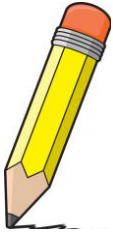


# Reader Response Journal Ideas



*Note: You are not required to use any of these ideas. You can read the literature selection and simply respond in whatever way you deem appropriate.*

Please put the book title, date, and journal prompt (if you are using one) at the top of the page. Use **concrete evidence** from the literature to support your claims. **Be specific.**

## **Author & Book**

1. Copy a powerful or meaningful quote/passage from the text. Explain why it is significant.
2. Write a letter to the author of the book.
3. Does the author try to persuade you in any way? How? Provide evidence from the text.
4. Will this book still be significant in 30 years? Why or why not?
5. List the questions you have after your reading.
6. What can you determine about the author's worldview or beliefs based on his/her book? Be specific and use passages from the text in your response.
7. How does the author provide information or details to make the story seem realistic?
8. What **point of view** is used to tell the story? How is this viewpoint effective? How would the story change if it were told from a different point of view (for instance, first person instead of third person or omniscient rather than limited) or from a different character's perspective?
9. What does the author do to make you want to continue reading?
10. Compare and contrast this book to another book you have read.
11. Select one biblical principle revealed in the novel – through plot, characters, and/or theme. What is the principle? How is it revealed in the novel? Can you think of a similar story in the Bible?

## **Setting**

The setting is the time and location that a story takes place. For some stories, the setting is very important; while for others, it is not.

Where does the story take place? Research the place and write a few paragraphs detailing what you learned.

1. What time period does the story take place? Research the time period and write a few paragraphs detailing what you learned.
2. If you could change the setting in this story to another setting, what setting would you choose? Why?
3. Sketch the setting of the story.
4. Drop one of the main characters into a new environment, time period, or situation. How does she respond? Write about it.

5. What feeling is created at the beginning of the story? Cheerful or eerie? (Include details to support your claim.)

## **Character**

1. Do any of the characters remind you of yourself? Which one? How are you similar: How are you different?
2. Write a letter to one of the characters.
3. Write a letter to one of the characters from another character's point of view.
4. Write a diary entry from the point of view of one of the characters. What is the character thinking or feeling?
5. Write interview questions for one of the main characters. Answer in the character's voice.
6. Summarize and evaluate decisions made by one of the main characters.
7. Who is your least favorite character? Why?
8. If you could choose one character from this book to meet, who would it be? Why? What would you talk about?
9. Select three key events from the story and show how each provided an understanding of a character's personality.
10. Create a character sketch (portraying personality and behavior) for one of the characters. If you prefer, use words or images (from magazines or online) or a combination of both.
11. Create a collage (digital or print) that symbolizes one of the characters in the story.
12. How do the character's actions affect other people in the story?
13. Choose a character in the story and write a short story based on this character.

## **Theme**

In literature, the **theme** refers to the main idea or moral of the story. Sometimes this main idea or moral is stated directly, and sometimes the reader has to think about the main idea. In most literary works, there could be more than one **theme**.

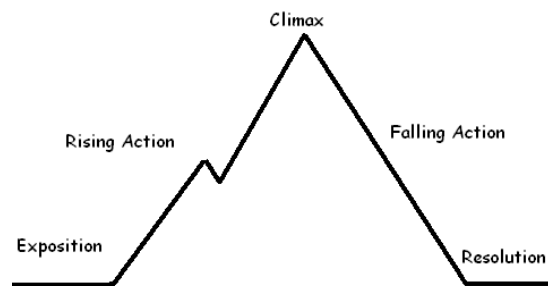
1. What is the dominant theme of the story? How is this evidenced in the text?
2. Does this story have multiple themes? What are they?
3. If this book was made into a movie, what song would go on the soundtrack? Why?
4. Create a collage that represents the theme of the story. Use magazines or create a digital collage. For example, if the theme is truth, cut out photos and images that symbolize truth.
5. How are the themes in this story relevant today?

