

Book Journaling for Beginners



Prompts, Templates & Lists



Book Elements to Track

- Title
- Author
- Genre
- Format: Print, ebook, audiobook
- Date started / Date finished (or stopped)
- Length
- Publisher
- Year published
- Own it?
- Content warnings
- Themes
- Moods
- Recommended by
- I'd recommend this to

Book Elements to Rate ★

- Enjoyment
- Craft
- Characters
- Plot & pacing
- Info & ideas
- Organization & flow
- Moral value
- Overall rating

Book Review Prompts

- I liked
- I disliked
- I didn't expect
- I was so happy that
- I was so sad that
- This reminds me of
- I don't want to forget
- I will now
- I've never thought about
- I learned
- I agreed with
- I disagreed with
- A question I have is
- The book praises
- The book shames
- I wonder
- This book has X going for it
- This book would've been better for me if
- The thing that makes this book different from other similar books is



Fiction Journal Prompts

1. Why did you pick THIS book to read right NOW?
2. Why is the title of this book the title? Is it straightforward or does it have shades of meaning?
3. How do the characters transform from beginning to end of the story? Which character transformation do you like best?
4. Do any of the characters' names carry any special significance?
5. Do any of the characters strongly remind you of people in your life?
6. Is there a clear antagonist or an antagonistic force? What stands in the way of the protagonist and his or her goal or transformation?
7. Did this book hit on any of your "soft spots" or "sweet spots" as a reader? These are things that you just love and can't resist.
8. Did this book hit on any of your pet peeves as a reader?
9. How would you describe the writing? Flowery, plain, poetic, emotional?
10. Did you speed through this book or was it a slog?
11. What morals underpin the story? Are they similar to or different from your own values?
12. What does this book praise? Do you agree?
13. What does this book shame or put down? Do you agree?
14. In what ways does the book nail its genre? In what ways does it depart from the typical genre conventions?
15. Was this book what you expected it was going to be? Did it surprise you at all?
16. If you could ask the author a question, what would it be?
17. Would you consider this a favorite book? If not, what would it need to have (or what would need to improve) for it to make your list of favorites?
18. What personality traits make the protagonist likeable? Unlikeable?
19. What personality traits make the book's villain likeable? Unlikeable?

Nonfiction Journal Prompts

1. Why did you pick THIS book to read right NOW?
2. Without thinking too much, quickly write a list of Ah-ha moments you had when reading this book. Do it from memory first, and then flip through the book to remember any that you forgot.
3. Did this book teach you a lot of new concepts, or did it reinforce things you already knew?
4. In what ways did this book inspire you (emotionally or spiritually)?
5. Are you going to think differently or make any changes based on this book?
6. Was this book what you expected it was going to be? Did it surprise you at all?
7. If you could ask the author a question, what would it be?
8. What does this book praise? Do you agree?
9. What does this book put down? Do you agree?
10. What important information from this book do you NOT want to forget?
11. Did this book turn you on to other books or resources that you want to explore or check out?
12. Who do I know who needs this book? Who do I know who would just really love reading it?

Line-a-Day Sentence Starters

These are best used for fiction

I can't help but notice

and it might be important because (and it might mean... or I think it's because...)

X stood out to me

and it might be important because (and it might mean... or I think it's because...)

X seemed odd or out of place

and it might be important because (and it might mean... or I think it's because...)

X keeps cropping up again and again

and it might be important because (and it might mean... or I think it's because...)

I've noticed this pattern

and it might be important because (and it might mean... or I think it's because...)

These can be used with fiction and nonfiction

I had an emotional reaction to

I didn't expect

I wonder

I don't want to forget

I will now

I've never thought about

I learned

I agreed with

I disagreed with

A question I have is



Lists and Words to Get You Started

Quick Reference

Master List of Genres

Action / Adventure
Arts / Photography
Biography / Memoir
Business / Leadership
Children's Fiction
Children's Nonfiction
Classics
Contemporary Fiction
Cookbook / Food
Engineering /
Transportation
Epistolary (letters)
Essays / Articles
Fantasy
Finance / Money
Graphic Novel / Comic

Health / Diet / Wellness
Historical Fiction
History / Social Science
Hobbies / Crafts
Home / Lifestyle
Horror
Humor / Satire
Law
Literary Fiction
Medical
Middle Grade
Mystery / Thriller /
Suspense
Mythology / Fairy Tales
Personal Development
Picture Book

Play / Screenplay
Poetry / Verse
Politics
Reference
Relationships /
Parenting
Religious / Spiritual
Romance
Science / Technology
Science Fiction
Short Stories /
Anthologies
Sports
Travel
Young Adult

Major Themes

Life vs. Death
Life vs. Fate worse than death
Love vs. Hate
Success vs. Failure
Maturity vs. Immaturity
Good vs. Evil

List of Mood Words

Adventurous
Bittersweet
Challenging
Dark
Dry / Boring
Emotional
Funny
Hopeful / Optimistic
Informative
Inspiring
Lighthearted
Mysterious
Reflective
Relaxing
Romantic
Sad
Suspenseful
Tense

Content Warnings

Child abuse
Rape / sexual abuse
Miscarriage or infertility
Death of a spouse, child, pet
Graphic violence
Foul language
Graphic sex
Sex scenes
Drug use

Moral Virtues

Confidence / Leadership
Cooperation
Courage
Faithfulness
Family
Friendliness

Generosity
Good Attitude
Hard Work
Honor
Hope / Optimism
Humility
Kindness / Caring
Love / Charity
Modesty
Obedience
Patience
Respect
Responsibility
Self-Control
Truthfulness
Wisdom

Moral Vices

Anger
Bad Attitude
Bullying
Cliques
Despair
Disobedience
Envy
Fear
Greed
Impatience
Lying / Secrets
Prejudice
Pride
Sloth
Stinginess
Vanity