

Journal Project
The Classical Roots of Western Literature
Summer 2003 • Brown University



Assignment: Produce a **journal**, a running reaction to the authors, works, and subjects we encounter during this course.

Description: One of the most important skills that you can develop is the ability to think critically about material you encounter. To facilitate your enjoyment of the literature we read and to stimulate class discussions, you will be expected to write a brief journal entry for every class. Essentially, this will capture your first reactions and/or further considerations as you read (or re-read) the day's assignment.

Format: Completely at your discretion; a notebook is recommended, if only so that you do not misplace any of your entries

What should I write? Among other possibilities, successful journal entry can be a series of questions that the text provoked and that you would like to discuss with the class; relating a character or event to a personal experience or another text read outside of class; or a brief critical analysis of a passage or character. More creative responses – i.e. short stories, poems, and artwork – are encouraged, although some of the entries must be of the more traditional variety.

Evaluation: Your journal grade will be based on your consistent and intelligent consideration of the day's assignment. Don't think that you need to "crack" the meaning of a given text or invent a revolutionary new interpretation that will change our perception of existence – although that would definitely earn an "A." Not every text will strike you with the same force and one or two "light" entries are acceptable. While style, grammar, and spelling are not separately evaluated components of your journal grade, don't allow pedestrian errors to confuse the presentation of your thoughts and insights.

Due Date: At Beginning of Final Class; but you must bring your journal to every class.

As always, don't hesitate to contact me with questions.