



English I: Mrs. Ballou

Optional Summer Reading Assignment 2026 - 2027

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Dear student,

I look forward to getting to know you and working with you next school year! In the meantime, I hope you have a wonderful summer break with your families and friends. During this time off, try to set aside time to read. As you know, the only way to improve your reading skills is to read; there's no shortcut to becoming a strong reader. This summer reading assignment is optional; however, I'd like to offer an incentive of up to 20 extra credit points to anyone who chooses to complete the following assignments:

Part 1:

Choose any book (fiction or nonfiction) that's grade-level appropriate (no *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, *Harry Potter*, etc.) and read it. I simply want you to read something that you will enjoy! Please choose something that you haven't read before. If you're not sure if your chosen book is grade-level appropriate, please email me. I'm happy to help!

Please note that we will be reading *Of Mice and Men*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and *Romeo and Juliet* in English I. Please do not read those texts. Furthermore, you may not use a text that is required for another summer assignment. I have access to all the summer assignments and will not award extra credit if you use a text from another class's assignment. You will also not receive extra credit if you reuse an assignment from a previous class. I have a list of the books you read for summer reading in 7th and 8th grade.

Part 2:

Prepare a three-minute book talk about your chosen book to share with the class. (You may create a visual aid, but it is not required.)

Your goal is to convince the class to read your chosen book! Your book talk should include the following elements:

1. Title and author
2. General author info: other books, relevant background, etc.
3. Genre
4. Main characters
5. Conflict that the main characters face
6. Setting
7. Brief plot overview (but don't give away the ending!)
8. Recommendation!! This is important!!
9. Read a brief excerpt of a key passage.

If you would rather not present your book talk live in class, you could create a book trailer instead. Your book trailer should contain the same elements that are listed above. Here are some examples of book trailers:

- [Example book trailer 1](#)
- [Example book trailer 2](#)
- [Example book trailer 3](#)

Assignments are due on the 2nd day of school. Please reach out if you have any questions!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Ballou