

Double Entry Diary

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RATIONALE

Research and practice has shown that many students have difficulty engaging with text (especially non-fiction) and forming meaning while they read. Reading comprehension can be extra challenging for students who are not interested in or do not know how to form connections with the text or topic at hand. "Faced with complex issues or concepts--as is frequently the case in course content--students can use writing to sort things out, to clarify, organize their thoughts, connect old knowledge to new, and, in the process, personalize the content" (Hughes, Kooy, & Kanevsky, 1997, p.187). This is the rationale behind using the Double Entry Diary, also known as the Double Entry Journal. The Double Entry Diary creates an interactive setting between the reader and the text by allowing students to record dual entries that are conceptually related. Some advantages of this strategy include the following:

- Facilitates student engagement with text
- Facilitates student comprehension of text (reader actively interacts with text)
- Allows students to respond immediately to the text
- Connects text with student's background knowledge
- Facilitates student reflection on development of personal understanding of text
- Allows teachers to informally assess difficulties students might have with comprehension
- Can be used for both fiction and non-fiction texts

The Double Entry Diary includes two columns: the left column is designated for quotes and facts a student selects from text; the right column is used for notes and comments a student makes the quote, fact, or selected passage. The Double Entry Diary can be used as vehicle for facilitating comprehension of text during reading, engagement, and comprehension of the content.

HOW TO USE THE STRATEGY

Begin with first modeling the strategy through a think aloud. This modeling will help students to understand the quote selection process. Next, discuss the type of thinking and writing required for the notes (the right side of the diary) by modeling your thought processes while writing on the overhead projector (L'Allier, & Elish-Piper, p.346). By showing students your thought process when reading and writing, they will be able to see how to use the strategy and make connections with text. The students should then be able to work through a guided practice with a text everyone has access to. Instruct them to take a piece of paper and separate it in half, length-wise. In the left column of the Double Entry Diary, students may select words, short quotes, facts or passages from the text that interests them or evokes a strong response. In the right column of the Double Entry Diary, students can record their responses and reactions to the text they selected. Examples of what they could write about in the right column include the following:

- This makes me think of...
- This reminds me of...
- I wonder...
- This is important because...
- I infer...

- I am confused because...
- The picture in my head looks like...
- I think this means...
- I don't understand why...
- I would like to learn more about...
- Agree/disagree and why...

With a few guided practices, encourage your students to use this strategy independently on an assigned reading. Use students' notes to hold a class or small group discussion and further stimulate students' interest or curiosity in the text.

See the following examples for how to use the strategy in your classroom.

Double Entry Diary Organizer

Name: _____

Topic: _____



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DOUBLE ENTRY DIARY

DIRECT QUOTE WITH PAGE NUMBER	MAKES ME THINK OF...

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Blank Template

Name: Elementary Example
 Topic: The Giver



Double Entry Journal

Direct quote with page number	Makes me think of...
1. "No one mentioned such things; it was not a rule, but was considered rude to call attention to things that were unsettling or different about individuals." (p. 26)	This seems like something Moses told me once. I shouldn't make people that seem different, feel different.
2. "How could someone not fit in? The community was so meticulously ordered, the choices so carefully made." (p. 40)	This community reminds me of those Norman Rockwell paintings my grandmother shows me. Everything seems so happy and perfect.
3. "Simply stated, although it's not really simple at all, my job is to transmit to you all the memories I have within me. Memories of the past." (p. 77)	When my grandmother would tell me stories about when she was a little girl. This sounds a bit different than just telling, though.
4. "He found that he was often angry...that they were satisfied with their lives which had none of the vibrance his own was taking on. And he was angry at himself, that he could not change that for them." (p. 89)	Sometimes I wish I could share my love of basketball with my friend Tim. Tim just doesn't understand why I love basketball so much and I wish he could.
5. "Sometimes I wish they'd ask for my wisdom more often there are so many things I could tell them; things I wish they would change." (p. 103)	Dad says this sometimes but in a different way. He says he wishes we would ask more questions and learn from his experiences.
6. "Memories are forever" (p. 144)	I can't remember much of first grade, but I remember a lot from 4th grade. I think I'll remember that trip to St. Augustine forever.
7. "Once he had yearned for choice. Then, when he has had a choice, he had made the wrong one; the choice to leave." (p. 174)	One of Robert Frost's poems, where he talked about two roads diverging in the woods, reminds me about the choices Jonas has to make.

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Elementary Example

Name: Elementary Example
 Topic: The Giver



Double Entry Journal

Direct quote with page number	Makes me think of...
1. "No one mentioned such things; it was not a rule, but was considered rude to call attention to things that were unsettling or different about individuals." (p. 26)	This seems like something Moses told me once. I shouldn't make people that seem different, feel different.
2. "How could someone not fit in? The community was so meticulously ordered, the choices so carefully made." (p. 40)	This community reminds me of those Norman Rockwell paintings my grandmother shows me. Everything seems so happy and perfect.
3. "Simply stated, although it's not really simple at all, my job is to transmit to you all the memories I have within me. Memories of the past." (p. 77)	When my grandmother would tell me stories about when she was a little girl. This sounds a bit different than just telling, though.
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Secondary Example

ASSESSMENT

This is a good strategy to use to assess reading engagement, comprehension and student metacognition. It can be used as an informal assessment in a number a ways. One way, is through observation either through student response during reading or group discussions. Another way is through assessment of students' "Double Entry Diary" graphic organizer; teacher can look for which text

was quoted and student responses to the selected text; an analysis of student responses will provide information on student connections, questions, and comprehension. Lastly, teachers can use informal student conferences to assess what the student understood in the text, made connections to what he/she already knew about the topic, and what questions the student may have had about the text or the author.

RESOURCES

Double Strategy, Double Entry Diary

<http://www.mvcsc.k12.in.us/MVES/Staff/amorris/rdg%20620/double%20entry.pdf>

This is a template for a double entry diary with a connection to quote and questions about the quote.

What Are Double-Entry Journals? How Are They Implemented in the Classroom?

<http://faculty.washington.edu/rmcnamar/WTL/WSWPN%20DOUBLE%20ENTRY%20JOURNAL%20HANDOUT.doc>

The double entry journal is a great strategy to use in every classroom for any content. The strategy helps students in a variety of ways with examples given.

Double-Entry Journals

<http://www.adlit.org/strategies/22091>

The double entry journal improves students' comprehension and retention of difficult passages by expressing their thoughts about the text.

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https://www.ocps.net/lc/east/hwp/school_info/Documents/Literacy/Double_Entry_Diary.pdf

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