

# OUTSIDE READING ASSIGNMENT

## **THE BOOK:**

You need to choose A BOOK THAT YOU ARE INTERESTED IN READING. It may be fiction or nonfiction, but it must be a book. No magazines are allowed for this assignment.

The book should be of an APPROPRIATE READING LEVEL for your ability, something a little challenging, but not too difficult. It should certainly not be too easy. If you don't know whether your book is right for you, ask me.

The book must be APPROPRIATE FOR SCHOOL, and it should be of an APPROPRIATE LENGTH for your ability.

The most important criterion is that you must be interested in reading the book. Choose wisely.

## **THE ASSIGNMENT:**

You will write an index card report for your book, and you will keep a dialectical journal as you read.

The INDEX CARD REPORT format is on the back of this paper, and we will practice them in class. With each in-class novel or play, we'll write an index card report together, so you can see how it works. As you read, you should be looking for major characters and minor characters, themes, and symbols. Look at the list of things you'll have to record and keep it in front of you as you read. You will write on one 5x8 index card which I will provide for you.

The DIALECTICAL JOURNAL will be recorded on regular notebook paper. You will draw a line down the center of each page and label each side. The left column is for TEXT, or what the book says, and the right column is for ME, or what you say in response. In the left column, you must record at least 5 quotes from your book and at least 5 summaries or paraphrases of what your book says. In the right column, you will record your responses to these quotes and summaries.

In the ME column, you might record questions or predictions, explanations or definitions, suggestions about what a character should do, anything that is your legitimate response to the text. Each response should be about one paragraph or more in length, and five of these entries must include literary terms. We will do several entries together in class to give you a better idea how to do this.

This is not an assignment that you will do the night before it is due. You will have to prepare ahead of time, looking for setting, narrator, and motifs to write on your index card report and recording passages that rile you up and generate a response in you for your dialectical journal.

## **THE READING:**

This is the book that you will bring to class on Sustained Silent Reading (S.S.R.) days until you have completed the assignment. Then you can bring any other appropriate book to the remaining S.S.R. days.

### S.S.R. days for first semester:

September 1, 15, 29  
October 13, 27  
November 10, 17  
December 8

### S.S.R. days for second semester:

January 12, 26  
February 9, 23  
March 9, 30  
April 12, 27  
May 11?

There will be a similar outside reading assignment for second semester, also.

## **THE GUIDELINES FOR S.S.R. DAYS:**

On S.S.R. days, you must come prepared. Check out a book from my library or from the school library BEFORE S.S.R. day. Bring a book from home. However you do it, just do it. You must read a book, not a magazine. Until you finish your outside reading assignment, the book should be your outside reading book, the same one that you have okayed through me.

On S.S.R. day, you could earn 75 points. (That's a LOT!) All I ask is that you do these four things:

- bring a book, probably your outside reading book
- read it all hour
- without falling asleep and
- without creating any distractions.

### OTHER POINTS OPTIONS:

Get a book during S.S.R. hour = 50 points instead of 75

Create one distraction = minus 30 points each time

Stop reading = minus 30 points each time

Fall asleep = minus 75 points and complete an extra assignment

Read a magazine = minus 75 points and complete an extra assignment

Bring nothing = minus 75 points and complete an extra assignment

## **THE FORMAT FOR YOUR INDEX CARD REPORT:**

**TITLE** and the **DATE** of its **ORIGINAL PUBLICATION**

**AUTHOR'S NAME** and **BIRTH** and **DEATH DATES**

**CHARACTERS** Write the names (or descriptions if no names are available) of the central characters, together with brief descriptions of each character's main traits or features.

**MINOR CHARACTERS** Deal with these in the same fashion as above, even more briefly.

**SETTING** Provide a short description and so what?

**NARRATOR** Name the point of view. Give evidence to prove that you are correct. (Use a quote from the story.) And definitely provide the so what?

**SUMMARY** Write a concise summary of the main events of the story, in the order in which they occur in the story. List only the most important parts, events that send the story in a different direction. This should NOT be the longest part of your card report.

**TONE** Describe the author's apparent attitude toward the central character or each of the main events. Provide evidence with chapter notations.

**IRONY** List the types of irony contained in the story and explain what each irony contributes to the story.

**SYMBOLS** List the leading symbols with an educated guess at what each symbol suggests. If your book "doesn't have any symbols," consider whether the book you've chosen is worthy of a card report at all.

**MOTIFS** List three or four recurring images, phrases, schemes, or situations, and explain how each one helps us make meaning out of the novel.

**THEME** Use the 2-question theme generator to write a few different theme statements for this story. These theme statements should be "the stuff that Level 3 questions are made of."