



### 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Reading Project – English 8 (Short Story Project)

I know, I know, your teachers have told you over and over again how important reading is for your future success in college, career, and life. You know that reading will help give you the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in a variety of situations. But you're a busy student—a busy *human being*—with lots to do, and you don't have enough time (or energy) to read as much as you know you should. So how do you make the most of the time and brain power that you *do* have for reading? You choose the right kinds of stories, ones that will **build your mind muscles** and **prepare you for the kinds of reading and thinking you'll need to strengthen your thinking and foster ongoing personal growth and lifelong learning.**

In addition to our regular in-class English work, you are required to read at least one short story this quarter that will contribute to your preparation for life after high school—career, college, and beyond. You will complete an assignment related to this story that will share what you've learned from the short story with your classmates.

What kinds of stories will stretch your thinking and help you on your journey of self-discovery? Here are a few ideas to consider:

- **literary classics:** They're called classics for a reason, and many of your professors may expect you to already know these even before you step foot in their classroom. Reading these stories will give you an advantage over students who might have to scramble to figure out exactly which story your professor just casually referenced during Monday's lecture.
- **a story that is out of your usual comfort zone:** Like your physical muscles, if your mind isn't being stretched just a little beyond what it's used to, then you aren't learning anything new. Choose a story that has slightly more difficult vocabulary than you are used to or something in a different genre than you usually read. Try out a story about a topic you don't know much about but are interested in learning. Take this opportunity to read something that you wouldn't normally pick up on your own just for fun.
- **stories recommended to you by educated/professional adults:** Most literate adults find things to read by listening to recommendations from other people! Ask the adults you know and admire what short stories they think you should read. What stories changed their lives or their thinking about the world? (Ask your teachers for their recommendations.)

#### Reading Choice Criteria

- Must be a **short story** of reasonable length and literary value. No fairy tales or children's stories!
- Must be of appropriate length and reading level for you. If you are not sure, ask!
- Must be a short story you have not read before.
- Must be approved by Dr. Pelotte/Dr. Lawrence/Mr. Arenas

\*Please be aware that some of these choices may include graphic language or adult subject matter. You are expected to use your discretion when deciding what is appropriate for you to read.

Short Story Proposal due	Task #1 due (first read)	Task #2 due (second read)	Task #3 due

### 3rd Quarter Reading Project – Task #1

Directions: Print, read and annotate your short story! Then, complete the "Short Story Bingo." Staple it to your story. Type or write on a separate piece of paper if you need more room.

Title of story: \_\_\_\_\_ Author's Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- Respond to the center box (theme)
- Then, choose three or more additional boxes to help you analyze the story's theme.
- Make sure you give examples from the text to explain your thinking. Provide direct quotations from the text to support your analysis.

<p>How does the story's ending help reveal the theme?</p>	<p>Which passage from the text most clearly reveals the theme? Explain.</p>	<p>Which symbols or metaphors help determine the theme? What are they and how do they help?</p>
<p>Does the character learn a lesson? What is the lesson? How does this lesson help to reveal the theme?</p>	<p><b>What is the big idea or central message from the text? (Theme)</b></p>	<p>What words, phrases, images, or ideas are repeated throughout the text? How does this repetition help to determine theme?</p>
<p>What choices does the main character make throughout the story? How do these choices reveal the theme?</p>	<p>How does the main character change throughout the story? How do these changes help determine the theme?</p>	<p>Does something unexpected happen? Does a character behave differently or unexpectedly? How does this help determine theme?</p>

### 3rd Quarter Reading Project – Task #2



**Directions:** Read your short story a second time. Then, complete the following reflection and staple it to your short story. Write these on a separate piece of paper or type them.

Name	Period
Title of Short Story	
Author	
Rating (1-10)	

At the beginning of this project, you chose and proposed this story based on the idea that reading it would help you on your journey of self-discovery and personal growth. Now that you've read your story several times, reflect on that idea again.

Choose five (5) of the following sentence starters and write a reflection for each. Make sure your responses are thorough—2-3 sentences each. Attach your responses to your short story:

- I noticed...
- I wonder...
- I was reminded of...
- I think...
- I'm surprised that...
- I'd like to know...
- I realized...
- If I were...
- The central issue(s) is/are...
- One consequence of \_\_\_\_\_ could be...
- If \_\_\_\_\_, then...
- I'm not sure...
- Although it seems...

**Reflect on the process of reading your story multiple times. How did reading your story for a second time impact your understanding (of characters, symbols, themes, author's purpose, etc.)? For example, did you interpret a character's actions differently than you did the first time?**



### Quarter 3 Reading Project – Short Story Talk Presentation Task #3

You will deliver a persuasive **three-minute short story talk** to the class about this story. The purpose of the talk is to convince the listener to read the story you are recommending. It is very similar to a trailer for a film, which shows you just enough information to convince you that you should watch the movie (but not so much that the movie is spoiled!).

