



Prestwick House
Response Journal™

Sample

Prestwick House

Response Journal

Reflections: A Student Response Journal



*A Portrait of the
Artist as a Young Man*
James Joyce

Click here
to learn more
about this
Response Journal!



Click here
to find more
Classroom Resources
for this title!



Prestwick House

More from Prestwick House

Literature

Literary Touchstone Classics
Literature Teaching Units

Grammar and Writing

College and Career Readiness: Writing
Grammar for Writing

Vocabulary

Vocabulary Power Plus
Vocabulary from Latin and Greek Roots

Reading

Reading Informational Texts
Reading Literature



 **Prestwick House**
Response Journal
Reflections: A Student Response Journal



*A Portrait of the
Artist as a Young Man*

James Joyce



Prestwick House

Copyright © 2010 by Prestwick House, Inc., P.O. Box 658, Clayton, DE 19938.
1-800-932-4593 • www.prestwickhouse.com

Permission to copy this unit for classroom use is extended to purchaser for his or her personal use. This material, in whole or part, may not be copied for resale.

ISBN 978-1-93546-612-3

Item No. 307574

To The Student

Although we may read a novel, play, or work of non-fiction for enjoyment, each time we read one, we are building and practicing important basic reading skills. In our ever-more complex society, in which reading has become more and more crucial for success, this, in itself, is an important reason to spend time reading for enjoyment.

Some readers, however, are able to go beyond basic reading techniques and are able to practice higher thinking skills by reflecting on what they have read and how what they read affects them. It is this act of reflection—that is, stopping to think about what you are reading—that this journal is attempting to encourage.

To aid you, we have included writing prompts for each section; however, if you find something that you wish to respond to in the book more compelling than our prompts, you should write about that. We hope you enjoy reading this book and that the act of responding to what you have read increases this enjoyment.

After you read the indicated sections, choose the questions to which you will respond. Keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to these prompts, and there is no one direction in which you must go.

Pre-Reading

1. James Joyce was influenced by many cultures and different mediums of art. He did not hesitate to incorporate other people's ideas or even their words directly into his work. F.H. Drouais, an eighteenth-century French artist, painted a self-portrait of himself as a boy, which he titled *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. It is likely that Joyce's title for his semi-autobiographical novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, was borrowed from Drouais.

Think about the title of a work from any medium—art, music, literature, film, television—that you believe would make a good title for an autobiography of your life. Write down the title, artist (if applicable), and medium it's from. In a paragraph or two, write an explanation about why you believe this title reflects your life.

2. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is considered one of the premiere novels of modernist literature. One objective of the literary modernist movement was to reveal the significant meaning of everyday life, including how characters' thoughts flow and react to events around them. Joyce is admired for his use of the stream-of-consciousness style (also known as interior monologue) of writing, in which a character's thoughts flow into each other, often without linear progress or standard grammar.

Think about your day today. Choose two or three moments that are significant to you. Then, in the stream-of-consciousness style, freewrite your thoughts about these moments. Find a way to connect the events you write about, and be sure to explain why these moments were important to your day.

3. The story begins with the protagonist, Stephen Dedalus, as a young child and ends with the conclusion of his college studies. In between, Stephen experiences many changes. He struggles with self-confidence, religion, patriotism, and theories about artistic beauty.

Chapter I

6. An epigraph is a short quotation that appears in front of a poem, book, or chapter that explains something about what follows. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* begins with an epigraph that is a quote from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. The quote translates as, "applying his mind to obscure arts."

After reading the chapter, determine what you think is the significance or meaning of the epigraph, and write a few sentences to explain your answer. Then, write an epigraph that you think is appropriate for the first chapter. The quote can be from any source, or it can be of your own creation; however, it must relate to the chapter and be appropriate for the classroom.

7. Stephen has a crush on his neighbor Eileen and hopes to marry her someday, but he is told that he can't because she is a Protestant. This information upsets Stephen, and he crawls under the table. Dante warns him that if he does not come out from under the table, eagles will claw his eyes out. Obviously, the threat is false; Dante's intent is to frighten Stephen into behaving.

