

Activity: Journaling Together

Source: Errol Alger, Art

Materials needed: Hardcopy journal OR D2L

Goals: To connect student and instructor in an informal exchange of ideas. To have students reflect on a relevant topic to better understand their own experience.

Assessment: Completed/Not Completed

Graded? Yes, as optional extra credit

Method: Offer students a chance to exchange focused writing with yourself. Select a topic relevant to a unit that you would like students to reflect about more deeply. Set the prompt and the deadline, explaining that the exchange is not visible to the entire class but a one-on-one conversation with the instructor. When work is submitted, reply directly and privately to each response showing that you have read their response and value their attention to the prompt. Clarify the duration of the exchange: is this simply a single exchange or is it open to several back-and-forths?

This kind of project could be assigned in keystone units that you wish to monitor more closely. This might also be assigned in units that are particularly challenging to students either for their subject matter or skill level demanded. This might also be assigned when students must work on a more independent level so that you could provide a less informal connection while they are working on a project.