

Name _____

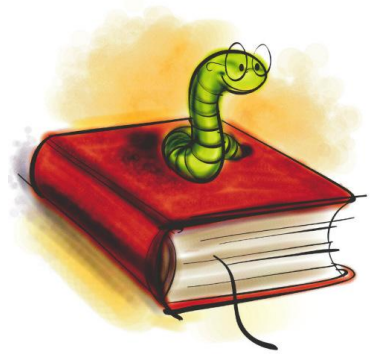
Date _____

Summer Reading

St. Bernard Parish Schools Rising Grades 7-8

DIALECTICAL JOURNALS

The term "Dialectic" means "the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer." Think of your dialectical journal as a series of conversations with the texts you read this summer. The process is meant to help you develop a better understanding of the texts we read. Use your journal to incorporate your personal responses to the texts. You will find that it is a useful way to process what you're reading, prepare yourself for group discussion, and gather textual evidence for your Literary Analysis assignments.



PROCEDURE: (JOURNAL IS DUE ON MONDAY, AUGUST 17, 2015)

- As you read, choose passages that stand out to you and record them in the left-hand column of a T-chart (*ALWAYS include page numbers*)
- In the right column, write your response to the text (ideas, questions, reflections, and comments on each passage)
- If you choose, you can label your responses using the following codes:
 - (Q) **Question** – ask about something in the passage that is unclear
 - (C) **Connect** – make a connection to your life, the world, or another text
 - (P) **Predict** – anticipate what will occur based on what's in the passage
 - (CL) **Clarify** – answer earlier questions or confirm/disaffirm a prediction
 - (R) **Reflect** – think deeply about what the passage means in a broad sense – not just to the characters in the story. What conclusions can you draw about the world, about human nature, or just the way things work?
 - (E) **Evaluate** – make a judgment about the character(s), their actions, or what the author is trying to say
- Complete journal entries for at least two passages each week in the summer. At least 20 journal entries are required, but the more the better!

Sample Dialectical Journal Entry from *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan

Passages from the text	Pg#s	Comments & Questions
"What I didn't tell them was that I'd have to get a summer job walking dogs or selling magazine subscriptions, and spend my free time worrying about where I'd go to school in the fall."	Pg 74	(R) Percy feels different from everybody else. He doesn't have as much money as the other kids at his school and feels alone because of it. Everybody also thinks he's a problem child, which can be really hard. I think this shows that kids who we think of as problems are maybe just feeling a little sad or alone.

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CHOOSING PASSAGES FROM THE TEXT:

Look for quotes that seem significant, powerful, thought provoking or puzzling. For example, you might record:

- Effective &/or creative use of stylistic or literary devices like symbolism, simile/metaphor, imagery, flashback, irony etc.
- Passages that remind you of your own life or something you've seen before
- Turns in the plot
- A passage that makes you realize something you hadn't seen before
- Examples of patterns: recurring images, ideas, colors, symbols.
- Passages with confusing language or unfamiliar vocabulary
- Events you find surprising or confusing
- Passages that illustrate a particular character or setting

RESPONDING TO THE TEXT:

You can *respond* to the text in a variety of ways. The most important thing to remember is that your observations should be **specific and detailed**. You can write as much as you want for each entry. You can use loose-leaf paper for your journals or download the template from the Author Study page on the ESA web site.

Basic Responses . . .

- Raise questions about the beliefs and values implied in the text
- Give your personal reactions to the passage
- Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character(s)
- Tell what it reminds you of from your own experiences
- Write about what it makes you think or feel
- Agree or disagree with a character or the author

Sample Sentence Starters:

I really don't understand this because...
I really dislike/like this idea because...
I think the author is trying to say that...
This passage reminds me of a time in my life when...
If I were (name of character) at this point I would...
This part doesn't make sense because...
This character reminds me of (name of person) because...

Characteristics of Higher Level Responses . . .

- Analyze the text for use of literary devices (tone, structure, style, imagery)
- Make connections between different characters or events in the text
- Make connections to a different text (or film, song, etc...)
- Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character(s)
- Consider an event or description from the perspective of a different character
- Analyze a passage and its relationship to the story as a whole
- Draw what you visualize in the text with regard to symbolism and imagery and explain their importance to the story