**Reading Syllabus**

Objective: By reading the following information, you will understand Mrs. Holtz’s classroom rules, as well as how to succeed in reading this year.

* Grade breakdown:
  + 40% Tests
  + 30% Projects/ Classwork
  + 20% Quizzes
  + 10% Homework

Academic Overview

* Healy Grading Scale
  + A: 100- 90
  + B: 89- 80
  + C: 79- 70
  + D: 69- 60
  + F: 59 & Below
* **It is extremely important for you and your parents to check your grades online. If you notice a missing assignment or a grade you have a question about, bring it to my attention immediately. Email is preferred.**
* Absent Work
  + There is an Absent Binder located by the door. It is your responsibility to retrieve your missed work after an absence. Your classmates will fill out this binder whenever you are not present in class.
  + You have as many days as you were absent to make up your work. For example, if you were absent for two days, you have two days to complete and turn in your work.
* Academic Integrity
  + Plagiarism occurs any time you attempt to pass someone else’s work, words, or ideas off as your own.
    - Copying work found online will result in a zero on the assignment. A second offense is a zero on the assignment, a referral to the Dean of Students, and a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.
    - Trading passwords and/or computers to complete online work is also considered plagiarism. The first time this happens, you will not be allowed to use electronics for the remainder of the quarter. Should this happen again, it is an automatic in-school suspension.

Classroom Materials

* You MUST have a binder for Reading TOMORROW. If possible, get dividers for your binder.
  + We can make dividers in class with post-its if you cannot get binder dividers.
* You need a full pack of loose-leaf paper for inside your reading binder.
  + A composition notebook is necessary for your reading log, but I do not require a notebook for notes in reading class. Your binder and loose-leaf paper should take the place of a notebook.
* Your textbook is to be kept at home. A classroom set of textbooks will be used in class.
  + Damaged or lost textbooks are $60.
* Be responsible and come prepared to class with your own supplies. I do not lend out supplies, but each group is equipped with a supply box in case of emergency. As these supplies are meant to be shared and used only occasionally, they should never be taken out of the room.

Acceptable Work

* Anything you turn in to me should be written in dark blue or black ink.
  + Pencil is only allowed on quizzes/ tests and essays written in class.
* All your work should be written in complete, full sentences, unless otherwise specified. I should be able to read your answer without looking at the question and be able to fully understand your response.
* If we grade something in class, any color ink besides blue or black is acceptable as a grading utensil. A red pen is the standard grading utensil, but other colors are permitted.
* I do not accept work if it:
  + has no name on it
  + is written in a color other than blue or black ink
  + has jagged edges (if you rip paper out of a notebook, tear the edges off)
* What’s the purpose of these high standards? If you’re taking the time to complete an assignment, and I’m taking the time to grade it, your work should be of the highest caliber possible.

Behavior Expectations

* My classroom is a place for academic discovery and scholarly behavior. Things that happen at recess, gossip, and disrespectful language have no place in my classroom and will not be tolerated.
  + Disrespectful language is any conversation that belittles an idea or a person. If you wouldn’t want it said about you, don’t say it.
  + When students are speaking during group discussions, please look at them. Active listening means taking notes, making eye contact with the speaker, and/or looking through your text to follow-up with a topic-appropriate comment.
* I aim to treat all students as burgeoning adults, and therefore want to respect academic discussions that occur during class. In order to do this, I employ two main strategies to call for student silence and attention:
  + Bell: When you hear the sound of my bell, it is my signal for you to wrap up your conversation. You do not have to stop speaking immediately, but should finish what you’re saying within 30 seconds of hearing the bell.
  + 3-2-1: When you hear my count down from 3, I am asking for your immediate silence and attention. In this instance I need your attention immediately, and cannot wait for you to finish your conversation. I will usually use this method if I have a quick interjection to add, so you’ll be allowed to go back to what you were doing or saying quickly.
* Students should remain in their seats at all times during direct instruction. During independent and group work, students may get up to throw away garbage or get supplies. Tissues are located at each group, so you do not need to get up for them.
  + Only **one** student, however, should be up at a time. So, if you need to go to the garbage can, wait until the person standing up goes back to his/her seat.
* A positive attitude and a willingness to try new things are necessary in this class. Help the students around you; successful students are team players. You learn more when you participate and engage in classroom activities and discussions.
* Cell phones are not permitted in classes, lunch, or recess and should be kept in your backpack at all times. Per school rules, if I see (or hear) your cell phone being used in any way, I will send it immediately down to the office. No exceptions.
* Consequences:
  + Expect a phone call home if you negatively impact the classroom or refuse to work.
  + If inappropriate behavior persists, I will set up a meeting with you, the 7th grade teachers, and myself.

