

Encouraging Independent Reading

Reading is like riding a bicycle, driving a car, or sewing; in order to get better at it, you must do it. And the more you read, the better you get at it.

~ Jim Trelease in *The Read Aloud Handbook* (2001)

Encouraging Independent Reading

Peninsula teachers encourage middle school students to read independently because they know that the amount of reading students do in and out of school is positively related to their reading achievement. Because class time is rich with direct [SpringBoard](#) instruction, focused independent reading and guided practice of thinking strategies, it is likely that students will be doing much of their independent, recreational reading at home or outside of the school setting.

Things to know about independent reading:

Benefits:

- ~Increases time students read
- ~Enables students to practice their reading
- ~Improves reading competence by practicing strategies learned in the classroom
- ~Enables students to manage and keep records of their reading
- ~Encourages students to develop a life-long love of reading

Role of Students:

- ~Select their reading book
- ~Read continuously
- ~Keep their own records
- ~Confer with their teacher about their reading
- ~Think about and write responses to their reading

Role of Parents:

- ~Help your student develop a love for reading by reading for pleasure yourself
- ~Share with your student what you are reading and how you are thinking about it
- ~Ask your student to tell you about what she is reading, as well describe the reading strategies she is using to build understanding.
- ~Ask to see your student's written responses to reading, for example: a quote journal; a critical events timeline; a character development diagram; a [Venn diagram](#), etc.

SpringBoard is the district's instructional material used for middle school literacy. The program is produced by the College Board. See www.collegeboard.com/springboard for more information.

See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venn_diagram for an example.