LIGHT READING BOOK REPORTS

WHY LIGHT READING?

The books you will be reading for this part of this course are considered light reading. They are different than the heavier, academic reading that you will also do for this class. For what we consider academic reading, you will probably need the expert help of your instructor to fully understand the text; you can do light reading on your own. For this assignment you pick a novel that you want to read.You will receive a *Light Reading Book Report* before you read so that you can have a focus for your reading as you make your way through the book. Each of these reports will give you a specific purpose for your reading.

We are doing this type of reading, light reading, not only because it is easier and more enjoyable, but because students learn more language from it. According to research in language acquisition over the last 30 years **students learn more useful language from free reading than from traditional structured vocabulary and grammar lessons**. Here are some quotes by leading researchers that support this idea:

"Less frequent words... may best be learned by reading extensively, because there is just not enough time to learn them all through conscious study."—Norbert Schmitt, *Vocabulary in Language Teaching*

"The only significant predictor of the ability to use the subjunctive was the amount of free voluntary reading done in Spanish; the amount of formal study of Spanish, the amount of formal study specifically aimed at the subjunctive, and how long subjects had lived in a Spanish-speaking country were not significant predictors of subjunctive competence."
—Stephen Krashen, *The Power of Reading*

The best way to improve in a foreign language is to do a great deal ofcomprehensible, interesting reading. The case for self-selected reading for pleasure is overwhelming.—Beniko Mason, *Extensive Reading in English as a Foreign Language*

Additional quotes supporting self-selected or light reading are found at the bottom of each *Light Reading Book Report* to help remind students why we are doing this.

WHY READ NOVELS?

"I don't know how one develops imagination without reading fiction"—Diane Ravitch

Reading novels is advantageous to students both as language learners and as well-rounded human beings:

1. **Readers learn more vocabulary from novels**. In a novel the vocabulary repeats itself more than that in non-fiction texts because the setting and the situations tend to be revisited and referred to over and over. This helps a reader to pick up both high frequency vocabulary as well as the specific words used in the novel and to become a better reader. Repeated vocabulary becomes automatic.

2. **Reading novels is easier and more fun** than reading other materials. Stories lend themselves to prediction. Once you understand the genre, the setting and the characters, you can often guess where a story is going. This natural interaction with the text makes reading fiction easier and more pleasant than non-fiction, especially for young readers and for language learners.

3. **The life lessons in novels are easier to see** than those in non-fiction texts. The valuable lessons in non-fiction can be harder to spot as the reader wades through a sea of random real-life events. The focus on the story in a novel can help readers to understand the author's message more clearly.

4. **Novels help readers to develop empathy**. In a novel we are allowed to peek inside the heads of others and explore their motivations. Novels help us to develop perspective or *Theory of Mind,* which is the ability to understand another's thinking rather than just our own. In our connected, but isolated, digital age we all need help with empathy. Reading novels that we enjoy and can understand is a good way to do that.

5. **Reading fiction makes you smarter**. "Those who read more fiction know more about a variety of subjects." (http://www.schoolsmatter.info/2012/05/those-who-read-more-fiction-know-more.html)

SELF-SELECTED READING

WHY READ?

Because reading is the fastest and most efficient way to learn language.

The more you read it will (hopefully) also become the most underlined way for you to learn as well.

OUR GOALS

- *To support fluency in speaking*
- *To develop a large sight vocabulary (automatic recognition)*
- *To increase general vocabulary knowledge in the target language*
- *To learn to enjoy reading in the target language*
- *To develop a life-long habit of reading for pleasure*

HOW TO CHOOSE PLEASURE READING MATERIALS

We learn to read better by reading more. We keep on reading (and therefore, we keep on learning) by choosing materials that are both understandable and interesting to us. You must be able to understand the book and it must be something that will hold your attention, so it is best to pick a book that you can understand and will enjoy. Keep these in mind as you select your reading materials:

- **Reading easier material may be better than reading harder material**

    It sounds odd, but you may need to lower your standards. Do not worry too much about picking material that is easy for you to read. Pick something that is relaxing to read. Don't feel guilty because it's easy. You need to over-learn the basic words and reading easy material will help you do that. The core words (the basic 1,000 words) need to become so easy for you that it is not an effort to read them. Then allow your ability and your interests to drive you on to more challenging materials.

