

CCSC DEAR Guide



1. WHAT IS DEAR?

DEAR stands for **Drop Everything And Read**, our silent reading program here at CCSC. DEAR meets for 30 minutes after 1st period. You will also have other opportunities to DEAR in your classes, especially Humanities and WAM.

2. WHY DO WE DEAR?

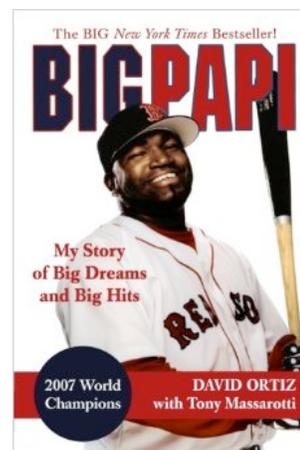


We do DEAR because **we believe that reading is the most important skill you need in order to be ready for college.** In addition, scientists have found out that reading skills aren't something you either have or don't have. Instead, **the part of your brain that controls reading is like a muscle.** And the more you work out your **reading muscles**, the better reader you become. You should

think of your time in DEAR as a chance to spend some extra time in a gym. It is an extra opportunity to build your reading muscles so that you are ready for college-level work. Like working out in a gym, we also hope that it is something that you can grow to enjoy and see real progress with over time.

3. WHAT ARE READING LEVELS? WHY DO THEY MATTER?

Reading levels are like **weight-lifting**. If David Ortiz wanted to build his biceps, he wouldn't want to lift a pencil up and down because it is too light for him. He could do it 100 times and still not gain much muscle. Similarly, Big Pai would not want to try to lift a school bus up and down because it's too heavy for him. He would probably just hurt himself trying to lift it. Instead, Ortiz would want to find a weight somewhere in between at just the right level for him. The right weight level would challenge him but not be so hard that he would just get frustrated.



Reading is very similar. If you are reading at a high school level, you don't want to be reading kindergarten-level books because they are too easy for you. You could read 100 and still not gain reading muscles. Similarly, if you are in kindergarten, you would just get a headache if your teacher told you that you had to read the complete works of William Shakespeare. Instead, **you want to read books that are at the right level to challenge you but not frustrate you.**

The research shows that the more you read books that are at the right difficulty level for you, the faster you build your reading muscles.



4. HOW DO I CHOOSE MY FIRST DEAR BOOK?

In the middle school, you usually will be assigned to a reading level that matches with a certain **colored sticker**. (Some of you may end up between two reading levels, and so you may get two colors.) When you look for a new book, you will want to go to the shelves that match your particular sticker color. You can then pick out any book that matches your sticker color. You can also look for magazines at your reading level as well.

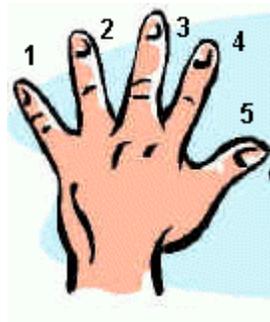


In addition, some of our books cover very mature topics and have some intense language such as swears. If so, these books will usually have **a star** on their binding as well. If so, you can only read these books if you are in Grade 9 or above. If you are in grade 7 or 8, you must bring in a note to our lovely librarian Ms. Post signed by a parent/guardian that says it is okay for you to read texts with mature content.

5. HOW CAN I BE SURE I AM READING BOOKS ON THE RIGHT LEVEL?

The idea of reading levels is **not an exact science**, so there is a fair chance that you may at first be reading books that are too easy or too hard for you.

If you are reading a DEAR book and you think it may be **too hard**, you can try something called the **5-finger rule**. Here's how it works:



- Turn to any page in your DEAR book and make one of your hands into a fist.
- While reading that page, stick out one finger each time you come to a word that you don't recognize. (*Do not include names of people or places in your count.*)
- If you end up sticking out all 5 fingers before you come to the bottom of the page, turn to another page and try the same thing.
- If you end up sticking out 5 or more fingers on this 2nd page as well, exchange the book next time the DEAR library is open and try another book on the same level.

If the same thing happens to you with your next book too, definitely have a chat with your humanities teacher. You may have accidentally been placed on a reading level that is a bit too challenging for you.

