

Reading Response Instructions and Information

Purpose: The purpose of keeping a reading journal is to give you a chance to respond to the reading in writing just after you've completed the reading. Also, since some students don't feel completely comfortable speaking up in class, a reading journal gives those students an opportunity to show what they have gained from the reading material.

What's in a Reading Response?

Your reading response should contain each of the following **five** parts:

1. Begin your reading response with a general response to the reading. You can give your gut reaction to what the writer has written and explain your reaction. This part of the reading response is best done immediately after finishing the reading. (Length guideline: one paragraph.)
2. Next, provide a summary of the reading. (Length guideline: 2-3 paragraphs.)
3. You will always state the thesis of the reading in your own words in your reading response. You should also explain where you got the notion of what the thesis is. Your explanation of what you thought the author's thesis is should come from something you get from the text itself. You should be able to discuss what sort of appeals the writer uses to make the argument or thesis (logos, pathos, ethos). As you do the reading, you may want to underline in pencil phrases or sentences that may relate to the thesis. This will help you stay focused on what the writer wants you (the reader) to take away from the text. (Length guideline: 2-3 paragraphs.)
4. Discuss the authority of the writer. Does she or he have validity in your mind? How does that authority get established? Why doesn't it get established, in some cases? Do you believe what the writer is telling you, or do you think this person is off base, and why? Who is the intended audience, and how might the writer be crafting the piece to appeal to a target audience? (Length guideline: one paragraph.)
5. Relate this reading to something outside class. A personal experience, a reading from another class or school, a film, a song, a newspaper article, anything can resonate with the readings we are doing in this class. Explain how the reading relates to the other entity and why it is connected in your mind. (Length guideline: 2-3 paragraphs.)

Format: The reading response should be typed (double-spaced) and stapled together. The length of your response should correlate to the length of the reading you've done. Your name should be on the paper, along with the date, as well as the titles of the reading you are responding to. I'll return it to you and you can keep it all together in a folder.

Make sure you save the graded reading responses that I return to you.

Grading, Due Dates, and Other Important Points: The reading responses are due as indicated on the syllabus. If you are absent on a day that a response is due, you should e-mail me to let me know, and you should attach the response that is due. This will show me that you have completed the assignment on time. Then, when you return to class, give me a hard copy of the reading response. If your reading response is longer than one page and you don't staple it together, I will deduct from your grade. Make sure you do not fall behind.