

## Reader's Response

Reader's Responses is a way to target a specific element of the work - elements such as the development of a specific character, a specific motif, or how historical elements appear in a work. Each time you are assigned this analysis tool, you will be provided with a **specific focus and/or a specific section**. **KEY: Throughout the entire Reader's Response, you will concentrate on that focus and that section only. Make sure you are clear about that element and that section.**

The purpose of Reader's Responses are to encourage active reading and use of essential comprehension strategies, such as asking questions, clarifying uncertainties, predicting outcomes, demonstrating knowledge of common motifs, evaluating a text's contents and its author's style, and making personal connections with the literature. A Reader's Response also provides an opportunity to write about the literature, and thus it provides excellent practice for the Unit Tests. Approach the work with this sort of gravity.

- The register is always formal. Practice the language and structure of formal essays.
- The audience is always your teacher.
- Know thy taboo.
- One to two pages typed (double-spaced) is typically the length. I will tell you the goal for each as I assign the work.

There are four sections to a Reader's Response: 1. Summary 2. Questions 3. Quote 4. Class Notes. Make sure you include these titles at the start of each section.

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### **DIRECTIONS:** Include:

- The standard heading in the upper left corner
- The title of the work, centered, at top of page, the author and the date of publication on one line.
- On the next line include the specific reading assignment (chapters, pages, due date).
- On the next or third line the assigned focus area: then your chosen focus area.

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain, 1885

Chapter 1

What do we know about Huck from the first chapter?: profound sense of observation.

“Annabel Lee” by Edgar Allan Poe, 1849

Entire Poem

Identify an element of the Gothic within the piece: porous line between life and death

**SUMMARY:** Take notes on the narrative. What is happening in this section AS IT RELATES TO THE ASSIGNED FOCUS AREA? And where relevant to the focus area the

style and structure of the text. These notes can focus on the following areas if they are relevant to the assigned/chosen focus area

- Plot **elements**: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution, internal/external conflicts, protagonist, antagonist, minor characters, setting, etc.
- Comment on **point of view**: speaker, first person narrator, unreliable narrator, third person omniscient, third limited, audience, etc. if relevant to focus
- THIS IS VERY BRIEF AND ONLY RELATES TO THE ASSIGNED SECTION.
- No bullets – paragraph please.

**QUESTIONS:** Generate at least three probing questions for class discussion AS THEY RELATE TO YOUR CHOSEN FOCUS AREA. Never ask yes or no questions. Consider whether students could reasonably answer this question, whether it is too broad or too ambiguous. Consider any combination of interpretative, and/or evaluative questions.

- **Interpretive:** Reading between the lines; more than one possible answer; what we think the author says.
- **Main point:** What do you believe the author's main point is in this section? Move beyond the literal. Challenge your understandings.
- **Historical implications:** Draw into focus the historical background of the period in which the author was writing. Does that have an important thematic bearing in this section?
- **Evaluative:** Judging and evaluating validity of a concept or point; what we think about what the author says; a level of right or wrong. These are questions in which you call upon the reader's moral intelligence. These questions have no one answer but rather depend upon an individual's perspective.

**QUOTE:** Copy one significant quote or passage from the text relevant to the focus area.. Include page number.

- **Use TLQ** – practice setting up the context of the quote using the focus area as your persuasion. Make sure that context is **at least two sentences** and transitions smoothly into the quote. The TLQ + the quote should work as one. The punctuation is a comma or colon – not a period.
- **Include only the portion of the quote relevant to the focus.** This could be a line you found particularly compelling, intriguing, beautiful, funny or crucial to the focus area and the assigned section.
- **Mean** – Analysis of this scene. **Two to three sentences** are adequate.
- **Matter** – Matter usually relates to this focus area as it appears in the work as a whole. If you have been assigned the work in advance of this assignment (like a novel), respond this way; by relating this focus area to the entire work. **MAKE SURE YOU USE ONE EXAMPLE OF RHETORIC TO CONFIRM YOUR FINDINGS.** If you are reading the work at this time (say a work from the historical units) then simply relate the matter to the scene and again. Make sure you explain HOW that rhetoric illuminates your point.

**CLASS NOTES:** Explain how a source of information (a Powerpoint, film, or class discussion) illuminated your understanding of this section and this focus. Explain in detail how this information helped you connect to the work and the focus area. This section will greatly aid you in formulating an opinion or perspective for in-class essays, dialectal journals, or the AP test.