

DIALECTICAL JOURNAL

Definition: A dialectical journal is a double column discussion about characters, events and ideas from a piece of writing. In one column (NOTE TAKING), you are to write down *significant lines* from the novel and the page number on which the lines are found. (Make sure to put quotation marks around passages copied from the text.) In the other column (NOTE MAKING), you are to *react* to the passage by writing your comments, concerns, questions, reasons for choosing the lines, etc.

Sample dialectical journal entries from The Good Earth

NOTE TAKING	NOTE MAKING
1. "...and when he was weary he lay down upon his land and he slept and the health of the earth spread into his flesh and he was healed of his sickness." (pg. 214)	1. This was an important part of the story because if Wang Lung had never been healed by the land then he may never have gone back to plow the fields. The earth would have just dried up and Wang Lung would have become a very poor man with all the money he had spent on Lotus and no more coming in from the harvest. But he was healed, and he was able to find that part of him once again that desires only the land, and so I'm sure another good harvest will come and for the most part, Wang Lung will be happy.
2. "...the lad turned stubborn and melancholy, and if Wang Lung was angry at all, he burst into tears and fled from the room." (pg. 220)	2. Wang Lung can't see why his eldest son isn't turning out quite as planned, and I'd say that it's because most of his life he has been pampered and coddled and everything has been done for him. If Wang Lung had made him work in the fields instead of going to school perhaps he could fend for himself a little and wouldn't be so bullheaded. I get the feeling that after this son is married he will become more and more demanding and a lot less aware of the land that gives him life.