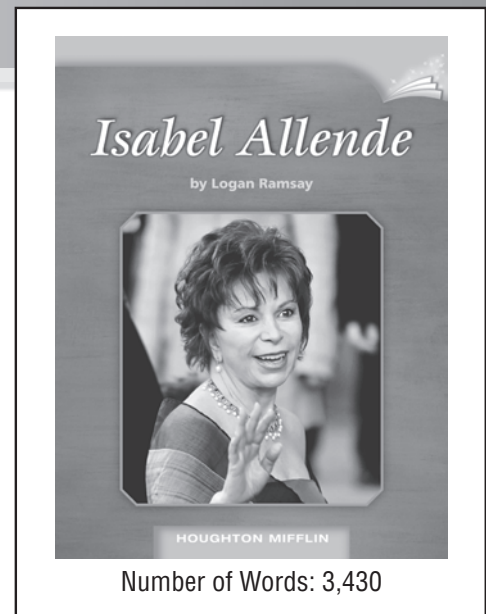
by Logan Ramsay

Fountas-Pinnell Level X

Biography

## Selection Summary

In 1982, Chilean novelist Isabel Allende wrote *The House of the Spirits*. Written in a style called magical realism, it drew on her family history and the politics and culture of Chile, and it became an international best-seller. She has since written many other books and is now a U.S. citizen.



## Characteristics of the Text

<b>Genre</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biography</li> </ul>
<b>Text Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starts in the present, then moves to the subject's early life</li> <li>• Organized by sections with chronological presentation of facts</li> <li>• Clear revelation of how events shaped the subject as a writer</li> </ul>
<b>Content</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isabel Allende lived in four countries by the time she was 16</li> <li>• Murder of cousin, Chilean President Salvador Allende, in 1973</li> <li>• Becoming a novelist; publication of <i>The House of the Spirits</i></li> <li>• Finding a place to call home</li> </ul>
<b>Themes and Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overcoming family and political upheaval</li> <li>• How family and country affect life decisions</li> <li>• How a writer's style develops and evolves over time</li> </ul>
<b>Language and Literary Features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear language enlivened with quotes from subject</li> </ul>
<b>Sentence Complexity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some long sentences with many adjectives</li> <li>• Italics for foreign words</li> </ul>
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Names and words related to the subject's culture and politics: <i>Panchita, coup, socialist, Augusto Pinochet</i></li> <li>• Terms defined within text: <i>souks, or open air markets</i>, p. 6</li> </ul>
<b>Words</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many multisyllable words, some of them challenging: <i>embassy, magical realism, trilogy</i></li> </ul>
<b>Illustrations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Photographs and illustrations with captions</li> </ul>
<b>Book and Print Features</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seventeen pages of text, with easy-to-read chapter headings</li> <li>• Epigraph quotation; sidebar on magical realism style; timeline</li> </ul>
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# Isabel Allende

by Logan Ramsay

## Build Background

Help students use their knowledge about how hard it can be to fit into new environments, in order to visualize the biography. Build interest by asking a question such as the following: *What would be some of the challenges of living in exile from your town, state, or country?* Read the title and author and talk about the cover photograph. Ask students what kinds of information they are likely to find out about Isabel Allende in this biography of the writer.

## Introduce the Text

Guide students through the text, noting important ideas and helping with unfamiliar language and vocabulary so they can read the text successfully. Here are some suggestions:

**Page 2:** Explain that this biography is about how the events in Isabel Allende’s life led her to become a writer. **Suggested language:** *Turn to page 2. The chapter heading tells us that the chapter will give us information on Isabel’s art, which is writing. Read the quote from Isabel under the chapter head: “I have been an outsider nearly all my life, a circumstance I accept because I have no alternative.” Can you guess why feeling like an outsider made Isabel turn to writing to express herself?*

**Page 3:** Direct students to the photograph of Isabel as a child and caption that explains she was born in Peru.

**Suggested language:** *Isabel’s father was a diplomat who worked at the Chilean embassy. Ask: Why does a diplomat work at an embassy?*

**Page 6:** Explain that Isabel’s mother married another diplomat in the early 1950s and the family moved with him to Beirut, Lebanon. Have students look at the photograph and caption on page 6.

