

Appendix 2.2

Digital Journal

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The second major assignment for this class will be a digital journal of your day-to-day encounters with text. Your journal will be a twenty-first-century descendant of Prudence Person's nineteenth-century scrapbook but will differ in several significant ways:

- 1 Your journal will be "born digital," i.e., you will create it entirely online.
- 2 You may include in your journal any kind of "text" you wish (not just written texts): YouTube videos, internet memes, photographs (your own or other people's), works of art, MP3 files, Twitter conversations, text messages, etc. If you can find it on the web or upload it, you can include it in your journal. We will discuss in class how to properly cite materials found on the web.
- 3 You won't just collect texts and media; you will respond to them. Your digital journal should include your personal and intellectual reactions to the texts you encounter (including responses to the texts assigned in class), and those responses should take diverse and unique forms. This is neither a diary nor a collection of other people's thoughts. This is an interactive digital notebook in which you will respond creatively and thoughtfully to the welter of media you experience in your everyday life.

You may build your digital journal in Scalar, WordPress, or any other online publishing platform you know or would like to learn. You may make your scrapbook public or private (and even anonymous or pseudonymous), but at the very least your instructor will need access to it to monitor your contributions and assign a grade.

Here are some creative response forms from which to choose (or you can choose your own):

- Imagine and write a series of text messages or Tweets between two characters in a novel we are reading and then "close read" the conversation.

- Create a playlist of songs “chosen” by a character in one of the novels we are reading. Include explanations of why s/he chose those songs.
- Create a visual representation of the plot structure of one of the novels we’re reading. Use TikiToki, The Brain, Google Draw, or some other app.
- “Close read” a series of text messages between yourself and a friend.
- Create a Pinterest board (or other digital collage, if you don’t want to make a Pinterest account) of images that comment upon one of the novels we have read so far, and then write a short explanation of why you chose those images.

Project Schedule

Week One: Choose a digital platform and create your journal site

Week Two: Post journal entry #1

Choose any text you find interesting (use a novel, short story, play, film, internet meme, YouTube video, piece of art or graffiti, or a series of text messages) and discuss whether this text could reasonably be defined as *literature* using the terms discussed in Terry Eagleton’s “What Is Literature?” Be sure to quote and cite Eagleton using MLA style. (500 words min.)

Week Three: Post journal entry #2

Read Victoria Olsen’s “Reading Writers Reading” and write a “reading memoir” about a book that was important to you as a child. (500 words min.)

Week Four: Post journal entry #3

Find a stranger’s Facebook page or Pinterest wall (many Facebook users set their profiles to “Public,” which I *strongly* advise against) and write a 500-word “character analysis” of the person. Describe the page’s creator as you would a character you encounter in a novel or a historical figure whose archives you are studying (as we have studied Prudence Person’s archive). Maintain a critical distance regarding your subject; you are not here to pass judgment, but rather to draw conclusions about this “character” based on available evidence.

Week Five: Post journal entry #4

Annotate a scene from *Pale Fire* using *RapGenius*.

Week Six: Post journal entry #5

Post a creative response to one of the novels we have read (see option above).

Week Seven: Post journal entry #6

In *A Tale for the Time Being* Nao Yasutani tries to imagine the reader who might find her diary. We might also say she shapes or creates that reader, imagining him or her into being. Write an entry in which you imagine a possible or ideal reader for your digital journal. What are that person's characteristics? What kind of reader is s/he? How will s/he respond to finding your digital journal online?

Week Eight: Post journal entry #7

Post a creative response to one of the novels we have read (see options above).

Week Nine: Post journal entry #8

Write an assessment of the two web publishing tools we have used: Scalar and WordPress. Discuss their ease of use, their adaptability, and whether they changed how you write.

Week Ten: Post journal entry #9

Post a creative response to one of the novels we've read (see options above).