



Contemporary Issues Journal



WHAT IS IT?

Contemporary Issues Journal is a writing assignment that deepens student understanding of course-related ideas and concepts and guides them in applying them to "the real world." It is a robust technique that offers many possibilities for modification and enhancement. Although it focuses on writing, it can also emphasize reading and reflecting. While primarily addressing learning that involves integration and synthesis, it also can catalyze student curiosity because it makes material from coursework more relevant to students, which stimulates their motivation to learn it. Furthermore, it provides an outlet for making connections between in-class work and areas outside of the classroom, thus deepening student learning

ACTIVITY TYPE	TEACHING PROBLEM ADDRESSED	LEARNING TAXONOMIC LEVEL
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Group Work❖ Learning Assessment❖ Project Learning❖ Reflecting❖ Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Low Motivation/Engagement❖ Surface Learning❖ Lack of Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Application: Analysis & Critical Thinking❖ Application: Problem Solving❖ Human Dimension❖ Caring❖ Integration & Synthesis

WHY USE IT?

- ❖ *Contemporary Issues Journal* technique is also very useful for assessing learning and provide a demonstrable record of what students think are important.
- ❖ They also demonstrate how well students can connect what they are learning in the classroom to their personal lives and the world around them.
- ❖ They are a clear documentation of students' ability to integrate information from various aspects of their lives.

HOW DO I DO IT?

1. Clarify your teaching purpose and learning goals for Contemporary Issues Journal
2. Create a prompt that establishes the topic area of journal entries
3. Set assignment parameters (Journal medium, Frequency of entries, etc)
4. Develop a plan for learning assessment or grading
5. Communicate assignment instructions to students
6. Allow students time to look for and record journal entries
7. Reflect upon the activity and evaluate its effectiveness



WHAT SHOULD I CONSIDER?

- ❖ Construct a rubric to assess the journal. Consider the following as items for the rubric
- ❖ Clear statement about the relationship between the news events and the journal entry.
- ❖ Well-selected points of comparison and/or departure among the events and entries.
- ❖ Solid evidence (citation of sources).
- ❖ Logical ordering of information.

WHAT COULD I USE?

A simplest online approach, consider the following alternative adaptations:

- + Have students blog within LMS,
- + Set preferences so that each student's blog is kept private from other students'.
- + Ask students to set up their own blogs. Either way, students can enrich their text with images, links to web pages, media, and even other blogs.
- + Alternatively, Create a single threaded discussion forum for students to share insights from their blogs or set up multiple forums assigned to separate topics

WHAT IF I WANT MORE?

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