



In Conroe ISD, we encourage all students to read over the summer in order to enrich learning and provoke thought. Summer reading strengthens reading skills, increases academic achievement, fosters a love for reading, and empowers students to become life-long learners.

Additionally, students who enroll in a Pre AP or AP English course are expected to engage in summer reading as it prepares students for the upcoming school year and creates an initial common framework for classroom discussion and instruction.

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Dear incoming 8th graders,

This summer, please **select a book of your choice**. You can get this book from a local library or purchase it from your favorite bookseller. Please do your best to select an 8th grade level book (or above).

As you read this book, you need to complete the following:

1. Twenty (20) Dialectical Journal Entries
2. Plan and prepare a “book talk” to share with the class

More information about each of these can be found on the attached pages. Please read and complete these assignments to turn in by **FRIDAY, August 18, 2017.**

Sincerely,
8th grade Language Arts teachers

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Need help?
Irons's 8th Grade LA teachers
will be available to discuss your
project and offer assistance.

When: August 4, 2017
1:00-4:00 (during Orientation)
Where: Irons Library

Dialectical Journal

The term “dialectic” means “the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer.” Think of your dialectical journal as a series of conversations with the novel you read this summer. The process is meant to help you develop a better understanding of what read. Use your journal to incorporate your personal responses to the novel, your ideas about the themes covered and things to bring class discussions.

- **As you read**, choose passages that stand out to you and record them in the left-hand column of a T-chart (*ALWAYS include page numbers*).
 - Look for quotes that seem significant, powerful, thought provoking or puzzling.
- In the right column, write your response to the text (ideas/insights, questions, reflections, and comments on each passage)
- You **MUST** label your responses using the codes below. Use the stems (if needed) to help with your responses.
- These direct quotes and your response may be used in class discussion during the first grading period.

One example (from William Golding’s Lord of the Flies):

Page	Text	Response
76	“He found himself understanding the wearisomeness of this life, where every path was an improvisation and a considerable part of one’s waking life was spent watching one’s feet.”	(E) - The author is trying to show that we, as humans, follow the footsteps of others and that most of our life is spent looking at our feet; meaning staying in the present [like Jack does with hunting] instead of planning for the future [like Ralph tries to build shelters for future harsh times]. This also shows Ralph is growing wise as a leader.

Requirements:

- Project must contain a minimum of 20 entries. You will earn bonus points for completing additional entries beyond 20.
- Entries should be spaced out over the ENTIRE book. This means that if your book has 42 chapters, and you write one entry over chapters 1-30 you will NOT receive credit for completion.
- Entries must cover a **variety** of response types (letter system below). You must use each type of response at least twice.
- Projects must be typed or written NEATLY on notebook paper using the chart format shown above.

Thinking Type	Definition	Possible Sentence Stems
(Q) Question	ask about something in the passage that is unclear	★ Why...? ★ How...?
(C) Connect	make a connection to your life, the world, or another text	★ This reminds me of... ★ This is similar to ...

(P) Predict	anticipate what will occur based on what's in the passage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ I wonder if... ★ I predict that... ★ I can guess that ... ★ Based on what I know, I can tell...
(CL) Clarify	answer earlier questions or confirm/disaffirm a prediction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ My predictions were right/wrong... ★ The answer to my question is...
(R) Reflect	think deeply about what the passage means in a broad sense - not just to the characters in the story. What conclusions can you draw about the world, about human nature, or just the way things work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ This shows... ★ I can conclude... ★ I can figure out that... ★ This helps me understand... ★ When I read this, I thought...
(E) Evaluate	make a judgment about the character(s), their actions, or what the author is trying to say	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ The author is trying to show... ★ This illustrates that [character] is... ★ I agree/disagree with [character] because... ★ In my opinion, it is right/wrong...
(D) Detect	notice literary devices (mood, figurative language, allusion, theme) and speculate on author's purpose in crafting them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ The author uses [device] in order to... ★ This is an example of [device] and helps show...

Book Talk

You spent 7th grade having a lot of book talks shared with you. Now, it's your turn. Present your book to your class within two minutes. In your presentation, you must cover the following topics:

- ❖ **Title**
- ❖ **Author**
- ❖ **Brief summary:** This should NOT give away the ending (focus on the main character or two and the struggle they face).
- ❖ **Read a short passage:** pick a short section of text (5-10 sentences) and share them with the class. Read it in a clear and exciting voice.
- ❖ **Make a connection:** "If you like books/movies/tv shows like _____, then you'll really like this book."

You need to have the book with you (to show the class the cover and read the short passage.) You may also bring a notecard with bullet points to help you remember what you are going to say. You should not read everything word for word off of the notecard. An example of a book talk can be found on the next page.

Book Talk Tips

1. Keep it short and sweet: A good book talk is short. Between one to two minutes is ideal. If it is not long enough, the reader will not know enough to be hooked, and if it is too long the reader will either be given the whole story or lose interest. Give the sparknotes version.
2. Give the important information: In the beginning of your book talk, be sure to say the author and the title of the book. You will want to have a picture of the book if you do not have the physical copy in your hand so that if someone forgets the title and author they may remember the cover. Be sure to include the main characters and a brief plot of the story focusing on the main conflict. End with the title and author again.
3. Read aloud: Pick an excerpt from the book to read aloud. Sometimes the first page is a perfect introduction, other times you will want to find an action packed scene that makes the reader want to know how the book arrived at that point.
4. Don't ruin it: never give away the ending of the book. Give just enough of the plot to keep the reader wanting to know more.



Example:

The *Unbecoming of Mara Dyer* by Michelle Hodkin is a paranormal thriller found in major and used book stores. When 17 year Mara wakes up in a hospital with no memory of how she got there, she learns that she was in an accident that killed her best friend, her boyfriend, and his sister. Hoping to escape the hallucinations, her family moves from New Jersey to Florida. On the first day of her new school, she meets a mysterious boy, Noah, with secrets of his own. After many hallucinations and dreams of people dying start to come true, she goes in search of answers about the mysterious death of her friends and what is happening to her. Mara must find out for herself how all of the broken pieces of her life fall into place. This story will keep you guessing until the very end.

In the novel it says, "My name is not Mara Dyer, but my lawyer told me I had to choose something. A pseudonym. A non de plume, for all of us studying for the SATs. I know that hearing a fake name is strange, but trust me- it's the most normal thing about my life right now. Even telling you this probably isn't smart. But without my big mouth, no one would know that a seventeen- year- old who likes Death Cab for Cutie was responsible for the murders. No one would know that somewhere out there is a B student with a body count. And it is important that you know, so you're not next. Rachel's birthday was the beginning. This is what I remember."

This book is chilling, darkly funny, and unlike anything I have ever read. If you liked *Miss Peregrin's Home for Peculiar Children*, or *Thirteen Reasons Why*, you will love the Michelle Hodkin's trilogy of *The Unbecoming of Mara Dyer*.

Summer Reading Grading Rubric

Dialectical Journal- 50 Points

Includes 20 pieces of text evidence	_____/10
Includes 20 detailed responses	_____/30
Follows correct format/neatness	_____/10

Book Talk- 50 Points

Includes title & author	_____/5
Well-constructed summary	_____/10
Shares passage in "reading voice"	_____/10
Makes connection	_____/10
Prepared, clear, thoughtful presentation	_____/15

Total: _____