Reading in the ELD Class

"If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of

civilization, it expects what never was and never will be. . .

The People cannot be safe without information. When the press

is free, and every man is able to read, all is safe."

* Thomas Jefferson

Reading is probably the single most important skill that you need to be successful in this world today. Consider how often you read things in your every day life; it is our primary form of communication. Without reading, you are left in a world of darkness and you are completely reliant upon others to tell you the truth rather than finding the truth on your own.

To this end, we will be spending a lot of time this year reading and analyzing what we are reading. Most of us who need help with reading do not even realize that we need help, but rather we find that we cannot concentrate when we read, we cannot remember what we read, or we find reading “boring” or “uninteresting”. All of these are signs that we need help with our reading.

To help us with reading, we will be doing different kinds of reading in class. You will be choosing an independent book from a box of them that I have in my room. You will find something that you like in this box. There are copies of popular books, of graphic novels, of romance novels, spy novels. These are not really the kinds of books you would normally find in an English classroom. These are books you read for fun and that is what you are going to do with them.

Twice a week, in 25 minute blocks of time you will sit down and read this book. You can read at your own pace. You can ask me about the book (I have read most, if not all) and eventually, when others have read the book too, you can talk to your classmates about the book. The more you read, the better reader you are. The best thing you can do to increase your English language skill is to read for fun and that’s what this will be. After every reading assignment you will fill out a reading log where you summarize what you read and you predict what will happen next, which are both good reading skills. These will be collected and graded every week.

The other reading that we do will be non-fiction and will be based off of something that is happening in the world. Sometimes this will be an actual article and sometimes we will watch a video, which will take the place of the “article”. These assignments will be different; you will read and analyze the article and start answering some questions about it early in the week. This is to help with read strategies and comprehension. Over the course of the week, you will be required to write up a summary of the article and to write a formal analysis of one aspect of it. This will be completed in class and then on Fridays, we will have a class discussion based off of your thoughts and ideas around the controversial subject. This will give us the opportunity to practice our writing nd eventually, to practice our formal essay writing skills.