**Suggested language:** *Based on the photograph and caption, what is a souk?*

**Page 12:** Explain that when Isabel’s father was dying, she began her last letter to him. **Suggested Language:** *The text says, “From the beginning, she knew that this letter would be different. It was more than a letter; it was a story.”*

*Now go back to the beginning and read to find out about the events in Isabel Allende’s life and how she became a writer.*

### Expand Your Vocabulary

**coup** – the sudden overthrow of a government usually by a small group of persons, p. 9

**diplomat** – one who conducts international relations, as in negotiating alliances, treaties, and agreements, p. 3

**embassy** – a building containing the offices of an ambassador and staff, p. 3


**exile** – living away from one’s native country, p. 11

**journalists** – those who collect, write, edit, and present news in newspapers and magazines and in radio and television broadcasts, p. 8

**socialist** – an advocate of socialism, p. 9

# Read

Have students read silently while you listen to individual students read aloud. Support their understanding of the text as needed.

Remind students to use the Analyze/Evaluate Strategy  **TARGET STRATEGY** as they read. Tell them to think about how Isabel's family and political events influenced her writing.

## Discuss and Revisit the Text

### Personal Response

Invite students to share their personal responses to the text.

**Suggested language:** *How do you think writing about a tragedy, as Isabel Allende did with Paula, might help you deal with your grief?*

### Ways of Thinking

As you discuss the text, help students understand these points:

Thinking Within the Text	Thinking Beyond the Text	Thinking About the Text
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Isabel Allende's novels are filled with colorful characters and events that reflect her life experiences. Her best-selling book, <i>The House of the Spirits</i>, began as a long letter to her grandfather.</li><li>Her writing style is called magical realism. It weaves magic and myth into realistic stories.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Writing can help individuals deal with cultural and political issues.</li><li>Writing can also help people to work through personal tragedies.</li><li>All life experiences, both good and bad, influence the themes and issues a writer addresses.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The first sentence of every chapter gives a clue to the chronological sequence of events.</li><li>The narrative of the text tells about Isabel Allende's life and how it influenced her development as a writer.</li><li>The important dates sidebar at the end of the book summarizes the events in the text and indicates the order in which they occurred.</li></ul>

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### Choices for Further Support

- Fluency** Invite students to choose a passage from the text to read chorally. Remind them to vary tone, pitch, and volume and to give special expression to direct quotes from Isabel Allende.
- Comprehension** Based on your observations of the students' reading and discussion, revisit parts of the text to clarify or extend comprehension. Remind students to go back to the text to support their ideas.
- Phonics/Word Work** Provide practice as needed with figurative rather than literal use of words, using examples from the text. Have students define the word *consumed* based on its use on page 4. Ask students if they can think of a phrase that means the same as "consumed by grief" in this context.

# Writing about Reading

## Critical Thinking

Have students complete the Critical Thinking questions on BLM 18.9.

## Responding

Have students complete the activities at the back of the book, using their Reader's Notebook. Use the instruction below as needed to reinforce or extend understanding of the comprehension skill.

## Target Comprehension Skill

**Fact and Opinion** ✓ **TARGET SKILL** Remind students that a fact can be supported by evidence and that an opinion is a belief. They can identify opinions within texts by looking for signal words such as *I believe, I think, I feel, should, best, worst, seem, everyone, all*. Model how to add details to the Graphic Organizer, using a "Think Aloud" like the one below:

### Think Aloud

*Isabel was born in Peru in 1942. We know this is true, so this fact can be listed on the left side of the chart. A Chilean poet named Neruda told Isabel that she was a "terrible journalist." This is his feeling or belief. It's not a fact because it can't be proved. It goes under the heading "Opinion."*

## Practice the Skill

Have students share examples of facts and opinions in another book and compare them to types of facts and opinions in this biography.

## Writing Prompt: Thinking Beyond the Text

Have students write a response to the prompt on page 6. Remind them that when they think beyond the text, they use their personal knowledge to reach new understandings.

## Assessment Prompts

- What is the meaning of **coup** on page 9?
- The poet Pablo Neruda tells Allende she should become a novelist because \_\_\_\_\_.
- According to the last page of the biography, why does Allende say she is "an outsider no more"?

# English Language Development

**Reading Support** Make sure the text matches the student's reading level. Language and content should be accessible with regular teaching support.

**Vocabulary** The text includes some vocabulary that is likely to be unfamiliar. Provide help as needed with the meaning of words such as *eccentric*, *telepathic*, and *devouring* (page 4).

## Oral Language Development

Check student comprehension, using a dialogue that best matches your students' English proficiency level. **Speaker 1** is the teacher, **Speaker 2** is the student.

