

Independent Reading Projects

Reading is a vital way to learn information, and it can be a source of enjoyment. In addition to reading together in class, I would like you to do some independent reading. Ideally, I would love for you to be able to do a great deal of reading, but I know that life keeps all of us busy, and sometimes we cannot always fit in as much as we would like. Try to fit in a little daily.



The reading for your project should be at your ability level, and you should choose various genre. What is genre? Genre is the category that the book falls under: biography/ autobiography, historical fiction, fantasy, nonfiction, drama, science fiction, realistic fiction, mystery, etc... **Challenge yourself to read a different genre each quarter.**

Each quarter, you will need to present a book in one of the following ways: orally, with the use of technology, written, or in a roundtable discussion (quarters two through four). For example, one quarter you might dress up as a character and tell "your" story. Another quarter you might choose to do a mini newspaper, writing articles about major events in the story. A Google Slides presentation, news broadcast, movie short, puppet show, treasure box, or series of journal entries are just some of the possibilities. Presentation options are limitless as long as they show **effort and creativity** as well as **demonstrate knowledge and understanding** of the book. I am **not** looking for a standard book report or book summary. (Before you spend a great deal of time on a project, please run it by me.) Just as with the genre of the book, **please choose a different presentation category each quarter.**

Projects are due approximately one week before the end of the quarter. If you plan to present a monologue, a book talk, or any other form of project to the class, let me know so that I can schedule some time for your presentation. Please ask questions if you have them and do not wait until the last minute to complete this assignment. If you finish and there are still three weeks left in the quarter, that's okay. Turn it in early. Then you won't have to worry about it as the quarter draws to a close.

Thomas Jefferson said, "I cannot live without books." I hope that you find some authors and books that you love, too.

Basic Independent Book Project Guidelines

Objective:

Show understanding of a novel you have been independently reading in an **interesting and creative** way — not a standard book report or summary. (Always pretend the teacher and class know nothing about the book.)

Keys Elements to ALL Projects:

Effort/ creativity/ thought is evident.

Book Title

Author

Main characters

Main plot points/ conflict

Conclusion (unless presenting to the class)

What you liked, didn't like, and/or learned from the novel

Key Elements to an Oral Presentation:

Eye contact with the audience

Voice that is easy to hear and understand

Enthusiasm for the book

Rehearsed and organized but not a robotic

Relaxed and confident body language

Visual aid (if used) should be VISUAL (example - **big** images and captions — not paragraphs to read).

Key Elements to a Written Project:

Do NOT go online to look for thoughts/ideas.

Neat appearance

Organized thoughts

Well-written paragraphs

Lack of spelling, punctuation, grammar errors

Detailed information presented to show understanding

(Information must go **beyond** what one might see in a book summary.)

Quotes/references are cited to support claims/ thoughts.

Key Elements to a Technology-based Project:

Technology is used to create and/or present the novel: Google Slides, iMovie, video, digital camera, etc.

Student has the capability to get the project into the classroom: USB drive, email, photo album, etc.

Well-planned and executed project

Heart of the novel is highlighted.

Technology enhances the presentation.

Key Elements to a Roundtable Discussion:

Keep notes while reading or use flags or Post-It notes in the book to highlight ideas, questions, dialogue, or description that you want to bring up in discussion.

Be an **active** part of the discussion.

Be willing to ask and answer questions.

Be willing to listen to the viewpoints of others, especially those who don't agree with you.

Sampling of Projects: book talk, Google Slides, character talk, book review, puppet show, book (movie) trailer, graphic novel presentation, photographic journey with description, character diary, letter to a character/author, feature articles for a newspaper, live TV/radio report of a breaking event from the novel followed by backstory, movie, scrapbook... **(Please talk to me before you invest a great amount of time.)**