Classroom Set-Up

* Group Seating:
  + All students are seated according to their most recent NWEA scores. Studies show students learn best when interacting with students of their same ability level.
  + I do not move seats; these are your seats for the school year. Your seat has an academic purpose and we will honor that purpose. My class is about academic growth, not petty drama.
  + All group members have specific jobs. These jobs will not change all year, and they will be picked next week.
* NBA Board:
  + There is an NBA board (Nothing But A’s) at the back of the room where students’ names will be posted after a test. A student who receives an A on a test will put up a basketball with his/her name on it to honor this accomplishment.
  + These students will receive a future homework pass or similar reward.

Reading Class Overview

* Homework
  + An essential part of this class is homework. Homework prepares you for our weekly quizzes, keeps you engaged in classroom learning, and ensures you’re prepared for the NWEA and PARCC tests. Remember, homework is an opportunity to extend your learning.
    - Every Wednesday, one Think CERCA activity will be due. If you do not have consistent Internet access at home, the computer lab is open in the morning before school. Contact Ms. Sisney for further information.
* Small Groups
  + Students will choose an independent reading book out of my collection. A new book will be chosen every eight weeks. At the culmination of each book, students will take a timed essay test about the book.
    - Should you or your parent have a concern about the content of your chosen book, please speak with me.
  + Those students who choose the same book will meet on Mondays to discuss the book. Reading logs are to be completed every Monday in preparation for this discussion.
    - Your reading supply list stated you needed a composition notebook. This is where your composition notebook will be used.
    - We will set-up our notebooks together during class, and I will return the reading logs you gave me at the beginning of the summer at that time.
* Compass Learning
  + Students may earn a Drop-a-Grade Pass for every four hours of Compass Learning completed.
    - A Drop-a-Grade Pass allows students to drop any non-test grade from the gradebook.
    - The four hours must be done in a language arts folder.
    - I can see how long you spend on one assignment, the grade you get on it, and what activities you complete. Use your four hours productively.
* Movies & Video Clips
  + Throughout the school year we will watch several movies, instructional videos, and short clips. This use of media is a newer component of the Common Core and will serve as a way for students to compare literary works and various forms of media, as well a way to prepare for the PARCC exams.
  + Below is a list of the films we may watch throughout the school year. For some films, we may just watch a short clip. All films add substantial value to the 7th grade-reading curriculum and have been chosen with care.
    - *Dead Poets Society* (PG)*, Percy Jackson & the Olympians* (PG)*, The Yellow Wallpaper* (Unrated- TV Movie)*, Darius Goes West* (Documentary)*, The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* (PG-13)*, Oprah Presents: Elie Wiesel Interview* (TV Documentary), *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Unrated- 1963), *She’s the Man* (PG-13), *The Count of Monte Cristo* (PG-13), *Louder Than a Bomb* (Unrated- Documentary)
    - *Various YouTube clips & Pixar shorts*
    - ***Parents****: If you have a question or concern about any of the above films, please do not hesitate to contact me. Your child can be removed from my room during the showing and given an alternate assignment.*

Contact Me

* Email me!
  + [dholtz2@cps.edu](mailto:dholtz2@cps.edu)
  + I encourage both parents and students to email me with questions or concerns.
* Read my website!
  + <http://holtz215.weebly.com>
  + I update my website weekly with homework for my class and general information about 7th grade happenings. Parents and students should check it regularly!
* Write me a note!
  + If you’re having a personal issue you don’t feel comfortable talking with me about, feel free to leave a note (with your name!) on my desk. I will help any way I can.

*Directions: Give this packet to your parent/guardian to read through and sign. Please encourage* ***your parent to fully fill out the information below****. Cut on the dotted line and bring this paper back tomorrow for your first homework grade!*

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**Student’s Name**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ **Homeroom** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/ Guardian Name(s)**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/ Guardian Main Email**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Even if you don’t check your email regularly, it is VERY nice to have an email on file. I can respond to emails more quickly than a phone call, and frequent emails can be a great way to do fast student check-ups.*

**Additional Email**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*Add another email & name if there’s another person who needs to be regularly updated about your child.*

**Any additional concerns or information you’d like me to have regarding your child:**

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***Student Signature****: This means you’ve read through the Reading Syllabus, agree to its terms, and understand Mrs. Holtz’s expectations.*

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***Parent/Guardian Signature****: This means you’ve read through the Reading Syllabus, understand Mrs. Holtz’s expectations, and allow your student to watch the films listed in the “Movies & Video Clips” section and read the small group books during the school year.*