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# Sample

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**Response Journal**

Reflections: A Student Response Journal



*Cyrano de Bergerac*  
Edmond Rostand

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*Cyrano de Bergerac*  
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P.O. Box 658, Clayton, DE 19938

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## 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.

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*Cyrano de Bergerac*

**ACT I**

1. At the beginning of this act, many different types of people show up at the theater to enjoy the show scheduled for that evening. Make a list of the many different places you can think of where people of different cultures, classes, ages and interests gather. Then pick one, the one you'd most like to be in, and explain why you chose that one.
2. The tradesman seems to be uncomfortable bringing his son into a theater full of people of a lower class. Write a diary entry from the point of view of an observer watching and hearing the tradesman and his son. What do you think of their behavior?
3. The theater is full of audience members looking to make trouble. The pickpocket is looking for victims, for instance, and the pages prepare to torment spectators with pea shooters and fish hooks. In a paragraph, describe a time in your life when either you created some mischief, or were the victim of someone who did.
4. The tradesman lists the name of many of the writers who have come to watch the play, insisting that each of them will be a writer whose name lives on forever in history. How many writers' names can you recall? Make a list of as many famous writers as you can. Across from each name, list at least one book published by that author.
5. It becomes clear through Ragueneau's first description of Cyrano that his nose is not only his most obvious feature, but also his biggest insecurity. Those around are warned not to point out this feature, or make any comment concerning it, or Cyrano will exact his revenge. What is your biggest insecurity? It may be something physical, or something internal, like a bad habit, or a weakness. Write a diary entry that discusses your insecurity, where you think it comes from, and how you deal with it on a day to day basis.

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*Cyrano de Bergerac*

11. Cyrano makes fun of his own nose in an attempt to prevent Valvert from doing so, and to make Valvert look ignorant and incompetent. Continue Cyrano's list of insults concerning his nose by creating a few additional ones, using the following prompts:
  - Envious:
  - Confused:
  - Curious:
  - Childlike:
  - Sympathetic:
12. Imagine you were a newspaper reporter who witnessed Cyrano's swordfight with Valvert. Write a newspaper article describing in detail the events that led up to the fight, the fight itself, and its aftermath. Remember that an article for a paper includes who, what, when, where, why, and how in the first paragraph. Try to come up with a clever or catchy title for your article.
13. Cyrano is overjoyed when he is told that Roxane wishes to meet with him. Give advice in dialogue form to Cyrano, telling him how he should handle the meeting, and what he should say to Roxane to win her love.
14. Cyrano claims "I love Cleopatra; do I appear Caesar? I adore Beatrice; have I the look of Doufe?" Use the internet to look up information about these characters. Explain why Cyrano is making these comparisons to a classmate who doesn't understand them.
15. Cyrano immediately goes to the aid of Le Bret when he discovers one hundred men have been sent against him. When asked why a poet would rush to fight one hundred men, the answer he gives is, "This poor, foolhardy poet is my friend." Describe a time when a person made a great sacrifice for you, simply because he or she was your friend and write that person a Thank-you note.

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*Cyrano de Bergerac*

26. Christian is persistent in mocking Cyrano's nose. Despite the warnings of those around him, he does not stop his obvious disrespect for a man he does not even know. Before this scene, we are not shown enough of Christian's character to make a clear judgment of him. What do you think of him after his actions and words here? Write a diary entry describing what you think of him after this display. Include why you think he may be acting this way.
27. Write down three adjectives that come to mind that describe Cyrano's feelings at the end of this Act. After you have listed the three words, write a few sentences explaining your choice, using evidence from the text in your explanation.
28. Cyrano must think up a creative explanation for why he has a love letter to Roxane on hand. He tells Christian "We poets always have a stock on hand." What other creative excuses might he have used? Write down at least three other excuses he might have given for why he had the letter in his pocket.
29. When Christian questions whether the words of Cyrano's letter will fit the occasion, Cyrano responds with the simile, "Take my word, it will fit her like a glove!" A simile is a comparison between two unlike objects using the words "like" or "as." Make a list of ten similes of your own. Do not use ones you know. Make them up. We have done one for you as an example: She is as beautiful as a spring day in Hawaii.

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*Cyrano de Bergerac*

**Act V**

54. Why does Mother Margaret forbid the sisters from trying to convert Cyrano when he comes to visit? List at least three reasons for her forbidding this, including not only what she actually states, but what you can conclude on your own, as well.
55. Roxane always wears Christian's last love letter close to her heart. It is an object she has become closely attached to, and one which she highly values. In a few detailed paragraphs, describe an object that money can't buy, one to which you feel closely linked.
56. Ragueneau mentions that he is now employed by Molière. Who is this famous Frenchman? Using the Internet or reference books, look up Molière, and in a few detailed paragraphs, describe his life and his accomplishments.
57. Choose the perspective of one of the characters who was present when Cyrano died. In a letter to a family member, write about what you saw and how your character feels about Cyrano's last speech, in which Cyrano reveals what he believes is the one thing death cannot take from him.
58. Write the epitaph that will appear on Cyrano's tombstone. Epitaphs are usually short and contain birth and death dates, but for this one you need to write more. Some epitaphs contain witty comments, which would be quite appropriate for someone as clever as Cyrano. Do not exceed 15 words.
59. You may admire Cyrano for how he acted and what he achieved in life, or you may think his actions were frivolous and his choices incorrect. In a short essay, choose whether you believe Cyrano to have been hero in his lifetime, and back up your choice with evidence from all five acts of this play.