

Comprehension & Vocabulary Journal Format for Novels

Journal entries should be completed in the order and format outlined below. In the top left hand corner, label your entry with your first and last name, date, Reading 96/97, title of book and journal #.

1. **SUMMARY:** Compose a brief summary of the text section (approximately one page). Here is one strategy for summarizing a large section:
 - a. List ALL the major characters and events from the text section. To narrow down the list, find the main event or theme that is driving the entire novel (i.e. a journey, someone's death, a war). Then cross out items from your original list that don't directly influence the main theme/event.
 - b. Next, summarize the main event/ theme in ONE sentence. Look for who—did what—why they did it—how they did it—when it was done.
 - c. Expand the one sentence summary with items from your original list that support and describe.
 - d. TIP—Avoid overuse of sequencing (i.e. then, then, next, then...).
2. **VOCABULARY:** Vocabulary words should be picked during reading. Look for unfamiliar words and/or words that you use less frequently.
 - a. Choose at least five words for each journal entry.
 - b. Write out the full sentence of context and include the page number.
 - c. Add a dictionary definition for the word.
 - d. Use the word in an original sentence that demonstrates your understanding.
 - e. Each vocabulary section will also require an activity to supplement it (i.e. Pictionary, root words, synonyms). These will be assigned in class.
3. **SEMINAR QUESTIONS:** Create three critical thinking seminar questions with lines after for handwritten answers. These questions must require more than a YES or NO answer. The intention is to generate discussion about events, characters or issues from the text.
 - a. Type your questions at the end of your journal entry. Leave some space between each question.
 - b. As your group talks about the questions in class seminar, hand-write your answers based on the dialogue.

