

## Building Your Creative Writing Journal

You are expected to keep a journal in this course. It will serve a different purpose in each quarter.

**Q13: You will experiment with poetry, play with prose, and work on class exercises in your journal. You are expected to maintain an approximate schedule of 5 pages per week. This means that you will have 35 pages to submit for a grade by Friday, 3/31 at 11:59 PM. This grade will count 3x in your Q3 average. I will grade it using the rubric at the bottom of this document.**

**Q4: You will take notes, complete class exercises and work on your short story in your journal. However, this information will be important for you to have as you progress through your short story writing process, so you will NOT be submitting the Q4 journal for a grade.**

Your journal can be electronic (a Google Doc) or hard copy (either printed, numbered, collated and stapled pages, or a notebook or other book-style journal). Please be advised that you are NOT invited to email or Google “share” your journal with me. You will either submit it as a Google Doc via Google Classroom, or you will hand in your hard copy to me in person. Plan accordingly and set up your journal in a way that works best for you. However, you will need to write in it daily in class and also sometimes at home. Additionally, each student will keep only 1 journal; I will not read from multiple sources. That just gets way too complicated for me.

To get an A (90-100), you must complete the following requirements:

- The pages in your journal must be numbered. The advantage to an electronic journal is that Google Docs will do this for you.
- When we talk about the number of “pages” due, I respect that some of your pages will NOT be full from top to bottom. That’s fine. When you finish one idea/concept/experiment/piece, start the next one on a new page. But also don’t try to scam me -- I am not an idiot. A person with 35 pages that each only occupy 2 lines has NOT met the requirement for a good grade.

If you are writing a multi-page piece (like a story), yes, that counts as multiple pages. Google will just keep numbering the page like a book. You should do the same in a hard copy journal.

Most of the exercises we work on in class will be allowed to count for journal pages. Notes cannot. If you aren’t sure if something can count as a journal page, just ask.

**THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT:** By law, I am what NYS calls a “mandatory reporter.” This means that I am required to report to Student Services any indication of a student being harmed, causing/potentially causing harm to others, or causing/potentially causing harm to him/herself. Please keep this in mind as you write. If you desire to create a fictional character who might meet some of those aforementioned criteria, you **MUST** write “**This is fiction**” at the top of the entry or piece. If you do not, I will assume that your expression is literal, and therefore I will guide you toward help, as I am required, and want, to do,

### What Should I Write About?

Your journal is a place where you try out and try on the writing voices, styles, devices and concepts we work on in the course.

Please read the lists below carefully and ask me questions if you are confused or unsure how to proceed.

What your journal could be:

- Poems, parts of poems, short poems, songs, long poems, poem ideas...
- Prose, parts of stories, story beginnings, dialogues, narratives...
- Observations, reflections, commentary on something you witnessed or read...
- Character descriptions, character development...
- Setting descriptions, setting development...
- Sensory reactions, memory recollections, imaginings...

What your journal is not:

- A diary (Please don't address your journal in a “Dear Journal” fashion.)
- An extension of your other social media (Please don't share elicited activities and events with me; I do not want to read about your inappropriate weekend activities, the inappropriate behaviors of others we both know, or your most personal relationship moments. That gets weird and awkward really fast.)
- A request for advice beyond my role as writer and writing teacher (please do not ask me for social advice, dating advice, psychological advice, parenting advice, medical advice, etc.)
- An opportunity to shock me (Please don't forget that I am old, have been teaching for 3 decades and have 3 kids of my own; I have seen and know a lot so writing something solely for the purpose of showing me how cool you are, and/or how awkward or uncomfortable you can make me feel, is not only

pointless because it's uninteresting to me, but it's also probably unoriginal and thus not creative.)

A chance for me to judge you (My goal with the journal is to extract more writing opportunities for you and maybe let you know if something has potential to be great...or is already great. I am not here to judge your life or your experiences.)

A place to record -- or plagiarize -- someone else's work (Only your work should be in this journal unless you are citing something that inspires you or that you are using as an allusion; all plagiarism will receive a 0. I do not negotiate with plagiarizers.)

A chit for bargaining (The rules of the journal grading are pretty simple; follow them if you want a good grade and, if you do not, don't try to bargain with me because I am not interested. So if you write fewer pages than required or whatever work-around you might want to try, just expect that I will deduct points accordingly.)

A waster of my time (If you nonsense or intentionally avoid what is expected of you, your grade will reflect that; instead of expending energy trying to work around my requirements, just meet them.)

### Grading

A/A-  (90-100)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You have completed the 35 required pages.</li><li>• Your pages are numbered, appropriate, and demonstrate practice with creative prose and/or poetry writing.</li><li>• There is variety and/or creativity in your ideas and work.</li><li>• Your grammar and mechanics are strong.</li></ul>
B/B+  (80-89)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You have completed the 35 required pages.</li><li>• Your pages are numbered, appropriate, and demonstrate practice with creative prose and/or poetry writing.</li><li>• Your entries are work toward creativity and grammatical/mechanical accuracy.</li></ul>
C  (65-79)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You have not completed the 35 required pages.</li><li>• Your entries do not demonstrate evidence of prose and/or poetry learning and development and/or</li><li>• Your entries do not conform to the rules of grammar and mechanics.</li></ul>
F  (<65)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You have completed 50% or less of the required pages and</li><li>• Meet some or all of the level C criteria.</li></ul>