Your presentation must include a **visual aid**, such as a drawing, collage, map, original illustration, etc. to present to the audience. You may use notes when giving your presentation, but **DO NOT SIMPLY READ THE NOTES TO THE CLASS**. The talk will cover a few different elements of the story, but you should focus much of your time on the plot and conflict. Finally, **PLEASE REHEARSE YOUR SHORT STORY TALK!** No one wants to listen to you make up 3 minutes of talking on the spot. **BE PREPARED** and demonstrate your best public speaking skills.

#### STRUCTURE OF A SHORT STORY TALK:

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	Find an interesting, exciting, or mysterious <b>passage from the story</b> to start off your presentation. This quote will get the reader's attention. Don't just pick any old quote... Choose carefully and deliberately to try to capture the attention of the audience. Be sure to explain to context/importance of the quote. Clearly introduce your story by giving the <b>title and author of the story</b> .
<b>BODY</b>	The middle of the presentation will cover main idea of the story. Focus on the <b>setting, characters, plot, and theme, and other literary devices</b> of the story without giving too much away. Tell about where the story is set, what kind of action or conflict is involved, and what it is about in general. Be interesting but brief here; remember you only have three minutes total!
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	Make your final pitch convincing your classmates that this is a story they want to read. Make some predictions of <b>who or what kinds of people might like to read this story</b> .

#### An example of a story talk on *The Graveyard Story* by Neil Gaiman:

"There was a hand in the darkness, and it held a knife."

So begins the story of Nobody Owens, known as Bod. On the night his parents are brutally murdered, 2-year-old Bod calmly climbs out of his crib and toddles out of the house and into a nearby cemetery. There he is adopted by Mr. and Mrs. Owens (childless and dead for 250 years!) who gladly care for the child and protect him from harm.

With loving ghostly parents, teachers, friends, and protectors, Bod grows from age two to fifteen in the graveyard. He learns to read and do numbers, and he also learns some ghostly skills. But not all the residents of the graveyard are friendly. There are witches, ghouls and creatures and let's not forget Jack – the evil fiend who is out to finish the job he started.

Filled with great illustrations, this is a funny, exciting and suspenseful story. How will Bod survive? Or will he? Can his loving family and friends really protect him from the evil Jack? This delightfully gruesome and very English tale will certainly appeal to both boys and girls who like adventure stories, suspense and some action. The Graveyard Story won the Newbery Award in 2009, and the awards said that the story is a "*delicious mix of murder, fantasy, humour and human longing*."



(by Diane Ferbrache, Hazen High School Librarian for The Washington Evergreen Young Adult Story Award, 2011)

# SHORT STORY TALK PLANNING SPACE

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>INTERESTING QUOTE FROM THE STORY:</b>	
	<b>CONTEXT OF QUOTE:</b>	
	<b>TITLE AND AUTHOR:</b>	
<b>BODY</b>	<b>SETTING</b>	<b>PLOT/CONFLICT</b> (no ending!)
	<b>CHARACTERS</b> + brief descriptions	<b>THEME</b>
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>REASONS TO READ THIS STORY</b>	<b>PEOPLE WHO WOULD LIKE THIS STORY</b>

Assessment Objective	A+/A (4 or 3.5)	B (3)	C (2.5)	D (2)	F (1)
Talk includes accurate and complete information about the story.	Story Talk includes exceptionally accurate and complete information that exceeds the minimum requirements.	Talk includes accurate and complete information that meets all requirements listed.	Talk includes accurate and mostly complete information that meets nearly all the requirements.	Talk includes incomplete information that meets only some of the requirements.	Talk includes incomplete or inaccurate information that meets less than half of the requirements.
<b>PERSONAL RESPONSE</b> Talk effectively persuades students to read the story.	Story Talk persuades students to read the story with three or more highly effective reasons.	Talk persuades students to read the story with at least two effective reasons.	Talk persuades students to read the story with at least one effective reason.	Talk attempts to persuade students to read the story, but reasons are inaccurate or ineffective.	Talk does not attempt to persuade students to read the story.
<b>COMMUNICATION</b> Story Talk is clear and understandable. It is well-rehearsed and student appears confident.	Story Talk demonstrates exceptional clarity, demonstrating a high level of confidence and poise. Includes at least one visual aid.	Talk clear, demonstrating appropriate level of confidence.	Talk is clear but may lack in confidence or preparedness.	Talk is unclear or sloppy, lack of quality hinders meaning.	Talk is incomprehensible due to lack of preparation.
<b>HOLISTIC SCORE</b>				<b>/4</b>	

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Period: \_\_\_\_\_



## Story Talk Reviews

Your task is to review three (3) video story talks given by your classmates.

Name of Presenter	Date
Title of Story	
Author of Story	

Choose three (3) of the following sentence starters to describe the presentation. Write these on the back of this paper.

- I noticed...
- I wonder...
- I was reminded of...
- I think...
- I'm surprised that...
- I'd like to know...
- I realized...
- If I were...
- I'm not sure...
- Although it seems...

Describe the presenter's communication skills. Was the story talk clear? Was it well-rehearsed and confident?

Did the presentation effectively persuade you to read the story? Why or why not? What is one thing the presenter may have done more effectively?

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### Statement of Academic Honesty

By signing below, I am indicating that I watched this presentation and the information on this page is accurate.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_