



Grade Level: 4  
Subject: ELA

## Write a Journal Entry

### ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- History
- Lifeways
- Identity

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students will be able to share important facts and details from a “firsthand” account.
- Students will be able to connect and relate to characters in the story.
- Students will be able to begin to understand the struggle many Native American youth face in finding and processing their identity

### CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PRACTICES

- Connecting to Community
- Preserving and Honoring Cultural History

### ASSESSMENT – Summative

Students will be assessed on their journal entry. Teachers can decide the specific standards/expectations that they would like students to meet but at minimum their entry should include a date, a description of the character whose point of view they are writing from, the setting, and details describing the event/day they are writing about.

### Overview

Journal entries have been used for hundreds of years as a method of recording keeping for history. Authors of these entries often include important details - including setting, events, and emotions surrounding these events. It is because of these journal entries that we know so much about the people of the past. In this lesson, students will take on the role of a character in the story and write a journal entry as if they were that character.

### MATERIALS

What materials are needed for students to engage in this activity?

- munk-t’səm a Journal Entry [Presentation](#)
- munk-t’səm a Journal Entry [Worksheet](#)

### LOGISTICS

- Where does this activity take place?  
**Classroom**
- How are the students organized?

**Whole Class**      Teams: 3-5

Pairs                      **Individually**

### TIME REQUIRED

Varies, ~ 45 minutes

## STANDARDS

### Oregon Common Core State Standards: ELA-Literacy

**RL.4.1** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

**RL.4.3** Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text.

**W.4.3** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

### Oregon Social Sciences Academic Content Standards

**Civics & Government 4.1** Investigate how the establishment, organization, and function of the Oregon government, its Constitution and its laws enforced and/or violated democratic conceptions of equity and justice for individuals and groups including Native Americans, African-Americans, Asian-Americans, and other immigrant groups.

**Economics 4.4** Examine the consequences of power and privilege on issues associated with poverty, income, and the accumulation of wealth.

**Geography 4.10** Identify political, economic, cultural and physical conflicts, including genocide, involving the use of land, natural resources, economic interests, competition for scarce resources, different political views, boundary disputes, and cultural differences within Oregon's different geographical areas and people groups who lived in those areas.

**Geography 4.11** Understand the impact and legacy of colonialism on marginalized communities and describe the decisions made to shape the human (e.g., tribal, cultural, agricultural, industrial, etc.) and physical geography (dams, wind turbines, climate change, transportation, etc.) and its effect on Oregon's environmental sustainability.

### English Language Proficiency Standards

**4-5.1** An ELL can construct meaning from oral presentations and literary and informational text through grade appropriate listening, reading, and viewing.

**4-5.7** An ELL can adapt language choices to purpose, task, and audience when speaking and writing.

**4-5.8** An ELL can determine the meaning of words and phrases in oral presentations and literary and informational text.

## Background for Teachers

<https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/september-2000/the-role-of-journal-writing-in-historical-thinking>

"The Bradley Commission Report on History Teaching argues that one of history's "habits of the mind" is for students to develop an understanding of the "significance of the past to their own lives, both private and public, and to their society."4 For this to occur, they must develop a degree of historical comprehension necessary to appreciate historical perspectives and avoid present-mindedness."

<http://historymatters.qmu.edu/mse/letters/whydo.html>

"For historians who use letters and diaries, the pleasures of reading them translate into specific reasons for why they are valuable windows for looking into the past. Both kinds of personal texts rely on narrative, or storytelling, something which gives historians a useful, inspiring, and sometimes challenging threshold for the story they want to tell. Too, most personal texts have a certain open, candid quality which contrasts with the highly conceptualized and self-protective language of more "official" documents. Finally, although only literate people kept diaries and exchanged letters, both forms were important to a wide variety of people in the past – rich and not-so-rich, old and young, women and men – and thus diaries and letters are among the most democratic of historical sources."

