

Dialectical Journals Foundation Lesson

About this Lesson

Dialectical journals allow a reader to record a mental conversation with a text. Students can use these journals to

- summarize a text
- pose questions
- read closely for details, images, diction, etc.
- notice patterns and make connections
- connect techniques to purpose, effect, and meaning
- choose appropriate evidence
- document quotations
- make inferences about characters, symbols, etc.
- write analysis justifying an assertion

The purpose of using dialectical journals is to help students document their thoughts about a text and to transfer these thoughts into their writing in an organized, coherent manner. By making the link between device and thematic meaning more concrete, dialectical journals can aid students as they prepare for class discussions, write analytical essays, or take exams.

This lesson presents several different types of dialectical journals, ranging from journals in which students ask questions about the text to journals that target thematic meaning. Using passages from Brian Jacques' novel *Mossflower*, the lesson presents both student models as well as exercises for independent practice. Teachers are encouraged to adapt these models and use rich, multi-layered passages from their own curriculum as the basis for dialectical journal assignments.

Passages for Laying the Foundation® lessons are selected to challenge students, while lessons and activities make texts accessible. Guided practice with challenging texts allows students to gain the proficiency necessary to read independently at or above grade level.

This lesson is included in Module 4: From Journal to Essay.

Objectives

Students will

- pose a variety of questions about the literature they read, ranging from knowledge-based questions to more abstract, analytical and evaluative questions.
- select appropriate evidence from the text to support a literary or rhetorical analysis.
- make inferences about topics based upon their reading.
- analyze a text by linking various literary devices and elements to meaning, including
 - characterization
 - imagery
 - detail
 - diction
 - figurative language
 - mood
 - tone
 - theme
- write thoughtful and effective commentary to support their analysis or claims.

Level

Grades Six through Ten

Connection to Common Core Standards for English Language Arts

LTF Foundation Lessons are designed to be used across grade levels and therefore are aligned to the Common Core Anchor Standards. Teachers should consult their own grade-level-specific Standards. The activities in this lesson allow teachers to address the following Common Core Standards:

Explicitly addressed in this lesson

Code	Standard	Level of Thinking	Depth of Knowledge
R.1	Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it. Cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.	Understand	III
R.2	Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.	Analyze	III
R.3	Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.	Analyze	III
R.4	Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.	Analyze	III
R.10	Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.	Understand	II
W.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.	Analyze	III

Implicitly addressed in this lesson

Code	Standard	Level of Thinking	Depth of Knowledge
L.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	Understand	I
L.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	Understand	I
L.3	Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.	Understand	II
L.5	Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.	Understand	II

L.6	Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.	Understand	II
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LTF Skill Focus

The foundation for LTF English lessons is the Skill Progression Chart that identifies key skills for each domain, beginning with grade 6 and adding more complex skills at each subsequent grade level while reinforcing skills introduced at previous grade levels. The Skill Focus for each individual lesson identifies the skills actually addressed in that lesson.

Levels of Thinking					
Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create
Close Reading		Grammar		Composition	
<i>written, spoken, and visual texts</i>		<i>purposeful use of language for effect</i>		<i>written, spoken, and visual products</i>	
Reading Strategies Determining Main Idea Generalization Inference Paraphrase Prediction Summary				Types (Modes) Descriptive Expository analytical Persuasive (argumentative)	
Literary Elements Character Diction Imagery Theme Tone				Structural Elements Body incorporation of quotes (7) topic sentence use of commentary use of evidence	
Figures of Speech (Figurative Language)					
Literary Techniques Symbolism					

Connections to AP*

Analysis of literary devices and elements is a task that is required of students in both the free response and multiple choice sections of AP English Literature and AP English Language exams. Dialectical journals offer students an organizational strategy for reading and writing during both timed and untimed assessments.

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Materials and Resources

- copies of Student Activity
- Dialectical Journal Template
- Activity: “Technology Extension: Dialectical Journals”

Assessments

The following kinds of formative assessments are embedded in this lesson:

- graphic organizers
- frames/fill-in-the-blank exercises

Teaching Suggestions

A dialectical journal can be an important part of an English class employing Pre-AP strategies but only if teachers have *a specific purpose and criteria for each journal*. Journals may take many forms, but the wise teacher will select or create a journal based on the skill(s) students are expected to learn. To use journals effectively, teachers should

- teach students to write literal (reading on the line), inferential (reading between the lines), and thematic (reading beyond the lines) questions.
- model the activity for students prior to making an assignment.
- establish specific requirements; e.g., three inference questions, five pieces of evidence with inferences and commentary, page numbers, at least two sentences of commentary for each piece of evidence, etc.
- really evaluate the journals. They should not be so long or overwhelming that students (and teachers) dread them.
- require or allow students to use journals when writing essays, participating in discussions, or taking tests.

