



Summer Reading Grade 9, English 1  
2024-2025

1. IXL Language Arts:

- Log into your [IXL account](#) for **GRADE 8 (DO NOT COMPLETE WORK IN GRADE 9)**
- You should choose those skills in which you feel you could use the most practice.
- **DO NOT** work on exercises that your class has already completed the previous year.
- You must work on an exercise until you achieve a score of **80 or BETTER to receive credit.**
- Your work will be graded accordingly:
  - 20 exercises completed at 80% or better will receive an A+/100
  - 15 exercises completed at 80% or better will receive B+
  - 10 exercises completed at 80% or better will receive C+
  - 5 exercises completed at 80% or better will receive D+
  - Fewer than 5 exercises completed at 80% or better will receive INCOMPLETE

2. You will read **TWO** assigned books this summer and complete the accompanying assignments. You can order from any bookseller; the edition does not matter.

**Book 1:** *The Book Thief*, Markus Zusak

**Book 2: Choose ONE of the following to read:**

*The Things They Carried*, Tim O' Brien

*The Kite Runner*, Khaled Hosseini

*Bridge of Spies*, Giles Whittell

*The Bookseller of Kabul*, Asne Seierstad

**You must close read and annotate the books OR keep a reader's journal for each of your books. If you would prefer, you can annotate one and keep a journal for the other. Please read both of your chosen works carefully; your first assignment in English will make use of these works, so please bring your books to class during the first week of school. As you complete the reading, make sure your work is organized (kept in logical order, recording page numbers, bookmarking important spots, etc.) so that you can easily relocate important information from your reading.**

## Reader's Journal Guidelines and Suggestions:

- **Pick a journal.** This can be a traditional journal, or a sketchbook without lines. I would prefer that you DO NOT keep your journal online.
- **Include an entry header.** Dating the entries is important. Each time you sit down to read, make an entry. Entries do not need to be all the same length or the same type but should remain organized.
  - **Make this journal creative:** keep it going, make it fun, really care about it. That will make it more interesting to share when classes start again. **If you are artistic,** draw or paint something that caught your imagination; **if you are a poet or a songwriter,** you can write poems or song lyrics about something that happened or about a character or place. **If you prefer mapping or geography,** you can make a map to track where an event took place, or where the character has travelled to or from. You can keep adding to this map in sections as you go along. **If you are more mathematical,** you might calculate the miles a character has travelled and try to find these real places on the map; or you can make a chart of his adventures from place to place. Find a manner that will interest you!
  - **OR keep a more traditional reader's journal:**
  - **Personal thoughts and reactions:** Do not limit yourself to summaries of the text. Push yourself to include more than "I liked (or hated)" type of statements. Be reflective; think about WHY you may be responding the way you are. Leave room for recording later reflections on the same topic/event/character. One way to do this is to take notes on the left-hand page of notebook and reserve the right-hand page for later additions, comments, questions, and so on.
  - **Comments and questions on plot, narrative structure, point of view, characterization, or setting:** Refer to any of the following kinds of questions to help guide your responses:
    - **Plot:** What is the main conflict? What are the minor conflicts? How are all the conflicts related? What causes the conflicts? Where does the climax occur if there is one? Why? How is the main conflict resolved? Which conflicts go unresolved?
    - **Narrative Structure:** How does the story move? What kind of narrative device is employed to move the plot? That is, are the characters on a journey through geographic space? Does the narrative move chronologically? etc. How does this structure seem to reflect or comment on other elements (i.e. characters and themes) in the text?
    - **Point of view:** Who tells the story? Can you trust the narrator to tell you the truth about events, characters, and settings of the story? Why has the author chosen this point of view? What effects does it have on other elements of the story?
    - **Characterization:** How are the characters portrayed? Are they flat, round, dynamic, static? Do they change? How and why do they change? What do they learn? What problems do they have? Do they have traits that contradict one another and therefore cause internal conflicts? Do they experience epiphanies? How or what? How do they relate to each other? Etc.
    - **Figurative Language:** How does the author paint a picture for the reader using descriptive details and imagery? Does personification (giving human characteristics to nonhuman things) add meaning to the story? Does the author use similes or

metaphors? Does the author use symbolism, when a thing represents or stands for something else, to create deeper meaning in the story? What do the symbols represent?

- **Setting:** Where does the action take place? (Think not only about geographic location but also physical space: indoors, outdoors, small rooms, palatial homes, etc.) What does it look like, sound like, feel like? What relationship does place have to characterization, the plot, themes, and the narrative structure? When in history does the action take place?
- **Note page numbers.** Write about and record favorite or interesting quotes in your journal and write down the page number and maybe even paragraph number where you found the excerpt.
- **Final impact of the story.** At the end of the book, take some time to record the overall impact the story had on you. Did the story flow well and keep you riveted in the characters' world until the very end? Or did it feel stilted and contrived? What impact did the characters have, if any, on you personally? Strong characters can make lasting impressions on readers' behaviors and thought processes. Write down whether the characters made this type of impression on you.

## **Close Reading and Annotation Guidelines and Suggestions:**

**Use this as a guide for types of details you may note and analyze in your annotations:**

**Underlining or highlighting in the text anything that is “noteworthy”, such as:**

- words, phrases, sentences or (rarely) whole passages that the student finds to be of particular beauty, interest, or importance
- unfamiliar vocabulary words to be looked up in the dictionary
- passages that the student wishes to bring up in class discussion
- the introduction of characters and character description
- important events that occur in the plot
- details that provide historical, cultural, social, or political context to the text
- examples of literary techniques and terms
- examples of an author’s individual style

**Marginal notes – you must also mark reminders as to WHY a passage was underlined:**

- new discovery such as “setting is Gulf Stream/Cuba” or “boarding school”
- short phrase referring to an important event such as “Pudge gets nickname”
- reference to literary terms such as “foreshadowing, metaphor, and allusion”
- comparison to another work such as “contrast with Ponyboy in *The Outsiders*”
- a thematic reference such as “man against nature” or “desire for individuality”
- a repeated usage like “eye motif” or “animal imagery”
- change in narrative voice
- notes on why passages elicit strong reactions/opinions/emotions
- morals or messages that you find in the reading
- questions that you ask yourself as you read