When you were a child, did an adult ever use a ridiculous or scary threat to coerce you into behaving? Describe the incident and the threat. Was the threat effective? If you haven't had such an experience, describe an incident you've witnessed of a child misbehaving, and create an outrageous threat that you think will get the child to behave.

8. Stephen attends Clongowes Wood College, a Catholic boarding school for young boys. Some of his classmates are nice, but one, Nasty Roche, "is a stink." Roche makes Stephen uncomfortable. After asking him his name, and Stephen responds, "Stephen Dedalus," Roche asks, "What kind of a name is that?"

Joyce places heavy emphasis on the meaning of his characters' names, especially his protagonists. Research the myth of Dædalus. Imagine you are Stephen Dedalus as an adult. Based on your research, write how you believe he would answer the question, "What kind of name is that?"

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

25. Mr. Dedalus takes Stephen around to some of his favorite places in Cork. They go to Mr. Dedalus's medical school. From there, they go from bar to bar. In these places, Mr. Dedalus has a reputation as a gregarious man, known among the pub crowds as a good drinker, charmer, and womanizer. Some of the men in the bar tease Stephen, asking him which girls are prettier, the ones from Dublin or the ones from Cork. Mr. Dedalus attempts to deflect the comments away from his son. Stephen is annoyed and saddened by his father's behavior. By the end of the day, Stephen feels alienated from his family and adrift in the world.

Stephen realizes that his carefree childhood has ended now that he is entering young adulthood. Do you agree with Stephen that a child's life is better than a teenager's life? Make a pros and cons list for childhood and one for teenager. List positive and negative aspects for each phase of life. Then, compare the two, and write down which one you think is better.

26. Stephen wins an essay-writing contest in which the prize is thirty-three pounds. To celebrate, the entire family talks about going out to dinner. Stephen's parents worry about the cost of such an outing and don't want to go anywhere too expensive. Stephen tells them not to worry—he'll pay for the meal. This extravagance begins Stephen's spending spree. He buys gifts for everyone, redecorates his room, and buys quality food for his family. Soon, the prize money runs out, and Stephen realizes he took the wrong approach in trying to unite his family.

Imagine you have been given two hundred dollars to spend as you like. There are many things you need, and many more things you want. It's not a lot of money; it will not go far. How will you spend it for lasting benefit?

Compile two shopping lists: one for necessities and one for luxuries. Record the cost of each item so that you can compare the cost of your needs and wants in order to make the most of your budget. Will you be self-indulgent or practical? Maybe you will fall somewhere in between, buying some necessities and some luxuries. Write a paragraph in which you explain and justify your purchases.

Chapter IV

36. Stephen has established a daily sacred schedule. Each day, he focuses on a specific religious belief. Stephen commits himself to this routine, but he is not sure if it is doing him any good since he believes the sin in his soul is so entrenched that nothing can free him of it. As a way to continue his dedication to a more purified life, Stephen starts to carry rosary beads in his pockets, and he divides the beads into three sections to represent the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Items people carry with them can reveal what's important in a person's life at a particular time. Examine what is in your pocket, wallet, purse, or backpack. Choose one thing that is either unusual or has significance to you. Write a journal entry in which you describe the item and then explain what it means to you and why you carry it around.

37. While continuing to doubt his worthiness, Stephen slowly comes to believe God does love him. He starts to see the entire world as infused with God's love. Stephen is determined to stay faithful to his devout practices. He knows that he will be faced with temptation, so he "mortifies" each of his senses: he keeps his eyes downcast to avoid the gaze of women, he smells foul odors, and he refuses to sing or whistle so as not to use his voice in a worldly way. Despite these attempts to deprive himself, Stephen has moments in which he feels tempted.

Think of a behavior that you would like to change or one that you see someone else struggle with. For example, smoking, eating habits, excessive shopping, spending too much time playing video games, etc. Make a list of the situations that would hinder attempts to change the behavior. Then, list suggestions on how to overcome those obstacles.