- **Reading a lot is better than reading a little (or just reading the minimum to get by).**

    The more you read the better you will get at it. Set a goal for how much you will read. Try to read something in Spanish every day. Plan your reading time and also read spontaneously. A good trick to snatch reading time is to carry something to read with you— if you are prepared it will seem like the world is conspiring to give you reading time.

- **Reading what you enjoy is better than reading what you "ought to read".**

    Read for the content's sake, not because you think you should. Choose something to read that really interests you. Find something that really interests you and read it. Then keep on reading for the pleasure of it. The intriguing subject or the fascinating story should be the thing that drives you to continue reading. Allow the inherent pleasure of reading itself to motivate you. Save Don Quixote till later—unless you are just dying to read it—then go ahead and try it.

- **Stop reading a book you do not like. It is better than plowing on.**

    Forcing yourself to keep on reading something you do not like is not normally a good strategy for free reading. If a book is too confusing or boring, put it down and pick up something else.

Sources: *Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom,* Richard Day and Julian Bamford, 1998.

The Power of Reading (Second edition), Stephen Krashen, 2004.

"The study of complex grammatical constructions does not help reading (or writing); rather, mastery of complex grammar is a result of reading."—Stephen Krashen, *The Power of Reading*

HOW TO CHOOSE A BOOK

You may have to search for a while before you find something suitable to read, but keep looking and experimenting until you find something that works for you. Find something that you like and can understand. As you look for a book, use these guidelines:

Pick something that is
INTERESTING & *COMPREHENSIBLE* to you.
You should *enjoy* it and it should be relatively *easy* for you to read. It does not have to be utterly fascinating, and you do not have to understand every single word. It just has to *hold your interest* for a while, and it has to be something that you can *mostly understand*.

If you find you don't like it or it doesn't make sense to you, choose something else to read.

You can also *read the same thing again* if you want. That is often a good option too.

"Without a reading habit children simply do not have a chance." --Stephen Krashen, *The Power of Reading*

Name _____

Date _____

Class _____

LIGHT READING BOOK REPORT #1
FOCUS: *CHARACTER CHANGE*

Pick a novel that appeals to you and with which you can fulfill the requirements of this assignment. This will be a novel that is both interesting and comprehensible to you. It should be appealing to you and it should not be too hard for you to read—you should be able to read most of it without using a dictionary (looking up a few words per page is OK). Your grade will be based on: **1) Completion** of the task outlined below, **2) Evidence** that you have read and understood the novel by using some of the vocabulary and concepts from the book in your answers and **3) The level of expression** and reflection in your answers.

Title of novel: _____

Author:_____

# of pages that I read: _____

I rate this book (circle one):   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

TASK / FOCUS FOR READING:

• **Explain how a character in the novel changes** from the beginning of the story to the end.

• **Give details from the story** about the changes and the causes of those changes.

  (Continue your answer on the back of this sheet)

→

What does the author want us to get from this story?

This novel seems to have been written for what kind of reader?

"Picking up word meanings by reading is 10 times faster than intensive vocabulary instruction."—Stephen Krashen

Younger students or students unaccustomed to writing like this may need these guidelines:

1) How was the character at the beginning of the story? Give examples.

2) What happened to make the change?
   What did he see?
   What did he do?
   What happened to him?
   What did someone say to him?
   Give examples.

3) How was he at the end of the story? Give examples.

If there is a character that does NOT change, show how/where/when there were opportunities for change in the story.

Name _____

Date _____

Class _____

LIGHT READING BOOK REPORT #2

FOCUS: **MINOR CHARACTER, MAJOR IMPACT**

Pick a novel that appeals to you and with which you can fulfill the requirements of this assignment. This will be a novel that is both interesting and comprehensible to you. It should be appealing to you and it should not be too hard for you to read—you should be able to read most of it without using a dictionary (looking up a few words per page is OK). Your grade will be based on: *1) **Completion*** of the task outlined below, *2) **Evidence*** that you have read and understood the novel by using some of the vocabulary and concepts from the book in your answers and *3) **The level of expression*** and reflection in your answers.

Title of novel: _____

Author:_____

# of pages that I read: _____

I rate this book (circle one)**:**   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

TASK / FOCUS FOR READING:

• **Describe how a relatively minor character had a big impact** in the development of the story.

• **Explain** that impact with examples from the novel. *(Continue your answer on the back of this sheet)*

→ → →

What does the author want us to get from this story?

This novel seems to have been written for what kind of reader?

