

Reading Response Logs

Reading response logs are a good way to keep students reading *consistently* throughout the semester. They offer remarkable insight to a student's thought process and reading interests. In addition, they provide a way to keep a record of students' reading that will prove helpful to them as they continue their middle and high school careers.



Rationale

For the “indifferent” reader, the reading log means getting credit for reading, a great reason to develop the habit of keeping a book going at all times. That habit just might continue after your class ends.

For the “ready” reader, the reading log offers a place to slow down and reflect on the writing style, make observations and predictions, and a reason to absorb more of the book's atmosphere rather than just “inhaling” the book in order to get to the next one. *Fluent readers often do not realize they have missed plot points and entire characters in their zeal to find out what happens.*

Strategy



Students will need a folder of some kind. I prefer a paper folder with loose leaf paper clipped in the middle. Most of the pages will be used for reading responses, but keep a page or two at the front for students to record a list of books read this year.

Distribute the hand-out (included) for suggested responses. Point out **clearly** and **often** that the responses are to be fairly short (3-4 sentences) and of a personal nature. Responses are **NOT** to be book reports.

I prefer students to do reading responses only on personal reading, not classroom novels, but I have been flexible with this depending on the amount of classroom reading required.

Remind students to add each completed book to their list. Often they are surprised at how much they have actually read. This list can be detailed with authors, characters, and themes listed or just a list of books and authors.



Helpful Hints

I required students to put the handout in their log so they could refer to it often.

During the week in which you introduce the reading response log, give an assignment for them to complete 2 entries. Select several responses that are personal and reflective. You also want to look for responses that are only “book reports.” Put several of these “correct” and “incorrect” responses on an overhead so the class can see exactly what you want. I was quite pleased with the quality of the responses after I did this.

Encourage students to bring their reading response log AND personal reading book to your class. Students can read their personal books and work on entries in their logs before class, after tests, or at other appropriate times.

One enormous benefit of the Reading Response Log is the insight you will gain as to what books, genres, and authors are attractive and meaningful to your students. This is valuable information for you, the Media Specialist and the Visiting Readers.

