

FAQ FOR MS. THOMAS'S ENGLISH AND READING CLASSES

How is the reading class structured?

At the beginning of each period, students read for ten minutes. Their reading levels will never improve if they do not practice, as you well know. Occasionally, we will use some of this time to talk about books we are reading. Sharing titles with each other is a way to make reading a universal and social habit.

Following individual reading time, I read aloud to them. This is beneficial because students hear how a good writer puts words together. It also builds unity in a class—it gives them common ground.

After I read aloud, we work on a lesson from *REWARDS*, a reading program that teaches students how to break bigger words into syllables. It is a good review for some students and exactly what others need to improve their reading skills. The idea behind *REWARDS* is that if they spend less time sounding out words, their fluency increases, and ultimately their comprehension improves.

Additionally, we will be discussing the reading strategies good readers use to access texts. We will discuss the strategies then spend a lot of time reading together and practicing those strategies.

How is English structured?

English also begins with ten minutes of reading. Students get ideas for their own writing by reading.

I also read aloud to them.

Next, students respond to a journal prompt. Sometimes I give them one, other times I give them the freedom to write about a topic of their choice.

Following the journal, we write. We will use the six traits of writing—ideas, voice, sentence fluency, organization, word choice, and conventions to improve our writing skills. We will write sentences, paragraphs, and eventually essays to help students improve their ability to write clearly. We will also be using an online writing program called gomyaccess. Students write essays in the program and get immediate feedback on how to improve their piece.

What does remediation look like in English and reading?

Students will do more learning activities to reinforce what was missed.

Students talk through the missed questions with me.

I will go through the learning activities with students individually.

How are walkaways structured in English and reading?

Students will do several practice activities before they take the official walkaway.

Walkaways are not tests in these classes—they are assessments to make sure students are mastering the core. The assessments will vary depending on the concept. Students will practice a lot before doing the final walkaway. They should not stress about walkaways as they will be prepared to take them if they come to class on time, participate in class, come regularly, and are attentive during class.