

Student Reading Response Journal Questions

Students respond for approximately five minutes in a writing journal to a question posted in class prior to reading. Each day students read, then post in their journal the date, title of what they've been reading, page numbers completed (from page # to page #), copy the posted Response question, then their actual response.

Miscellaneous Prompts

- After reading, I wonder...
- Are the characters realistic (do they seem like they could be real people)? Why or why not?
- Create a plot diagram.
- Create a timeline of events from what you have read so far.
- Create a 'WANTED' poster for the antagonist.
- Describe a character that you would like to meet (which doesn't mean that you think you would like the character, but that you think the character would be interesting). List 4 questions that you would ask.
- Describe something you have read that is similar to this.
- Describe the main characters.
- Describe the major conflict. What side are you on?
- Describe the most important event. Give at least three reasons why you think it is the most important event.
- Describe the setting – when and where what you are reading takes place.
- Describe the setting's time and place. Create a new setting that you think would be better for the story and describe it.
- Describe the setting's time and place. Draw it.
- Describe the setting's time and place. List the clues that helped you identify the setting.
- Describe what was either believable or unbelievable about your reading. Defend your opinion.
- Describe the similarities and differences between the main character and you.
- Describe the theme (central meaning/message) of your reading.

- Describe your least favorite character and explain why. Describe your most favorite character and explain why.
- Do any of the characters feeling change as you've read? Explain why or why not.
- Do you like what you're reading? Why or why not?
- Does the title fit the story? Why or why not?
- Draw a comic strip or graphic novel page for what you just read.
- Draw a line down the center of your paper. On the left, write facts from what you read. On the right, write your personal opinions about what you read.
- Draw a line down the center of your paper. Write a cause (why did it happen?) on the left and its effect (what happened?) on the right. Do this until you have three cause and effects listed.
- Draw a picture for what you just read.
- Draw an interpretation of the passage – may be a picture, symbols, graphic organizer.
- Draw 4 objects that represent your reading. Write a sentence for each, telling what each item says about what you've been reading.
- Draw the line down the center of your paper. On the left, list what you like about what you read and why. On the right, list what you didn't like and why.
- Explain how you have been surprised by what you are reading.
- How did the reading make you feel? Why?
- How do authors characterize their actors? (Dialogue, direct commentary, actions...) Explain.
- How have your feelings changed as you've been reading?
- If the author were here, what would you say and ask him/her?
- If you could change what you're reading, how would you change it?
- If you could talk to the author, what questions would you ask? Why?
- If you could talk to the author, what would you want to tell them about yourself? Why? How does that relate to what you've been reading?
- If you were a character in this book, who would you be? Why?
- If you were the author, how would this end?
- If you were the author, what would you change? Why?
- If you were the author, what would you have happening next?
- In 4-6 sentences, describe several insights you've gained from your reading.
- In few sentences, summarize what you read today.
- Is what you are reading believable? Why or why not?
- Is the setting described well enough that can put a picture of it in your mind? Why or why not?

- List at least three problems the characters faced? Which was the most life changing? Explain
- List five major events in order from which happened first to last.
- List the personality characteristics of the main character (feelings, interests, behaviors, etc.)
- List the physical characteristics of the main character (clothing, physical features, etc.)
- List three new vocabulary words from your reading. What can you tell about them from their structure? What can you tell about them from their context?
- List three questions you have about what you read.
- Make a timeline of the events that have occurred in your book so far...
- Predict what will happen next.
- Pretend what you are reading is nominated for a national award. Explain why you think it should or should not receive an award.
- Pretend you are a talk show host and two characters are the guests on your show. Which characters would you chose and why? List two questions that you, the host, would ask each character.
- Pretend you are famous reporter on TV. Write a story about what you've read for the evening news.
- Pretend you are the friend of one of the characters. Write him or her a letter.
- Pretend you get to create the music soundtrack for what you've been reading. What five songs would you include? Write an explanation for each song: why would you include it, how does the song connect to events.
- Pretend you have special powers and could put yourself in your reading. Where would you put yourself and why? How would you being there change the story?
- Pretend your job is to write magazine ads. Create an ad for what you've been reading.
- Select a quote from your reading that you liked. What made you pick it? How does it make you pause and think?
- Quote a passage & respond to it. How did it make you feel?
- Summarize what you just read.
- Summarize what you read today.
- Summarize your favorite book. Make me want to read it!
- Tell me about the main character. What kind of person is he/she?
- Think of a problem that a character had to face. Write the problem and how the character solved it or is working to solve it. If you were that character, what would you do differently?

