

Grade: 8	Strand: Reading	Concept: Response journal
Description of Task:	Students respond to reading using an electronic response journal to record thoughtful connections to texts.	
Expectations:	8e27 • explain their interpretation of a written work, supporting it with evidence from the work and from their own knowledge and experience; 8e31 • explain how the various elements in a story function in relation to each other; 8e32 • identify the main ideas in information materials, explain how the details support the main ideas, and question and evaluate the ideas in the material; 8e33 • make judgments and draw conclusions about ideas in written materials on the basis of evidence; 8e34 • clarify and broaden their own points of view by examining the ideas of others;	
Software Type:	Database	
Computer Skills Prerequisite	Students must be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access and run the program • Add a new record • Select items from a dropdown menu • Click in a field and enter text • Print and save the record 	
Student Instructions: (for teacher)	1. Ask students to share some opinions about the text selection they have been studying. 2. Remind them that response journals combine opinions and details from the text without retelling the story. 3. Remind them of the elements of good response journal entries (e.g. connections to other texts, to their own experiences, predictions, questions, etc.). 4. Show students the form they will use (either using a print copy of the template or by displaying the digital file using a projector) and discuss the information required. It would be helpful to complete an entry as a class activity. 5. If students are using template #2, provide a copy of the rubric.	

Teacher Notes:	<p>A response journal is a form of writing in which students make thoughtful connections to texts, activities, and experiences. A response journal provides sustained opportunity to explore, analyse, question, interpret, or reflect in order to gain new insights and enriched appreciation or understanding. Response journals may be used in any subject area where students encounter interesting or powerful content, experiences, and ideas. A response journal is the personal processing of the student rather than a restatement or recounting of text. Reading, viewing, or listening to material that has interest to the student, stimulates the use of response journals. (<i>Teaching/Learning Teacher Companion, Ontario Curriculum Unit Planner, 2002, Ontario Ministry of Education</i>)</p> <p>This activity can be used in a variety of settings and student groupings. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each student can have his/her own copy of the file, in which they will, over the course of the year, enter responses. They can simultaneously access their files in a computer lab or on a classroom computer on an individual basis. • The class can all access the same file. In this way, the file will hold all the records of each student's entries. Students access the file one at a time (because all records are in one file, which can only be opened by one user at a time). <p>The response journal may be kept in digital format only, or you may ask students to print their records to maintain a print copy of their journals.</p> <p>The instruction file for this activity is 3 pages. The first page contains the basic instructions for using the database template. Pages 2 and 3 provide information about additional features of the program.</p> <p>The format of the file can be edited to add or remove any field.</p> <p>Related offline activities: Students can record their information on a paper version of the template. If they are keeping a print copy of the dictionary, they can add their handwritten records to the collection. If the file is only in digital format, they may use a print copy of the record to prepare a draft for when they have access to a computer.</p>
	<p>Activity Template File: Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/> Student Instruction BLM: Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/></p>
Assessment:	<p>The response journal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can provide the focus for a student-teacher conference; • is a vehicle for communication with teachers, peers, parents; <p>The response journal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • may be appropriately assessed according to the criteria of depth of thought and connection with understandings and experience; • is a record in which the student need not pay strict attention to the formal aspects of writing style or correctness. (<i>Teaching/Learning Teacher Companion, Ontario Curriculum Unit Planner, 2002, Ontario Ministry of Education</i>) <p>Does the student's response demonstrate a processing of the text through analysis, questioning, interpretation or reflection, or is the response a simple restatement or recounting of the text? (curriculum)</p> <p>Does the student question and/or evaluate the ideas in the text? (curriculum)</p> <p>Does the student support his/her opinions and judgments with evidence from the text, or with personal experience? (curriculum)</p> <p>A response journal can be easily assessed using a rubric. A sample is attached.</p>