



Independent Reading (IR)

English 9

Everything you need to know about IR in English 9. Please do not lose this packet; another one will not be printed for you. If you need a duplicate, please see Mrs. Davie's teacher page off the MVHS webpage.

Mrs. Davie
English 9

English 9 Independent Reading

Why: The process of reading has an incredibly positive effect on brain. Reading makes the brain function on many levels at once making it more effective and more efficient. Just like exercise and your body, the more you read, the stronger your brain becomes, and the better it performs on both school related and personal tasks. Not only is reading great exercise for the brain, it is entertaining! Yes, entertaining! Half the reason students hate reading is because they are forced to read texts they do not like, so independent reading gives students the chance to choose their own reading and discover what kinds of books they find entertaining. Because in-class time is given for IR, students need to be held accountable for their reading. So, journal and creative project opportunities are given. Students get to choose projects and journal prompts. Due dates are set up per quarter so students have flexible scheduling to complete assignments.

When: Independent reading will take place every Friday, except on short weeks, or weeks where we have fallen behind on our unit of study. In class students can read their IR book, work on journal entries, or work on IR projects. Students should be reading their IR books on their own time as well.

What:

- **Books:** Students can choose what books they read for independent reading with a few requirements: the reading needs to be a book, NOT magazine or newspaper, and the reading needs to be close to or above the student's reading level (reading text far below reading level is not acceptable). Otherwise, students can pick any genre, author, topic they find suitable. Students should be reading AT LEAST 2 different books per quarter (see book project requirements). That breaks down to finishing a book roughly every 4 ½ weeks.
- **Journals:** Students are required to write **FIVE** journal entries per quarter based on the list of journal prompts given at the beginning of the year. The entries must be based on one of the prompts from the list, unless otherwise approved by the teacher. Journal entries should be approximately one page either hand written, or typed double-spaced. Students cannot repeat or reuse the same journal prompt twice in a quarter, but can use a prompt again another quarter. 5 journal entries are due at the end of each quarter. This breaks down to about 1 journal every 2 weeks, approximately. A bit of advice: take a few minutes about every other IR Friday and write 1 journal. Keep it in your classroom folder so that by the time the end of the quarter rolls around, you will have accumulated 5 entries without losing them!
- **Projects:** Students are required to complete **TWO** creative book projects each quarter. To avoid procrastination, one book project will be due at the middle of the quarter and the other due at the end of the quarter (along with the 5 journal entries). There will be 8 different choices for book projects. Students can choose what projects they would like to do each quarter, but cannot repeat any projects. So everyone, by the end of the year, will have completed all 8 creative book projects, just in different order. All book projects should be about **DIFFERENT BOOKS**. Depending on the project, a student may not need to be completely finished with a book in order to do a project on it by the end of the quarter, but each project should be about different books. That only requires the student to read 2 different books per 9 week quarter, minimum. Reading more, of course, is encouraged. Projects should NOT be based on books read before this school year, and you are not allowed to re-use a project from previous school years.

Grades:

- Independent reading is worth 30% of a student's final grade in English 9.
- Daily points will be given each IR Friday for students a) coming to class prepared with an IR book and b) actually reading/journaling during class time
- Journals: 50 points (10 pts each, 5 per quarter)
 - Journals will be graded on thoughtfulness and thoroughness of explanation, as well as length requirement and conventions
- Projects: 200 pts. (100 pts each, 2 per quarter)
 - Projects will be graded on relevance and thoroughness, as well as any specific project requirements depending on the project.

Due Dates:

Quarter 1:

Book Project 1:

Book Project 2 & Journals:

Quarter 2:

Book Project 3:

Book Project 4 & Journals:

Quarter 3:

Book Project 5:

Book Project 6 & Journals:

Quarter 4:

Book Project 7:

Book Project 8 & Journals:

Questions?

If you have any questions about IR, please be sure to ask me so you understand what it is you need to be doing. Not knowing what to do is NOT an excuse for doing a project incorrectly. You have detailed instructions here, read them, then please ask me any questions you have to ensure you do your projects/journals correctly the first time! I have tried to make this class requirement as both educational and entertaining as possible, so please give it the effort it deserves and take pride in your work!

Happy Reading!

