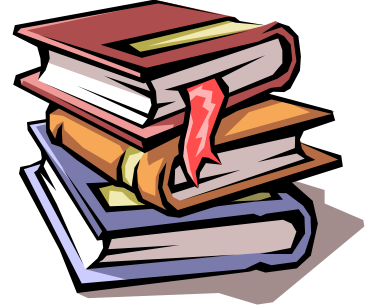


Independent Reading



Reading is very important. Some people look at that sentence and think that it's so blatantly obvious that it doesn't even need to be said. But some of these same people then say, "I hate reading," or, "I don't have time to read," or don't say anything — they just don't read. And that's a shame. By not reading, they are depriving themselves not only of entertainment, but of the mind-expanding activity of seeing how other people think, express themselves, and view the world. Without seeing these other perspectives, we get stuck with a very limited vision of what it means to be alive. Visual media, such as movies or TV, do an adequate job of offering other perspectives, but they don't give us the intimacy of adopting a completely new style of thought, conveyed through words and powered by our imaginations.

With practice, as with any skill, your reading will improve. The idea behind the independent reading is to encourage you to read and develop a habit of reading so that you will continue to read for the rest of your life. A tall order, perhaps, but with your help it can become reality.

Requirements:

For each quarter, you will be required to do the following:

- 1) Read for 15 hours in major works. This may be fiction, non-fiction, drama, poetry, short stories, etc. Newspapers and magazines do not count. This does not include reading that is required for this or another class unless you are told otherwise. You should read at or near your reading level. You can achieve this by reading just over 20 minutes each school day. Your grade will depend on how long you have read: 15 hrs=100, 14 hrs=90, 13 hrs=80, etc.; 5 hrs or less=0. Time over 15 hours may be applied to the next quarter's reading. This counts as a test grade.
- 2) Keep a reading log. This is an ongoing tally of the date you read, the number of pages you read with start and stop pages, and the amount of time you spent with start and stop times. See the attached page. Please keep each book on a separate log sheet.
- 3) Earn 100 points in "Literary Activities". You may choose any activities from the following list (feel free to suggest additional ones) as well as other opportunities that may arise. Your grade will be based on how many points you earn out of 100. This counts as a test grade.

Because this is an *independent* reading project, you are expected to keep track of your time, points, etc. and make sure that you are fulfilling the requirements. A record sheet is attached for your use. Work will be collected at 5 weeks (which should reflect 7 ½ hours and 50 points) and at the end of the quarter, although you may turn in work at any time.

DO NOT LOSE THIS INFORMATION – YOU WILL NEED IT ALL YEAR

Literary Activities

All point values are for high-quality work. Activities that do not show effort and attention to quality and detail will receive lower scores; outstanding work may earn extra points. Make sure you label your work with the name of the activity.

- **Reading Journal:** Keep a reading journal in which you make at least one entry for every hour of reading. Unlike the reader-response journal, make your entries after you have finished reading. Your journal entries should consist of thoughts about what you have read, questions you have about the story, predictions about what is going to happen, and other things that occur to you as a result of your reading. You may use a standard format where each entry includes 1) A summary of what you read, 2) Your reaction to the events of the book, 3) A question about what is happening, motivations, etc., 4) A prediction about what will happen, and 5) Answers to previous questions and predictions.

Note that if you choose this activity, you must tell the teacher and submit your journal once a week. (100)

- **Essay:** Write a short (about 250-word) essay on a book you are reading. You can write about any number of things: how the book relates to your life (or doesn't); what the book has to say about life, society, the world, etc.; a comparison between that book and another; what you found difficult or puzzling about the book. Basically, try to expand your thinking to look at the sorts of issues that the book brings up, and how you have come to terms with them. Make sure it is a planned, developed essay (intro, body, conclusion). *Don't just summarize the book!* (50)
- **Literary Structure** (a.k.a. The Book Report): What is the main plot and who are the central characters? Are the characters static (unchanging) or dynamic (change by the end)? What is the setting? What is the atmosphere/mood? What is the central conflict and how is it resolved? What is the climax? What are some themes? Note that there may be more than one setting, conflict, etc. Be as complete as you can; the more you put into this, the more points it is worth. (50)
- **Play Writing:** Turn an important scene from your book into a play. Use proper play form, including stage directions. Extra points for including a cast list with description of the character's appearance and personality, a description of the set, or a drawing of the stage. Play performance in front of the class also gets extra points. (50)
- **Board game:** Create a board game based on your book. There are a variety of game models you could follow: Sorry!, Candyland, Life, Monopoly, collectable card games, etc. Provide all materials needed to play the game in a box (rules, pieces, dice, cards, gameboard, etc.). Games will be displayed, so make sure no fragile pieces are included, and be aware that some students are attracted to shiny things and may take them from the display (50).

