



Double-Entry Journal

One of the best ways to engage with a literary text (story, novel, poem, play) is to have a conversation with it or its author. The DOUBLE-ENTRY JOURNAL allows you to do just that, and it can be used for many purposes, from getting more deeply into the text or passages from it for class discussion or short assignments all the way to generating ideas for analytical papers.

You can format your journal by drawing a line down the center of a page (though it's better to use facing pages, which will give you more room to write) or, on computer, as below, creating a table with one row and two columns.

Below are several, but by no means all, ways to use a DOUBLE-ENTRY JOURNAL.

Left-Hand Side	Right-Hand Side
Quote from the text	Visual commentary (drawings, visual analogies, doodles)
Quote from the text	Reactions (“This bugs, annoys, moves . . . me because . . .”), reflections (“I wonder if. . .”), musings (“Hmmm...”), questions (“I wonder why...”) with possible answers (“Maybe because . . .”)
Quote from the text	Connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Text to other text(s)—print, visual, aural ▪ Text to self ▪ Text to world
Quote from text	Significance in relation to piece as a whole; relating part to whole.
Quote from text	Social Questions (Race, class, gender issues)
Quote from text	Naming Literary Techniques
Quote from text	Imitations or parodies of text’s content or style.
Quotes from text	In generating ideas for a paper, relating passages to your thesis.

Created by Michael Weiser on 11/15/03 under a VCCS grant