

Honors Modern Literature

Reading Journal

For each reading assignment, you will be required to keep a reading journal. The purpose of the journal is simply to interact with the novel. As a journal, there is no formal organization or structure it needs to follow. It doesn't even have to be grammatically correct (but keep it readable, at least!).

The only requirements for the journal are as follows:

- Be sure to title the journal by the title of the novel and the section you are responding to: for instance, *The Book Thief*, Part 1
- Include details or quotes from the assigned section of reading. I need to be able to tell that you read.
- The journal needs to be at least 1½ pages handwritten on college-ruled paper. Of course, handwriting varies wildly, as does line width, so this requirement can be difficult to grade if you are not taking the assignment seriously. If I can see that you are seriously engaging with the text, I will be satisfied. If it looks like you are writing as little as possible to try and just get credit for an assignment you care nothing about, then I can usually tell, and will be more strict with the length requirement. So, use this assignment as an opportunity to seriously write your thoughts, and you should be fine.

Think of this assignment as a place to jot down notes or questions or thoughts to bring up during discussion. Since you are graded on your participation in class, coming in having written specifics down will help you remember the things you wanted to discuss.

Finally, if you are presenting on a given reading assignment, then you are excused from the reading journal and the discussion participation because you will already be receiving a grade for that assignment.

Participation

You will each receive a participation grade for every in-class discussion. For this grade, I will simply keep a tally of each time you bring up a relevant point or ask a relevant question that contributes to the discussion as a whole. Our discussions are only meaningful if students are actually discussing, so I give you a grade to give you that extra encouragement to speak up. I will also be grading on whether you are attentive and engaged throughout the entire discussion and whether you participate in a polite and mannerly fashion. In other words, if you dominate the first part of the discussion and then fall asleep (or start on homework for another class), your grade will be lowered. Again, discussions are supposed to be fun, so come in ready to participate!