

Dear Parents of English I Honors Students,

One of the goals of the English I Honors course is to establish a **reading habit** in the busy lives of high school freshmen. I hope we can work together to recapture and foster the pleasure and passion of reading.

Some of the best books challenge our beliefs by helping us see through different eyes—to live a different life. What I seek for all of my students is a compulsion to read—for pleasure—for knowledge—for a passion—for a story or information that will keep them in the pages of a book past our assigned reading time and past our goal of four to five books read this semester. I am hoping your child will read 20 or more books this year, as many of my former students have. This has tremendous benefits. Here are a few:

- **Reading relieves stress.** High school is stressful. Reading takes you out of the present and into another place and time; it is a perfect escape.
- **Reading builds stamina.** In this class we will exercise muscles soon to be strained in the coming years as students prepare for college, a career, and the real world. Reading for fluency and stamina has been proven to improve the reading rate for students. Fast reading develops confidence and an appetite for books as well as teaching vocabulary in context, which improves writing, but it only happens when students find books they *want* to read.
- **Reading builds vocabulary and background knowledge.** Reading a wide variety of texts helps develop a breadth of background knowledge and an expansive vocabulary that will not only help students succeed on standardized test, such as the ACT and SAT, but also in becoming stronger writers.
- There is a lot of talk in the media that ‘students today won’t read,’ but I believe students substitute with other distractions (social media, TV, etc.) if they feel no passion for the book assigned to them. In my experience, students who haven’t been readers since elementary school will suddenly become quite passionate about reading with **the right book** in their hands.

With that being said, please keep in mind there is no **required** reading for independent reading time (IRT) or book club selections. Students themselves select books for IRT and book clubs. While I use professional judgment and the American Library Association’s recommendations for the classroom library and book club choices, please have a conversation with your child about your expectations for appropriateness. If you have any concerns about the subject matter or language in the books your child selects, please begin the initial conversation with him or her. Because I respect your role as parents and the traditions you hold sacred, if you have further concerns, contact me, and I will direct your student to those books which will meet with your approval. Your signature below indicates you are aware of the IRT selection process. I hope you will talk to your child about what he/she is reading this semester.

Thanks for your support,
Mrs. Kathleen Mulrine
PCHS English Department - English I Honors

I have read and agree to the contents of this letter.

Student’s name

Date

Parent’s name (please print)

Parent’s signature