<https://www.grandronde.org/history-culture/history/our-story/>

<https://www.grandronde.org/history-culture/history/>

<https://www.grandronde.org/press-media/press/trail-of-tears/>

Senate Bill 13 Tribal History/Shared History:

<https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/equity/NativeAmericanEducation/Pages/Senate-Bill-13-Tribal-HistoryShared-History.aspx>

## VOCABULARY

- **Character:** A character is a person, animal, or being in a story
- **Setting:** Where a story takes place, or where the story is located. Includes the physical location and the time/era
- **Supporting Details:** Details that support the main idea of the story. Includes descriptions, examples, reasons, explanations and comparisons.
- **t'səm:** Chinuk Wawa word for “write”

## Opening

### Start Journal Entry Presentation:

Begin by asking students whether they have written in a journal or diary before. Ask them what type of things they do/would write in a journal or diary.

## Activity

### 1. Continue with Journal Entry Presentation:

- Slide 3:** Explain the importance of journaling to history. Talk about one of the world’s most renowned youth journal writers - Anne Frank. Have students watch a short video on Anne’s Diary. (Click to start)
- Slide 4:** Explain historical journal example. This is a short background on the Grand Ronde Trail of Tears (*builds off lesson [4.SS.3 Grand Ronde Trail of Tears](#)*).

**Ask students:** *Do you believe any Native Americans on this trail kept a journal/diary (They did not).*

Explain that Native Americans typically only kept records orally, by telling stories.

**Ask students:** *What problems could this cause for historians when they are piecing together times in history? (i.e. one-sided perspective of events since records are not easily accessible due to being oral).*

- Slide 5:** Work with students to review one of Ambrose’s journal entries. This is a slightly complex text for 4th grade students so the teacher will need to help decipher the writing and guide students.  
What did he include: *Date, details about setting, details about the day’s events, one emotion word (fear).*  
What could he add: *the year, more exact location, more details, more emotion*
- Slide 6:** Review assignment directions with students prior to handing out assignment

### 2. Hand out “t’səm a Journal Entry” worksheet to students.

## Closure

Students can “publish” their writing by re-writing on a themed paper (examples attached at bottom of lesson). Students can also share their journal entry with another classmate or in small groups.

## Differentiation

- Students can work in pairs or small groups to complete the journal entry
- Students can verbally record their journal entry using an iPad or other technology device
- Students can write a series of “social media posts” to tell their story

## Extension

- **Large Lesson Extension:** The writing of this journal entry could be formalized to teach the writing process to students (planning (also called prewriting), drafting, revising, editing, and publishing). This would extend the lesson into a small unit

## Notes/Other

This lesson can be taught with a variety of titles. The teacher may decide to read as a whole group, small group, or suggest titles individually to students. Suggested titles include:

*Indian No More* by Charlene Willing and Traci Sorell  
*I Can Make This Promise* by Christine Day  
*Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie  
*Code Talker* by Joseph Bruchac  
*Rain is Not My Indian Name* by Cynthia Leitich Smith  
*My Name is Not Easy* by Debby D Edwardson

Resource guides for these titles can be found on the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Curriculum 4th Grade ELA page.

This lesson can be taught at any time throughout the reading of these titles and can be revisited multiple times.

Jan Michael Looking Wolf’s or Grand Ronde Canoe Family audio tracks can be played as background music while students are working. These audio tracks can be found on Spotify or Apple Music.

Jan Michael Looking Wolf: [Spotify](#) and [Apple Music](#)  
Grand Ronde Canoe Family: [Spotify](#) and [Apple Music](#)

## Appendix

Journal Entry Presentation:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1clR0xK0XSynfDZsaSiwzOjhEla9lMJr7hpQ4W-J4kwU/edit?usp=sharing>

Journal Entry Worksheet:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1u3TOOEWWjGzaHVVYmrMbuDDij6pTqYZ-/view?usp=sharing>

Reading Resource Guides:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1pM1DPSc9a-8m9HpGLhR6ZPbAilfMBF7V?usp=sharing>

Themed Pages for Final Drafts:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HdGpJiR3aplDRbOOUyM2RezyWqpxzFP2/view?usp=sharing>