



Summer Reading:

Students Entering 8th Grade

Summer Reading Assignment for 2010-2011 School Year

You need to choose one book from the reading list for the grade you are getting ready to enter. You may, of course, read more than one on the list, but you will need to complete the following assignments on one of the books. The assignments will be turned in to your next year's English teacher during the first or second week of school (to be determined by individual teachers). Students may also choose a book that is not on the reading list as long as it is approved by their parent / guardian, is found by searching the website arbookfind.com, is 150 pages long for students grades 4-5, or is two hundred pages long for students grades 6-12.

Reading Response Journal

Writing in response to literature can be a great way for students to organize their thoughts, explore what they think, and even to generate ideas. Writing in journals allows students to capture their ideas and to better understand and relate to work of fiction. For your chosen book, you will be completing five journal entries. Here is what you need to do:

- Split your book into five equally sized parts. For each of these parts you will write one journal entry (explained below).
- For each entry you will need to have one sheet of paper – total of five sheets of paper.
- Fold each sheet of paper in half long-wise or draw a straight line down the middle.
- On the right hand side of the paper, write a short summary (at least one or two paragraphs that explain what happened in the section – make sure to have something from the beginning, the middle, and the end of your section).
- On the left hand side you will respond to your summary. You may want to write about how you feel about what you have read, other topics it may have made you think about, experiences you may have had that were similar those experienced within the book. Some sentence starters are (you may answer more than one of these per section):
 - If I were the character...
 - A quote I liked or reacted to strongly is...
 - This reminds me of...

- I predict...
- This line is interesting/challenging/puzzling because...
- I now understand why/how/what ...
- I was surprised by...
- Some questions I have are...
- I'm confused about...
- Complete one of these entries for each of the five sections of your book.

After completing your response journal, complete the following analysis of the literature that you have read. You will need an additional 6 sheets of paper. Title your pages: Summary, Setting, Conflict, Theme and Mood, Characterization, Literary Techniques and complete the following activities on their correct page.

Focus on Analysis

- Summary - Summarize your book.
- Setting - Describe the setting: where and when. Create a new setting that you think would be better for the story and describe it.
- Conflict - Describe the major conflict. What side are you on? Why?
- Theme and Mood - Describe the theme (central meaning/message) of your reading. What is the mood of what you're reading (happy, sad, funny, serious, etc.)?
- Characterization – Describe the physical and personality traits of the main characters. How do authors characterize their actors, how does the author let you know about the characters? (Dialogue, direct commentary, actions...) Give one piece of text evidence for each character described.
- Literary Techniques – What techniques did the author use, what special way did the author write (for example, flashbacks, told in first person, multiple voice narrative, foreshadowing, lost descriptive words that create visual images in your mind, etc.)? Did that make reading it better or worse? Explain.

Overall Presentation

- Put all 11 pages of the project together.
- Feel free to decorate the pages of your journal and.
- Then, create a cover for your project. It needs to include the title of the book, the author's name, your name, and a picture of a scene from the book (you may either draw it or make a collage using magazine pictures).

Reading List for Students Entering 8th Grade

***City of the Beasts* – Isabel Allende**

Fifteen-year-old Alexander Cold leaves his home and family to join his fearless grandmother, a magazine reporter, on an epic voyage of magical realism to a remote and dangerous part of the Amazon.

***The Rag and Bone Shop* – Robert Cormier**

Trent, an ace interrogator from Vermont, works to procure a confession from an introverted twelve-year-old accused of murdering his seven-year-old friend in Monument, Massachusetts.

***Whirligig* – Paul Fleischman**

Brian travels to the four corners of the U.S. to build a whirligig in memory of a girl he killed while he was driving drunk.

***The Wizard of Earthsea* – Ursula LeGuin**

After pride causes him to unleash a demon, Zed is compelled to chase or escape from the ever-pursuing shadow. *Earthsea Trilogy*.

***Soldier's Heart: A Novel of the Civil War* – Gary Paulsen**

Eager to enlist, fifteen-year-old Charley has a change of heart after experiencing both the physical horrors and mental anguish of Civil War combat.

***The River Between Us* – Richard Peck**

During the early days of the Civil War, the Pruitt family takes in two mysterious young ladies who have fled New Orleans to come north to Illinois.

-Scott O'Dell Historical Fiction Award

***The Westing Game* – Ellen Raskin**

The mysterious death of an eccentric millionaire brings together an unlikely assortment of heirs who must uncover the circumstances of his death before they can claim their inheritance.

***Stargirl* – Jerry Spinelli**

Stargirl, a teen who animates quiet Mica High with her colorful personality, suddenly finds herself shunned for her refusal to conform.