Answers

The following answers are provided as a guide for teachers to assist students in developing thoughtful commentary. However, these are merely suggested answers, and teachers and students are encouraged to go beyond the expected responses to obtain the maximum benefit of the lesson.

Activity One: Summarizing, Observing, and Questioning Journal

Summary	Observations and Questions
<i>The narrator describes the “ruined grandeur” of Kotir’s Fortress and establishes Fortunata’s unease as she observes the eerie atmosphere of the fortress and ominous behavior of the fortress’s guards.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What image decorates the shields of the fortress’s guards? (level one) • What details establish that the fortress is crumbling into ruin? (level one) • Why are the “myriad of evil green eyes” a good symbol for the tyranny of the Wildcats? (level two) • How does the narrator establish the cruelty of the Wildcats’ power? (level two) • There are many words that create an ominous tone, including “evil,” “slimy,” “sodden,” “shudder,” “guttering light,” “spearbutts” (level two). • There are images that suggest the corrupting nature of power (level three).

Activity Two: Character Analysis Journal**Character: Gonff the mousethief**

Evidence (quotation or detail and context)	Inference—Commentary
<p>Quotation: “He was a ducker and a weaver of life, a marvelous mimic, ballad writer, singer, and lockpick, and very jovial with it all” (10).</p> <p>Context: The narrator describes Gonff and the enjoyment he takes in eating a piece of cheese he stole from the Kotir larder.</p>	<p><u>Joyful, mischievous</u>—Gonff embraces life and its pleasures. He is a talented entertainer who sings, tells stories, and mimics others in a humorous and joyful way. A “ducker” who is regarded as harmless and amusing by the Mossflower community, Gonff’s likability keeps us from judging his thievery too harshly.</p>
<p>Quotation: “Gonff shrugged it all off, calling every creature his matey in imitation of otters, whom he greatly admired” (10).</p> <p>Context: The narrator describes Gonff and the enjoyment he takes in eating a piece of cheese he stole from the Kotir larder.</p>	<p><u>Friendly, affable</u>—Part of Gonff’s likability stems from his overt friendliness. All animals are his “mates,” and he approaches everyone with equal pleasantness and sociability. However, Gonff’s friendliness seems to be only surface deep, as he doesn’t seem discerning as to who is his mate. The fact he “shrugs off” his neighbors’ good will could mean that he knows he is buying their acceptance so they will, in turn, ignore his petty thieving.</p>

Activity Three: Analysis of Mood or Tone Journal

Evidence (quotation or detail and context)	Commentary
<p>Quotation: “Slimy green algae and fungus grew between sodden banners as they slowly disintegrated into threadbare tatters suspended from rusty iron holders” (14).</p> <p>Context: The narrator describes the “ruined grandeur” of Kotir’s Fortress and establishes Fortunata’s unease as she observes the eerie atmosphere of the fortress and ominous behavior of the fortress’s guards.</p>	<p>(Mood words are underlined): Images such as “slimy green algae” and “sodden banners” and “rusty iron holders” capture the <u>unpleasantness</u> of the fortress. When these images are combined with details such as “fungus,” “disintegration,” and “threadbare tatters,” the fortress emerges as an <u>ominous</u> place that promises its inhabitants nothing but decay, death, and destruction. The reader is left to wonder why such a stronghold was allowed to deteriorate so dramatically, creating a feeling of <u>unease</u> and <u>apprehension</u>.</p>
<p>Quotation: “Both bore shields emblazoned with the device of their masters, a myriad of evil green eyes watching in all directions” (14).</p> <p>Context: The narrator describes the “ruined grandeur” of Kotir’s Fortress and establishes Fortunata’s unease as she observes the eerie atmosphere of the fortress and ominous behavior of the fortress’s guards.</p>	<p>(Tone words are underlined): The <u>negative</u> connotation of the word “masters” implies that the soldiers are little better than slaves or minions who carry out their leaders’ nefarious intent. Such <u>ominousness</u> is reinforced and supported by the word “evil,” a reference to the painted eyes on the soldiers’ shield. The fact that the “evil eyes” are “watching in all directions” makes the leadership seem all powerful and omnipresent, reinforcing the passage’s <u>menacing</u> and <u>threatening</u> tone.</p>

