

Dialectical Journal Guidelines for Summer Reading (24)

AP English Literature & Composition Summer Reading

DUE DATE: THE FIRST FULL DAY OF SCHOOL

Overview and Purpose

Dialectic means “the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer.” The “dialectic” was the method Socrates used to teach his students how to be actively engaged in the struggle to obtain meaning from an unfamiliar and challenging work. A dialectical journal is a **written conversation with yourself** about a text that encourages the habit of reflective questioning. You will use a double-entry form (see below) to examine details of a passage and synthesize your understanding of *The Kite Runner*

When writing in your journal, there is to be **NO COLLABORATION** with other classmates. In addition, any assistance from the internet, movies, or secondary literary icons such as Cliff, Schmoop, and/or Sparky will be viewed as cheating. Of course, when school resumes, **we will be getting in our circles for discussion**, but the journal is strictly your responsibility. For now, just read and respond. That is all we want you to do.

If you have questions about format or directions, email anne.fine@knoxschools.org.

Your Instructions

1. We will be reading and responding to *The Kite Runner*;
2. Purchase a **marbled composition book** of sorts;
3. When you are ready to read and respond, fold pages in half, vertically, or draw a vertical line down the middle of the page. In essence, make a T-chart for each page;
4. Label the top of each column on the page like this: **TEXT** on the left and **RESPONSE** on the right;
5. Grab a pencil and some sticky notes. You will need these to mark passages and situations that you want to respond to.

HOW DO I START?

- **On the first page of your journal**, write the title and the author. You may embellish this page with art work if you wish. We always love to see the creativity from you guys.
- **For pages 2-3 of your journal**: research the following and write a letter to your AP Lit instructor introducing this writer, assuming that he/she is an alien from Mars and has not a clue about any of this. (Do not include any items from the bio that do not answer these questions. If you are not sure who your instructor is, just write "Dear Instructor:")
 1. Who is your author? What is the time period of his/her life?
 2. What did he/she enjoy writing about?
 3. Does your research note that this person has/had a particular style? If so, include this in your letter to me.
 4. What was going on in the world/society that may have influenced the writer or writing of this text?

On page 4 of your journal, WRITE DOWN THE THEMES OF YOUR TEXT. You can get this information online, and we are okay with most of the usual cites, except for Wikipedia. This will help you make connections during your reading and possibly help you with your essay when we are done. **Visit a few cites, rather than just one, so you see some differences.**

On page 5 of your journal, write down the requirements for your text. In other words, write down how often you are to make an entry in this journal according to this chart:

<i>The Kite Runner</i>	Responses
Chapters 1-10	5 responses
Chapters 11-14	5 responses
Chapters 15-23	5 responses
Chapters 24-25	2 responses
Reflection Page (1 page or more)	What important ideas does this text exploit or develop? Why is this important? How does this text remind us about what it means to be human?

When you are ready to respond:

- MAKE A T-CHART ON EACH PAGE (See #'s 3-4 above).
- In the TEXT column, cite passages or explain a "moment" from the novel, including quotation marks and page numbers. **An entry without a page number will not be considered. Repeat: an entry without a page number will not be considered.**
- ***Think about these universal ideas when choosing your passages: guilt, friendship, forgiveness, loss, and desire for atonement, and desire to be better. Journals that are insightful surveys of these ideas incorporated with a student's thoughts will receive a higher score than journals that simply summarize, question and predict. Avoid questions. Avoid generalizing about how "great" this book is. See the rubric below.***

HOW DO I FIND MY PASSAGES/MOMENTS?

Write passages/moments down accordingly (on the text side):

- When you read details that seem important to you.
- When you have an epiphany
- When you learn something significant about a character
- When you recognize a pattern (overlapping images, idea repeats, details, slogans, etc.)
- When you really agree or really disagree with something the character does.
- When you find a meaningful quote
- When you notice that the writer's style is significant to the overall meaning of the work
- When you notice effective use of a literary device.

HOW DO I RESPOND?

FINDING THE GRAY AREAS: In the **RESPONSE** column reflect upon the passages as such:

- Challenge** the ideas, beliefs, and/or values implied in the text.
- You may include** a reaction to the passage, characters, or situation
- Discuss the words or ideas of the author or character.
- Explain that it connects to another novel.
- Compare the passage to other characters.
- Argue with or speak to the characters or author.
- Make connections to any themes** that are revealed to you.
- Make connections among other passages** or sections of the work
- DO NOT SUMMARIZE** the plot or what you have just cited. Respond and analyze.

HOW WILL THIS BE ASSESSED?

FOR ASSESSMENT PURPOSES (AKA if you want an A):

- ✓ Each response must be at least 60 words. **Include your word count at the end of each response.**
- ✓ HINT: If you READ WITH A PENCIL and write down your ideas immediately after finishing a chapter, you will have fresh information for your responses. HINT: Skip the highlighter. Read and annotate with your pen or pencil.
- ✓ Regularly read and re-read the previous pages of your notes and comments; that is how you will end up with a journal that has explored an overall concept/theme, etc., and might be an aid when you write your final paper.

- ✓ **FIRST PERSON** is acceptable in the response column. Be creative in your responses. **Use your voice.**
- ✓ Vary your selected quotations between dialogue and non-dialogue.
(Remember, this is not a book report or summary book.)

SO, on page 6, you can begin your journaling. **Write the section title from the book (For example, "Part 1") at the top of the pages and draw the line down the middle to split the page in half. The text or moment goes on the left; your "conversation with yourself" goes on the right.**

Assessment Guide & Reminders

SUBMIT YOUR JOURNAL:

- **IT IS our hope that you will make this journal a collection of your thoughts and analyses--a record that you can be proud of. So, feel free, to decorate or doodle or draw whatever comes to mind while you are having that "conversation with yourself." And by all means, be honest. If a character makes you angry, then say so.**
- **Make sure you have followed the directions here. If you have questions, please let us know.**
- **Your journal will be collected on the first FULL day of school.**

A = Meaningful passages and quotation selections. Thoughtful interpretation and commentary about the text; avoids clichés. Includes comments about literary devices such as theme, narrative voice (POV), imagery, conflict, etc. and how each contributes to the meaning of the text. Makes insightful personal connections and asks thought-provoking questions. Coverage of text is complete and thorough. Journal is neat, organized and professional-looking; student has followed directions in creation of journal.

B = Less detailed, but good quote selections. Some intelligent commentary; addresses some thematic connections. Includes some literary devices, but less on how they contribute to the meaning. Some personal connections; asks pertinent questions. Adequately addresses all parts of reading assignment. Journal is neat and readable; student has followed directions in the organization of journal.

C = Few good details from the text. Most of the commentary is vague, unsupported, or plot summary/paraphrase. Some listing of literary elements; virtually no discussion of meaning. Limited personal connection; asks few, or obvious questions. Addresses most of the reading assignment, but is not very long or thorough. Journal is relatively neat, but may be difficult to read. Student has not followed all directions for organization;

D = Less than C work, right? You get the picture.