

Dialectal Journals

The term “Dialectic” means “the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer.” Think of your dialectical journal as a series of conversations with the texts we read during this course. The process is meant to help you develop a better understanding of the texts we read. Use your journal to incorporate your personal responses to the texts, your ideas about the themes we cover and our class discussions. You will find that it is a useful way to process what you’re reading, and/or prepare yourself for group discussion.

Procedure (How You Do it):

[Here is a template](#) for the dialectal Journal.

1. **As you read**, choose passages that stand out to you and record them in the left-hand column of the chart (ALWAYS include page numbers). Use your [SIFT Protocol](#).

You may use the provided Google Doc template or Google Slides template. (Hint: Slides are more interesting.)

2. In the right column, write your response to the text (ideas/insights, questions, reflections, and comments on each passage)

3. You must label your responses using the following codes:

- (Q) Question – ask about something in the passage that is unclear
- (C) Connect – make a connection to your life, the world, or another text
- (P) Predict – anticipate what will occur based on what’s in the passage
- (CL) Clarify – answer earlier questions or confirm/disaffirm a prediction
- (R) Reflect – think deeply about what the passage means in a broad sense – not just to the characters in the story/author of the article. What conclusions can you draw about the world, about human nature, or just the way things work?
- (E) Evaluate - make a judgment about what the author is trying to say

Choosing the Passages from the Text:

- Look for quotes that seem significant, powerful, thought provoking or puzzling. For example, you might record:
- Effective &/or creative use of stylistic or literary devices
- Passages that remind you of your own life or something you've seen 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

Responding to the Text (The Most Important Part):

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. You can write as much as you want for each entry, but usually more *is* more. Below are some guidelines for responding.

<i>Basic Responses</i>	<i>Sample Sentence Starters:</i>	<i>Higher Level Responses</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">· 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· 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...	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· 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 a different text (or film, song, etc...)· Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character(s)· Consider an event or description from the perspective of a different character· Analyze a passage and its relationship to the story as a whole

Dialectal Journal Rubric

10	Demonstrates a complete understanding and interpretation of text evidence by a wide variety of reading skills and strategies in the responses	Writes a substantial number of responses, completing or going beyond the required amount.	Responses are thorough and thoughtful.	Exhibits a level of comprehension that extends beyond the literal to the personal, critical, evaluative responses.
6	Demonstrates adequate understanding and interpretation of text evidenced by some variety of skills and strategies in the responses.	Writes an adequate number of responses, completing only the required amount.	Responses are fairly thorough and are thoughtful.	Exhibits a level of comprehension that extends beyond the literal to the personal with some critical responses.
4	Demonstrates some understanding and interpretation of text evidenced by little variety of reading skills and strategies in the responses.	Writes a limited number of responses.	Some responses are incomplete or irrelevant.	Exhibits a level of comprehension that is mostly literal or personal, with few critical responses.
0	Demonstrates very limited understanding and interpretation of text evidenced by no variety of reading strategies in the responses.	Writes very few responses.	Many responses are disjointed incomplete or irrelevant.	Exhibits a level of comprehension that is mostly literal with some personal responses, and no critical responses.