Analysis of Theme Journal**Thematic Idea:** *Freedom***Thematic Statement:** *Freedom is worth fighting for, even if the fight requires great sacrifice.*

Evidence (quotation or detail and context)	Commentary
<p>Quotation: “...me and my missus an’ our liddle family won’t be goin’ back to slave for no cat and her soldiers. We’d be as well off dead as havin’ to do that again” (77).</p> <p>Context: Ben Stickle the Hedgehog offers the last word in a debate about whether the animals of Mossflower should spy on the Wildcats of Kotir in preparation for war.</p>	<p>Ben Stickle has much to protect—a wife, children, comfortable home, and productive farm. It would be easy for him to not fight the Wildcats and to submit to their bidding. When the Wildcats first demanded most of his crops as “payment,” Ben initially gave in to the soldiers’ demands. However, Ben argues that personal freedom is worth great sacrifice, and that he would “be as well off dead” if he had to go back into servitude or live under a tyrannical and oppressive regime. Even though he is reluctant to put his personal safety in jeopardy, he understands that a life without freedom is not an option for the animals of Mossflower.</p>

Dialectical Journals Foundation Lesson

Dialectical journals allow a reader to record a mental conversation with a text. You can use dialectical journals for a variety of tasks: to ask questions of the text, to record patterns of details, images, and figures of speech, to make inferences, to connect literary elements and techniques to thematic meaning or tone, and to document quotations and evidence. The following activities will introduce you to different types of journal entries that ultimately will help you write a stylistic analysis.

Activity One: Summarizing, Observing, and Questioning Journal

One kind of dialectical journal is a **Summarizing, Observing, and Questioning Journal**, which allows readers to summarize important points or ideas and to ask questions about a literary passage. There are three types, or levels, of questions readers can ask when completing this type of journal entry:

<u>Level One: Literal</u>	<u>Level Two: Inferential</u>	<u>Level Three: Thematic</u>
Knowledge questions can be answered by skimming the text or doing research.	Inference questions require the reader to make educated guesses supported by the text.	Thematic questions connect the text with real life and with universal themes.
<i>on the line</i>	<i>between the lines</i>	<i>beyond the lines</i>

Answers to Level One questions can be found directly in the text; you literally can put your finger “on the line” that contains the answer. Level One questions often begin with “What?” “Where?” or “Who?”

Example: *What weapons does Martin the Warrior carry?*

Answers to Level Two questions are interpretive, requiring readers to make inferences or assumptions based on evidence in the text. Level Two questions ask “How?” and “Why?”

Example: *Why is it ironic that Martin the Warrior carries a rusting sword?*

Level Three questions ask readers to consider the universal meaning of texts. When considering Level Three questions, a reader asks, “How does this text connect with my life or with life in a larger sense for all human beings?” These questions begin with ideas in the text but move from the “what?” of the text to the “so what?” of abstract issues and thematic concerns.

Example: *How does someone’s appearance affect our understanding of his/her heroic qualities?*

When you are creating a Summarizing, Observing, and Questioning Journal, you should follow this procedure:

In the left-hand column

- summarize assigned paragraphs, passages, or chapters.
- write a synopsis of a specific plot point.

In the right-hand column

- note patterns of diction, imagery, figurative language, etc.
- create questions on each of the three levels of questioning.

Read carefully Passage A from Brian Jacques' *Mossflower*:

Passage A

Mossflower lay deep in the grip of midwinter beneath a sky of leaden gray that showed tinges of scarlet and orange on the horizon. A cold mantle of snow draped the landscape, covering the flatlands to the west. Snow was everywhere, filling ditches, drifting high against hedgerows, making paths invisible, smoothing the contours of earth in its white embrace. The gaunt, leafless ceiling of Mossflower Wood was penetrated by constant snowfall, which carpeted the sprawling woodland floor, building canopies on evergreen shrubs and bushes. Winter had muted the earth; the muffled stillness was broken only by a traveler's paws.

