

Independent Reading

Independent reading completed outside of class is a requirement at Fairfield Junior High, and students are expected to carry a reading book at all times. Countless studies show that students who read often are more successful in all areas of academics. Independent reading assignments are traditional (and expected) in successful schools. It is not unreasonable, then, to require students to read as part of the Language Arts curriculum. After reading, students are expected to show evidence of their comprehension of the text, which can be accomplished in one of the three ways noted below. Independent Reading accounts for 20% of students' total grades in Language Arts.

Option 1: Accelerated Reader

Earn the required number of reading points for the term by selecting books from the Accelerated Reader list, reading them carefully, and passing the computerized AR tests. Students who select this option will have until the last week of the term to complete reading and testing. This is the simplest and fastest method of earning reading points, and it works remarkably well for students who read books within their reading zone (ZPD), take the tests within a week of finishing the book, and don't struggle with multiple-choice comprehension questions.

Option 2: Book Reports

Earn the required number of reading points for the term by reading books of appropriate length and difficulty, writing a book report following the assigned format, and discussing the book with the teacher. Students who select this option must schedule and complete their conferences with the teacher *before* the last week of the term. Conferences will take place before and after school, and must be scheduled at least three school days in advance. Students should bring their book report and a copy of the book to the conference. This method of earning reading points requires careful planning and scheduling, but it works best for students who struggle with the Accelerated Reader method of testing and/or those who read books that are not on the AR list.

Option 3: Combo AR/Book Report

Earn the required number of reading points for the term by a combination of the first two options.

Before midterm, students will submit an Independent Reading Contract on which they must indicate which of these options they have selected as well as the titles of the books they will read. Contracts may not be changed after midterm.

Reading Points and Grade Requirements

Ninth graders who wish to receive the full 20% for independent reading on their term grades must earn 30 reading points each term. There are two ways to figure out how many points a book is worth:

- Check the point value of the book on the Accelerated Reader list. (The list is available online, in the school media center, and in all language arts classrooms.)
- OR
- Calculate the point value using the formula on the handout that accompanies this page.