- Rewrite the Ending: Write a new ending for your book. 1) Begin by writing a brief summary of the action in the book that led up to the ending as it originally existed. 2) Explain why you want this ending changed. 3) Then write your new ending *as if it were part of the book*, not as a summary. Points are awarded based on style of writing, creativity, and connection to the book. (45)
- Author Research: Find out details of the author's life from *at least two sources* and write them in a clear, organized paper that *includes your sources* in correct bibliographic form. Explore possible connections between the author's life and the book you are reading for additional points. Use your own words - do not plagiarize your sources! (40)
- Newspaper front page: What would make the news in your book? Create a newspaper front page (or series of front pages) from a point in your book. Have multiple articles that relate to events in the book, a cover story and accompanying photo, and consider what other features of a newspaper you could include like weather, editorial cartoon, ads, etc. (40).
- Societal Role Analysis: Examine the role of gender, class, age, race, sexual preference, religion, or disability in your book (you only need to examine one). Discuss how the topic is addressed: do people adhere to stereotypes? Are there representations of non-mainstream social groups? For example, you might examine the role of gender in your book – are men or women the main characters or motivating forces? Are their jobs stereotypical? Are men or women represented equally? Use specific examples to back up your statements. Please do this activity no more than twice for one book. (40)
- Diorama: Create a three-dimensional representation of a scene from your book. Make sure you base the appearance of everything on actual description from the book. Include a written description of the scene or use actual text from the book. (35)
- Facebook profile: Create a Facebook “Profile” or “Home” page for a character in your book. Consider what would go in the friends list, the profile picture, what groups the character would belong to, pictures or comments on the page, changes in relationships, wall posts, etc. Note that just creating a page is not enough; it must have details based on the book. See the “Facebook update” activity for ways to create this (35).
- MySpace page: Create a MySpace page for a character in your book. Consider what layout would work best, the personal details and interests the character would list, what they would write and what other characters would post, etc. You can create an actual page on the website (provide the URL, make it public) or create one by hand (35).
- Book Sell: Stand in front of the class and try to “sell” your book to the class, generating interest in it and creating a desire in others to read it. You may want to prepare with passages to read aloud, pictures, background information, etc. Find reviews, awards, and other selling points. You *must* have a copy of the book with you during your presentation. (35)
- Book Share: Stand in front of class and share a book that you have finished. This should take 2-4 minutes and cover what the book was about, what you liked and disliked about it, and

whom you would recommend it to and why. Opportunities to share books will be given periodically; make sure to let the teacher know if you are interested. (30)

- Poem Writing: Write a poem that relates to your book. It can be based on a theme the book brings up, specific events from the book, the central conflict of the book, a particular crisis within the book, etc. Your poem must be specific to the book, incorporating some details from it. Extra points are awarded for using a particular poetic form (sonnet, ballad, etc.). (30)
- Character analysis: Write down 5 quotes about one character from the book and explain in 2-3 sentences for each what it shows about the character's personality and motivations (30).
- Character collage: Create a poster with images from magazines, the Internet, etc. that shows a character and his/her physical and personality traits (can include the background, pets, hobbies, etc.). Include the title, author, character name, and descriptive phrases that explain what you included (30).
- Book Review Article: This must be typed in 10-point type, single-spaced, in a 2" wide column for printing. Include a headline and a byline with your name. Write a review of your book, including the author, title, a brief summary of the plot that does not give anything away, an explanation of the things you liked and what you disliked, whether you would recommend the book, and to whom you would recommend it. Also mention where you got the book from (school/public library, gift, purchased, borrowed from friend, parent, etc.)(30)
- Twitter feed: Create a series of 10 Twitter updates ("tweets") that reflect a character's responses to events in the book. Use Twitter conventions, such as using @name to refer to another character, #tag to refer to a keyword/sorting term, and limiting tweets to 140 characters (30).
- Comic Strip: Turn an important scene from your novel into a comic strip. Points are given for how clearly the events of the book are conveyed in visual form. If you are planning an extensive project, be sure to discuss your plan with the teacher. (25)
- Graphic novel to prose: If you are reading a graphic novel, rewrite a section as if it were a non-graphic prose novel. Choose a significant episode with a logical start and finish. Use descriptive details and dialogue markers (25).
- Book Summary: Summarize your book, beginning to end, in a clear, organized way, in at least 200 words. This must be *original work*; *do not copy it from another source*. (25)
- Theme Analysis: Come up with a theme for your book and, in a paragraph, explain why that theme is appropriate using at least three specific examples from the book. (25)
- Character traits: List 5 personality traits for one character and explain in 2-3 sentences for each one how it affects the character and events in the book (25).