Mrs. Davie

IR Journal Prompts

1. Describe a character from your story that you would like to meet. This does not mean you have to like the character, it just means you think this character would be an interesting person. Why would you like to meet this character? What would you do if you did meet? Where would you meet and why? List some questions you would like this character to answer for you.
2. Write a biography for one of the characters in your book. Be sure to include the information the author has given you, as well as information you had to infer yourself.
3. Have any of the characters in this book reminded you of characters in your own personal life? Were there situations or events similar to your own life? How were they alike and how were they different?
4. If you were to put this story into your own life, in the area where you live, around the people and friends that you know, how would the story have to change? How would the people change? Would the setting have to change? Why would these changes have to take place?
5. If you could change the setting in this story to another setting, what setting would you choose? Would you change just the time period? Or would you change the place, the season, the actual environment—one of poverty, riches, or middle class America? Why would you make those changes?
6. If the author of this book were here, what would you say to him/her? What would you ask? Why? What would you want to tell the author about yourself? How does that relate to your reading?
7. Draw pictures or use pictures from magazines/online/etc. of FOUR inanimate (objects that are not alive) objects that represent your reading. Write a paragraph about each object describing the object and why you chose it to represent your reading. Try not to just pick objects that are literally present in the story, but also pick objects that represent themes, emotions, ideas from the story.
8. Describe your least favorite character in this story. What do they look like physically? How does this character appear in your mind's eye? Explain why this is your least favorite character. What events/character traits from the story have made you feel negatively about this character?
9. How have your feelings changed as you've been reading? How did the book make you feel in the beginning as opposed to how you feel now? Why do you think you feel this way? Why have your feelings changed, if they have changed at all?
10. Select a quote from your reading that you liked. What is the meaning of the quote? What made you pick this quote? Why did this quote stand out to you? Be sure to describe the context and meaning of the quote. Respond to this quote—how does it make you feel? Good quote-bad quote-inspirational quote? What was the effect of the quote in the text?

11. Pretend you are the friend of one of the characters and you are going to write them a letter. Think of a problem that character has had to face in the book. Describe what that character has done/felt in response to that problem, then give them advice about what YOU would do if you were in the same situation.
12. What have you found boring about what you have been reading? What made it boring? If you were the author, what changes would you make to make it more interesting? Be sure your creative choices fit within the context of the rest of the story.
13. Describe the author's style in writing this book. Did they speak in first person, multiple voices, use a lot of flashbacks, use lots of descriptive details? Critique their style of writing. Was it good/effective/interesting? Why? If you could give the author one piece of advice on HOW they wrote this book, what would it be?
14. Choose a character in your book and compare him/her to a character in a TV show, movie, or other book. How are they alike or different? Explain each character in a detailed way, and then give examples of how they are alike or different.
15. Pick a character (or two) that is NOT a main character, but rather a supporting character. What is the purpose of the supporting character in the story? Why are they there? What impact does this character's action make on the plot of the story? Could the story do without this character?
16. Describe the theme of this book (or what you think the theme is so far). What is the main point of the story—the message behind it all? What impression do you think the author is trying to make? How is this theme valuable to readers?

**On each journal, please copy the journal prompt you are using for that entry. Leave 1-2 lines of space, then write.

IR Book Project Choices

Net Search

Where did your story take place? When? What are some interesting aspects of this story it would have been nice to have known about BEFORE reading the story? Are there issues or topics from the story you would like to know more about? Search out 5 websites related to your story that a reader may want to visit before or during reading this story in order to understand it better. For example, if your story mainly takes place in a coastal town in Maine, find a website about the life and culture on coastal Maine; what it is like to live there, what most of the people do for work there, how the location affects the culture, etc. Basically, you want to find 5 websites relevant to the book that would help someone else understand this story better, and get more out of reading the book.

For **EACH** website you will need the following:

- A 1 page print out of the title or front page of the webpage—including the web address
- A summary of the information that can be found at this particular website (1-2 paragraphs, typed)
- A connection to the book (1-2 paragraphs typed) explaining how the information at this website connects to some aspect of your story
- Sites NOT allowed for inclusion: book reviews of the book, book summaries, or movie websites if the book was made into a movie (i.e. Twilight, Harry Potter, etc.)

Staple the documents for each website together, then paperclip all 5 stapled packets together to turn in.

Create a Comic

We have all seen the comics in the Sunday paper, and graphic novels are becoming a very interesting and popular genre of book. Comics are no longer just for the funnies. Many stories and topics, serious and light, are being made into comics. For your story, choose an important scene: one that changes the whole course of the story, one that deeply affects the life of one of the characters, or one that is heavy in descriptive detail and begs to be visualized. Take your chosen scene and create a comic book or strip for that scene. Great care should be taken to make the visuals as clear and interesting as possible. You will not be graded on artistic talent, but serious effort should be taken to make this as neat and interesting as possible. You may create the visuals by hand (draw) or create them on the computer, whichever suits you best.

