

# Part 3: Actually Doing the Journals: Organizing and Analyzing

## In This Chapter:

- how to organize your journals and sort out your thoughts
- picking out certain parts of the passage
- understanding the importance of certain devices
- relating everything to the thesis and the author's purpose
- how to use what you previously marked up
- summarizing your quotation
- identifying important elements
- how much to write/do

## Formatting the Dialectical Columns

It is extremely important that you provide your analysis in an organized manner. Your dialectical journals must be formatted a certain way. Although it may seem inconvenient to you, it actually helps you sort out your thoughts clearly, making things easier for both you and the teacher.

Your journals will look like tables when you make them, and the tables will look something like this:

Quotation (#)	Paraphrase/Summary

Rhetorical Strategy/Device	Effect/Function

This is pretty self-explanatory - you fill in the parts accordingly. Be sure to number each quotation - Quotation #1, Quotation #2, and so on - so that your teacher will know how many you have without counting. The more organized you are, the easier it is for the teacher to breeze through your journals, the more impressed he or she will be and the better your grade will be. The less organized you are, the more work you make the teacher do, the more the teacher has to constantly flip back and forth from one page of your journal to the next, search for any uncited quotes or page numbers, or try to identify any disorganized parts, the more frustrated that the teacher will be. And believe me, the frustration will come out in your grade.

**Using Proper Citations** This is pretty self-explanatory too. When you put in a quote, you need to make things so that your teacher can easily find out where in the passage you took it from. Just make sure that after you take a segment of the passage to analyze, you write the first sentence, a series of "....." and then the last sentence, then in parentheses, put the paragraph(s) that you took the quotation from. (However, if you did not take out a whole paragraph to analyze, cite the paragraph that the sentences are from and then cite the sentence numbers (e.g., paragraph 4, sentences 7-11). Furthermore, in the "Rhetorical Strategy/Device" column, after citing the part of the quote, you should put a dash (-) then identify the device used, the type of sentence it is, etc. (e.g., "...[insert short quote here]..." - *verbal irony*). Easy.

## Picking Segments of the Passage to Analyze

**Choosing a Quotation** You do not have to choose a huge chunk of the essay, nor should you choose a couple of sentences. One specific paragraph in the passage is sufficient and is what I would recommend. However, you may do a couple of paragraphs if you have a lot to say about the increased amount of material.

**Summarizing It** Yet we have reached another area of the journals that I will label "self-explanatory". You have known how to paraphrase since grade school. Get a basic context of the part of the passage that you are analyzing and write it in your own words. You can be as short and to-the-point as you wish. Take an example from the first two paragraphs of "Cut":

*I remember vividly the last time I cried. I was twelve years old, in the seventh grade, and I had tried out for the junior high school basketball team. I walked into the gymnasium; there was a piece of paper tacked to the bulletin board.*

*It was a cut list. The seventh-grade coach had put it up on the board. The boys whose names were on the list were still on the team; they were welcome to keep coming to practices. The boys whose names were not on the list had been cut; their presence was no longer desired. My name was not on the list.*

(Cut, Prentice Hall Reader, pg. 83)

You could easily translate this to:

*The author is lamenting over his experience of being cut from the basketball team when he was in the 7th grade. A cut list was posted on the board in the gymnasium. Only the boys whose names were on the list were allowed to stay on the team. His name was not on the list.*

Simple enough.

**Analyzing These Segments** And now... what dialectical journals are really about.

**Using What You Marked Up** You have taken notes all over the passage. You have identified the thesis, devices used, types of sentences, tone words, etc. Whatever items you have identified, you can simply add to the "Rhetorical Devices/Strategy" column. It's that easy (much easier and less time-consuming than having to look back at the passage, read parts over, then figure things out, then write it in your journal - good practice for the AP exam, on which you are given only 10-15 minutes per passage - that's why we mark things up).