Also, if you have read **at least 2 DEAR books on your level** and you think that they are **too easy or too hard**, have a chat with your humanities teacher. Your teacher may tell you to try a book on the next reading level.

Finally, every time you read **5-10 books from your level** in DEAR, you should have a chat with your humanities teacher. You may be ready to move up to the next weight-level on your reading.

6. WHAT DO I DO WHEN I FINISH MY DEAR BOOK?

If you finish your DEAR book in the middle of DEAR, use the rest of DEAR time to write your DEAR Review. Every classroom should always have DEAR Reviews in them. The DEAR library is open 9:45-2:45 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. It is also open during lunch on Wednesdays. The best times to go are during lunch and mid-day academic enrichment. You may also go during advisory if it is okay with your advisor. If you are in the Bent building for DEAR, you may also go during DEAR itself as long as you show your DEAR monitor your completed DEAR review.

7. WHAT DO I DO IF MY BOOK'S AT THE RIGHT LEVEL BUT I JUST DON'T LIKE IT?

Sooner or later, everyone has that experience where they pick out a book that looks so good but turns out to be plain boring. Often, you need to read several chapters into a book in order to get really into it. Some books, however, just never seem to get interesting no matter how many chapters you read.



We want you to enjoy DEAR and to enjoy the books you read. If you are not getting along with your DEAR book, we ask that you **read at least 25-50 pages to let the book grow on you.** However, if you *really* do not like a book, you can exchange it for a new one after at least a full DEAR period or two. If you give a book a try a fair shot, you should not feel bad about abandoning it. It happens to all of us sometimes!

8. WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME DURING OUR ACTUAL DEAR TIME?

- First of all, you *must* be reading your assigned DEAR book. If at any time (whether during DEAR or another point during the day) a teacher asks you to read your DEAR text and you don't have one, you will earn a **HW sanction**.
- During DEAR it is expected that you stay seated in your chair with your head up and eyes focused in your book. The DEAR monitor should easily be able to see that you are reading.
 - **Note:** *If you are feeling very sleepy, you may stand up at your desk and read while standing up for a short time. However, if you abuse this privilege, the entire class may lose their right to do this as well.*
- You may not ask to use the toilet or the water fountain once DEAR has started. If you wish to use either of these, you must ask your DEAR monitor *before* DEAR begins.
- In order to create an environment where people can focus on their reading, the following things are not allowed in DEAR. Violating these rules will result in a **demerits**:
 - Talking / note-passing
 - Non-verbal communication (making faces at your neighbor, etc)
 - Doing HW / reading non-approved DEAR text
 - Cosmetics (lip gloss, mirrors, brushes, etc) out
 - Sleeping / having head down
 - Intentionally doing anything other than reading



9. What exactly can I read in DEAR?

- A book with a DEAR sticker or CCSC classroom library sticker on it
- An approved magazine (it should have CCSC on its mailing label)
- A black and white e-reader such as the Kindle Paperwhite (Note: color e-readers like the Kindle Fire are not allowed since they also have web-surfing capabilities)
- Any other purchased book, e-book, or library book that you have brought in as long as it is accompanied by a note signed by your humanities teacher. (Make sure you have permission from your teacher to read this text before DEAR starts or else you could earn a HW detention!)

10. How much am I expected to be reading?



In addition to reading during official DEAR time, many of you will often have time to read your DEAR books in humanities class, WAM, and learning lab. Also, we ask that you read **at least 30 minutes in your DEAR book each weekend**. And we encourage everyone to try to read **30 minutes in your DEAR book each night**.

11. How much will DEAR cost me?

Nothing, as long as you treat your books with the respect that they deserve! For magazines, please make sure to keep them in the plastic sleeves when you are not reading them.



Every student at CCSC will need to **sign the DEAR contract** and hand in a **\$15 deposit** for participation in the DEAR program. However, you will get the full \$15 back at the end of the year if you care for your books carefully and do not damage them--by spilling water on them, writing in them, folding over page corners, etc. So, keep good care of these books. Many of them are brand new and deserve your love and affection!