

## 17 Different Ways to Respond to Literature

1. Pre-write: before reading, respond to the title and any images, words, ideas or issues that you have collected as a pre-conceived notion of the text. Explain your predictions about both the text and your response to it.
2. Ask 10 questions about the text as you read. Articulate and record whatever perplexes you about an idea, word choice, character action, etc. These questions might begin with words like... " I wonder why..." or "I'm having trouble understanding..."
3. Make connections with your own experience. What does the reading remind you of from your own experience? Do the characters remind you of anyone you have known? Do the issues or conflicts from the text have any connection to problems you have ever experienced?
4. Make connections with other texts. Consider the authors you have studied before. What does this author have in common with those authors? What other works of literature have a similar theme to this one? What other characters from literature seem similar to the characters from this work?
5. Write down 10 words from the piece that you do not know OR 10 words that you assume are the most difficult for students. Define them, use them in a sentence of your own, and write the sentence in which you found the word.
6. Choose your vote for the most effective sentence or poetic line from the reading. Write the sentence; then explain why it is the most effective sentence from this reading selection. Use other sentences or poetic lines from the work as comparative examples. Use those other lines to clearly illustrate how the expression in the winning line is superior to those of other lines.
7. Choose your vote for most effective literary device. Write the sentence from which the device is taken, define the device that was used, describe why the author may have employed it, and then explain why you vote this particular device the most effective from the entire reading selection. Give examples of other literary devices and explain why you believe they were less effective in the effort to achieve what you deem to be the author's primary purpose for using the device.
8. Choose one "truth" that you believe this author holds to be true. This may be the moral or didactic message of the piece. Write a persuasive essay in which you agree with that "truth." Add details to support his or her ideas.
9. Choose one "truth" that you believe this author holds to be true. This may be the moral or didactic message of the piece. Write a persuasive essay in which you disagree with that "truth." Use details to support your arguments over the author's.
10. Identify the author's specific point of view by determining whether the work is written from the first, second, or third person perspective; describe the distance between the author and his/her main subject; describe the distance between the author and the audience; describe the level of formality by examining diction, syntax, word choice, and allusions; describe the level of fallibility and or the degree of the author's objectivity; describe any changes in the point of view through the progression of the reading. In other words, write all you can about the perspective from which this work is told!
11. Go online or look in books to find an image of a work of art that you can associate with the work's mood, content, or conflict. Write a justification describing the connection between the literature and the art as you have interpreted it.

12. Add a passage to the reading by emulating the style of the author and continuing the theme, tone, and conflict. Indicate at what point that passage should be placed in the work. And write a justification for its inclusion. What does your passage add to the full scope of the work?

13. What well-known quote sums up the theme, conflict, or character of this work of literature? Write the quote, the name of the author who penned it, and a justification for your association of the quote to the work of literature.

14. Take the main character out of context. Remove him or her from the literature's setting; imagine what he or she would think of a conflict or issue that would be anachronistic for him or her. Write a narrative from that character's point of view, defending his or her beliefs on the issue.

15. Change the genre. Write a tribute/summary/emulation of the work as it might be in a changed genre. For example, if you are reading a novel, then summarize the theme/characters/tone in an original poem. Or if it is a poem to begin with, then write a prose passage. You may do so for the entire work or for a specific passage.

16. Choose an instrumental song that captures the mood of a particular scene in the literary work. Bring the song in to class with you so we can all hear it. Make a list of 30 adjectives that come to mind as you hear the work and/or read that portion of the text. Write to describe the action or conflict of that scene using those 30 words.

17. Create an ABC book to further define a chosen character from the work. For each letter of the alphabet, write a short narrative that relates that character to one word that begins with that letter. For example, if you chose the character Grendel from "Beowulf," you could use the word "CAIN" for the letter "C," associating Grendel with Cain.