**Picking Out Specific Parts** Which quotations should you analyze? It's up to you. There are going to be certain areas of the given essay that you understand well or that stick out in your mind as you read, and other areas where you did not have a single clue as to what the author was saying. If you read these parts over and still do not understand them, then ignore them. (You will do this on the AP exam rhetorical analysis too: leave the incomprehensible parts alone and do as much as you possibly can with the parts that you really understand.) Choose one of the parts of the essay that you know you understood and choose those as your quotes. If you cannot understand any or enough quotes for whatever reason (the diction was too elevated to understand, you just don't get it, etc.), then pick a random passage and at least see if there are any rhetorical devices or items in it that you can identify. You should be able to do this. Pick these passages. If you can at least grasp the main concept of the essay, then you can get some kind of idea as to why these devices are related to the author's purpose, so the Device/Strategy and Effect/Function columns will not be too much of a problem. The summary is just one small part of the journals; if you really don't understand what the author was trying to say in that part of the passage, then take that part sentence by sentence (as opposed to inundating yourself trying to figure out the whole thing) and put each sentence into your own words.

**Finding Rhetorical Devices** There is only one thing that I can tell you about this: know and understand your rhetorical devices. You will get an assignment called the Rhetorical Devices Glossary if you have not already. In it are 90 words that you must define, words that describe syntax, diction, figurative language, structure, organization, tone, etc. Familiarize yourself with these terms. In fact, be a complete nerd. Review them occasionally or whenever you have free time throughout the school year. This will save you a lot of stress when exam time comes up. And it will save you stress when doing your journals - you will not have to look everything up. Several of these rhetorical devices will be used in all of your journals, so don't you dare say that you can't find any! In the beginning of the year, you will get many work packets for homework labeled "TONE", "SYNTAX", "DICTION", "FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE", etc. with exercises and definitions. It is your job to keep these packets so that you can refer to them when doing your dialectical journals. They will tell you everything you need to know. They are also good practice for identifying terms so that you can do the journals with ease.

**Finding Other Things** You do not need to analyze only rhetorical devices. There may have been a particular word or sentence that you thought was especially important. Include these in your journal. The author may have organized the essay in a particular way that you may want

to point out. In this case, you could make a footnote and do a separate column to mention this, and explain why the author used this particular structure. These things will be less noticeable than the devices, but they are still important to the essay, and it is important that you notice them and include them (and probably more impressive to the teacher, wink wink.)

*Understanding the Effect of the Devices ..Why Are They Important?* This is always the most difficult part of the journals - answering the question of WHY. This skill is most definitely one of the most necessary skills in AP English Language. You must be able to understand the effect of every item used in the essay that you are given to analyze, and more importantly, understand how the item and its effect are related to the author's purpose.

Let us look at yet another quick example of picking out devices and explaining their importance to the passage. Imagine for a minute that you are doing a dialectical journal and read the following passage, then take a look at part of a sample journal on it.

Men are still basically scum when it comes to helping out in the kitchen. This is one of two insights I had last Thanksgiving, the other one being that Thanksgiving night must be the slowest night of the year in terms of human sexual activity. Nobody wants to engage in human sexual activity with somebody who smells vaguely like yams and is covered with a thin layer of turkey grease, which describes pretty much everybody in the United States on Thanksgiving except the Detroit Lions, who traditionally play football that day and would therefore be too tired.

But that, as far as I can tell, is not my point. My point is that despite all that has been said in the past 20 years about sexual equality, most men make themselves as useful around the kitchen as ill-trained Labrador retrievers. This is not just my opinion: It is a scientific finding based on an exhaustive study of what happened last Thanksgiving when my family had dinner at the home of friends named Arlene and Gene.

Picture a typical Thanksgiving scene: On the floor, three small children and a dog who long ago had her brain eaten by fleas are running as fast as they can directly into things, trying to injure themselves. On the television, the Detroit Lions are doing pretty much the same thing.