- Character E-mail: Create an e-mail you would send to a character along with that character’s reply. Make sure that you have specific references to events and/or characters from the book and that the character’s response fits with his/her personality (25).

- Facebook update: Provide 5 Facebook status updates for a character in your book with responses from at least two other characters. These should reflect how the characters are thinking about the events of the book and their relationships with each other. Note that using the actual Facebook site will probably violate their terms of service, but you can create a similar appearing product by hand, on the computer, or using facebookquotes.appspot.com. You can also use “Print Screen” to take a screenshot of a Facebook page and paste it into Paint or another photo editing program and change it to suit your needs. See the examples (25).



Bruce Wayne is glad to see the new law requiring skylights in all buildings was passed.

September 9 at 4:34am · Comment · Like



Lucius Fox I don't know, it seems like a waste of taxpayer money to me.

September 9 at 8:22am · Delete



Bruce Wayne Trust me on this one, Lucius. They come in handier than you might think.

September 9 at 9:04am · Delete



Lois Lane hates the first few days of summer! Everyone's wearing sunglasses and I can never tell who's who!

April 24 at 11:36am · Comment · Like

Clark Kent likes this.

- Letter to the Author: Write a letter to the author of the book (in correct letter form) talking about the book, asking questions, and saying anything that you might want to discuss with the author. Use the author’s name c/o the publisher’s address (located on back of title page). Avoid writing things that you could determine yourself (e.g. “Have you written any other books?”). Bonus points for actually sending your letter. (20)
- Character Web: For a book with at least four major characters, create a web that connects the characters by showing their relationships, backgrounds, etc. Make sure your web shows who each character is (name, occupation, etc., within each character’s circle), and all relationships (labeled on connecting lines) with other characters. (20)
- Reading Graph: Plot the data from your reading log as a graph. Use at least 13 hours’ worth of reading time. Include a written analysis of what you can interpret from your graph. You can plot time spent per day, start and stop time each day, a scatter graph that shows average reading rate, and a variety of others. (20)
- Recommended Reading List: Create a reading list of ten books that you have read that you think others in your class would enjoy. For each book, include title, author, and a couple of sentences about the book and why you recommend it. Your list should have a heading like “John’s Picks” or “Susan’s Recommendations.” (20)

- Magazine cover: Design a magazine cover that features a character, place, or event from your book as the photo, and headlines that relate to features of your book. Note that there are a wide variety of magazine types to choose from, and that you can create a fictional magazine title (20).
- Venn diagram: Create a Venn diagram (overlapping circles that show similarities and differences) for two significant features of your book. You might have personality traits of two characters, details about different settings, causes and effects of two events, changes in one character between the beginning and end of the book, etc. Identify what you are comparing and include at least 10 items (20).
- Sequel: Plan the sequel to your book. Give a 150-200 word summary of what will happen. For additional points, write the first page of the sequel (just like how some books include the first few pages from the sequel at the end of the book to get people to buy it) (20).
- Postcards: Provide 3 or more postcards from a character, with a picture on one side and that character's short message on the other, along with the name and address of who is receiving the card. Consider why the character would choose that time and person to write to (20).
- Character portrait: For a character whose physical appearance is given, draw a picture of the character next to the passage(s) from the book that describe(s) the character (20).
- Character sketch: Draw the outline (like a gingerbread man, not a stick figure) of a well-developed character from your book. Fill in the body with descriptive details – what is going on in the character's head, what touches his/her heart, where the legs carry him/her, how the hands are used, etc. You must have at least 10 words (15).
- Personal Vocabulary: Find the definitions of *unfamiliar* English words you encounter in your reading. Write down the word, its definition, and the sentence from the book you found it in. Create a grammatically correct sentence that shows understanding of proper use of the word for two bonus points.