Specifics:

- Your scene should be AT LEAST 10 frames in length.
- Frames can be as large as you would like, but no smaller than ¼ page each.
- There needs to be dialogue in your scene. (Or some writing below each frame to describe it)
- Scenes should be drawn/printed in color
- Can be put together as a book, or just a series of scenes

****Note:** keep in mind you are not being graded on artistic ability, but it is obvious how much time an effort a student puts into a project like this. A lack of sufficient effort, or a lack of attempt to do this project neatly and creatively, will negatively affect the final grade.

3D Model

Create a 3D model relating to this book. One could choose to go the diorama route and create a scene from the book with 3D models of people and setting, or one could build a model of the main setting of the story (a house, forest, etc.). If the story takes place in a particular room, or a character's bedroom is referenced, you could build a model of it how you think it might look. This model could be placed in a shoe box, or built up, whichever works best for you. Choices for materials to build this 3D model are endless: modeling clay, toothpicks or popsicle sticks, paper, poster board, household items, etc. You can create any 3D object relating to your story so be creative in your construction!

Specifics:

- Your model needs to be a sensible size (not incredibly huge or microscopically small)
- Write a 1-2 paragraph (typed) description of your item and describing your creative choices
- Again, you are not being graded on artistic ability, but effort is noticeable. Be as creative as you can, and be as neat as you can

Soundtrack

The soundtrack to a movie is put together by professionals, and a lot of time and thought is put into choosing which songs should be played for what scenes. The music chosen for a scene or story can really emphasize what is going on, and enrich the experience of that story. Think about the different events, themes, scenes, and emotions happening in your story and create a soundtrack for the book. If it helps, just imagine your book was going to be made into a movie, which music would suit it best? Your choices need to be meaningful!

Specifics:

- Choose a total of 5 songs for your soundtrack:
 - 2 songs need to be for specific scenes, while the others could encapsulate the entire story/mood of the book
 - If you would like to attach a particular scene to each song, that is fine, but not necessarily required
- Write 1-2 paragraphs for each song describing why you chose that song
 - And for the scene song selections, describe the scene with which they should be attached, as well as why you chose the song
 - Before each description, please list the song title as well as artist/song writer
- Attach the actual music:
 - If you are able, burn the songs to a CD and turn it in along with the written portion of the project (if you burn a CD I will get it back to you after the project is graded)
 - OR find the lyrics to each song and print them, along with song title, and turn that in along with the written portion of the assignment

Book in a Bag

Choose at least 5 items that represent this book. These 5 items should be able to fit in a paper grocery bag (or any other bag of comparable size). If needed, you can also bring a picture of an item, if it cannot fit in the bag, but you are limited to doing this for only 1 item in the project. Really try to find REAL objects that can relate to the book. Sometimes the connection to your book may seem a little abstract, but that is fine! As long as you explain in your write-up how the item relates, I will understand your thinking. The outside of the bag should be decorated with, at least, the title of the book and name of the author. The items you choose can be literal representations, or they can be symbols of a concept. You want to pick items that are interesting and intriguing so as to spark interest in your book, making your listeners want to read your book.

Specifics:

- At least 1 item needs to be a representation of the setting
- At least 1 item needs to be a representation of the main character
- At least 1 item needs to be a representation of the conflict, or one of the conflicts, within the story
- At least 1 item needs to be a representation of an important scene
- And at least 1 item needs to stand as a representation of the entire book
- For each item, write a brief description of why you chose that item to represent that particular aspect of the book

Character Sketch

This project will focus specifically on one character from your book which you find particularly interesting. You will create a life-size sketch of this character, but instead of the usual decoration, you will place symbolic representations of this character on different parts of the sketch. So, with help from a friend, you will lay down on a piece of paper (the large rolls of paper which are available at here at school—ask Mrs. Davie) and your friend will draw the outline of your body on the paper. This will be the body outline of the character you have chosen to sketch. Then, for each body part/area you will draw images/words that represent that character. For example, the head is the intellectual part of the character, What are your character's dreams or visions? You will draw a symbol of them on the head portion of the character sketch. I will list here what symbols should be on each body part. You can draw the images, or use photos/magazine clippings/etc., whatever works best for you. Finally, include a brief write up of what images you chose and why you chose them.