In the kitchen, Arlene, a prosecuting attorney responsible for a large staff, is doing something with those repulsive organs that are placed in little surprise packets inside turkeys, apparently as a joke. Surrounding Arlene are thousands of steaming cooking containers. I would no more enter that kitchen than I would attempt to park a nuclear aircraft carrier, but my wife, who runs her own business, glides in very casually and picks up EXACTLY the right kitchen implement and starts doing EXACTLY the right thing without receiving any instructions whatsoever. She quickly becomes enshrouded in steam.

So Gene and I, feeling like the scum we are, finally bumble over 5 and ask what we can do to help, and from behind the steam comes Arlene's patient voice asking us to please keep an eye on the children. Which we try to do.

But there is a famous law of physics that goes: "You cannot watch small children and the Detroit Lions at the same time, and let's face it, the Detroit Lions are more interesting." So we would start out watching the children, and then one of us would sneak a peek at the TV and say, "Hey! Look at this tackle!" And then we'd have to watch for a while to see the replay and find out whether the tackled person was dead or just permanently disabled. By then the children would have succeeded in injuring themselves or the dog, and this voice from behind the kitchen steam would call, VERY patiently, "Gene, PLEASE watch the children."

I realize this is awful. I realize this sounds just like Ozzie and Harriet. I also realize that there are some males out there, with hyphenated last names, who have advanced much farther than Gene and I have, who are not afraid to stay home full time and get coated with baby vomit while their wives work as test pilots, and who go into the kitchen on a daily basis to prepare food for other people, as opposed to going in there to get a beer and maybe some peanut butter on a spoon. But I think Gene and I are fairly typical. I think most males rarely prepare food for others, and when they do, they have their one specialty dish (spaghetti, in my case) that they prepare maybe twice a year in a very elaborate production, for which they expect to be praised as if they had developed, right there in the kitchen, a cure for heart disease.

(Lost in the Kitchen, Dave Barry)

After having read this essay and marking it up yourself (I was being lazy again, sorry), you would have realized that the most noticeable strategy here is Barry's use of humor. So of course, rather than trying to analyze his humor in the whole passage, you would pick out a paragraph or so, then take a humorous sentence out of it and explain what effect it has (if you wish, you could then relate this one part to his use of humor in the rest of the essay, which would help your grade; this is not done in the sample journal that will follow, however) and then relate it to the author's purpose. Here is a sample of one thing you might put in your journal during your analysis (note that the quotation and summary are missing):

Rhetorical Strategy	Effect/Function
"Now to the WOMAN, who had all this sexist Home Economics training back in the pre-feminism era, this is a very simple instruction." (sentence 3, paragraph 8)	Here, Barry creates humor by exaggerating women's training in Home Economics. Even though he is arguing against male stereotypes, he ironically also creates a stereotype against women. This adds more to his purpose - he is trying to teach us about how stereotypes affect our everyday life in things as trivial as helping out in the kitchen, as well as how they affect the ways in which we perceive people.

Note the details used in this explanation - the student who wrote the journal (yours truly) explained exactly what the author did to create humor, the effect that it has on the reader, the author's purpose in using humor, and how it relates to the thesis. You do not have to blatantly blurt out, "This relates to the author's purpose/thesis because..." or "The effect is...", as long as these things are implied in your explanation in the Effect/Function column. Here is another example (from paragraph 8) of what you could include in your analysis:

Rhetorical Strategy	Effect/Function
"Let's say a woman is in the kitchen, working away after having been at her job all day, and the man, feeling guilty, finally shuffles in and offers to help." - complex sentence	Barry juxtaposes his sentence types here, the rest of the sentences are simple, declarative sentences. When creating the beginning of this hypothetical situation, it is probably easier for the reader to understand the sentence when all of the thoughts are strewn together, rather than separated.

