

September 1, 2011

Dear Parents,

The seventh grade language arts department is excited to introduce you to this year's independent reading program! This year we are going to discover all the kinds of reading that are out there. This is a chance to explore many different genres of novels. Our program this year has two parts: a required reading component and a reward component.

Each quarter, students will be required to complete two independent novels. The requirements for these books will change each quarter. Our goals are to raise Lexile (reading comprehension) levels, and to prepare students for 8th grade.

- First quarter: The first book can be on any topic, but must be 150 pages or more. Students present a short book talk to the class. The second book will be chosen from a list of medieval novels. Students prepare a small group presentation with classmates who read the same book.
- Second quarter: Both books must be at least 200 pages long. One of the books must be AR (Accelerated Reader), and students must pass a computer test on that book. The second book will require a short presentation in front of the class.
- Third quarter: Both books must be at least 200 pages long. One of the books must relate to one of our third quarter themes, either courage/determination or survival. The second book is a topic of choice.
- Fourth quarter: One of the books must be at least 250 pages long. One of the books must be nonfiction. Both requirements may be met by the same book, as long as the student still reads two books total.

For the two required books each quarter, students may not choose books that have been movies, nor books that have a lot of pictures, such as *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*. Students' choices are open after they have completed that quarter's required reading.

In addition to the above requirements, we are planning a fun reward program. At the end of each quarter, we will hold a reading auction. Every page that students read and pass off becomes a "dollar" for the auction. The more students read, the more money they will accumulate! Students pass off required books by completing that quarter's assignment. They pass off any additional books they read by either passing an AR test on the computer or completing a book project from a provided list. Students will keep track of all of their finished books on a reading contract, which will be kept in the classroom.

You can encourage your child at home by setting aside time to read. He or she should read 30 minutes every night, not counting weekends. Check your child's planner or the teacher's website for book project due dates, and encourage your child to complete these projects on time. We are excited to work with you and your student this year!

Thank you for your time,

Mr. Campbell, Mrs. Hendricks, and Mrs. Van Leeuwen