

Suggestions for Student Journaling

Journaling is the practice of recording on paper a collection of thoughts, understandings, and explanations about ideas or concepts, usually in a bound notebook.

Keeping a journal is a perfect way to encourage students to write on a daily basis. The following are some suggestions for establishing guidelines for journal writing in the classroom:

- Allow your students to create a special journal or notebook for writing.
- Establish a set time for writing in a journal. This may vary for different students, but establish a routine that works in your classroom.
- Don't follow the rules! Encourage students to let the writing flow and not to be concerned with rules of grammar, spelling or punctuation.
- Establish a routine for collecting, storing and returning student journals. Let students know that you will be reading their journals and make a plan for how you will assess them.
- Encourage students to draw or doodle in their journals.
- Remind students to include a date and topic or title for each journal entry.
- Allow students to write with a favorite pen, pencil, or marker. Writers should feel comfortable while writing.
- Provide prompts for students who have difficulty getting started on their own.

Topics for Student Journaling

Writing prompts may be used to help students develop an idea for journal writing. Inspiration for journal writing may be obtained through works of art, music, poetry or quotes.

The following are some suggested prompts to use together with a work of art:

- This painting makes me feel...
- This reminds me of when...
- The colors make me feel...
- I saw a painting similar to this when...
- If I were the person in this painting I would...
- My favorite painting is...
- When I look at this painting I travel to...
- I wish this painting was...