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"In defense of men, let me say this: ..."  
"So the woman says something like:..."  
- simple sentences, with a colon

Barry speaks to us as if he is having a casual conversation with us. He would not say, "The woman, for example, may say something such as...", he said it as if he were actually talking to the reader, which helps the reader understand his point of view more. Barry's point is to be light and humorous throughout the essay but to also teach us about stereotypes, and so these sentences demonstrate his approach to reach the reader's interest.

Note that here the student analyzed syntax, another important element that you should always keep in mind. The identification was simple; the type of sentence was named. You probably think that this is rather minuscule; after all, when you write, you probably only use certain types of sentences "just because". But there is something to take out of even this small of a thing. Note how in the explanation of the first item, the student mentioned the importance of "juxtaposition" of sentence types. The importance was also explained in further detail: the sentence must be compound, because Barry is creating a situation in the mind of the reader, and the thoughts must be connected. This explains the effect and the author's purpose. Now note the second item. It takes notice of both his sentence structure and his diction. Here Barry uses simple, declarative sentences with colons to state his case, rather than to use long-winded, more "proper" sentences; this is because he is trying to be light and humorous, and this "lightness" would most greatly be aided by colloquial and conversational language. This refers to the author's purpose, the effect of the item on the reader, and another integral element that you should always deeply consider, **the relationship between the author and his audience**. (For a more in-depth idea of analyzing the effect of certain devices, please refer to Part 4.)

## How Much Do I Do?

Obviously, you cannot arbitrarily choose the amount of quotations and parts of the quotations to analyze. (Sorry slackers, you cannot analyze two parts of one quote and think that you are done.) You need a certain amount for your journals to be considered adequate, or several points will be deducted - take it from someone who got a C on one of her dialectical journals for not doing enough, when it would have been an 100% if she had just added one quote to each passage (I asked the teacher.) Don't ever make that mistake.

**How Many Segments and Devices Do I Analyze?** You must analyze at least 3 quotations from the passage. From these quotations, you will pick 3 devices or any other important parts and provide an in-depth analysis of them. "In-depth" means at least a paragraph of a well-developed explanation of the device and its effect on that particular part of the essay and especially, the essay as a whole. You MUST also tie this in to the author's purpose - why would the author do this? What does the author want me to think? How does this aid the overall flow and effect of the essay? These questions are important, and you must try to answer as many of them as possible. Finally - and most importantly - the more you write, the better, the more you will personally learn about the essay, and the better your grade will be. You will see this in the sample passage provided in the next section.

**REMINDER: NEVER TAKE THE EASY WAY OUT.**

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Rianne Mision

Thursday, May 15, 2008

Dialectical Journals #29-31

WOMEN'S BRAINS by Jay Gould

Quotation 1	Paraphrase/Summary
"Broca's work seemed particularly invulnerable to refutation.... rejected the inferiority of women and wrote with feeling about the burden imposed upon them by Broca's numbers." (paragraph 3)	Broca's work seemed to be perfect, unable to be successfully argued with. His procedure is meticulous, his facts backed up. But there is more to science than just this. But Broca was very objective and respected facts more than anything, and so he firmly believed that women were inferior because of their smaller brain size. Though this caused prejudice by males, it was true.
Rhetorical Device/Strategy	Effect/Function
"Had he not measured with the most scrupulous care and accuracy? (Indeed, he had...all depends on what you do with them." - rhetorical question, followed by a parenthetical answer	The speaker is discussing science and the theories and research discussed may be too "intelligent" for the audience or reader, or so his attitude demonstrates. The speaker is indeed pretentious. Rhetorical questions are used to engage the reader and to prove a point, and most authors will simple leave the question alone for the audience to answer. Instead, Gould answers the question himself, showing his view of the audience as ignorant to his knowledge of arcane scientific principles.
"an apostle of objectivity" - metaphor	This is a creative way of saying "Broca was very objective as a person and as a scientist." Figurative language used in a piece such as this that is dominated by logic and facts can be refreshing to the reader and be interesting because it adds a different "twist" to the essay.
"...no faith, however respectable, no interest, however legitimate.." - parallel structure	Parallel structure creates a rhythm that is easier for the reader to follow and adds balance to the sentence (it sounds better). It is thus easier for the reader to "get the idea" than if he or she had to use serious effort to follow or understand the meaning of the sentence; so, the structure of the sentence allows the reader to understand that Broca truly believed that faith and interest had nothing to do with true knowledge and truth, and only facts could provide these two things.

