

# Journal Writing

Entries made over the course of the residency may reveal a change in student attitude or the development of confidence, certain understandings, or relationships. Students should write analytically about the issues explored through the process. Teachers should guide journal writing by providing open-ended “prompts” to which students respond. Be sure to share with students your criteria for a “good” journal entry. For example, suggest that they provide specific examples to support their claims, when they make statements.

## SAMPLE PROMPTS:

After a session focused on group building - “What are the skills required to work effectively in a group?”

After a session incorporating media - “How does the media shape my perceptions of this society?”

Students should also try writing in the voice of the characters they have met during the residency. Asking students to think about what happened prior to the scene will give you information about their understanding of the causes of their behaviors and choices.

After a session involving a discussion of different forms of violence - “Violence affects my life in the following ways ...”

At the end of the residency -

“This residency has helped me to understand...”

“This residency has made me think about my own choices when...”

You can also assign grades for journal entries for using description, providing examples, and making connections in journal entries as follows:

Grade each entry out of 12 points (4 points possible for each feature)

**Emerging = 1 point**      **Thoughtful = 3 points**  
**Adequate = 2 points**      **Insightful = 4 points**

Try putting this scale at the bottom of journal pages:

## Journal Response

\_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
 Undeveloped                  Partially developed                  Thoughtful                  Powerful

Adapted from *The Mindful School: How to Assess Authentic Learning* by Kay Burke (see Resources).

CRITERIA FOR JOURNAL ENTRIES	EMERGING	ADEQUATE	THOUGHTFUL	INSIGHTFUL
Descriptive words and phrases				
Examples that support claims				
Connections between the work and other areas of life				