"We remember things best when they are organized with everything else we know, when they come with stories attached, rather than as isolated bits of information."—Frank Smith, *Reading FAQ*

Name _____

Date _____

Class _____

LIGHT READING BOOK REPORT #3
FOCUS: <u>**CONModelICT**</u>

Pick a novel that appeals to you and with which you can fulfill the requirements of this assignment. This will be a novel that is both interesting and comprehensible to you. It should be appealing to you and it should not be too hard for you to read—you should be able to read most of it without using a dictionary (looking up a few words per page is OK). Your grade will be based on: *1) <u>Completion</u>* of the task outlined below, *2) <u>Evidence</u>* that you have read and understood the novel by using some of the <u>vocabulary</u> and <u>concepts</u> from the book in your answers and *3) <u>The level of expression</u>* and reflection in your answers.

Title of novel: _____

Author: _____

# of pages that I read: _____

I rate this book (circle one)**:**   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

TASK / FOCUS FOR READING:

• <u>**Describe at least one *external* conflict and one *internal* conflict**</u> that you noticed in the novel.

• **Explain** the causes and the results of these conflicts <u>with examples from the story</u>.

(Continue your answer on the back of this sheet)

→ → →

What does the author want us to get from this story?

This novel seems to have been written for what kind of reader?

"Incidental learning of words during reading may be the easiest and single most powerful means of promoting large-scale vocabulary growth." — W.E. Nagy & P.A. Herdman, *Extended Reading in the Foreign Language Classroom*

Name _____

Date _____

Class _____

LIGHT READING BOOK REPORT #4
FOCUS: **LIFE LESSONS**

Pick a novel that appeals to you and with which you can fulfill the requirements of this assignment. This will be a novel that is both interesting and comprehensible to you. It should be appealing to you and it should not be too hard for you to read—you should be able to read most of it without using a dictionary (looking up a few words per page is OK). Your grade will be based on: **1) Completion** of the task outlined below, **2) Evidence** that you have read and understood the novel by using some of the vocabulary and concepts from the book in your answers and **3) The level of expression** and reflection in your answers.

Title of novel: _____

Author: _____

# of pages that I read: _____

I rate this book (circle one)**:**   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

TASK / FOCUS FOR READING:

• **Explain at least one important life lesson** that a reader can take from this story.

• **Describe** how seeing this lesson played out in the novel could help a reader in their real life.

• **Give details and examples** from the novel in your answer.

 (Continue your answer on the back of this sheet)

→ → →

What does the author want us to get from this story?

This novel seems to have been written for what kind of reader?

"People acquiring a second language have the best chance for success through reading."

—Stephen Krashen*, The Power of Reading*

Name _____

Date _____

Class _____

LIGHT READING BOOK REPORT #5
FOCUS: **RATING THIS BOOK**

Pick a novel that appeals to you and with which you can fulfill the requirements of this assignment. This will be a novel that is both interesting and comprehensible to you. It should be appealing to you and it should not be too hard for you to read—you should be able to read most of it without using a dictionary (looking up a few words per page is OK). Your grade will be based on: *1) Completion* of the task outlined below, *2) Evidence* that you have read and understood the novel by using some of the vocabulary and concepts from the book in your answers and *3) The level of expression* and reflection in your answers.

Title of novel: _____

Author: _____

# of pages that I read: _____

I rate this book (circle one)**:**   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

TASK / FOCUS FOR READING:

• **Explain the reasons you have for rating the novel** the way you did above.

• **Give details and examples** from the novel in your answer.

(Continue your answer on the back of this sheet)

→ → →

What does the author want us to get from this story?

This novel seems to have been written for what kind of reader?

Name _____

Date _____

Class _____

LIGHT READING BOOK REPORT #6
FOCUS: *FINAL CHAPTER*

Pick a novel that appeals to you and with which you can fulfill the requirements of this assignment. This will be a novel that is both interesting and comprehensible to you. It should be appealing to you and it should not be too hard for you to read—you should be able to read most of it without using a dictionary (looking up a few words per page is OK). Your grade will be based on: *1) Completion* of the task outlined below, *2)Evidence* that you have read and understood the novel by using some of the vocabulary and concepts from the book in your answers and *3)The level of expression* and reflection in your answers.

Title of novel: _____

Author: _____

# of pages that I read: _____

I rate this book (circle one):   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

TASK / FOCUS FOR READING:

• **Explain why you think the ending of the novel was or was not effective.**

• **Describe** in detail how it could have been improved.

