



You Must Read from Great Writers To Become Better Writers!

Introduction:

There is a simple, basic truth about writing: in order to do it well, you have to see how others have done it. Therefore, each student will be reading books by poets, fiction writers, and playwrights who are acknowledged masters of their craft.

Purpose:

The purpose of the independent reading assignment is to give you a broad interaction with great writing so that you may see the important concepts of the class at work on the page. We can discuss how to make a character believable, but the best way to learn how to do it is by reading the work of a master.

We will be reading as writers. This assignment is intended to show you how good writing is done. You will no doubt like many of the books you read, but there may be some you do not like. All of them should give you plenty to think about as you struggle to become a better writer.

How it will work:

Once we begin, you will always be reading a book by an author on the list. The authors are arranged in three different categories:

1. Fiction
2. Poetry
3. Drama

Our first large unit will be on fiction writing, so your first reading books will come from that list. When we move to our poetry unit, you may choose a book by an author on the poetry list, etc.

I will monitor your reading through your reading journal. (See Reading Journal Instructions). Once we begin the independent reading assignment, you will have to complete three pages of journaling per week on your reading.

Each Friday, I will check to see that your journals are complete. I will collect them regularly to give them letter grades.

At the very least, you are required to read three books this term, one from each category. Doing more will earn you extra credit. You will keep a list of books you complete, at the end of each quarter you will receive points based on the number of books you read. Here is the breakdown:

3 books = 25 points
4 books = 35 points

5 books = 45 points
More: 10 points more/book

A word about difficulty:

The authors on the following list represent a wide range of styles, tastes, and difficulties. I have placed a star (*) by those authors who are especially challenging. Even if you do not consider yourself a strong reader, there will be many authors on the list you can read, enjoy, and learn from. See me if you have special questions about this. My advice is to try some of the harder books as they also offer some of the most exciting, groundbreaking, and unusual writing.

Authors of Fiction --these can be novels, short story collections, or collected writings.

	Bram Stoker	N. Scott Momaday
Edgar Allen Poe	William Faulkner	E. Annie Proulx
Truman Capote	John Steinbeck	Joyce Carol Oates
Mary Shelley	Zora Neale Hurston	Mark Helprin
Mark Twain	Cervantes	Albert Camus
Alexander Dumas	Nathaniel West	Robert Coover *
Henry James	Daniel Defoe	Steven Millhauser
Emily Bronte	Eudora Welty	Jorge Luis Borges
Stephen Crane	James Fenimore Cooper	Salman Rushdie
Charlotte Bronte	Bernard Malamud	Vladimir Nabokov *
Willa Cather	Saul Bellow	Paul Bowles
Gustave Flaubert *	Kate Chopin	Alain Robbe-Grillet *
Jack London	Norman Mailer	Jack Kerouac
Sinclair Lewis	George Orwell	John Barth *
Louisa May Alcott	Flannery O'Connor	Nathaniel Hawthorne
Katherine Anne Porter	Herman Melville *	Franz Kafka
Robert Louis Stevenson	Malcolm Lowry *	Charles Dickens
John Dos Passos *	Jules Verne	Donald Barthelme
H.G. Wells	Gabriel Garcia Marquez	Kurt Vonnegut
F. Scott Fitzgerald	Toni Morrison	Virginia Woolf *

Authors of Poetry --these can be individual books or collected poems. They may NOT be anthologies featuring many poets.

Walt Whitman	Elizabeth Bishop	Sylvia Plath
John Engels	Donald Justice	Maxine Kumin
Emily Dickenson	John Berryman	Gary Snyder
Carolyn Forche	Galway Kinnell	Rita Dove
Gertrude Stein *	Robert Lowell	Langston Hughes
Louise Gluck	Carolyn Kizer	Denise Levertov
Richard Wright	Richard Wilbur	Gregory Corso
Robert Hass	Stanley Kunitz	Federico Garcia Lorca
William Carlos Williams?	James Dickey	Pablo Neruda
H.D.	Philip Levine	Andre Breton
Wallace Stevens	Allen Ginsberg	Robert Frost
Seamus Heaney	Marianne Moore	Ai
Anthony Hecht	Frank O'Hara	Anna Akhmatova
T.S. Eliot *	Robert Pinsky	Carlos Drummond De Andrade
Zbigniew Herbert	John Ashberry *	W.H. Auden
E.E. Cummings	Cesar Vallejo	C.P. Cavafy
John Hollander	W.S. Merwin	Paul Celan
Hart Crane	Robert Penn Warren	Amy Clampitt
Ted Hughes	Anne Sexton	Stephen Dobyns
Theodore Roethke	Charles Wright	Alan Dugan
Richard Hugo	Adrienne Rich	
	Michael McClure	

Authors of Drama --these can be individual plays or collected plays.

Tennessee Williams	Oscar Wilde
Arthur Miller	Eugene Ionesco *
Henrik Ibsen	Edward Albee
Anton Chekov	
Thorton Wilder	
Moliere *	