

2024-2025 Reading Assignment: HONORS English 9

Dialectical Journal Directions

Think of your dialectical journal as a series of conversations with the texts you read. The process is meant to help you develop a better understanding of the texts as you read them. Use your journal to incorporate your personal responses to the texts, your ideas about the themes, and your evaluations of the texts' rhetoric. You will find that it is a useful way to process what you are reading, prepare yourself for group discussions, and analyze the way the authors present their ideas and arguments.

PROCEDURE:

- Select a novel from the attached list.
- 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).
- In the right column, write your response to the text (ideas/insights, questions, reflections, and comments on each passage).
 - You must label your responses using the following codes:
 - **(S) Setting(s)** – Find a quote that describes the setting or settings of your novel. Underline words that use imagery, or appeal to your senses. How does this description affect the reader's mood?
 - **(C) Characterization-** Referencing lines from the text, comment on a main character. What traits does he/she have that are getting in the way or contributing to his/her success? Does this character remind you of someone you know? Yourself, perhaps? Talk about more than their hat size, please. Track how your main characters change throughout the novel.
 - **(TI) Thematic Ideas** – A theme is a universal message about life implied by. The author. Find a quote that demonstrates a universal idea about life (coming of age, survival, society vs. self, prejudice, abuse of power, dehumanization, family, trauma, and identity, etc.) Explain how this idea impacts the character's life and note how this idea can be applied to any human.
 - **(T) Title** – Often the deeper meanings of book titles are not evident until the end. Quote references to your book's title and explain how it fits this part of the plot. As you read, note how the title takes on deeper meaning.
 - **(POV) Point of View** – The novel's point of view will impact how the narrative unfolds. Select a quote that distinctly represents your narrator's point of view. Explain how this point of view limits or expands your knowledge of the narrative in that moment. What traits, biases, or habits of your narrator impact what they do or do not share? How does this limit or open the reader's eyes to the plot?
- Your dialectical journal should have at least 30 well-developed entries and cover the entire book. You must have at least **three** entries per category. It is up to you to determine which categories you would like to exceed the three-entry requirement in order to have 30 well-developed entries.
- Remember, you will use this on your test, so be sure to make entries meaningful and useful later.
- **MLA Style Parenthetical Citation:** You will be required to cite each page number for each quote. Your parenthetical citation should include the author's last name and the page number after each quote. Example: (Hinton 42).

Sample Dialectical Journal entries from *The Outsiders*

| Quotation From the Text You will need at least 30 entries | Response |
|---|--|
| <p>1. "I'm not sure how you spell it, but it's an abbreviation for the Socials, the jet set, the Westside rich kids. It's like the term 'greaser', which is used to class all us boys on the East Side. We're poorer than the Socs and the middle class. I reckon we're wilder, too." (Hinton 2).</p> <p>Context: Pony Boy is explaining the dynamics of his setting.</p> | <p>(TI) Theme of judging others. People really do judge each other based on money and social status. Even though this book was set in the 1960's, conflict like this still goes on even today. This is established very early on, and it seems as if it will be ongoing throughout the book.</p> |
| <p>2. "...I would have never done it-- this girl beside me kind of gasped, and said, "They are right. You are a hood." That didn't make me feel so hot" (Hinton 15).</p> <p>Context: Pony Boy is talking about girls like Cherry, a Soc at his school.</p> | <p>(C) The reader can assume that Pony Boy wants to impress girls like Cherry, but the negative stereotype of 'greaser' gets in the way.</p> |

RESPONDING TO THE TEXT:

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*. High scoring responses will be written in complete sentences and will thoroughly respond to each category prompt.

You can write as much as you want for each entry.

While you may begin with initial annotations, entries themselves must be typed or neatly handwritten.

Rubric for Dialectical Journal

Critical Reader (detailed, elaborate responses)—**A+**

- Extra effort is evident.
- You include more than the minimal number of entries.
- Your quotes are relevant, important, thought provoking, and representative of the big ideas of the text.
- You can “read between the lines” of the text (inference).
- You consider meaning of the text in a universal sense.
- You create new meaning through connections with your own experiences or other texts.
- You carry on a dialogue with the writer. You question, agree, disagree, appreciate, and object.
- Sentences are grammatically correct with correct spelling and punctuation.

Connected Reader (detailed responses)—**A:**

- A solid effort is evident.
- You include all acceptable entries.
- Your quotes are relevant and connect to the big ideas of the text.
- Entries exhibit insight and thoughtful analysis.
- You construct a thoughtful interpretation of the text.
- You show some ability to make meaning of what you read.
- You create some new meaning through connections with your own experiences and the text.
- You explain the general significance.
- You raise interesting questions.
- You explain why you agree or disagree with the text.

Thoughtful Reader (somewhat detailed responses)—**B:**

- You include all 30 completed entries.
- Sentences are mostly correct with a few careless spelling and grammatical errors.
- You selected quotes that may be interesting to you, but that don’t necessarily connect to the big ideas of the text.
- Entries exhibit insight and thoughtful analysis at times.
- You make connections, but explain with little detail.
- You rarely make new meaning from the reading.
- You ask simple questions of the text.
- You may agree or disagree, but don’t support your views.

Literal Reader (simple, factual responses)—**C:**

- You include mostly acceptable entries.
- Entries exhibit limited insight or none at all.
- You accept the text literally.
- You are reluctant to create meaning from the text.
- You make few connections which lack detail.
- You are sometimes confused by unclear or difficult sections of the text.

Limited Reader (perfunctory responses)—**D:**

- You include several unacceptable entries.
- Very little effort is evident.
- You find the text confusing, but make no attempt to figure it out.
- You create little or no meaning from the text.
- You make an occasional connection to the text, and the ideas lack development.
- Sentences contain numerous grammatical and spelling errors.

Additional deductions will be applied for any of the general expectations that are not met.

Name _____ Book _____

Dialectical Journal

(S) Setting(s) – Find a quote that describes the setting or settings of your novel. Underline words that use imagery, or appeal to your senses. How does this description affect the reader’s mood?

(C) Characterization- Referencing lines from the text, comment on a main character. What traits does he/she have that are getting in the way or contributing to his/her success? Does this character remind you of someone you know? Yourself, perhaps? Talk about more than their hat size, please. Track how your main characters change throughout the novel.

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(T) Title – Often the deeper meanings of book titles are not evident until the end. Quote references to your book’s title and explain how it fits this part of the plot. As you read, note how the title takes on deeper meaning.

(POV) Point of View – The novel’s point of view will impact how the narrative unfolds. Select a quote that distinctly represents your narrator’s point of view. Explain how this point of view limits or expands your knowledge of the narrative in that moment. What traits, biases, or habits of your narrator impact what they do or do not share? How does this limit or open the reader’s eyes to the plot?

| Quotation From the Text | Response |
|--|----------|
| Quote with page #: Context: | |
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