

Tips for Writing Reading Responses

- Write your essay response in a formal writing style (not a journal entry)
- Include title and author of work when you begin writing your response
- A poem title or article title uses quote marks: "Sonnet"
- A book title or newspaper title uses underline or italics: *Frankenstein*
- Use complete sentences
- **Absolutely avoid sentence fragments**
- Use proper paragraph divisions where necessary
- Explain your point fully
- Do not summarize the readings; write knowing that I already have very intimate knowledge of the readings
- "I don't know" does not = a response
- Avoid referring to yourself when you write these responses
- Definitely avoid using "I believe," "I think," "I feel"
- Use quotes only when necessary
- Introduce quotes and/or paraphrases
- When quoting from a poem, indicate line breaks with a slash
- When indicating the line from a poem, use the parenthetical documentation with the proper punctuation
- When punctuating anything with quote marks, the punctuation goes inside the quote marks (*except in the case of the citation*)

Example of incorporating a quote from a poem:

In Billy Thornton's poem, "The Nature of Nature," the author uses nature as a symbol of poverty: "Man's nature is to destroy / Nature / naturally an un-natural way" (line 29).

or

Billy Thornton, in "The Nature of Nature," combines the duality of Man's destruction of Nature as "naturally an un-natural way" (line 29).