

English 11 AP Dialectical Journal

Attachment 5

Reading is too often a passive experience for many students. They sit down with a book or article, pass their eyes over the words, and say that they have done the reading assignment hoping that the most difficult post-reading task they'll encounter will be a short quiz primarily composed of recall questions. One way to get students involved is through the use of the dialectical journal. The term indicates the tension between reader and text that occurs when students struggle to derive meaning from a difficult or unfamiliar work.

What is it?	The journal is a double-entry, note-taking process done while reading any genre of literature. It is an attempt to transfer a reader's interior monologue on paper by providing two columns which are in dialogue with one another, not only developing a method of critical reading but also encouraging habits of reflective questioning/thinking.
Why is it Important:	In the right-hand column, the reader "owns" or "comments" on important text that has been identified. The dialectical journal helps readers critically think about the text they are reading. By keeping a dialectical journal, students are brought to think "for themselves" about a text and offer their own interpretations.
How is it done?	<p>Draw a line down the middle of a piece of notebook paper, thereby making two columns. The left column, labeled "text" or note taking" is used for traditional note forms of <u>direct quotations</u> and citations or summaries. Thus, when they finish they have a summary of the material they have read.</p> <p>The right column is used for <u>commenting</u> on the left-column notes. Here students record their questions, comments, and ideas next to the text that has piqued their interest. As students take notes, regularly re-read previous pages of notes and comments, drawing any new connections in a right column summary before starting another page of note-taking/note-making. The top 1' margin of the page is reserved for biographical information, teacher directed comments, or any pre-reading information that might help the reader better understand and appreciate the text.</p>

NOTE TAKING	NOTE MAKING
<p>(also known as: text references or identification)</p> <p><i>~reading notes, direct quotes, summaries, lists, images, w/page numbers included</i></p> <p>~citation....(pp)</p> <p>~(if applicable, include column #)</p> <p>~citation....(pp)</p> <p>~citation....(pp)</p> <p>~ citation....(pp)</p>	<p>(commentary on the reference; our thoughts)</p> <p><i>~ notes about your left column: summaries, evaluations, judgments, comparisons, contrasts, analysis</i></p> <p>~Why did I copy this passage or make this note?</p> <p>~Why is it important to me? Is there a connection to other information? What can I infer?</p> <p>~commentary</p> <p>~questions, meaning</p> <p>~inferences</p>