A sturdily built young mouse with quick dark eyes was moving confidently across the snowbound country. Looking back, he could see his tracks disappearing northward into the distance. Farther south the flatlands rolled off endlessly, flanked to the west by the faint shape of distant hills, while to the east stood the long ragged fringe marking the marches of Mossflower. His nose twitched at the elusive smell of burning wood and turf from some hearthfire. Cold wind soughed* from the treetops, causing whorls of snow to dance in icy spirals. The traveler gathered his ragged cloak tighter, adjusted an old rusting sword that was slung across his back, and trudged steadily forward, away from the wilderness, to where other creatures lived.

It was a forbidding place made mean by poverty. Here and there he saw signs of habitation. The dwellings, ravaged and demolished, made pitiful shapes under snowdrifts. Rearing high against the forest, a curious building dominated the ruined settlement. A fortress, crumbling, dark and brooding, it was a symbol of fear to the woodland creatures of Mossflower.

This was how Martin the Warrior first came to Kotir, place of the wildcats (5-6).

*soughed—a soft low murmuring, sighing, or rustling sound

The following chart shows an example of a Summarizing, Observing, and Questioning Journal entry completed by a student after reading the Mossflower passage. Read the example journal carefully.

Summary	Observations and Questions
The narrator establishes the cold, wintry setting and then describes the progress of Martin the Warrior over the harsh, snowy landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What/where is Mossflower Wood? (level one) • Do the colors on the horizon suggest sunrise or sunset? (level two) • What motivates people to not give up, even when they have to overcome great physical or mental obstacles? (level three) • The narrator repeatedly uses words and images that relate to cold, snow, winter and poverty. (level one) • Why does the narrator make the forest seem like a house? (level two) • What qualities do heroes share? (level three) • Irony: our hero seems poor, ragged, and tired. (level two)

Now, read **Passage B**, another excerpt from *Mossflower* that describes the interior of Kotir's fortress.

Passage B

Fortunata the vixen¹ waited nervously in the draughty antehall of Kotir. A low fire cast its guttering light around the damp sandstone walls. Slimy green algae and fungus grew between sodden² banners as they slowly disintegrated into threadbare tatters suspended from rusty iron holders. The vixen could not suppress a shudder. Presently she was joined by two ferrets dressed in cumbersome chain mail. Both bore shields emblazoned with the device of their masters, a myriad³ of evil green eyes watching in all directions. The guards pointed with their spears, indicating that the fox should follow them, and Fortunata fell in step, marching off down the long dark hall. They halted in front of the two huge oaken doors, which swung open as the ferrets banged their spearbutts against the floor. The vixen was confronted by a scene of ruined grandeur.

¹vixen—a female fox

²sodden—saturated with liquid, as with water; soaked through

³myriad—a very great or innumerable number of people or things

Using Passage B, create your own Summarizing, Observing, and Questioning Journal entry based upon the techniques you have learned. Use the format of the chart below, and try to write at least two examples of each level of questioning.

Summary	Observations and Questions

Activity Two: Character Analysis Journal

Like Summarizing, Observing, and Questioning Journals, **Character Analysis Journals** allow readers to record their reactions to a text. Specifically, Character Analysis Journals help readers document evidence to support their inferences and conclusions about the character they are analyzing.

Procedure:

In the left column:

- record evidence about the character (words, actions, reactions).
- select evidence that directly describes a character, evidence that shows what he or she says or does, how he or she acts or reacts, and what other characters say about him or her. Below the quotations from the text, note the context of the quote.
- use quotation marks around quotes and cite page numbers.

In the right column:

- make an inference about the character based on the evidence (underlined). Tell what word or phrase describes the character, based upon the evidence you have collected.
- write commentary that explains how and/or why the evidence leads to or supports the inference.