- Thinking about what you just read, draw the picture that appears in your mind.
- This connects to my life...
- This text relates to my life because...
- Use pictures/graphic organizer/web to represent your reading (so far) in the story.
- What are some things you do when you don't understand what you're reading?
- What are the two most important ideas from what you've been reading?
- What are two emotions the main character has felt? What made the main character feel that way?
- What character is like you? Describe how is he or she like you?
- What do you like about what you are reading?
- What do you think will happen next?
- What does this book remind you of?
- What emotions do you feel about your reading? Describe what is going on in the reading that makes you feel that way.
- What emotions did you feel while you read? Give details from your reading that made you feel that way.
- What event could have happened in real life? What would be similar in real life? What would be different in real life?
- What has been the most important part of what you've been reading?
- What has been the most interesting part of your reading?
- What has happened so far? What do you think will happen next?
- What have you been reading? What does it remind you of in your own life?
- What have you found boring about what you've been reading? What made it boring? If you were the author, what would you do to make it more interesting?
- What have you learned about life from what you're reading?
- What ideas do you have about what is going to happen? What clues have you read to give you those ideas?
- What is something you've learned from your reading?
- What is the author trying to tell you about life in this story? Defend this moral.
- What is the mood of what you're reading (happy, sad, funny, serious, etc.)? Defend your idea.
- What is the title of what you are reading? How does it fit the story? If you don't know yet how it fits the story, what is your best guess?
- What is your favorite part of the book you're reading? Why?
- What message or less was conveyed.
- What object is important? Draw it. Write an explanation for why you feel it is important.

- What passage describes how you want to live your life? Why?
- What questions would you like answered about your reading? Would you like the book/article better if you knew those answers now? Why?
- What special way did the author write (for example, flashbacks, told in first person, multiple voice narrative, foreshadowing, lost descriptive words that create visual images in your mind, etc.)? Did that make reading it better or worse? Explain.
- What surprises you in this story? Explain why.
- What was going through your mind as you read?
- What you are reading is going to be made into a movie. Create the movie poster.
- What you are reading is going to be made into a movie. Make a list five characters, what famous actor will play each character and what about the character makes that actor the best choice for the part.
- What you are reading is going to be made into a movie. You are the movie executive that chooses the location for the filming. Where would you chose and why?
- Which character do you like best? Why?
- Which character do you like least? Why?
- Who are the characters? Describe who they are, what they look like and how they are connected.
- Who is the author? What do you know about the author? What do you imagine the author must be like?
- Who is the most important character to you? Why?
- Who is the most interesting character in the book and why.
- Why did you choose this to read? Give at least 3 reasons.
- Why do you think the author wrote this?
- Without using complete sentences or paragraphs, reflect on today's reading.
- Would you be friends with the main character? Why or why not? Support w/ evidence from your reading.
- Would you recommend this book to friends? Why or Why not?
- Write a journal entry as if you were a certain character from your reading.
- Write a paragraph describing the setting.
- Write a quote from what you are reading that has meaning for you. Explain why you chose this quote.
- Write a quote from your reading that connects to your life. What did it mean to what you've been reading? What did it mean to your life?
- Write a review of what you just read (summary plus personal opinions).

- Write a summary of what you just read.
- Write a summary of what you've read.
- Write about a situation a character experiences. Write about a similar situation you experienced.
- Write about how one character feels. Write about a time you felt that way, too.
- Write down one word from your reading that you didn't know. What is your guess about what it means? How did you make that guess?
- Write an editorial, an opinion essay, about an event from your reading.
- Write an obituary for the protagonist or antagonist.
- Write the biography for one character.

Test Readiness Terms

Analyze

When analyzing, look closely at all the parts or ideas to explain how they are related.

