

English III Honors Summer Reading Assignment

You will create a dialectical journal for each of the novels assigned to you this summer. Please create a separate document for each novel, *Of Mice and Men* and *To Kill a Mockingbird: A Full-Length Play*. This assignment is due on the first day that we meet as a class. Each journal will be worth 60 points. Use the directions below to create your dialectical journal.

Dialectical Journals

The term “Dialectic” means “the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer.” Therefore, you should approach your journal as an ongoing conversation with the texts you have been assigned. This approach will assist with processing what you are reading, preparing yourself for group discussions, and gathering textual evidence for Literary Analysis assignments. It will also allow me to view your thought process and analysis while reading the text.

Directions:

- Divide your paper into two columns.
- As you read make note of important quotes or passages. Record these in the left column. Always include page numbers.
- In the right column you will question and comment upon the text.
- **Provide at least seven (7) entries per text.** Your entries must cover the entire text. You may add more to ensure depth of analysis and full coverage of the text.
- **Each entry in the right column must be at least 2 sentences long.** It may be longer if necessary.

Sample Dialectical Journal entry: *Animal Farm*, George Orwell

Passage from the text with citation	Questions, Comments, Analysis
“Man is the only real enemy we have. Remove man from the scene, and the root cause of hunger and overwork is abolished forever. Man is the only creature that consumes without producing” (Orwell 2).	Old Major’s speech effectively rallies the other animals by identifying a clear enemy—man. Old Major’s explanation of the tyranny of man adds to the later irony of the novel and development of the novel’s focus on the transformative nature of power. The characteristics that Old Major clearly defines as human become the same characteristics seen in the pigs.
“Twelve voices were shouting in anger, and they were all alike. No question, now, what had happened to the faces of the pigs. The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which” (Orwell 55).	Orwell clearly emphasizes that the pigs’ transformation is complete by noting that it was “impossible” to differentiate between the men and the pigs. This resolution to the novel reinforces the development of the theme that absolute power is corruptive in nature. This sentence also serves as a resolution to the conflict of the novel by showing that the struggle to overthrow an unfair ruling power was unsuccessful for the animals.

Scoring

Journals will be scored using the rubric below.

Category	10	8	6,4	2,0
Passage/Quote Selection	Selected passages reflect a deep understanding and analysis of text. There is a great variety of selection types: plot events,	Selected passages are meaningful; There is some variety of selection types.	Selected passages include few meaningful details for a thorough analysis of text OR there are too few selections	Selected passages have little or no apparent significance or meaning OR there are an insufficient amount of selections.

	dialogue, narration, etc.			
Left and Right: Literary Elements	Includes in-depth discussion of literary elements; addresses how elements such as tone, diction, organization and context contribute to purpose and meaning	Includes discussion literary elements; does not completely address how they contribute to meaning	Includes some identification of literary elements; has virtually no discussion of contribution to meaning	Includes few literary elements; has virtually no discussion of contribution to meaning
Right: Interpretation and commentary	Commentary provides thoughtful insight and connection to themes	Commentary intelligently addresses thematic connections	Commentary is vague and/or unsupported with little connection to theme	Commentary involves paraphrase or plot summary
Right: Personal connections and questions	Insightful personal connections and thought- provoking questions	Appropriate personal connections and pertinent questions	Limited personal connections and few or obvious questions	Limited personal connection and no good questions
Overall Effect: Appearance	Organized and professional	Neat and easily legible	Not easily legible	Sloppy and disorganized
Overall Effect: Coverage of text and assignment	Thoroughly and completely addresses all parts of the assignment; all directions are followed	Adequately addresses all parts of the assignment; most directions are followed	Not thorough (addresses most of the assignment); not all directions were followed.	Too short; directions not followed
Overall Score	_____ / 60			

Choosing Passages or Quotes from the Text:

Look for quotes that seem significant, powerful, thought provoking or puzzling. For example, you might record:

- Effective and/or creative use of stylistic or literary devices
- Passages that remind you of something you have encountered in Literature before
- Structural shifts or turns in the plot
- A passage that makes you realize something you hadn't seen before
- Examples of patterns: recurring images, ideas, colors, symbols or motifs.
- Passages with confusing language or unfamiliar vocabulary
- Events you find surprising or confusing
- Passages that illustrate a particular character or setting

Avoid merely summarizing the plot.

Responding To the Text:

You can respond to the text in a variety of ways. The most important thing to remember is that your observations should be ***specific and detailed***.

Basic Responses

- Raise questions about the beliefs and values implied in the text
- Give your personal reactions to the passage
- Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character(s)
- Tell what it reminds you of from your own experiences
- Write about what it makes you think or feel
- Agree or disagree with a character or the author

Sample Sentence Starters:

I really don't understand this because...

I really dislike/like this idea because...

I think the author is trying to say that...

This passage reminds me of a time in my life when...

If I were (name of character) at this point I would...

This part doesn't make sense because...

This character reminds me of (name of person) because...

Higher Level Responses

- Synthesize information to identify possible themes
- Analyze the text for use of literary devices (tone, structure, style, imagery)
- Make connections between different characters or events in the text
- Make connections to different texts (or film, song, etc...)
- Consider an event or description from the perspective of a different character
- Analyze a passage and its relationship to the story as a whole