

## Appendix E1

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# JOURNALING GUIDES<sup>1</sup>

In this book, you are asked to keep a journal to reflect on materials presented and on how they might relate to your past, present, or future thinking, feelings, and behavior. Journaling also provides you with an opportunity to think about your own values and goals as a professional and how you will choose to relate to others and to the material. You are strongly encouraged to do additional journaling activities to think critically about the material presented in order to facilitate learning. It is suggested that you do this soon after reading the assigned material. Some of the exercises suggested are as follows:

1. *Historical consciousness* asks you to think of the material in a “then, now, next” framework. Consciousness has to do with being aware in terms of both one’s mind and one’s emotions. Dr. Warren Scheideman (2004)<sup>2</sup> notes that “*historical consciousness is looking at the past; applying learning to the present; and changing the future, the next*” (p. 2). For example, “Before I read this book, chapter, paragraph, or sentence, I thought (or felt). . . . Now I think or feel. . . . In the future I will. . . .” This process allows you to not only journal but also assess your learning through this critical thinking process.

2. A common tool for journaling is the *key phrase journal*, in which you list key terms or phrases in your reading and class discussions, define them in detail, and then consider identifying why they might be useful to you in the future.

3. A very popular method of journaling is the *double-entry notebook*. On one side of the page or notebook you might head the page with “A phrase or sentence or chapter I liked [or was intrigued by, did not understand, did or did not agree with, etc.].” On the other side of the page or notebook, you might comment about the phrase or paragraph you selected, listing questions about it or making connections

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between what you read and something you read or heard elsewhere that either supports or contradicts the information or ideas presented.

4. Another approach is to simply write down *quotations from the text* on one side of the page and on the other side indicate why they are important to you.

5. Most *reflective journals* ask you to write about three different aspects of your learning: (1) Summarize what you read, (2) describe how you felt about it, and (3) note what you learned.

6. Others use a more applied version using three columns, pulling things together into a more *synthesizing-type journal*: (1) what I read (or did if you were asked to try something out), (2) what I learned, and (3) how I might use the information from this experience in the future.

7. In courses where students are asked to *apply learning to their teaching or experience* working with families, we often ask them to write in the left column something they did or experienced and in the right column, how the outcome related to concepts in the readings and in class discussions.

8. I especially like the questions of Dr. Anne Herrington of Bard College posted to a California schools guideline for learning Web site ([www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/actbank/tjouguide.htm](http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/actbank/tjouguide.htm)). In describing *response journals*, here are some of the questions she suggests, asking her students to write for 5 minutes right after reading an assignment. Consider some of her questions below:

- What are you intrigued by?
- What connects to your own experience?
- What does the reading make you think of?
- Does it remind you of anything or anyone?
- Do you see any similarities between this text . . . and other texts?
- Does it bring to mind other related issues?
- What perplexes you about a particular passage?
- Try writing: “I wonder why . . .” or “I’m having trouble understanding how . . .” or “I was surprised when . . .”
- Think of your journal as a place to carry on a dialogue with the writer.
- Ask the author or teacher questions. Have the author or teacher respond. What happens when you imagine yourself in his or her shoes?
- Write down striking words, images, phrases, or details. Speculate about them. Why did the author choose them? What do they add to the story? Why did you notice them?

I would add to this list of questions the following:

- Did this reading challenge your assumptions or stereotypes? If so, how?
- What might be a practical problem this reading might help you solve?
- How would you communicate what you read today to someone else?
- What information in your reading was most convincing? What evidence made this so? Least convincing? What evidence would you need to be convinced?

## NOTES

1. A list of different journal formats is available at the Schools of California Online Resource for Educators, <http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/actbank/tjournal.htm>.

2. Scheideman, W. (2004, February, March, June). Dr. Scheideman introduced me to historical consciousness. See his presentation at the School for New Learning Faculty Development Workshop: *Increasing Historical Consciousness: A Way to Expand Learning and Assess Development*. Workshop Series Sponsored by the Office of Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, DePaul University, Chicago. Available at [http://www.snل.depaul.edu/about/assessment\\_center/index.asp](http://www.snل.depaul.edu/about/assessment_center/index.asp).