



The "DEAR" Outside Reading Project (100 homework pts.)  
Term 2

For the next four weeks, we will be working on an Outside Reading Project. We will call this "DEAR" time. The acronym, "DEAR," stands for "Drop Everything And Read." Unless you choose to and can fit in reading during the week, this will be the only English HW assigned on the next four weekends.

Here are the requirements for approval of this novel:

- a. You must have NEVER read (or started to read) this novel (only fiction books allowed).
- b. The length must be at least 200 pages. (Unless you have a lot of extra time outside of school, I suggest you stay closer to 200 pages than pick something extraordinarily long.)
- c. The book must be pre-approved by a parent AND by the teacher. Fill in the information requested in the BOOK APPROVAL FORM box at the bottom of the page. Turn it in on the date indicated on the form below. NOTE: Before your parent signs the BOOK APPROVAL FORM, ask your parent to read this entire informational packet, look over the book you've chosen, and discuss this choice with you.

d. Weekend Reading Requirements:

- 1. Read a minimum of 1/4 of your novel every weekend.
- 2. Fill out a "Reading Log" after completing each 1/4 of your novel. There are four Reading Logs to do (one per 1/4 of your novel per weekend). In the Reading Logs (worth 15 pts. each) you keep track of your reading by summarizing the main plot developments happening in the book over each 1/4, keep track of character development, look for themes and symbols, and jot down new and pertinent vocabulary words. Either copy the required Reading information on your own notebook paper.—setting them up according to the template below OR download the template from my website, copy and paste it into a WORD document and write/type right on the sheets. The Reading Logs are worth 15 homework points each and due each Monday. NOTE: In order to receive full credit, a parent/guardian must sign your Reading Log each weekend.
- 3. Do a journal topic for each 1/4 of the novel. These journals are worth 5 points each for Journals A-C. Journal D is worth 10 pts.). Topics are listed later in this "packet."
- 4. Prepare for a final reading circle activity when you are done with the novel.

Book  
APPROVAL  
FORM  
↳

BOOK APPROVAL FORM (5 points) Due date: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of book: \_\_\_\_\_

Author of book: \_\_\_\_\_

Why I would like to read this book (be very specific): \_\_\_\_\_

Total pages: _____
divide by 4 = _____
pages per week I must read

Parent approval/verification:

I hereby verify that my son/daughter has never read this novel before, and I think, given his or her reading ability and the parameters of this assignment, he or she will be able to have success and enjoyment reading this book.

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent comments or questions (if any) for the teacher:

Teacher approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ score /5

Teacher approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Reading Log # \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

p2 Reading Log Template - copy, download into Word, or write info on your own paper!

due date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Hr. \_\_\_\_\_ Due date: Monday, \_\_\_\_\_ /15  
 SCORE \_\_\_\_\_ /15  
 Reading Log # \_\_\_\_\_ (15 pts)

Where you are in the book now (2pts)

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of my book: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Specific pages I read for this reading log: p.# \_\_\_\_\_ to p. # \_\_\_\_\_

Plot summary (5 pts)  
 Write at least a paragraph summarizing the events that have happened in these pages.

### List of Characters, Description, and Importance (3 pts.)

List the characters who have been introduced or important to the plot in these pages. Describe each, and talk about their importance in this section or in the book so far. In the following weeks after week 1, give an update on each character from the previous list if any important things develop.

CHARACTER	page number first appears	Complete description	importance
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
Etc.			

### Themes (big, universal life ideas) &/or Symbols (2 pts)

Discuss any [THEMES] that seem to have surfaced or reappeared in these pages. Remember a [THEME] is not a plot summary. Themes are the BIG universal questions/ideas/lessons about life. Also, if you think there may be any [SYMBOLS], list them, too, as well as what you think they might mean.

POSSIBLE THEMES & why you think these might be themes

POSSIBLE SYMBOLS & why you think these might be symbols

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### New or Pertinent Vocabulary (3pts)

List a minimum of 3 new or pertinent vocabulary words for this section of your novel. List the 3 words here, the page number where you found the word, copy down the sentence in which the word appears (in full), and jot down the definition of the word. Make a chart:

new or pertinent word	page number	complete sentence	definition
1.			
2.			
3.			

EXTRA SPACE FOR QUESTIONS, OBSERVATIONS, EXTRA CHARACTERS, ETC.

# Journal Topics

(p. 3)

**JOURNAL TOPICS FOR DEAR JOURNALS A-C (first three quarters of your book)—5 pts. each**

From the list of journal topics below, choose one per week. Write a full page (at least one full side of a sheet of paper) in your ENGLISH JOURNAL. Keep them all together. Label these journals like this: DEAR JOURNAL A (1st 1/4 of book), DEAR JOURNAL B (2nd 1/4 of book), DEAR JOURNAL C (3rd 1/4 of book).

Try to center your discussion on ONE of these topics. You may choose TWO topics to have enough discussion for a full page (be sure to copy both topics down), but you may NOT choose more than two. You may not re-use topics

NOTE: Your score (out of 5 points) on this journal will be based on thoughtful, meaningful, and completeness of your reflection. You **MUST** copy down the number of the topic AND the topic as written below at the top of your page so the teacher knows which topic to which you are responding.

