

Dear incoming 8th grade students,

Summer reading. Here is how it is going to work: I have picked a book, you pick another. My choice for you is *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway. You will take an Accelerated Reader test on it when school starts, which will count for a grade, and you will write a short *essayish*-type piece that I will detail when you arrive to class.

Your book selection should be grade appropriate--that is, it should be at or above a 8.0 on the ATOS book level (here is a good website that will assist you in figuring out what the *book level* of a book is <http://www.arbookfind.com/UserType.aspx>). That's all the criteria I will lay down. There is some research that says when students make their own reading choices they are more inclined to develop a life long love of reading. So you can pick whatever you would like. The reading level requirement is really the only fail safe--designed to keep the selections smart and appropriate.

If you would like to keep reading, pick another book (or two or three *ad infinitum*) at or above your grade level and when you get back, I will set up time for you to be tested and each extra A.R. test you pass will be an opportunity for you to earn points for next year. Points will earn you fabulous prizes such as extra credit, recess, etc. etc.

Looking forward to next year. Have a fun/safe/productive summer.

Best,

Mr. Fitzgerald
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