- Analyze how your feelings change as you read this story and why.
- Analyze what motivates the main character's behavior.
- Analyze the author's ability to write. What does the author do most effectively? What does the author do least effectively?

Compare

When comparing things, look closely to find all things that are alike between them.

- Compare what is happening to a character in the book with your own or a friend's life.
- Compare the plot of what you are reading with your favorite book.
- Compare where you live to the setting described in what you are reading.

Contrast

When contrasting things, look closely to find all things that are different between them.

- How does what you are reading contrast with a novel you were assigned to read in school and didn't like reading.
- Contrast the theme of what you are reading with something you read last month.
- What would be a good contrast to the setting of what you are reading?

Define

When defining something, look at it carefully and identify the qualities that make it meaningful.

- Define what makes an interesting story or poem.
- Define what is needed to make a good setting.
- Define what is needed for a reader to be able to relate to a character.

Describe

When describing something, use descriptive words and lots of details. Describe it so that a person reading what you wrote can make a picture in their mind with what you are saying.

- Describe the important ideas in this story.
- Describe the similarities and differences between the main character and you.
- Describe the main characters.
- Describe the mood of what you are reading.

Differentiate

When you differentiate, you want to explain the difference.

- Differentiate between the main character and your favorite teacher.
- Differentiate between a good story or poem and a bad story or poem.
- Differentiate between the setting of what you are reading and where you live.

Discuss

When discussing something, closely examine the subject in detail.

- Discuss why you like or dislike what you are reading.
- Discuss what you think what moral, or life-lesson, can be found in what you are reading.
- Discuss what images appear in your mind as you read & how the author helped create those images.

Evaluate

When evaluating, look closely to determine what is important and significant.

- Evaluate whether the title fits the story.
- Evaluate the quality of the writing.
- Evaluate whether the main character would be worthy of your friendship.

Explain

When explaining something, give reasons why things happened or give reasons for how you got your answer.

- Explain what kind of reader would like this book most.
- Explain why somebody should or should not read this?
- How would you explain the plot of this story to somebody interested in reading it?

Identify

When identifying something, look closely and explain what makes it unique.

- Identify what the author has done to try to keep you reading the book.
- Identify the main characters. Describe what has happened that makes you believe they are the main characters?
- Identify the protagonist. Identify the antagonist. Describe what has happened that makes you believe they are the main characters?

Interpret

When interpreting something, think and examine it carefully, then give the meaning or significance of it.

- Pick the phrase from what you are reading that made you think. Interpret what the author meant.
- Pick out 2-4 words from what you are reading that you had difficulty understanding. Interpret what you think each word means based on context clues (other words around that word that might help you interpret what the author means).
- Which characters would you interpret to be ‘good’? Which would you interpret to be ‘bad’? What has the author written that leads you to those interpretations?

List

When creating a list about an event or thing, provide all of the details or all of the steps in order.

- List the reasons why another person should or should not read this.
- List the events, in order, that have happened so far in what you’ve been reading.
- List five characters and their personality and physical traits.

Main Idea

When looking at the main idea, look for the most important idea or reason.

- What is main idea? Defend your answer.
- Write the main idea of what you are reading and what are your reasons for thinking it is the main idea.

Outline

When outlining something, you are creating a brief description.

- Outline the important events of what you are reading.
- Outline the plot.
- Using outline form, describe what is needed for an effective poem or book

Prove

To prove something, you give details and examples for what you think or believe.

- Prove what the author is trying to tell you about life (the moral).
- Prove how reading this can change or impact the reader's life.
- Prove the theme of what you are reading (bravery, loyalty, friendship, loneliness, etc.).

Summary

To summarize, give a brief description of what happened with only a few details.

- Summarize what has happened in the book so far.
- Summarize what you just read. Make me want to read it!
- In few paragraphs, summarize what you read today.

Usually

Usually is a way to describing something that often, but not always, occurs.

- Usually a reader imagines the places being described in the story. Draw a picture of the image you have from this story. What do you usually see when reading a story?
- Usually an author uses descriptive words to allow us to set the mood and setting. How does this author do that? What words do you usually use?