

Hello E Form Students!

Ready for summer reading? Let's get it going!

For your summer reading assignment, everyone is required to read:

- *On the Wings of Heroes* by Richard Peck.

Then, you can choose to read one or more of the following:

- *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeline L'Engle.
- *Shackleton's Stowaway* by Victoria McKernan.
- *Streams to the River, River to the Sea* by Scott O'Dell.
- *The Shakespeare Stealer* by Gary Blackwood.
- *Savvy* by Ingrid Law.

Next fall, please bring to class **annotated copies** of your summer reading books. Our first writing project of the year in English will be a thematic essay on the summer reading book you liked the most. Your annotations will be important to helping you write this essay.

Remember, **annotations** are there to help you **understand the story better** and **dig for treasures** you might otherwise miss.

WHAT SHOULD YOU ANNOTATE?

Understanding annotations

1. Character descriptions or quotes that help you understand the character better.
2. Main plot points.
3. Challenging vocabulary words with the definition written on the side. You can try to guess the meaning of the word from context or look it up.

Treasure annotations

1. Theme. Dig for clues about the main message of the story. Yes the author is telling a story, but the author is also showing us a message about life. Highlight any clues you can find about that message.
2. Beautiful language. Watch for metaphors, similes, alliteration, personification, or any beautiful phrases. When you read something and think, "That was such a cool way to say it!" you've found something to highlight.

Write lots of notes. Examples of what your notes might be like:

1. Put notes to the side of your highlights to remind yourself why you highlighted that part. You might write: "Beautiful way to say it!" or "Good metaphor."
2. Ask questions as you're reading. "Why does he say this?" or "Could this be foreshadowing?"

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: *Can I do my annotations in specific colors?*

Answer: Sure! Color annotations can be fun. These are the colors we are going to use when we annotate *Tale of Two Cities* in 8th grade.

- PURPLE: Foreshadowing
- GREEN: Challenging vocabulary
- RED: Main plot points.
- BLUE: Literary devices (such as metaphor, simile, personification)
- ORANGE: Historical facts.

Some students love to annotate this way. Maybe you want to try this method for one of your summer reading books and see if you like it.

Question: *Do I have to do my annotations in specific colors?*

Answer: No. Find the method that best allows you to use annotations to understand and find treasure in the novel. It is up to you.

Question: *What if it is a library book?*

Answer: Buy the book.

Buying the book will make this project so much easier, especially since we are going to write about these books in English. Your summer annotations will be like friends helping you write your papers.

If there is a true emergency and you can't buy the book, please write down:

- The complete sentence or phrase you are annotating.
- The page number.
- The paragraph number.
- Why you are annotating it.

Question: *Annotating makes it hard to read. So do I have to do this?*

Answer: Yes. This is a skill. There are lots of times we read for fun. This is reading for deeper understanding. It is something you will be asked to do many times throughout your academic life.

One strategy you might try is to not annotate anything until you come to the end of the chapter. Then, go back and find 3 annotations you can make.

Question: *How many annotations should each book have?*

Answer: Each book should have a minimum of 3 per chapter. We are looking for evidence of best effort and thought.

Question: *When is this due?*

Answer: The first week of school.

Question: *Which book is the best?*

Answer: Can't answer that one. They all are good in different ways, or we wouldn't have put them on your list!

Question: *Is 8th grade literature a fun class?*

Answer: Y E S !

Happy summer reading!

Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Finlinson