The following chart shows an example of a student character journal based upon Passage A:

Character: *Martin the Warrior*

Evidence (quotation or detail and context)	Inference—Commentary
<p>Quotation: “A sturdily built young mouse with quick dark eyes was moving confidently across the snowbound country” (5).</p> <p>Context: Martin makes his way across a desolate landscape on a quest to help the woodland creatures of Mossflower.</p>	<p><u>Small, but strong, observant, and bold</u> The reader is surprised to see that the hero of the story is a mouse, a small, seemingly helpless woodland creature. But this young mouse is “sturdily built” and has “quick dark eyes,” images that affirm his strength and alertness. In addition, the fact that the author shows him moving “confidently” across the “snowbound” country establishes him as a traveler who is experienced, at home in the wilderness, self-sufficient and bold.</p>
<p>Quotation: “The traveler gathered his ragged cloak tighter, adjusted an old rusting sword that was slung across his back, and trudged steadily forward, away from the wilderness, to where other creatures lived” (6).</p> <p>Context: Martin makes his way across a desolate landscape on a quest to help the woodland creatures of Mossflower.</p>	<p><u>Weathered and weary, but resolute</u> Martin’s cloak is “ragged,” his sword “rusting,” details that show that he and his weapons and garments have been through a lot together. He is tired, as is evident from the author’s use of the verb “trudged,” to describe his way of walking, but he is evidently resolute as well, since he does not stop but makes his way “steadily forward.”</p>

Now read Passage C below and create a character journal for Gonff the mousethief, another character in *Mossflower*:

Gonff the mousethief padded silently along the passage from the larder and storeroom of Kotir. He was a plump little creature, clad in a green jerkin with a broad buckled belt. He was a ducker* and a weaver of life, a marvelous mimic, ballad writer, singer, and lockpick, and very jovial with it all. The woodlanders were immensely fond of the little thief. Gonff shrugged it all off, calling every creature his matey in imitation of the otters, whom he greatly admired. Chuckling quietly to himself, he drew the small dagger from his belt and cut off a wedge from the cheese he was carrying. Slung around his shoulder was a large flask of elderberry wine which he had also stolen from the larder. Gonff ate and drank, singing quietly to himself in a deep bass voice between mouthfuls of cheese and wine.

*ducker—In British slang, a person who is regarded as odd, harmless, or funny.

Character:

Evidence (quotation or detail and context)	Inference—Commentary
Quotation:	Inference: _____ Commentary:
Context:	
Quotation:	Inference: _____ Commentary:
Context:	

Activity Three: Analysis of Mood or Tone Journal

Mood or Tone Journals help readers explore the writer's attitude toward his/her topic or the feelings the writer experiences while studying the text.

Tone: The writer's, speaker's or narrator's attitude toward the subject, the audience, or a character.

Mood: The feeling created in the reader; the atmosphere of the piece.

Procedure:

In the left column:

- record examples of elements such as diction or imagery that contribute to mood or tone.
- note the context of the quotation or detail from the text.
- use quotation marks around quotes, and note the page numbers on which they appear.

In the right column:

- explain how the text reveals the mood of the passage or the tone of the speaker.
- interpret words and images that have emotional impact and connotative associations.

The following chart shows an example of a student journal based upon Passage A from *Mossflower*:

Evidence (quotation or detail and context)	Inference—Commentary
<p>Quotation: “Mossflower lay deep in the grip of midwinter beneath a sky of leaden gray” (5).</p> <p>Context: The author describes the setting of Martin’s journey, which takes place in a snowstorm.</p>	<p>The author personifies the season, midwinter, by using the word “grip” to describe the strong influence of winter on Mossflower Wood. When a person “grips” something, it is a violent, often hostile act usually meant to immobilize the other person. Midwinter has immobilized Mossflower and its inhabitants, and they seem to be in some kind of danger.</p>
<p>Quotation: “Snow was everywhere, filling ditches, drifting high against hedgerows, making paths invisible, smoothing the contours of earth in its white embrace” (5).</p> <p>Context: The author describes the setting of Martin’s journey, which takes place in a snowstorm.</p>	<p>The four parallel participial phrases that follow the simple independent clause of this sentence contain a masterful progression of detail, showing the reader the massive extent of the snow and its ability to mask familiar landmarks from the traveler. The snow seems to be everywhere, and it seems alive and eerie, blanketing the physical world in its “white embrace.” Again, the author uses personification to create a feeling of menace and foreboding in the setting.</p>
<p>Quotation: “Cold wind soughed from the treetops, causing whorls of snow to dance in icy spirals” (5).</p> <p>Context: The author describes the setting of Martin’s journey, which takes place in a snowstorm.</p>	<p>This sentence gives an almost fairylike feeling to the setting, creating an airy and compelling image of dancing spirals of snow. However, the author’s use of the onomatopoeic word “soughed” gives the image a frightening edge, making the reader hear the moaning of the wind as the snowflakes dance.</p>

