

7th & 8th Grade Literature with Mr. Kennar
Journaling Ideas

Writing about what we read is a great way for us to increase our knowledge and understanding of the books we read. In addition to your nightly reading of 20-30 minutes, please respond to one of the following prompts in your Literature journal:

1. Identify the main character. List the problem(s) he or she faces, and explain or predict how they get solved. If the problems do not get solved, explain why and tell how you might have solved them.
2. Summarize and evaluate two decisions made by the main character.
3. Select an important quote from the story (one to three sentences), and explain your personal connection to the quote. Also, show how the quote relates to a theme, conflict, or character in the text.
4. Describe a key event in the story and show how this event provides insight into a character's personality.
5. List several things that you value or that are important to you. List what your favorite character values. Compare and contrast these two lists, pointing out what you both have in common and how you differ.
6. Visualize a scene or a character from your story; use drawings or words to illustrate it.
7. Choose a minor character and show how he or she is important to the plot, main character, or themes in the story.
8. Identify and describe the changes the main character undergoes (physically and emotionally) throughout the story.
9. Write a critique of the book you are reading, and explain whether or not you would recommend this book or author to a friend.
10. Identify and explain one or two lessons you learned by reading this book.
11. Identify and describe the setting (time and place) of your book and explain how it is significant to the story.
12. Identify the theme of your novel. Justify your reasoning by providing evidence from the text.
13. Create a list of difficult or unknown words that you come across in the text and look up their meanings to increase your "word power."

In addition to these suggested prompts, you are permitted to write about a non-Literature-related topic (a “free” journal) once each week. I will collect and grade your journals twice each quarter for a total of 40 points (roughly equal to 2 tests). When scoring your journals, I look more at the quality of your writing than the quantity of journal entries. I will briefly check each week to make sure you are keeping up, but it is critical that you establish a consistent routine with your journaling. Those who fall behind with it have difficulty catching up. About 5-10 minutes a day is all it takes and your journal represents a good-sized chunk of your Literature grade for the quarter. I will help you select a novel if you’d like. Enjoy!

Mr. Kennar