

Dear 7th Grade Parents,

Happy September - I'm excited to be your child's English teacher this year! As we begin the school year, I would like to take a moment to tell you about our independent reading initiative. This year, in addition to our study of whole class texts, students are expected to read independently and consistently in order to develop a habit of reading. Studies have consistently shown that independent reading benefits student learning, not only in the Language Arts, but also across the curriculum and throughout life. Reading can relieve stress, build stamina, improve writing, and most importantly, develop empathy and a greater understanding of self and others. What I hope is that through regular, student-driven practice, students will develop an appreciation of great literature and a love of reading beyond our classroom walls.

To support this goal, students will be allowed to choose what they want to read for pleasure. In addition to our school library, students will also have access to my personal classroom library, which I have stocked with many popular and high-interest titles for young adults. I believe strongly that when students choose their own books, they do so because those books meet their personal, intellectual, emotional, and psychological needs. Each student is different, and I want to honor that difference in our reading endeavors this year. In my experience, even students who do not like to read will begin to find pleasure in reading given the right circumstances—the right book and the right time.

To help students find that right book this year, I will often take class time to share books that I think might interest them. Only in very rare circumstances will I steer a student away from any particular book. That said, although I have personally read many of the books in my classroom library that may interest my students, I will not necessarily know or remember all the details of every book that the students choose. As a parent myself, I respect your role in your child's life; if you are concerned about what your child has personally chosen, please have a conversation with him or her. If you prefer that your child not read a particular title, please return it to school so that it can be re-shelved for others.

Finally, I ask that you please sign this letter and have your child return it within the first week of school. By signing this, I know that you have read the information provided.

Sincerely,

M. Clason

Sign below and return this portion by September 14, 2018

(Parent Signature)

