

Students who take notes on readings and who do reflective writing about readings have been shown to learn more, enjoy reading more, and to earn higher grades in assignments and classes. If you don't take notes on your readings already, you should start! To help you make the most of your readings, in this class you'll contribute regularly to a personal reading diary.

The reading diary serves four purposes:

1. It helps you process and document readings.
2. It encourages connections to be drawn from and between individual readings.
3. It provides a forum for honing synthesis and critical thinking skills.
4. It helps to demonstrate that you are doing the required readings.

When done correctly, the reading diary will get you to think deeply about course material and also provide you with **an archive of reading notes that can be used to help you remember and locate course concepts, quotations, and citations relevant to (and required for) your midterm and final project.**

Format

The format of your diary is up to you as long as each entry contains the required elements, the diary is legible, and it can be turned in. A Word file on the computer is OK and so is a composition book. (Printed or photocopied pages from the reading itself with your underlining is NOT acceptable because it doesn't meet the requirements below.)

As this is a diary, it is acceptable to write in incomplete sentences or to write in outline form, as long as we can easily find the minimum requirements for each entry (listed below).

For all readings due after this handout is given out, you should write an entry in your reading diary for every assigned reading. (You *may* also write an entry for optional readings, or for the readings that came before the handout.) Each entry in this diary should do the following things:

Required:

1. Write a **heading** stating which reading this entry applies to. (Abbreviations are fine in a diary.)
2. Note, outline, and/or summarize the **argument(s)**, **main point(s)** **new terms**, or **key concepts** that you find in the reading as you go along.
3. Each entry must consist of **at least four sentences** that you write. (A four sentence quotation that you copy down verbatim would not count.) If you are outlining, the number of words in your total outline should be equivalent to at least four sentences.
4. Focus upon more than "like" or "dislike." While you will certainly have opinions about the readings, centering your entry solely upon whether or not you liked the piece fails to meet any of its four intended purposes (see above). Go further! **Subjective assessments won't be counted** toward the minimum word limit.

Recommended:

5. Go beyond the summary to think about how the reading relates to other work, play and tech generally, or to your own assignments and project.

For example:

- Note a similarity or contrast to a previous reading.
- If it is a *technology* reading, make a link to *play theory*. If it is a *play theory* reading, make a link to a *technology* reading.
- Note the location of useful facts or quotations from the text so that you can use them later.
- Note questions you have about the reading. (Then bring them up in office hours, or in class if there is time. When grading your diary we will not be able to answer your questions for all of the readings – that’s too late and the course will have moved on.)

Grading

Remember, this must exist in a legible format that can be physically handed in for grading (see course syllabus for dates). The Reading Diary is graded on a pass/fail basis for each entry.

In other words, if you have had five required readings so far, your reading diary should contain five entries. If each one of the entries meets the requirements above, you would receive a 5/5 (or 100%).

You do not need to summarize recommended readings, however, if you wish to summarize recommended readings, these can also provide **extra points** toward your score for the reading diaries but they will not count against you if you do not summarize them.

Example

Here is the professor’s reading diary entry for one reading. This example contains more elements than the minimum required.

S-S Ch. 2

p. 20: Small minority of species play: fish, birds, mammals, reptiles.

More research on animal play than people

How do animals play? (Fagen)

- Brief jerky movements (mice twitching)
- Noncontact solo play (leaping)
- Social play (chasing, wrestling)
 - metacommunication p. 23
- Complex social play (tag, king-of-the-hill)
- Object play (playthings, peekaboo)

Not clear why animals play.

training/practice? But play follows mastery

bonding? But most species bond w/o play

flexibility? But most play is repetitive

adaptive? Not proven.

“no one is making great progress showing adaptation to be play’s main function.” P.34

Q: What is this enacted subjunctive ??????!?!? p. 29

Reaction: People used to think only humans used tools/tech but now we know lots of other animals use tools. Maybe play is the same way. It seems fundamentally human but really it’s pre-human. It’s animalistic.