

Journal/Note-taking Guide for Reading Novels and Short Stories

(This is what our class discussions will be based on)

A. Twenty (better) Questions (from K. Myers, *English Journal*)



1. What character(s) was your favorite? Why?
2. What character(s) did you dislike? Why?
3. Does anyone in this work remind you of anyone you know? Who?
4. Are you like any character in this work? How?
5. If you could be any character in this work who would you be? Why?
6. What quality(ies) of which character strikes you as a good characteristic to develop within yourself over the years?
How does the character demonstrate this quality?
7. Overall, what kind of a feeling did you have after reading a few paragraphs of this work? Midway? After finishing?
8. Do any incidents, ideas, or actions in this work remind you of your own life or something that happened to you?
9. Do you like this piece of work? Why or why not?
10. Are there any parts of this work that were confusing to you? Which parts? Why do you think you were confused?
11. Do you feel there is an opinion expressed by the author through this work? What is it? How do you know this?
Do you agree with the opinion? Why or why not?
12. Do you think the title of this work is appropriate? Is it significant? What do you think the title means?
13. Would you change the ending of this story in any way? Tell your ending. Why would you change it?
14. What kind of person do you feel the author is? What makes you feel this way?
15. How did this work make you feel?
16. Do you share any of the feelings of the characters in this work?
17. Sometimes works leave you with the feeling that there is more to tell. Did this work do this?
What do you think might happen?
18. Would you like to read something else by this author? Why or why not?
19. What do you feel is the most important word, phrase, passage, or paragraph in this work?
Explain why it is important? (note from me: this is how you handle excerpts for the Antholio)
20. If you were an English teacher, would you want to share this work with your students? Why or why not?

B. Use the following sentence stems to focus your thoughts about your reading:

1. I wonder...
2. I began to think of...
3. I suppose...
4. I don't see...
5. I like the idea...
6. I noticed...
7. I love the way...
8. I was surprised...
9. I can't really understand/believe...
10. If I had been...
11. Why did...
12. It bothered me when...
13. This reminds me of...
14. Maybe...