Specifics:

- Head: Intellectual: What are his/her dreams or visions?
- Eyes: Seeing: What memorable sights affect him/her?
- Ears: Hearing: What does he/she notice and remember others saying?
- Mouth: Communicating: What philosophies does he/she have? What arguments/debates?
- Arms: Working: What is his relationship to work in general? To specific work? What does this character DO with their arms?
- Hands: Practical: What conflicts does he/she deal with? How?
- Heart: Emotional: What does he/she love? Whom? How?
- Torso: Instinctive: What does he/she like about him/herself? What are they hiding? What brings them pain?
- Legs: Playful: What does he/she do for fun? What do they enjoy?
- Feet: mobile: Where has he/she been going and how has he/she been affected by that?
- Wings: Future: Where is he/she going? What do you predict?

Collage/Mural

The only boundaries for this project are the edges of a standard piece of construction paper (the rectangular size). Use images/words that you find from magazines or online, newspaper images/words, take your own photos, draw, paint, use 3D items you can glue to the page, whatever you can come up with. Your purpose for this project is to sum up the events of this book, emotions, themes, characters, conflicts, as much as you can in this one graphic representation. Try to get as many images, words, etc. on the page as possible. No space should be left uncovered! The collage/mural should not just represent literal events or items from the story, but also the emotional and underlying themes and interpretations of the book. Be creative and interpretive!

Specifics:

- You need to FILL that piece of paper with images/words/representations
- Artistic ability specifically is not graded, but insufficient effort is noticeable and will affect the grade
- Include a 1-2 paragraph write up for your collage. I would like you to choose a name for your collage (just like painters/artists choose names for their works) and describe the images and what they stand for. You need to be able to explain your creative choices!

Your “Get Out of Jail FREE” Card

For one of your 8 projects, I will allow you to “get out of jail free.” I really want to emphasize to all of you how important it is to manage your time, and learn to manage your time well, but I do understand that sometimes you just forget, or life gets a little hectic and you just can’t get a good project done in time. So, at the end of this packet will be a “Get Out of Jail FREE” certificate. You need to fill it out and turn it in on the day the project is due that you would like to skip. **YOU MUST HAVE THE CERTIFICATE IN ORDER TO BE EXEMPT FROM THE PROJECT!!** The certificates will only be attached to THIS packet, not the online packet, so it is VERY important that you do NOT lose this!! Keep it in your classroom folder if you cannot keep track of it yourself. Use of this certificate will exempt you from the project (meaning it will not be considered for the total points that make up your IR grade). You may only use the certificate to get out of ONE project. The certificate needs to be turned in ON TIME to be valid.

A note about books that have been made into movies:

I love it when books are made into movies. I love reading the book AND seeing the movie and doing comparisons between the two. Seeing a movie that has been based on a book usually motivates me to read the book too. I appreciate all this, but when it comes to your projects, I have some concessions. Please do not use anything from the movie on your project. Books are interpretive, and you should see them in your own way. Therefore, please do not use photos from the movie, pictures of actors from the movie, or any other movie references in your project. These projects are a window into YOUR thinking and YOUR creativity, and THAT is what I am interested in, not the movie. So go out, enjoy the movie, but try to make your book project your own.

Double-Dipping

Life is all about efficiency, and I am SO down with that! So, if you are doing an art/industrial arts/foods/etc. project that could work as your book project too (usually 3D model is where this comes in handy) then go for it! Be sure your write-up explains how the project specifically relates to the book, and be sure all project requirements for IR are still completed.

Grading Rubric

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Apparent and obvious reading and understanding of the text | 30 pts |
| Thoughtfulness/Effort | 30 pts. |
| Neatness/Clarity | 20 pts. |
| Creativity and Style | 10 pts. |
| Conventions/Requirements | <u>10 pts.</u> |
| Total | 100 pts. |

Important Note: All of the writing associated with any of these projects is expected to be typed, double spaced, Times New Roman font, size 12, one inch margins all around. Name, Date, Class, and Teacher should be left aligned at the top, with page numbers right aligned at the top. The writing should be paper-clipped, stapled, or somehow attached with the project so it can be graded all together. Any questions, please ask! 😊

IR Tracking Sheet

Use this table to keep track of which projects you have completed over which books.

| <u>Project Name and Number</u> | <u>Book</u> |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |