

# English 95

## Reading Project

During this quarter, I will require that you read at least one complete book and keep a journal of your thoughts and feelings about what you have read. The good news is that you choose what book you will read! (Note, however: This is not optional; it's required in order to pass the course!)

**The Book:** You may choose anything written in English that interests you, with a few exceptions.

1. You must choose a full-length book, and you must get an OK from me before you begin reading.
2. Generally, you should choose a book that you really want to read, or that you are at least pretty interested in. Some types of books you can choose are: mysteries, thrillers, detective stories, science fiction, romances, human interest stories, general fiction, biographies and autobiographies, and books about current social or political issues. Of course, other types of books may be appropriate also. Check with me.
3. You may **NOT** choose: photo books, comic or cartoon books, how-to books, or **TEXTBOOKS FOR OTHER COURSES** or any books that people would tend to skim for information rather than actually read for pleasure. Be especially sure that **you do not choose a book that you think will impress the instructor**. I want you to read something of interest to you.
4. If you are uncertain about what to choose, you can ask a friend for a recommendation: something she or he read and enjoyed, and why. You might also want to go browsing at a good bookstore. Find a section that interests you, and look at the front and back covers of some books. Then skim over a few pages to see if the author's writing style makes sense to you. As a last resort, you can ask me for a suggestion.
5. If, after a reading or two, you realize you've picked a book you're not really willing to finish, you can choose another and make up the lost assignments.

**The Journal:** You will set aside 10-15 minutes after your reading period to summarize what you've read and what the reading made you think about or feel. Use your blue books for this. (We'll alternate: while I read one of your blue books, you'll work in the other. That's why you need at least two to start.) Here are the rules:

1. Write immediately after reading, or as soon as possible after reading.
2. Do not worry about grammar or correctness. I'll be looking for **content** only. Try for at least 1-2 pages of written response each time you sit down to write.
3. Begin each journal entry by noting the following information:  
Title of book and the author: \_\_\_\_\_  
Minutes of uninterrupted reading: \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount of reading: page \_\_\_\_\_ to page \_\_\_\_\_
4. **Summary:** In your summary, please give me the highlights of the book you're reading, but remember that I have probably not read the same book. Give me enough information so that I know what's going on, but please don't simply copy sections out of the book.
5. **Personal Response:** The personal response is your opportunity to express what you think about what you've read. Try to connect what you've read with your own thoughts and experiences. You can disagree with the author, offer your opinion about what is happening in the story, or speculate about what will happen next, or write about what the book reminds you of in your own life.

Although these summaries will not become part of the final portfolio, failure to complete the required number will result in your final portfolio being disqualified.