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ISBN 978-1-60389-539-2

Item No. 201393

Response Journal

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.

I. Jonathan Harker's Journal

1. *Dracula*, published in 1897, is an excellent example of the type of novel, or genre, called Gothic horror. A Gothic novel is gloomy and has elements of the grotesque and/or the supernatural. Many examples of these elements can be found in this chapter. List ten phrases or sentences which are good examples of gloom, melancholy, grotesqueness, or the supernatural and the page on which it is found. Be sure to put the exact words you take from the novel in quotation marks. The following is an example:

1. "a dog howling all night"

2. The description of Harker's coach ride through the Carpathian Mountains to Castle Dracula is filled with frightening events and images. One of the strangest events describes the eerie dog howls, which seem to travel on the night wind as Harker's coach travels through the mountains. Imagine that you had taken that exact same night ride. Complete the following dialogue that you might have with a friend describing your feelings about the ride:

You: Never, never, have I felt so...

II. Jonathan Harker's Journal

3. There are many words and expressions in this chapter which show that this novel does not take place in modern times. Two examples of this are when the words "caleche" and "traps" are used. After you have read this chapter, leaf through it and find ten words or phrases which indicate that this novel is written in the late 1800's. After you have written your list, look the meaning for each word in a dictionary and write it beside the word on your list.

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10. Point of view is an important part of the structure of a novel, because it shows the interpretation of events from one person's perspective, as opposed to that of another person. Sometimes the point of view is said to be in the third person, meaning that it is from the view of a narrator outside the novel. When a person narrates events happening to him or her, we learn about the action from the first person point of view. You have now read five chapters of *Dracula*. Make a list of the chapter names. After leafing through the chapters, write beside each the names of all the characters whose point of view is written from in that chapter.

VI. Mina Murray's Journal

11. The tone and content of Mina's journal entries certainly differs from that of her fiancé, Harker's. In this entry, we find her quoting an old former sailor who is answering her questions about sea bells and a legend about a "White Lady" at the Whitby Abbey. She has rendered the sailor's conversation in dialect, which is the way a person speaks that is particular to the region where he or she lives. Rewrite the old sailor's dialect conversation in modern English, beginning with "I wouldn't fash masel' about them miss." and ending with "...I lack belly-timber sairly by the clock."
12. Dr. Seward, who loves Lucy and is in charge of a mental hospital, is also keeping a journal of sorts, called a diary. A diary is used more for keeping objective observations and factual matters than a journal, but is nevertheless a record of events. Reread the entries in Dr. Seward's diary in which he describes one of the patients, Renfield, in the mental hospital. Complete the following conversation you might have with a friend in which you sympathetically describe what is happening to Renfield:

Dr. Seward doesn't seem as if he should be taking care of this poor man, Renfield. He writes about being "disgusted" with him and also "scolding" him. This doesn't...

XII. Dr. Seward's Diary

26. With the exception of Jonathan and Mina's wedding in Buda-Pesth, we have not heard much about Jonathan Harker since the very early chapters. Write a letter bringing a friend up to date on the life of Jonathan since his escape from Castle Dracula. Mina's letter to Lucy in this chapter tells where they are now and what they are doing. Begin your letter as follows:

Dear Friend,

You remember my telling you about all the troubles Jonathan had when he went to Transylvania on business? Well, you're not going to believe this, but...

27. At the end of this chapter, we read of Lucy's death. Arthur and her two doctors are with her when she dies. Imagine you are keeping a journal, and have learned that your friend Lucy has died suddenly. Write what you think actually happened to cause her death and how you are feeling about the loss of your friend.

XIII. Dr. Seward's Diary

28. Mina records the funeral service of her friend Lucy in her journal. She also records an incident involving Jonathan in which he thinks he sees Count Dracula when they get back to London after the funeral. After falling asleep on a park bench, he awakes refreshed and with seemingly no memory of having seen the Count. Waking and dreaming, imagination and reality play a large part in the structure of this novel. Write of an experience you have had at some time in your life when you have felt something is real that turned out to be not quite as you had thought. It could be something as simple as waking from a dream that seemed very, very real or a time you might have just mistaken one thing for another.

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48. The plans for the journey by the good men to Transylvania are made. There is also a suggestion that Jonathan remain behind to care for Mina. Jonathan postpones that decision until he talks to Mina. Complete the following dialogue between Mina and Jonathan about the decision as to whether he should go with the men to Transylvania:

Mina: Oh, my darling Jonathan, I would worry so about you returning to that castle where you experienced such pain.

Jonathan: That isn't my problem at all Mina. It's thinking of you being here alone and unprotected...

49. Mina surprises everybody by asking Dr. Van Helsing if she may also be part of the group going to Transylvania. Imagine that you have suffered all that she has at the hands of the evil Count. Write a paragraph with either of the following choices as your feelings if someone suggested to you that you go along to try to capture or kill Count Dracula:

A. There is no way in the world I would travel to that hateful castle, its howling wolves, its...

OR

B. I want to be there to see that evil vampire get his just punishment for what he's done to those I love. I will not shed one tear no matter how he dies...

XXV. Dr. Seward's Diary

50. You will recall that the group has decided to travel over land in order to arrive in Transylvania before Count Dracula, who is traveling back to his castle by sea. This chapter chronicles the route the group takes to reach the castle. You will need to refer to an atlas or an encyclopedia for information about this route. Draw a small map of the route the group takes, labeling each of their stops along the way. Also, from the information written in the journal entries, try to calculate how many days their trip takes.