• **Give details and examples** from the novel in your answer.

  (Continue your answer on the back of this sheet)

→ →→

What does the author want us to get from this story?

This novel seems to have been written for what kind of reader?

"Only a fraction [of the words that students need to know] are likely to be acquired through formal study, leaving the pedagogical implication that any others have to be acquired through simple exposure to the language or not acquired at all. This puts a premium on nonteaching activities that can bolster exposure to a language, with reading being an especially important source." —Norbert Schmitt, *Vocabulary in Language Teaching*

Name _____

Date _____

Class _____

LIGHT READING BOOK REPORT #7

FOCUS: TO THE FINAL CHAPTER, AND BEYOND!

Pick a novel that appeals to you and with which you can fulfill the requirements of this assignment. This will be a novel that is both interesting and comprehensible to you. It should be appealing to you and it should not be too hard for you to read—you should be able to read most of it without using a dictionary (looking up a few words per page is OK). Your grade will be based on: *1) Completion* of the task outlined below, *2) Evidence* that you have read and understood the novel by using some of the vocabulary and concepts from the book in your answers and *3) The level of expression* and reflection in your answers.

Title of novel: _____

Author: _____

# of pages that I read: _____

I rate this book(circle one): 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

TASK / FOCUS FOR READING:

- **Explain what might have happened if the story had continued for one more chapter**.
- **Combine details** from the original story in your extrapolation.

  (Continue your answer on the back of this sheet)

→ → →

What does the author want us to get from this story?

This novel seems to have been written for what kind of reader?

"Incidental learning of words during reading may be the easiest and single most powerful means of promoting large-scale vocabulary growth." —W.E. Nagy & P.A. Herdman, *The Nature of Vocabulary Acquisition*

Name _____

Date _____

Class _____

LIGHT READING BOOK REPORT #8

FOCUS: DRAW IT!

Pick a novel that appeals to you and with which you can fulfill the requirements of this assignment. This will be a novel that is both interesting and comprehensible to you. It should be appealing to you and it should not be too hard for you to read—you should be able to read most of it without using a dictionary (looking up a few words per page is OK). Your grade will be based on: *1) Completion* of the task outlined below, *2) Evidence* that you have read and understood the novel by using some of the vocabulary and concepts from the book in your answers and *3) The level of expression* and reflection in your answers.

Title of novel: _____

Author:_____

# of pages that I read: _____

I rate this book (circle one)**:**   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

TASK / FOCUS FOR READING:

• *Draw the major events in the story* with a series of simple line drawings.

• *Be prepared to explain those events* to a partner and/or your teacher. If you are not sure what to draw or what is important in the novel, tell it to a classmate after you read. Their reactions will help to guide you into the most important parts to include and explain in your drawings.

(Continue your drawings on the back of this sheet)
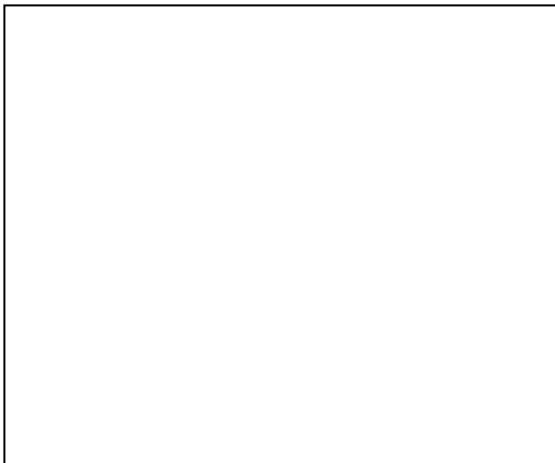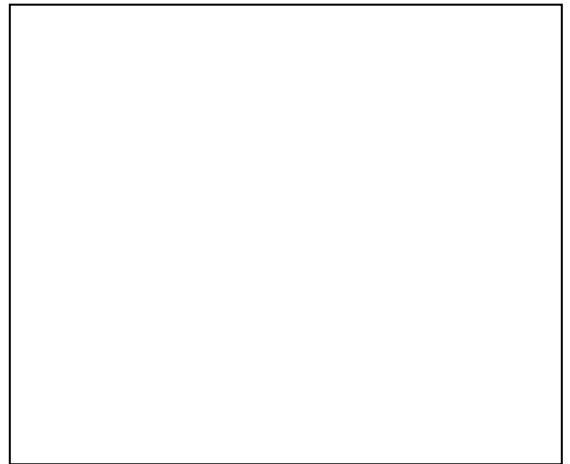
→ → →