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Quotation 2	Paraphrase/Summary
"This represents one possible antidote to 'scientific' claims for the constitutional inferiority of certain groups..... -and as farcical as more famous tall tales by and for men." (paragraph 15)	Montessori's findings represent an argument against scientific claims that certain groups of people are inferior. Biological distinctions, of course, exist, but data may be misinterpreted. Disadvantage groups may likewise argue that they are superior to advantaged groups, not just the other way around. So, if a woman told history from her point of view, this is no different than "tall tales" told by men.

Rhetorical Device/Strategy	Effect/Function
"farcical", "constitutional", "speculative" - elevated diction	The language is obviously not colloquial. The subject is sophisticated and intelligent, and the vocabulary used is extensive. This all contributes the the speaker's attitude; he is obviously haughty and pretentious, believing in his intelligence and assuming that the audience is ignorant to the topic that he is discussing.
"scientific" - verbal irony	Science is constituted by facts, things that have been proven to be true. Obviously, since it had been argued by Broca in the beginning of the essay (through his meticulous work, he even stated himself) that women were definitely inferior, but now studies by Montessori proved otherwise, then the claims are no longer scientific. So, Gould means the opposite of what he says here.
"- and as farcical as more famous tall tales by and for men." - hyphenated phrase	Here, the speaker draws a final conclusion from the aforementioned thought. In this paragraph, he acknowledges the fact that scientific claims are biased against certain groups, but the "disadvantaged" groups could likewise use science to argue that instead, they are the ones who are superior, depending on how they use the information. He notes Morgan's view of history from a woman's perspective, and concludes the thought with noting that this is just as foolish and tall tales told by men, and this conclusion is signaled with a hyphen, still connecting it to the thought but separating it into its own idea. In other words, the speaker has come to the conclusion that these scientific arguments of the superiority of certain groups is really not worth as



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Dialectical Journal #11  
Joan Didion "On Keeping A Notebook"

Quote	Paraphrase/Summary
"Why did I write it down? In order to remember, of course, but exactly what was it I wanted to remember? How much of it actually happened? Did any of it? Why do I keep a notebook at all? It is easy to deceive oneself on all these scores(564, 26-29)."	Didion is questioning herself as to why she keeps notebooks in the first place. She wants to know what part of the story she wanted to remember, and how much of it really did happen.
Rhetorical Question	
Function Didion's rhetorical questions question the author as well as the reader. This technique acts to speed up the pace of the reading with several questions, but then slows down the pace by forcing the reader to think about these questions as well. This quotation pulled from "On Keeping a Notebook" is six sentences long, and each sentence is under fifteen words. Her fourth sentence is only three words long, and this acts to create pace within this excerpt.	Effect In asking these specific questions, Didion reveals her purpose to this particular essay. She is questioning her own note-taking technique, and asks the same question to the reader. Because Didion's sentences are so short and simple, there is nothing to confuse the reader. The context of all her sentences is the same, and the five rhetorical questions are answered within the questions, and in the final sentence of this excerpt. The question and answer technique is simple to understand because the sentences are basic in structure and not long and drawn out. This shows the reader that Didion is not trying to make things more difficult than they are, just like the purpose of keeping a notebook.

