

Journal basics.

Q: Why write?

A: Writing allows you to record thoughts, respond to things and get ideas out of your head. Writing by hand is a pure form of this. It is a skill, both physical and mental, that each of us has. Writing daily and weekly, even a little bit, keeps your skills alive. Journal writing also plants the seeds for formal “real” writing later on.

Journal guidelines:

Writing happens in an English dedicated notebook w/lined paper. Spelling and absolute perfection are not so important in journal writing. Coherence (things making sense) and information are important. Entries must be in multiple sentence/paragraph form (not bullets and not fragments, not random thoughts or unorganized notes) or they will not be accepted. Entries must be legible - readable without tremendous effort by the reader. If this means going slow when you write, then go slow. *Students with a Learning Plan exempting them from handwriting may type journals, print them and paste/secure them in the journal notebook.*

Point breakdown. Entries are worth FIVE points.

- Entries have a heading: **topic, date** at the top. (1)
- Entries contain **specifics, details and concrete examples**. (1)
- Entries always contain **quotes from text**. These quotes work to support the claims and observations you make in your entries. (1)
- Entries go beyond stating the obvious; they **contain on-topic commentary and discussion**. Plot summary does not happen. (1)
- Journal responses are always **more than ½ page**. (1)