



Your Journal Journey

In a practical way, a journal is used to reflect on what we've read and to prepare us for literary discussions and writing. But it should be more than that. A journal is a journey into and out of a text and into and out of ourselves.

We plunge into a text, have an experience, and that experience changes us. In order to adequately reflect on that change, we must take another journey back into ourselves and assess what we now know and who we now are. We reflect on the text and what we believe it means, and we attempt to draw connections to other things we know.

We can explore the text, and ourselves, by asking deep questions:

- ◆ What's the author trying to tell us?
- ◆ How do literary elements contribute to this view? (character, setting, point of view, symbolism, theme, etc.)
- ◆ How does this highlight the complexities of the human condition?
- ◆ Why did that character do that?
- ◆ What does the author want me to see about this character?
- ◆ How does this character stack up against others?
(evolution, improvement, erosion, static, etc.)
- ◆ How does this character stack up against characters in other texts?
- ◆ How does this compare to my own experience?
- ◆ How am I like/unlike this character?
- ◆ How does this text compare to other texts?
- ◆ What do I think? WHY???

Enjoy the Ride!