

## REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES FOR THE READING JOURNAL

- Final copy of the written journals must be **word-processed, proofread, and printed**, to be submitted on the first day of class. Oral report journals should also be written in the same format and also kept in the e-mail account for reference.
- Each journal should consist of at least three separate entries per work of 200 - 250 words, creating a 600 – 750-word response for each book.
- According to the format in the accompanying sample, students should date each entry.
- Each entry should respond to the following guide questions. (Not all questions will apply to each entry, but students should try to address each prompt question *at least once* in their entries.)
- Older and more experienced students, especially rising English Honors students, should focus on questions 11 – 14 as a means of commenting on author's style, technique, and thematic intentions.
- Remember: a journal is not the same as writing an essay or book report; it is less formal and provides an opportunity for reflection on connecting with the author emotionally and intellectually.
  1. Explain your feelings after reading the opening chapter(s) of the book? After reading half of the book? After finishing the book?
  2. Describe your emotional response to the book. Laughter? Tears? Frustration? Celebration? Explain.
  3. What is the most important word / passage / event in the book? Explain.
  4. What came as a surprise in the book? Why?
  5. What character(s) do you like and / or dislike? Why?
  6. Do you or others whom you know resemble any of the characters? Explain.
  7. Do you think the title fits the book? Why or why not?
  8. What was the author saying about life or living?
  9. Did the book help or change you in some way?
  10. Would you recommend this book to someone else? Why or why not?

For English III and IV students (and especially honors students):

11. What are the most effective techniques that the author uses? What are the effects of these techniques? Give examples.
12. Are there surprising developments in the plot? When do they happen? How and why are those developments important?
13. What is the major theme (central idea) of the book? What idea(s) does the author want you to gain from the reading?
14. What elements of language (words, images, sentence style) did you find particularly powerful?

