

Readers Notebook (aka “Reading Logs”)

I. The Purpose:

A. The purpose of a reading log is to engage the text through serious study. By keeping a reading log we will:

- 1) Develop reading skills by being aware of how we are reading and what we are reading (“metacognition”).
- 2) Keep track of the ideas, connections, and questions that come to mind so we can think more about them later and/or share them with others

B. Reading logs are similar to “taking notes” on a text, but they also include thinking about how we read, not just writing down what we read.

II. Reading Skills:

A. How do we read? What do we do when we understand something? What do we do when we don’t understand something?

1. Predict
2. Picture (images, mental maps, graphic organizers etc...)
3. Make Connections
4. Identify a Problem
5. Identify a Solution

III. How to Start a Reading Log:

A. I will tell you how much you need to read before you write an entry in your reading log. Your reading log will be posted online, or will consist of a stapled piece of notebook paper that you will keep in your Working Portfolio.

B. Set-Up the Entry:

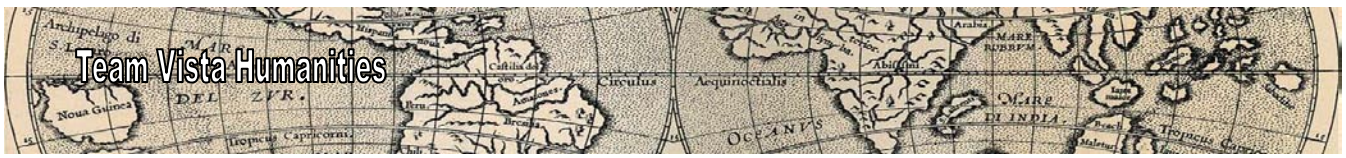
First and last name of author and the title of the piece

The entry number (Reading Log #1, etc)

The page, pages, paragraphs or sections that you are reading

The date you read the piece

The amount of time it took to read the piece



Reading Logs cont.

IV. How to Keep a Reading Log

Notice that there are three sections here (A, B, and C). You will not necessarily have to write about every section or every question/prompt from every section. I will tell you with each assignment.

Use the prompts to guide you or come up with your own. Be detailed. Don't just say, "I didn't understand," say I didn't understand when the author said ... because ...” See example.

Section A – Reflect on how you read by ...

1. Predicting

I predict ...

In the next part ...

I think this is ...

2. Picturing

I picture ...

I see ...

3. Making Connections

This is like a ...

This is not like ...

This reminds me of ...

I started to think about ...

4. Identifying a problem

I got confused when the author said ...

I'm not sure of ...

I didn't expect ...

Some words I didn't know were ...

I was distracted by ...

I lost track of everything except ...

I stopped because ...

While reading this section I forgot important things that I already read ...

During this part I got stuck; it made no sense ...

5. Identifying a solution

I figured out this word from context ...

I re-read this sentence/section ...

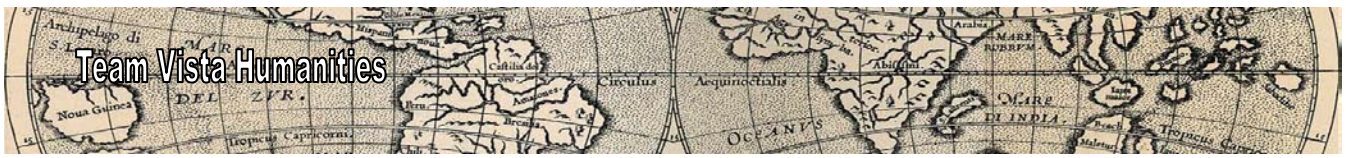
I skipped this sentence/section ...

I kept reading to see if things later became clear ...

I took notes on the margin or on a post-it ...

I took notes on a separate sheet of paper or on the computer ...

I made a diagram, drew a picture, or used another graphic organizer



IV. How to Keep a Reading Log cont.

Reflect on what you read by ..

Section B. – Making observations

1. What strikes you about the text? What did you find interesting or significant about the text?
2. What is the gist of the text? In other words, what is the main idea/thesis? Keep this to one or two sentences.
3. Do you agree with the author? Why or why not? Keep this to 2-3 sentences (or more) use “because.” I agree with the author because ...
4. Make a bullet point list of 3-4 important things that you learned from the text OR Write out a very short summary

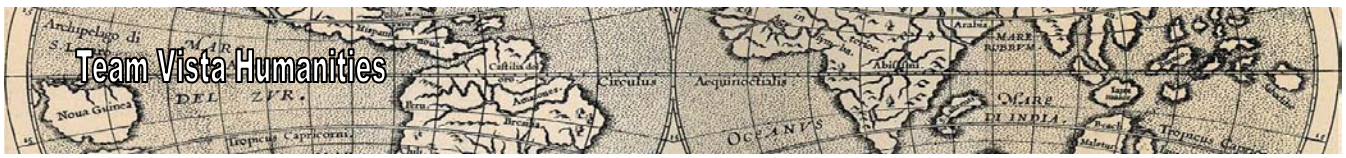
Section C. – Asking questions ...

1. Small Questions: Write down any questions you have concerning the literal meaning of the text (i.e. “on the surface” questions) if you have not addressed them in an earlier part of the reading log. Leave space so you can answer them later after thinking about it some more or getting help from class discussion.

2. Big Questions: Write an interpretative question. That’s a question that people could have different opinions about. These are often good questions for a seminar discussion or for a debate, and you should try to bring them up in discussion. They might develop into “essential questions” or “fertile questions” that you can write about in your journal or conduct research on. You do not have to necessarily answer them; but leave room to jot down thoughts, reflections, and random notes.

Section D – Quotation Analysis

1. What quote struck you as memorable or particularly interesting? Why? What point was the author making? What significance does it have to the meaning of the text?



READING NOTEBOOK ENTRY (Sample)

Kant, "What is Enlightenment?"

Entry #1

p. 203

9/3

15 min.

Sec. A – Reading Skills

I was confused by the word nonage, but after re-reading the 1st paragraph I understood. The definition is right there – in the text. It means being too lazy to think for yourself.

My brother started to play his music really loud so I could not understand the second paragraph. It was all a blur, until I told him to turn it off, then it made sense.

The author lost me with "fair sex." What does that mean?

The author's use of "guardians" reminds me of Captain Beatty in *Fahrenheit 451*.

Sec. B – Observations

The gist of the text is that Enlightenment is having the courage to think for yourself instead of blindly doing what others tell you to do, because you are too lazy to do it yourself.

Sec. C – Question

I answered my own small question in the above section

My big question is: Are people really capable of enlightenment in today's world?

I'm not sure where to go with this, but maybe a research project about the effects of advertising on youth would be interesting. David-Jean said something about that last year ... NOTE TO SELF – Bring this up in seminar tomorrow

(There was no quotation analysis for this assignment)