

Reading Responses 2 - Reader-Response Journaling With *Candide*, By Voltaire Directions Sheet

Label The Work and The Author for the Batch of Reading Response In Top Margin Along
With the Reading Response Page Number.

EX.

Candide, by Voltaire (François-Marie Arouet)

Pg. 1 of 6

Quote Verbatim any passage of your choice to which you can meaningfully respond. Cite the page number of the passage in (parenthesis) per MLA citation conventions.

Develop Your Response to your Selected Quote in the
Second Column

"As they drew near the town they saw a Negro stretched on the ground with only one half of his habit, which was a kind of linen frock; for the poor man had lost his left leg and his right hand...

'Yes, sir,' said the Negro; 'it is the custom here. They give a linen garment twice a year, and that is all our covering. When we labor in the sugar works, and the mill happens to snatch hold of a finger, they instantly chop off our hand; and when we attempt to run away, they cut off a leg. Both these cases have happened to me, and it is at this expense that you eat sugar in Europe...' (53).

To me this passage demonstrates how farsighted Voltaire was in 1759 to depict in the detail he does here the evils of European colonialism at a time when most of his contemporary thinkers were writing about the "social contract" in a context pertaining only to European men. It's not until the mid to late 19th century when writers such as Joseph Conrad would detail the atrocities of European dominion that readers see the details of European colonialization as brutally depicted in Voltaire's writing a century and a half earlier.

Of course, the developed world's economic exploitation of poorer countries continues to this day, and Voltaire would have found a richly illustrative cast in today's world...

Respond to *Candide* using the Reader-Response Journaling Method as described on back. **You will have 5 reading responses this round.**

Respond to 5 quotes of your choice that you feel a connection with for whatever reason. You make the determination as to the significance of your passage!

A passage needs to be at least a paragraph in length, but no more than two. Use ellipses (...) to shorten the passage when appropriate. Refrain from passages more than 2 paragraphs in length.

Directions: Copy the passage in your own hand word for word. Get the feel for Voltaire's style!

There is no length requirement for individual responses. You are being assessed on quality of responses (see rubric on back). With that said, though, appropriately in-depth responses will require development. The above examples model appropriate tone and substance, not development. Your individual responses will be more developed.

There is no particular order you need to follow. Whichever order works best for you is appropriate **as long as your responses are neat, orderly, and you follow this formatting!**

**Reading
Response
Directions:**

DEFINITION OF READER-RESPONSE CRITICISM

Reader-response criticism encompasses various approaches to literature that explore and seek to explain the diversity (and often divergence) of readers' responses to literary works.

With the redefinition of literature as something that only exists meaningfully in the mind of the reader, and with the redefinition of the literary work as a catalyst of mental events, comes a redefinition of the reader. No longer is the reader the passive recipient of those ideas that an author has planted in a text. "The reader is active," [Louise] Rosenblatt had insisted. [Stanley] Fish makes the same point in "Literature in the Reader": "Reading is . . . something you do." Iser, in focusing critical interest on the gaps in texts, on the blanks that readers have to fill in, similarly redefines the reader as an active maker of meaning. Other reader-response critics define the reader differently. Wayne Booth uses the phrase the implied reader to mean the reader "created by the work." Iser also uses the term the implied reader but substitutes the educated reader for what Fish calls the intended reader.

Since the mid-1970s, reader-response criticism has evolved into a variety of new forms. Subjectivists like David Bleich, Norman Holland, and Robert Crosman have viewed the reader's response not as one "guided" by the text but rather as one motivated by deep-seated, personal, psychological needs. Holland has suggested that, when we read, we find our own "identity theme" in the text by using "the literary work to symbolize and finally replicate ourselves. We work out through the text our own characteristic patterns of desire." Even Fish has moved away from reader-response criticism as he had initially helped define it, focusing on "interpretive strategies" held in common by "interpretive communities"—such as the one comprised by American college students reading a novel as a class assignment.

Fish's shift in focus is in many ways typical of changes that have taken place within the field of reader-response criticism—a field that, because of those changes, is increasingly being referred to as reader-oriented criticism. Recent reader-oriented critics, responding to Fish's emphasis on interpretive communities and also to the historically oriented perception theory of Hans Robert Jauss, have studied the way a given reading public's "horizons of expectations" change over time. Many of these contemporary critics view themselves as reader-oriented critics and as practitioners of some other critical approach as well. Certain feminist and gender critics with an interest in reader response have asked whether there is such a thing as "reading like a woman." Reading-oriented new historicists have looked at the way in which racism affects and is affected by reading and, more generally, at the way in which politics can affect reading practices and outcomes. Gay and lesbian critics, such as Wayne Koestenbaum, have argued that sexualities have been similarly constructed within and by social discourses and that there may even be a homosexual way of reading.

Adapted from The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms by Ross Murfin and Supryia M. Ray. Copyright 1998 by Bedford Books (see http://bcs.bedfordstmartins.com/virtualit/poetry/critical_define/crit_reader.html for the full text)

Rubric

18-20 pts.

Scores in this range represent excellent responses that fully and thoughtfully address the topic. They are well organized pieces of writing, and both make generous and insightful use of the text(s). Both illustrate adept use of language and mastery of mechanics. Both also show an appreciation for literary features, when appropriate. The top score response, however, demonstrates uncommon skill and offers unexpected "a-ha" moments for the reader.

16-17.9 pts.

These are slightly above average responses, but they may be deficient in the one of these: depth of insight, use of the texts, organization, or awareness of literary features. They are less precise and less sophisticated in terms of style and use of language. These essays may contain minor mechanical errors, but they are generally well-written.

15.4-15.9 pts.

These essays are slightly below average that maintain the general idea of the assignment and that show some sense of organization, but these essays are weak in content, depth of thought or analysis, language facility, and mechanics. These responses may refer to quotations, but they do not reveal thoughtful use of the texts. These responses may contain mechanical errors that are distracting to the reader.

14-15.3 pts.

These responses make an attempt to deal with the topic but demonstrates serious weakness in content, organization, syntax, and mechanics. These essays reveal little to no insight or analysis, and they do not reflect any engagement with the texts. These scores represent unacceptable grades in terms of the standards for the course, but credit is given for some degree of effort.

13.9 pts. or less

These are essays with little redeeming quality. They appear to be simply a "get it done" efforts, which reveals little thought, no organization, and no revision. Or these essays completely miss the focus of the prompt.