Quote	Paraphrase
"How it felt to me: that is getting closer to the truth about a notebook.(565, 80)	As the piece progresses, Didion reveals the deeper meaning of "Keeping a Notebook." She expresses that the truth behind keeping her notebooks was to express her feeling on a particular moment.
Syntax; colon	
Function The use of a colon highlights an example. It acts to draw attention to a particular instance, and in this case, Didon is able to emphasize that realizing what a keeping a notebook meant to her was a process. Eventually, she recognizes that she wrote notes down to understand what particular events meant to her, even if some of the details were not completely based in reality.	Effect By using a colon, Didion highlights that her purpose in writing is to show why she kept a notebook for such a long time. She is able to portray to the reader that the feeling behind the notebook was the most important part. This use of syntax makes the tone more colloquial because the diction is simple and her intent is direct. She goes on to say that she believed the events she recorded would one day emotionally fuel her writing and give her topics to choose from.

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Quote	Paraphrase
"We are brought up in the ethic that others, any others, all others, are by definition more interesting than ourselves; taught to be diffident, just this side of self-effacing.(566, 105-107)."	Didion expresses that as children we learn to be humble and modest. She is trying to show what keeping a notebook means, and she realizes that it is important to know how she personally fit into the particular detail or observation.
Parallel structure; repetition	
Function Repetition within a sentence acts to emphasize a point. In this case, repeating the word "others" draws attention to this particular moral. By using "others," "any others," and "all others" she repeatedly puts the focus on the number of people who need to be more important than one's self.	This repetition causes the reader to realize how long of a journey discovering the importance of a notebook was. Parallel structure helps Didion to draw emphasis to this particular story in her article, and brings a certain air of sarcasm because of the colloquial, insistent tone.

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Quote	Paraphrase
"It all comes back. Perhaps it is difficult to see the value in having one's self back in that kind of mood, but I do see it; I think we are all well advised to keep on nodding terms with the people we used to be, whether we find them attractive company or not. Otherwise they turn up unannounced and surprise us, come hammering on the mind's door at 4am on a bad night and demand to know who deserted them, who betrayed them, who is going to make amends (567, 17 sent 3)."	Didion is trying to relay to her reader what happens when a person is revisited by who they were in the past. She captures the moment with repetition and personification.
Personification	
Function- Didion is able to personify the people of our pasts though verbs like "surprise," "hammering," and "demand." The use of personification makes the writing more real and deep. Personification and figurative language allow Didion's example to liven her purpose.	Effect- This specific use of personification makes Didion's tone a bit sardonic and nostalgic. It allows the reader into Didion's past because they can see the effect the past has had on her. The use of such vivid verbs lets the reader into Didion's mind and broadens her purpose. By personifying a mindset, Didion creatively connects to her reader by allowing them to think about their pasts and who they have figuratively 'left behind.'

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Quote	Paraphrase
"Well, perhaps not entirely marginal. As a matter of fact Mrs. Minnie S. Brooks and her MANDARIN COAT pull me back into my own childhood, for although I never knew Mrs. Brooks and did not just visit Inyo country until I was thirty, I grew up in just such a world, in houses cluttered with Indian relics and bits of gold ore and amber girls and the souvenirs my Aunt Mercy Farnsworth brought back from the Orient (567 p14)."	Didion is comparing the world of Mrs. Minnie S. Brooks and her Mandarin Coat to her own childhood. She realizes that she never knew this woman, but she knew what her life was like because of all the souvenirs and clutter in the houses she grew up in.
Polysyndeton; long sentence	
Function Syntax helps to add to the overall purpose and tone of Didion's essay. This sentence particularly breaks up the normal, typical sentence structure and allows the reader to realize the quirkiness of what Didion is really saying. By listing all the things that appear in "such a world" and combining them with multiple conjunctions, the reader can feel the pace of the sentence and understand the quantity of 'stuff' she is emphasizing.	Effect By using so many conjunctions at the end of her long sentence, Didion accomplishes creating creativity in her tone. She capitalizes on the fact that the reader probably will not have an entirely specific clue about what she is talking about by varying her sentence structure. She once again shares another purpose of keeping a notebook: this time, to look back and realize that notebooks weren't about details, they were about emotions.

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