Beginning/Early Intermediate	Intermediate	Early Advanced/ Advanced
<p><b>Speaker 1:</b> Who is the biography about?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> Isabel Allende</p> <p><b>Speaker 1:</b> Where was she born?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> Peru</p> <p><b>Speaker 1:</b> What is her occupation?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> writer/novelist</p>	<p><b>Speaker 1:</b> What was the major tragedy in Isabel's early life?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> Her father abandoned the family.</p> <p><b>Speaker 1:</b> What is the title of her first book and in what style is it written?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> <i>The House of the Spirits</i>. It is written in a style called magical realism.</p>	<p><b>Speaker 1:</b> On whom does Isabel base the characters in her first novel?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> On her mother, grandmother, and other extraordinary women.</p> <p><b>Speaker 1:</b> Why did Isabel leave Chile for Venezuela in 1975?</p> <p><b>Speaker 2:</b> She was in danger after her uncle, the President, was killed during a military coup.</p>

### Responding

**TARGET SKILL Fact and Opinion** Think about the facts and opinions the author gives about Isabel Allende. Then copy the chart below. Add several more facts and opinions from the story to complete the chart.

Fact	Opinion
Isabel Allende had lived in four different countries by the time she was sixteen.	?

**Write About It**

**Text to Self** Isabel Allende uses adventures from her own life to help inspire some of her books. Think of a fun adventure from your life that would make an interesting book. Write several paragraphs telling the story of that adventure.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Lesson 18**  
 BLACKLINE MASTER 18.9  
**Isabel Allende**  
 Critical Thinking

### Critical Thinking

Read and answer the questions. Possible responses shown.

- Think within the text** The author says that Isabel Allende's grandmother believed she was telepathic. What opinion is the author trying to support with this information that Isabel lived in a strange household?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Think within the text** What happened to Allende's father? He abandoned the family when she was young.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Think beyond the text** When Allende wrote for *Paula*, she used humor to say things she would not have been able to say otherwise. How does humor allow people to do this? Give an example.  
People are more likely to pay attention to a message that is funny as well as meaningful. An example would be comedians who impersonate the president.
- Think about the text** Toward the end of the selection, why does the author say that Allende is no longer an outsider? Allende's home, job, and the people she loves are in California, and she has said that she now feels like an American.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Making Connections** Allende uses many experiences and events from her life in her writing. Has there been an event in your life that would make an interesting story or movie? Explain briefly.

**Write your answer in your Reader's Notebook.**

Critical Thinking  
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Grade 5, Unit 4: What's Your Story?



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Critical Thinking

Isabel Allende  
Critical Thinking

Read and answer the questions.

1. **Think within the text** The author says that Isabel Allende's grandmother believed she was telepathic. What opinion is the author trying to support with this information?

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2. **Think within the text** What happened to Allende's father?

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3. **Think beyond the text** When Allende wrote for *Paula*, she used humor to say things she would not have been able to say otherwise. How does humor allow people to do this? Give an example.

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4. **Think about the text** Toward the end of the selection, why does the author say that Allende is no longer an outsider?

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**Making Connections** Allende uses many experiences and events from her life in her writing. Has there been an event in your life that would make an interesting story or movie? Explain briefly.

Write your answer in your Reader's Notebook.

# Isabel Allende • LEVEL X

**Isabel Allende**  
Running Record Form

page	Selection Text	Errors	Self-Corrections
14	<p>It has been said that the true measure of an author’s ability is the successful publication of a second novel. Allende’s second novel came out in 1984. It was titled <i>Of Love and Shadows</i>.</p> <p>The idea for the novel came from some disturbing news reports from Chile. Many bodies of men who had disappeared during the 1973 military coup had been discovered. Allende imagined the lives of the women who had spent years searching for those men. Although the novel was about violent events, it was also about how people come together in times of crisis.</p>		
	Comments:	<b>Accuracy Rate</b> (# words read correctly/96 × 100) _____ %	<b>Total Self-Corrections</b> _____

Behavior	Code	Error
Read word correctly	✓ cat	0
Repeated word, sentence, or phrase	Ⓜ cat	0
Omission	̄ cat	1

Behavior	Code	Error
Substitution	cut cat	1
Self-corrects	cut <sup>sc</sup> cat	0
Insertion	the ^ cat	1
Word told	Ⓢ cat	1

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