



Literacy at Hartford Public High School

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Thoughts for the Day

Do your daily lessons...

- Promote understanding
- Focus on skills
- Have tightly focused goals
- Seem real to the students
- Help your students feel more powerful and purposeful in their own world
- Require high-level thinking
- Provide choices
- Have clear expectations
- Allow meaningful collaboration
- Connect to your students' lives and world
- Call on your students to use what they learn in interesting and important ways
- Involve your students in setting goals for their learning and in assessing their progress toward those goals
- Provide joy and satisfaction to your students
- Contain profound ideas
- Teach your students to take responsibility for their learning
- Build a sense of community in the class
- Maximize the opportunity for your students to show what they know
- Span content, process, and product
- Include whole class, small group, and individual instruction
- Build collaboration with parents
- Support success for each learner and the class as a whole
- Use effective and varied instructional approaches
- Root themselves in student needs

Writing to Learn Using a Double Entry Journal

The essentials of a double entry journal are simple:

Students keep notes and quotes from reading and lectures on one half of a folded page of their notebooks; on the other half of the folded page, they respond to, question, or analyze the material that they've included.

These responses can easily serve as the basis for class discussion the following day.

The left side can include such content as

- Key phrases
- Important words
- Main ideas
- Puzzling passages
- Summaries of passages
- Passages that seem powerful
- Key parts of ideas, chapters, etc.

The right side can include such responses as

- How to use ideas/information
- Why an idea is important
- What a puzzling passage seems to mean
- Questions a student has
- What a key word means
- Why something seems puzzling
- A prediction based on current information
- A reaction to a passage
- A personal experience that connects with a passage
- A comment on the author's view, style, etc.

Think of how you might use this quick writing strategy with your classes. It could pay off in handsome dividends for class discussions and on reviews for tests.