

August 18, 2008



**See the Layers.**  
READ actively. THINK critically. LIVE thoughtfully.

Dear Parent,

I'm excited and honored to have your child in my English 11 class. I am passionate about teaching and learning and fully recognize the great trust and responsibility you've placed in me for your child's education. I pledge to do my best to help your child reach his or her fullest potential and prepare him or her for the increasingly rigorous demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Helping your child establish a habit of lifelong reading is one of the best gifts we can give him or her. To that end, the Batesville High School English Department has designed an independent reading program to nurture a habit of lifelong reading. Students will be required to read six (6) books each quarter. I will strive to maintain a balance between teacher and student selected texts; thus, each quarter, one of the six titles will be a core whole class novel. The other five will be student selected titles read independently or within a literature circle, a small group reading and discussing a common text. Since books vary in length and difficulty level, we will use the following guideline to define what constitutes a "book":

- 1-299 pages = 1 book
- 300-599 pages = 2 books
- 600+ pages = 3 books

To strengthen students' reading skills, students will keep a reading journal (RJ) for the whole class novels and for the books read with a literature circle (usually not more than two books per quarter). The journal requires them to think deeply about the books they are reading--to ask questions, to make connections with their own lives, with other texts, with current events and issues, to analyze characters and themes, and to recognize and appreciate the author's use of language and literary devices. The RJ will be graded using a rubric and counts as

Since not all reading is meant to be deep, analytical reading, I will omit the RJ requirement on the books students read independently. This will allow students to simply enjoy the books. Students will track their independent reading on goodreads.com, an online site that allows them to maintain a digital library of books they've read and plan to read. Students will choose one book per quarter to present either a book talk (in class or on video) or write a critique of the book and publish it on goodreads and/or student's blog.

To reach the independent reading requirements, students need to be reading regularly at home. As a rule of thumb, students should read at least thirty minutes—the equivalent of one television show—five days a week. If you notice your child is not bringing home a book and spending time reading, he or she is probably falling behind. Please encourage him or her by asking what he or she is reading and discussing the books.

Working together, we can help your child to become a lifelong reader and building critical thinking skills that will help him or her succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me. Thanks in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

Lisa Huff

Mrs. Lisa Huff, English Teacher  
Batesville High School

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**Read Six Books Per Quarter.**



1-299 pages = 1 book  
 300-599 pages = 2 books  
 600+ pages = 3 books



- Read three for pleasure and track them on goodreads.com, giving a book talk or written critique on one selected title.
- Read one closely with the whole class and keep a reading journal.
- Read two closely, with a literature circle, and keep a reading journal.

**Independent Reading Deadlines:**

First Quarter

- Book Talk or Book Critique on one book read independently given or published on or before Friday, October 10.
- Reading Log (showing equivalence of 6 books completed) completed on goodreads.com by Friday, October 17.

Second Quarter

- Book Talk or Book Critique on one book read independently given or published on or before Friday, December 5.
- Reading Log (showing equivalence of 6 books completed) completed on goodreads.com by Friday, December 12.

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 To acknowledge your notification and understanding of the independent reading requirements, please sign and return the bottom half of this page. Please post the upper half at home as a visual reminder for your child of the reading requirements.

I have read and understand the independent reading requirements for English 11 and will encourage my child to read regularly at home to meet the reading requirements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Child's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Class Period

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date