## **Conflict and Plot**

There are five main elements in a **plot**. The first is the exposition. This is known as the beginning of the story where **characters** and **setting** are established. The second element of a plot is known

as the **rising action** which occurs when a series of events build up to the **conflict** (or main problem). The main characters are established by the time the rising action of a plot occurs and at the same time, events begin to get complicated. It is during this part of a story that excitement, tension or crisis is encountered. The third element of a plot is known as the **climax** (or the main point) of the plot. This is the turning point of the story and is meant to be the moment of highest interest and emotion. The reader wonders what is going to happen next. The fourth element of a plot is known as **falling action** (or the winding up of the story). Events and complications begin to resolve and the result of actions of the main characters are put forward. The last element of a plot is the **resolution** or (the conclusion). It is the end of a story and ends with either a happy or a tragic ending.

1. After finishing a story, create a story map. Write a few sentences explaining each part of the plot.



2. If you could change the life or lives of a story character, to make their lives more like the lives of the characters in the book or story you are reading, whose lives would you change? How would you change their lives? Why did you pick these people or that person? How would this change impact the events in the story?
3. What are the major conflicts in this story? Describe each one and classify it (man vs. man, man vs. nature, man vs. self, man vs. supernatural).
4. Why is a particular conflict important to the plot? (How does it advance the story? Does it help develop a character? Does it add an unexpected twist to the story?)
5. Were you satisfied with the resolution of the story? Why or why not? If you were the author, would you have ended the story in a different way? How? Why?

## **Literary Devices**

1. Did you read anything today that felt like foreshadowing? What was it? Predict what will happen next. (**Foreshadowing** is a warning or indication of a future event. Authors often drop foreshadowing clues for the reader.)
2. Does the author use imagery in the text? List examples you've encountered in your reading. (**Imagery** is the literary term used for language and description that appeals to our five senses. When a writer attempts to describe something so that it appeals to our sense of smell, sight, taste, touch, or hearing, the writer has used imagery.)
3. Does the author use **simile** or **metaphor** in his/her writing? List examples from the text.

4. Does the author use **allusion**? (**Allusion** is when a work references another work—often the Bible, Shakespeare, Greek Mythology, or classic literature. Example: “When she lost her job, she acted like a Scrooge, and refused to buy anything that wasn’t necessary.” Scrooge was an extremely stingy character from Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*.)
5. Does the author use **hyperbole**? (A **hyperbole** is an exaggerated statement. Example: “I was helpless. I did not know what in the world to do. I was quaking from head to foot, and could have hung my hat on my eyes, they stuck out so far.”)

### **Responding to Poetry**

1. Does the poet use **personification**? (**Personification** is attribution of a personal nature or human characteristics to something nonhuman.) Cite examples from the text. Does the personification strengthen the text? How?
2. Read the poem aloud. What do you hear? Rhyme? Alliteration? Onomatopoeia? Take some time to record how the sounds in the poem work together.
3. Does this poem relate to your life experience or your own ideas? Explain.
4. Compare and contrast this poem to a song.
5. Paraphrase the poem (write it in your own words).

### **Responding to Nonfiction**

1. What did you learn today as you read that you did not know before? What surprised you? Explain why it surprised you? (General comprehension, evaluation)
2. Non-fiction text can include both opinions and facts. List at least two opinions and explain how you know they are opinions. List at least two facts and explain how you know they are facts.
3. Describe how you can apply what you learned from this book.
4. Copy a passage of excellent writing and describe why you believe it is excellent.
5. Before I read this book, I did not know \_\_\_\_\_ (list ten facts).
6. Is the person you read about someone you would want to meet? Why or why not?
7. What is the most important point the author was trying to make? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
8. What questions do you have after reading this book? Write them down and research to try to find answers. Record the answers you find.
9. What is your opinion on the topic you read about? How does it compare with the author’s opinion?