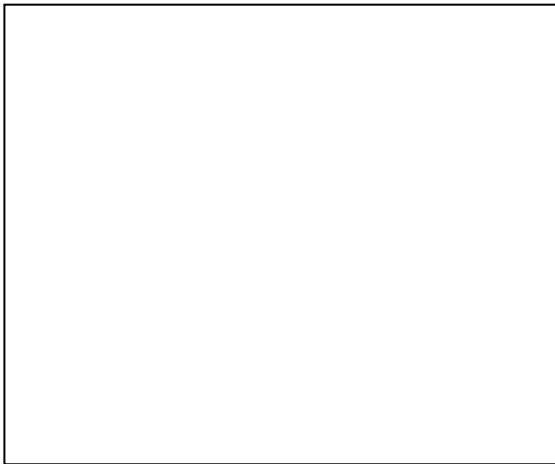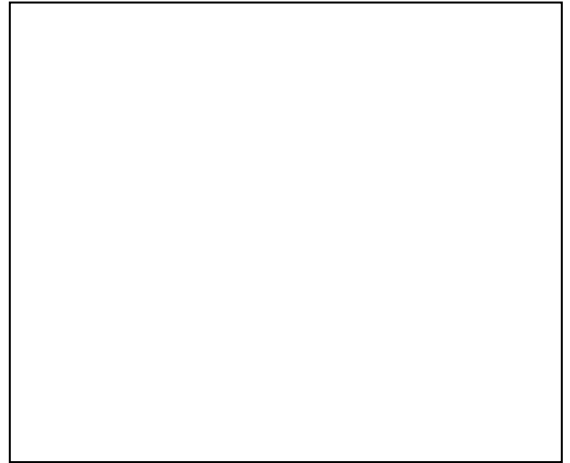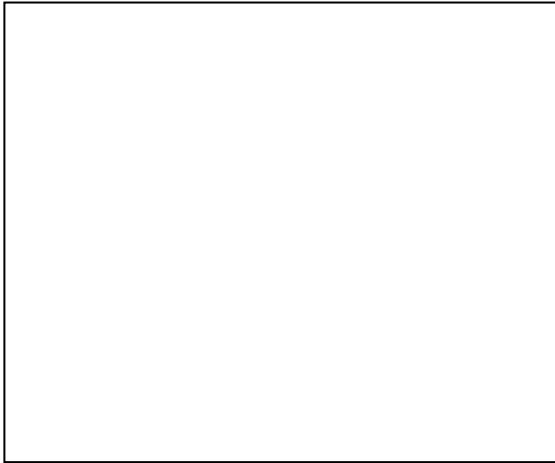What does the author want us to get from this story?

This novel seems to have been written for what kind of reader?

"If we want our children to learn how to read anything--let alone to read more, or to read more diverse or more difficult material--it helps immeasurably if we can give them as much experience of language as possible."

—Mem Fox, *Reading Magic*

USEFUL SPANISH FOR BOOK REPORTS

#1   Un personaje que cambia durante la novela es…

#2   Un personaje relativamente menor que tiene un impacto grande es…

#3   Un conflicto externo es…

      Un conflicto interno es…

#4   Lecciones para la vida

      Una lección que se ve en el libro es…

#5   Le doy a este libro…

#6   Yo pienso que el final de esta novela (no) fue eficaz porque…

#7   Si el cuento hubiera continuado por un capítulo más, yo creo que…

El autor quiere que aprendamos…

Parece que el autor quiere que veamos (*or* entendamos / comprendamos)…

Parece que el libro fue escrito para…

Si yo estuviera en una situación similar…

USEFUL LANGUAGE FOR BOOK REPORTS

USEFUL FOR BOOK REPORTS WRITTEN IN ENGLISH

1 A character who changes during the novel is ...

2 A relatively minor character who has a big impact is ...

3 An external conflict is ...

An internal conflict is ...

4 Lessons for life

One lesson in the book is ...

5 I give this book ...

6 I think the end of this novel was/was not effective because ...

7 If the story had continued for another chapter, I think ...

The author wants us to learn ...

It seems that the author wants us to see (or, to comprehend / to understand) ...

It seems that the book was written for ...

If I were in a similar situation I would ...