

Dialectical Notes - A variation of Cornell Notes/Power Notes

Objective: Students will be able to:

1. cite specific passages from a novel and identify the literary significance.
2. infer author meaning.
3. apply literary devices to specific passages.
4. scrutinize reading passages for literary devices
5. justify their quotes and the importance of them.

Purpose: Reading is too often a passive experience for many students. Students sit down with a book, pass their eyes over the words and say that they have completed the reading assignment. This is not the true meaning of reading a book.

Requirements:

1. You will need either spiral notebook or several sheets of paper.
2. Your notes will be divided into three separate columns. Each column will be labeled in the following manner: "Page," "Text," and "Response."
3. As you read the passage provided, record the page number and important quotes found in the text. The quote must appear as it does in the novel...you may use ellipsis to omit information that is not important to your quote since the author tends to write incredibly long and complex sentences.
4. In the "Response" column, you should note the significance of the quote in regard to plot, character, theme, purpose, mood, style, etc.
5. You may also record any questions, comments, or ideas about the passage that have piqued your interest in the "Response" area as well. These items are used to clear up any problems you have in understanding the novel. These may also be used to indicate any thoughts or reflections that occur throughout your reading. In essence, the "Response" section becomes an intellectual history of your reading experience.
6. Upon completion, you will have a summary of the material you have just read. Not only is summarizing a worthwhile skill, but as we discuss the novel in class, you will have a better understanding of the novel and will agree with facts presented in class discussions. These facts should all be recording facts of the "who, what, where, when, why and how" variety.
7. In time, dialectical notes will become a habit, one which will guarantee that you actively participate in your reading and make meaning of what you read.
8. For this novel, *The Turn of the Screw*, you must complete a minimum of one quote for each page read for class. The novels for this class have either 87 or 117 pages depending on the novel. Just because you've received a 117 page novel doesn't mean that you have more work, instead it means that your dialectical notes will be that much more comprehensive. Since the novels are of varying page lengths, you must also note the total number of pages found in the novel on the first page of your notes. Failure to include this will result in a deduction of points. Including an incorrect number will also result in a deduction of points...and I will watch for this!
9. This is due the day we take the final test for the novel. No late notes will be accepted.
10. Any questions? Ask! Don't assume you know the answer!

Sample:

Page Quote

- 1 - "The story held us, round the fire...as on Christmas Eve in an old house a strange tale should be...only case...in which a visitation had fallen on a child."
1 - "If the child gives the effect another turn of the screw...two children?...
"that two two children give two turns--?"

Response

This establishes the setting of the story.
This is where the title of the story comes from.