



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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Analysis of Theme 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 the meaning of a work as a whole 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 those patterns (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 resource provides a structure for students when they are asked to keep a dialectical journal analyzing one or more themes developed 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 3: *Generating Text-Based Responses*.

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

Use the student activity pages to create a sample journal entry for students using whatever text they will be studying.

If students are new to tracing a theme through an extended work, focus students' attention on specific parts of the text they can use as the basis of their journal or give them a selection of thematic ideas to focus on.

Model how to complete the journal entries and 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.

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Thematic ideas:

Evidence (quotation or detail and context)	Inference—Commentary
<p>Textual reference—</p> <p>Context:</p>	<p>Thematic idea suggested by evidence—</p> <p>Commentary:</p>
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