



English 9

Sustained Silent Reading Guidelines

One day per week students will engage in Silent Sustained Reading (SSR). Why? Consider the following research:

- In 38 of 41 studies, students given free voluntary reading time did as well as or better in reading comprehension tests than students given traditional skill-based reading instruction.
- Reading as a leisure activity is the best predictor of comprehension, vocabulary and reading speed. Kids who do the most recreational reading become the best readers.
- When it comes to vocabulary acquisition, SSR provides the best investment of reading time.
- SSR results in better reading comprehension, writing style, vocabulary, spelling and grammatical development.
- SSR provides student with an opportunity to develop a recreational reading habit; habitual, recreational reading increases comprehension and vocabulary acquisition.
- SSR is necessary to allow students an opportunity to build their background knowledge.

Statistics are taken from *The Power of Reading: Insights from the Research* by Stephen Krashen.

Also consider what Stephen King, a prolific and well-loved American author, has to say about the power of reading and its effect on writing:

“The real importance of reading is that it creates an ease and intimacy with the process of writing; one comes to the country of the writer with one’s papers and identification pretty much in order. Constant reading will pull you into a place (a mind-set, if you like the phrase) where you can write eagerly and without self-consciousness. It also offers you a constantly growing knowledge of what has been done and what hasn’t, what is trite and what is fresh, what works and what just lies there dying (or dead) on the page. The more you read, the less apt you are to make a fool of yourself with your pen or word processor” (150).

King, Stephen. *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*. New York: Scribner, 2000.

Your participation in Silent Sustained Reading is not an optional activity. Rather, it is one of the core elements of this class, and it will be graded accordingly. Students may earn ten points per SSR day for participation in SSR. In order to receive credit, students must:

1. Select a book to commit to reading. Choose a book that is age appropriate. You may not “book surf.” Pick a book that you commit to finishing. Students may not read magazines, newspapers, or materials for other classes during SSR. Silent Sustained Reading is a time for students to engage in *sustained* reading of a book (fiction or non-fiction) of their choosing.

2. Bring your book to class. Students who do not bring their SSR book to class on SSR days will not receive credit for that day of SSR.
3. Read silently for the entirety of the SSR period. Students may not socialize, use any sort of distracting technology, sleep, or work on any other materials. Students who are off-task or are not actively reading will not receive credit for that day of SSR.
4. In the last couple of minutes of SSR, complete your reading log for the day. Be prepared to turn it in when your teacher asks for it. Students who do not maintain a reading log will not receive credit for that day of SSR.

No partial credit will be given for participation in SSR. SSR is a summative grade. Your teacher will determine which days are SSR days, but it is generally a good idea to bring your SSR book with you every day. You can read if you finish work early or are waiting for others to complete an activity before the class moves on.

"No matter how busy you may think you are, you must find time for reading, or surrender yourself to self-chosen ignorance." – Confucius