This exercise is most useful if you look up the words as you encounter them, rather than going back through the book hunting for words or looking them up long after the fact. (2 points per word, definition, and original sentence, 2 points per created sentence, at least 5 words at a time)

- Movie I: If your book were made into a movie, whom would you cast as the major characters and why? Mention not only the names of the actors, but give an idea of who they are to someone who may not know them (what have they been in, what kinds of roles do they typically play, etc.). Say why this particular actor fits the role: "Eddie Murphy would be good as this character because the character is always joking around and getting away with things, and Eddie Murphy is good at playing funny, yet mischievous roles, like he did in *48 Hours* and *The Nutty Professor*. (15)

- Movie II: If your book has already been made into a movie, compare the movie and the book. Some questions to ask yourself include: which one was better and how? What was changed? What surprises did you have when you first saw the movie/read the book? (15)
- Advertisement: Create an advertisement for your book that would be found in a newspaper or magazine. Make sure it is visually grabbing and includes details that would make someone in your class want to read it such as excerpts from the book, quotes from reviewers, etc. (15)
- Reader-response Journal: Write a reader-response journal for 20 minutes of reading. This is a record of your reactions to what you have read, what thoughts go through your mind, your predictions, emotions, and any other response you have because of the reading. It is done *while you read*; don't try to "remember" what you were thinking and write it down later.

Divide a piece of paper vertically and record what is happening in the book on the left side and your reactions on the right. For example:

	What is Happening	Your Reaction
○	The dentist pulls out her teeth	That's disgusting! Why did he have to do that?
	There is microfilm hidden in one tooth	Oh... so THAT's why!
○	She wakes up from the anaesthetic	That reminds me of when I had a tooth pulled. I was really groggy for a long time. She's in for a surprise!

Basically, put down whatever goes through your head as you read. Do it for one 20-minute sitting — which means you should stop every page or two to pause and jot down your thoughts, if you haven't been writing them down as they come to you. This will interrupt your reading, so you should wait until you're into the flow of the book so you don't run the risk of getting lost or confused.

Remember: *do this while you are reading*, not afterward. The goal is to make you a more conscious reader, which is best accomplished by paying attention to your thoughts as you read, not in recollection. The advantage of doing this while you are reading is that it will take you no extra time to complete beyond your reading time. (15)

- Illustration: Create an illustration for your book. Neatly copy an interesting/significant passage from the book and make an illustration on separate *unlined* paper that shows what is happening in that passage. Make sure the author and title of the book are clearly visible. Credit is based on attention to detail and evidence of effort, rather than artistic ability. (15)
- Crossword Puzzle: Create a crossword puzzle that relates to your book with at least 15 clues. Include the clues, a blank version of the puzzle, and a completed version of the puzzle. (15)

- Judge a Book by its Cover: Look at the physical features of your book. What do you notice about the book that stands out? How is the publisher trying to get you to buy it? Consider elements like title, size of author's name, cover art, reviews, size of print, quality of paper, description on the back, etc. Focus on the "selling" features of how the publisher is marketing the book - don't just give a description of the book. (15)
- Cover Art I: If your book has a picture on the cover, describe it in detail and explain how it relates to the story. (10)
- Cover Art II: Design a new cover for your book (make sure it has the title and author, at least). Explain how it relates to the story. (10)
- Haiku: Write one or more haiku about your book(s). It must have 5 syllables, then 7 syllables, then 5 syllables; you will get no credit for any haiku that do not follow this requirement. (5 points, limit 5 per book and 10 per quarter)
- WOW search: Find a WOW in your reading. Only one of each WOW per book. (5)
- Quotables: Copy a particularly interesting quote or passage from your book in attractive, large print, suitable for hanging in the classroom. Include the title of the book and author below it. (3 points, limit 5 per quarter)
- Powerpoint: Some activities can be done as a Powerpoint presentation, like "Literary structure" or "Book summary." Incorporate images, multiple slides, a clean layout, etc. to fulfill the activity requirements and submit it via e-mail as an attachment. (+10 above original literary activity value).
- Read a variety of books. Show that you have read books in three different genres, by three different authors, and you have at least 20 hours devoted to one issue, one genre, or by a single author. In order for a genre or author to qualify, you must have spent at least 5 hours reading in each particular area. You must present evidence of doing this using completed reading logs and a short written explanation of why you should receive this credit.

In other words, if you have read two horror books by Stephen King taking 23 hours total, a fantasy novel by R.A. Salvatore taking 9 hours, and a mystery by Agatha Christie for 5 hours, you qualify. (50)

- Reflective Essay I: *Do this essay within the first 3 weeks of school.* Write about your reading background. How do you view yourself as a reader? Do you read a lot? Did you used to? What books have you read, loved, or hated? Does your family read? Do you go to the library or buy books? What would you like to read? (30)
- Reflective Essay II: *Do this essay only after you have completed all 60 hours of reading.* In the end, how have you been affected by your reading? What have you enjoyed? What have you hated? What have you learned? Have you changed at all in relation to reading? What did you think of the literary activities? What changes would you make? (30)

