**Independent Reading – Above and Beyond Options**

**Overall Directions:**

Choose any one of the following independent reading project options to express your understanding of a book that you choose for Above and Beyond independent reading.

* The book has to have been **printed** **in the last 5 years**, must be **at least 200 words,** and **may not have a motion picture adaptation**.
  + **Your book must be approved by Friday, 5/5**
* This project **can** count (if it meets expectations and is done with appropriate effort) as a 10% boost in your Final Assignments category OR your Homework category, whichever is lowest at the time of input
* This project is **DUE** by Friday, 5/26 (No late Above and Beyond assignment are accepted)

**Written Projects**

**Expectations:**

All written responses should be **at least 500 words** (handwritten or double-spaced, typed in Times 12 font) long, should **clearly identify the author and title of your book** and should include references to **at least three specific details** from your book.

* Put an **MLA** heading, and the **number of the option** you chose at the top of your project.
* Some of these projects, such as the character journal and newspaper article, may also include visual elements. These visual elements must be made/drawn by you (You **may not** just print off pictures from online. You want the points? Create the work.)

These are not formal essay topics: **you may use the word “I”** when you write these, and write from a personal perspective. However, you must focus your writing on specific details from the book and you should **use language that is appropriate** for a school assignment (that means not using vague, weak words like “stuff” or informal words like “gonna”).

* Written projects **must be submitted to turnitin.com.**

**Project Options:**

1. **What is the book saying about people or the world?** Refer to specific situations, characters, or other literary elements in the book to support your answer. In addition to supporting details, include a quote from at least one passage in the book that reflects the theme you have identified. Be sure to include the page number of your quote.

2. **Write in detail about what you consider to be the two or three most important episodes/plot events in the book.** Briefly explain what happens in these episodes, why they are important to the story, and explain your personal reaction to them. In addition, describe what these episodes reveal about the book’s meaning.

3. **Write several entries from the diary of a major character.** The diary should be written in the character’s voice and should reflect his or her reaction to major events in the novel. You may also include visual and design elements that reflect the character’s personality.

4. **Pretend that you are a writer for a magazine like People who is interviewing a major character from your book.** Write the transcript of your interview with that character. Use visual and design elements to make your article look the way it would in a magazine.

5. **Explain how a character changes from the beginning to the end of the novel.**

Describe at least three specific events and explain how each event affects your character. You could also include illustrations of one or more of these events if you choose.

6. **Write a newspaper story about an important event in your book.** Be sure to mimic the voice and style of writing from a newspaper like the Press-Democrat or New York Times. Use visual and design elements (including pictures) to make your project look like a newspaper article.

7. **Write about a character that you would like to have as a friend.** List at least three character traits (such as honesty) that the character has and support each one by referring to specific details—things the character says or thinks, things he/she/it does, descriptions, or things people say about them—that demonstrate these qualities.

8. **Write about a character that you do not approve of.** Analyze three situations from the story to explain what you think is wrong about the character’s actions, behavior, and/or values. Explain why you think the character is acting/thinking that way and what is wrong with their actions/thoughts. What do you suggest as a more favorable response, behavior, or value?

**Visual Projects**

**Expectations:**

All visual projects should be done **on poster board (approximately 24 inches x 36 inches large)** and should **clearly identify the author and title of your book**.

* Put an **MLA** heading, and the **number of the option** you chose somewhere on your project.
* **Visual projects** also **require** a **short writing assignment**, which **must be submitted to turnitin.com**, in addition to it being added to your project.
* You **may not** just print off pictures from online. You want the points? Create the work.

**Project Options:**

1. **Create a poster to advertise the book (similar to a movie poster).** Your poster must include a well-developed paragraph that powerfully describes why the book is recommended. Other effective elements include meaningful quotes (be sure to identify who said them and to cite the page number for each quote), descriptions or drawings of meaningful events, and identification of the book’s genre and/or themes.

2. **Draw a map of where the story takes place and label all of the important places.**

For each place, write a short paragraph that explains its importance. You may include the paragraphs on the map or write them on a separate sheet of paper.

3. **Create** **a poster of a major character’s profile page for Facebook or another social networking site.** The profile should include a picture; a list of friends; a quote; a list of likes and dislikes; a recent status update or blog entry; a favorite song, movie or TV show; and so on. Explain at least six of the items on your character’s page. Examples: “I like the song “Paint it Black” because it reminds me of the time

that…” or “I watch Justified because I relate to the way that…” You may include these explanations on your poster or write them on a separate sheet of paper.

**Multimedia Projects**

**Expectations:**

All multimedia projects should be submitted in a manner that is easily accessible. You may be creating a product to hand in, or you may be making film or audio that can be emailed. In the written portion, **clearly identify the author and title of your book**.

* Put an **MLA** heading, and the **number of the option** you chose somewhere on your project.
* Note that **multimedia projects** also **require** a **short writing assignment**, which **must be submitted to turnitin.com**, in addition to it being added to your project.
* You **may not** just print off pictures or take images from online. You want the points? Create the work.

**Project Options:**

1. **Create a CD with at least eight songs that represent themes, characters, events, symbols, or other elements of the book.** Make a cover for the CD and—this part is very important—include a 3-5 sentence written explanation for each song, explaining how it relates to specific situations and characters in the book (why you chose each song).

2. **Create a book trailer (no longer than three minutes).** Although it is targeted to younger readers, the site www.booktrailersforreaders.com has many examples you can use for inspiration. You will have to do this outside of class, using your own filming and editing equipment. You will also need to submit a 250 word rationale explaining your choices in the trailer. Why did you highlight certain events or characters? What other choices for setting/music/voiceover/etc. did you have to make to stay true to the book?

**Reader’s Choice**

If none of these projects is a good fit for you, you may propose a project that uses your unique talents to demonstrate your understanding of the book that you read. If you want to do so**, you must submit a 250 word proposal by 5/1 that outlines what you want to do, how you will do it, and what it will accomplish.** If your teacher approves your written proposal, you may do your choice instead of choosing one of the options on this handout. Be sure to obtain approval of your project well in advance of the final deadline.