

The Scarlet Letter

Reading Journal Example

General Instructions:

* Use Post-it notes throughout the novel to highlight major details, including, but not limited to major characters, their personalities, interactions with other characters, unusual elements of setting, symbolism, irony, foreshadowing, theme, etc. If you do this first, completing the journal entry is easier. Usually, anything noteworthy enough to place on a Post-it is worthy of the journal entry. In the end, your novel should be “pregnant” with Post-its. NOTE: At the end of the year, you will joyfully say farewell to your work in our annual AP Post-it Burning Ceremony.

* Create one journal entry for each specified group of chapters (See previous page). These entries must be handwritten in blue or black ink, *only on the handouts provided (EXAMPLE ON BACK)*.

* Keep these entries AS YOU READ, not when you finish reading each section. Part of your grade will be based on whether the entry is written *while* you read, and this is not hard for me to determine.

* Quality is more important to me than quantity; however, you should find it easy to fill up most, if not all of both columns (If you need more room, continue on the back). *On average, you should comment on at least four elements per journal entry.*

1. Quote the selected text in the top box. See below for specifications.
2. Begin the left column with a *1-sentence summary* of content surrounding the related passage.
3. On all other commentary in the left column, FOCUS ON LITERARY TECHNIQUE, NOT ON SUMMARY OF PLOT
4. In the right column, write your reactions, opinions, observations of the content. There should be no commentary about literary technique here.
5. Write in complete sentences.
6. Use a highlighter to highlight literary terms throughout your analysis (see bold type below)

Record text from the novel in this space. You may summarize or paraphrase, but each entry must include one relevant, significant, or profound direct quotation. Do not use ellipsis marks at the beginning, end, or middle of the quotation. If it is important enough to comment on, then quote it all. If necessary, you may continue on the back. Remember to include the page number(s) after the text reference.

Critical, Analytical Response	Personal Response
<p>In this space you are to analyze Hawthorne’s use of language and his narrative techniques. Consider the following questions to help you get started:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the language in a specific passage. How does the diction contribute to the overall tone? • How is the personality of a specific character established within a specific passage? Consider the use of dialogue, foils, and/or actions. • What are key characteristics of the speaker or narrator? • How does the setting play a role in the development of a character or theme? • Consider a notable literary technique in the text. Is there irony, satire, symbolism, allusions, metaphor, and so forth? What is the impact of the technique on the overall work at this point? • Are there predominant images (motifs) that keep recurring throughout the work? • Explain the effect of any unusual organizational strategies - multiple narrators; chapter divisions; pacing elements, such as flashbacks, time lapses, or intercalary chapters • Explain the effect of rhetorical strategies in the work – unusual punctuation or use of italics, syntax, repetition of words and phrases; rhetorical questions, etc. 	<p>In this space write your personal response. Tell how the quotation or events surrounding this quotation make you feel. Use the pronoun “I” here. You may make connections to your own life, other works of literature, art, songs, poetry, movies, etc.</p>

Selection Title: _____

Author: _____ Date of entry: _____

Significant Quotation		Page(s): _____
<p>George raised the gun and his hand shook, and he dropped his hand to the ground again. “Go on,” said Lennie. “How’s it gonna be. We gonna get a little place.” “We’ll have a cow,” said George. “An we’ll have maybe a pig an’ chickens...an’ down the flat we’ll have a ...little piece of alfalfa.” “For the rabbits,” Lennie shouted. “For the rabbits,” George repeated. “And I get to tend the rabbits.” “An’ you get to tend the rabbits.”</p>		
Critical, Analytical Response	Personal Response	
<p><i>At this point in the story, Lennie has killed Curley’s wife and has run off to the “safe place” where George had told him (at the beginning of the novel) to go if trouble ensued.</i></p> <p>The theme of hopelessness that begins the story, now ends it. George’s actions show total despair: His shaky hand raises the gun and then drops listlessly.</p> <p>The setting of rural America during the Great Depression has left its toll on the actions and behaviors of these two characters.</p> <p>The colloquial dialogue of both Lennie and George helps create the simplicity behind their relationship, and exemplifies their simple, uneducated lives.</p> <p>The theme of friendship is highlighted here as well, because Lennie and George have each other, unlike any other character in the novel. They share a common bond no other character has – their dream of a future on their farm; however, this event serves as the final destruction of that dream, which further highlights the theme of hopelessness experienced by so many migrant workers during the Depression.</p> <p>This is the final appearance of the “rabbit” motif. The rabbit serves as a symbol of Lennie, who is innocent and kind, but also at the mercy of George’s hand here. Both characters are at the mercy of society</p>	<p>This is the saddest part in the book. All the hopes, even those of Candy and Crooks, along with George and Lennie, have been shattered. I don’t ever think I have experienced such hopelessness, and I hope I never will. It’s about as hopeless as that scene in Seabiscuit when the destitute parents “give” their son away in order for him to have a future. Personally, I appreciate Seabiscuit a bit more, because the main character has a future, unlike George and Lennie.</p> <p>This book seems somewhat Anti-Transcendental because it shows how life is not always “happily ever after.” It’s hard to imagine people lived like this during the Depression.</p>	