

Personal Reading Contract



Dear Parents/Guardian:

“The amount of free reading done outside of school has consistently been found to relate to growth in vocabulary, reading comprehension, verbal fluency, and general information...Students who read independently become better readers, score higher on achievement tests **in all subject areas** (emphasis added), and have greater content knowledge than those who do not.”

This quote from Bernice E. Cullinan of New York University in her article “Independent Reading and School Achievement” is just one of hundreds that emphasizes the importance of student-selected, out-of-class reading on academic achievement.

Because other studies have indicated that the amount of independent reading accomplished by students lessens as they enter middle school, middle school students need special encouragement to participate in this valuable activity. At Indian Hills, our English/Language Arts department has traditionally required one hundred minutes per week of outside reading. This goal is achievable for most students, yet as many as 50% of some classes fail to demonstrate that they are meeting the requirement, and some students admit to falsifying reports of their outside reading.

In order to discourage dishonest responses and encourage healthy participation in this worthwhile pursuit, students in my classes are required to complete a Personal Reading Contract. This is an agreement between the student (in consultation with a parent or guardian) and teacher indicating the number of minutes of personal reading per week the student feels would be most workable and beneficial for him. Because the actual reading is the important element, the record of the reading is minimal and should be able to be accomplished in just a few minutes of thoughtful reflection.

Please take a moment to discuss with your student the amount of personal reading to which she feels comfortable committing. The student’s contractual obligation should be a minimal effort; as always, students are encouraged to exceed their own expectations, but full credit will be given for a student’s achieving his minutes goal and completing the weekly reading record in an acceptable manner. If a student fails to return this signed contract, he will be accountable for one hundred minutes of personal reading per week, reported in the weekly Personal Reading Record. **This signed, returned contract is worth 25 assignment points.**

Student name (printed): _____

Period: _____

Number of minutes of Independent Reading committed to per week: _____

Student signature: _____

Parent signature: _____