

## The Journal Assignment

**The purpose of the journal is to engage intellectually with the assigned readings** in preparation for class discussion. This practice will directly prepare you for your Reader Response presentation and will help you with subsequent assignments as well.

You will write in your journal once each week, about reading selection(s) due that week. Respond to the reading assignment(s), don't summarize them. You can also include anything else in the journal, such as comments on course topics, questions, experiences that seem relevant in some way, responses to things you've seen, heard 'around' that you maybe saw differently through the lens of the class.... Feel free to delve into other media, like poetry, drawing, etc. while keeping in mind these goals.

Because their purpose is to *prepare* for class discussion, journal entries must be turned in on the day they are due in order to receive full credit. You can, however, miss 1 of them over the course of the term and still receive full credit.

Journal entries should be typed, double-spaced, and (if > 1 pg) stapled, or hand written very neatly. You need not, however, correct spelling or grammar. An average journal entry will be about a page or two long.

The journal is "first writing" or "**writing-to-think.**" **Your goals are *discovery and response*.** That is, you are *writing to generate ideas* rather than to express fully-formed ideas. Don't worry about the quality of your writing in your journal and don't feel you have to have something 'important to say' before you write. Rather, use the writing to think of important things. It is OK if your ideas are not fully formed or fully connected. The *practice* of first writing is invaluable to the writing and critical thinking processes.

The syllabus explains how the Journal contributes to your Final Evaluation (on page 2).