



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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Analysis of Character Journal

A Guide to Using the Student Resource

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

Dialectical journals allow a reader to record observations and comments about a text. Students can use these journals to perform a number of close reading activities, including tracing the development of a character over the course of an extended text. A dialectical journal will help students keep a record of the patterns they notice as they read a text and then, the record of that pattern (and the page numbers of the text) will be at hand when students prepare to write an essay that asks them to synthesize many parts of the text into a coherent and cohesive analysis.

This lesson provides a template for students when they are asked to keep a dialectical journal analyzing one or more characters in a text. Teachers are encouraged to use this model when assigning rich, multi-layered texts from their own curriculum.

This resource is included in Module 2:
Understanding Text Complexity.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

The Student Resource pages provide one blank journal template so that teachers can either model how to create a journal entry for students, or pre-populate the example in the Word® document before printing the Student Resource pages. The sample journal entry will be most effective if teachers use the text that students are currently studying.

If students are new to tracing the development of a character through an extended work, focus students' attention on specific parts of the text they can use as the basis of their character journal.

Give specific instructions on the number of entries a student is required to have in the journal, keeping in mind the amount of grading that will be involved when students turn in the journal. A few excellent entries will give students a richer learning experience than many mediocre ones.

One incentive for students to keep a journal with accurate and insightful commentary is their ability to use the journals in writing situations. Having a journal, especially for use in a timed writing, gives students some preparation before writing an analytical essay.