Read Passage B again, and this time create a journal entry that targets the mood and/or tone of the setting:

Fortunata the vixen waited nervously in the draughty antehall of Kotir. A low fire cast its guttering light around the damp sandstone walls. Slimy green algae and fungus grew between sodden banners as they slowly disintegrated into threadbare tatters suspended from rusty iron holders. The vixen could not suppress a shudder. Presently she was joined by two ferrets dressed in cumbersome chain mail. Both bore shields emblazoned with the device of their masters, a myriad of evil green eyes watching in all directions. The guards pointed with their spears, indicating that the fox should follow them, and Fortunata fell in step, marching off down the long dark hall. They halted in front of the two huge oaken doors, which swung open as the ferrets banged their spearbutts against the floor. The vixen was confronted by a scene of ruined grandeur. (14)

Evidence (quotation or detail and context)	<u>Inference</u> —Commentary
Quotation: Context:	
Quotation: Context:	

Activity Four: Analysis of Theme Journal

Another kind of dialectical journal is an **Analysis of Theme Journal**. When creating this type of journal, you will target the passage’s thematic idea and create a thematic statement:

Thematic idea: one word (or a short phrase) that describes the topic or subject of the passage

Thematic statement: a declarative sentence that states a universal truth revealed in the passage

To create a thematic statement, you might begin with the question, “What does the evidence have to say about the thematic idea?” The answer to this question becomes the basis for a thematic statement. Once you have written your thematic statement, you can use your dialectical journal to gather evidence and write commentary on the theme you have chosen.

Procedure:

In the left column:

- record evidence that supports a thematic idea in a text you are studying. Also, record the context of the evidence. Your teacher may wish to help you determine the thematic idea when you are first practicing this skill; later on, you can determine themes on your own.

In the right column:

- write commentary that explains the connection between the evidence and the theme.

The following chart shows an example of a student journal over Passage A.

Thematic idea(s): Heroism

Thematic statement (a declarative sentence): Heroes persevere despite hardship and danger.

Evidence (quotation or detail and context)	Inference—Commentary
<p>Quotation: “The traveler gathered his ragged cloak tighter, adjusted an old rusting sword that was slung across his back, and trudged steadily forward, away from the wilderness, to where other creatures lived.”</p> <p>Context: Martin makes his way across a desolate landscape on a quest to help the woodland creatures of Mossflower.</p>	<p>Martin’s cloak is “ragged,” his sword “rusting,” details that show that he and his weapons and garments have been through a lot together. He is tired, as is evident from the author’s use of the verb “trudged” to describe his way of walking, but he is evidently resolute as well, since he does not stop but makes his way “steadily forward.” Like a true hero who sacrifices himself for the good of others, Martin does not let his physical weariness, his poverty, or his raggedness stop him from pursuing his quest.</p>

Now read Passage D, an excerpt from *Mossflower* where Ben Stickle the Hedgehog gives his opinion as to whether the animals of Mossflower should spy upon the oppressive Wildcats in preparation for war.

“I don’t know much about fightin’ and spyin’ but I still think it’s a good idea. One thing I do know, me an’ my missus an’ our liddle family won’t be goin’ back to slave for no cat and her soldiers. We’d be as well off dead as havin’ to do that again. But we’d all best listen to the good Abbess here. Let’s not jump too hasty; war means creatures getting theyselves killed. If it must come to that, then so be it, but meanwhiles let’s keep level heads about us, concentrate on safety for now. Aye, that an’ keepin’ ourselves an’ our families safe. I want to see my little ones grow to farm their own food and not have soldiers comin’ around to tell us that our land is theirs an’ takin’ toll and tax of over half the vittles we have. That ain’t fair nor right” (77).

First, write your thematic idea and statement:

Thematic idea(s): _____

Thematic statement (a declarative sentence): _____

Now create your journal entry:

Evidence (quotation or detail and context)	<u>Inference</u>—Commentary
<p>Quotation:</p> <p>Context:</p>	