## TOPICS CHOICES FOR JOURNAL (check off or highlight each one as you use it)

1. What were your feelings after reading these pages of this book?
2. What connections are there in this section between the book and your own life? Elaborate!
3. Which character(s) do you like best? Why?
4. What makes you "wonder in this book"? Why?
5. What confuses you in this book? Why?
6. What predictions do you have about what will happen next in this book? Why?
7. Select one event in this section. If you were the main character, describe how you would have reacted differently than the character did.
8. Are there any heroes/heroines among the characters? Why do you consider one of them heroic? Would you like to be in their place?
9. You are chosen to buy a birthday present for a character. Make a list of possible appropriate gifts. Describe the gift you would give. What reasons do you have for choosing that gift?
10. Express the changing emotions of a character in these pages.
11. Choose one of the main characters. Discuss any of the following about this character:
  - How is this character like or not like you?
  - What qualities in this character would you most like to emulate?
  - Would you ever consider having this character as a friend?
  - What major things has this character done?
  - What makes you like/dislike this character?
  - What do other characters think of this character?
  - Does this character remind you of anyone else in the book or in your life?
12. Think of an adventure that you have had that was similar to the one in the book. Describe how your adventure was both similar and different.
13. In what ways would your life be different if you were to live through some of their experiences?
14. Select an incident in the story that appeals to you. Give three reasons why you liked it.
15. Would you like to live in the setting described in the story? Why?
16. If you had been the author, what would you have added to the setting to make it more mysterious, dangerous, beautiful, or pleasant?
17. Does the author believe that most people are basically good or evil? Give evidence.
18. Is the lesson or moral of the story acceptable to you? How could you change the story so that it would be more acceptable?
19. Create a political speech for an election year that embodies the theme from the story.
20. What is one event that you remember? Why do you remember it? Why is it so critical in the story?
21. Choose a major event that took place in the book. In your own words, talk what happened. What effect did this have on the characters?
22. What makes this book good? enjoyable? uninteresting?
23. What one word would best describe this book? Why?
24. What events in your own life relate to this story, if any? Explain what events this book reminds you of which have actually occurred in your own life.
25. Copy quotes from your book and explain what they mean to you/why you like them.
26. \_\_\_\_\_ (suggest a topic to your teacher)

DEAR  
JOURNALS  
A-C  
(weeks  
1-3)

P.4

# JOURNAL D: FINAL DEAR JOURNAL (10 pts. for 2 sides on all the issues below) and FINAL DEAR ACTIVITY (20 pts)

For the grand finale of the DEAR OUTSIDE READING PROJECT, you will do two things:

- a. prepare the final DEAR JOURNAL D as outlined below (10 points for a min. of 2 sides)
- b. DEAR JOURNAL D will be used for your final "reading circle" group discussion.

Before you do this final journal, you must carefully re-read your previous reading logs (whichever ones you have back) so you are very familiar with what you have already written. You must have substantial information for each of the five areas listed. You will share your ideas for each of the five areas in a small group "reading circle," which will be led by a student leader.

Here are the FIVE areas (2 sides min.) you must include in DEAR JOURNAL D:

## 1. QUALITIES OF A "GOOD" BOOK

Brainstorm a list of **at least 3 but no more than 5 qualities** found in a "good" book. For each quality you come up with, explain why that quality is important. **DO NOT DISCUSS YOUR OUTSIDE NOVEL IN THIS SECTION.**

## 2. RATING YOUR NOVEL

Using the list of 3-5 qualities you brainstormed for a "good" book, **evaluate your DEAR novel** based on these criteria. Use the rating scale 1 (very weak) – 5 (excellent). Then give an average of the qualities to come up with an overall score between 1-5 for your book.

After the numerical evaluation, answer some of these questions (choose the questions which most interest you):

- Did you like the book?
- What qualities made it a great book?
- What qualities were lacking?
- To whom would you recommend the book and why?
- Can you envision this book being made into a movie? Why or why not?

## 3. PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

Discuss the personal connections you made with characters, events, or themes in this book. Some questions you might want to consider are these:

- Did the book connect to you and your life?
- Did it remind you of others in your life?
- Did it help generate ideas to solve a problem in your life (or in lives of others)?
- Did it remind you of events, people, relationships, values, etc. in your life?
- How has this book impacted you?

## 4. THEMES

What were the themes or "BIG IDEAS" about life included in this book? What BIG IDEAS were so important that if you were a teacher designing an exam on this book, you would write up an essay question (worth major points) asking students to examine this BIG IDEA in the novel? Look over your discussion of themes revealed in previous reading logs for ideas on theme. Think about details, characters, or events which to the novel's BIG IDEAS.

## 5. COMPARISONS

What could you compare the novel to? Name movies, television shows, other books that came to mind as being similar to this novel as you were reading it. For example, the movie Simon Birch has a similar relationship between Joe and Simon as the brother and Doodle in the short story "The Scarlet Ibis."

DEAR  
J  
O  
U  
R  
N  
A  
L  
D

(week 4)  
2  
sides!