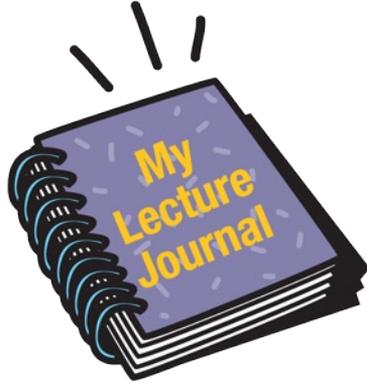




Lecture Journals: A Unique Assessment Tool

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Do you find that the content learned through participatory learning activities including demonstrations, role-playing scenarios, spontaneous on-task class discussions, and other creative and active learning tasks are not adequately measured by traditional test bank multiple-choice questions?



If so, what do you do?

One alternative is to assign at the beginning of the term a Lecture Journal, which chronicles what actually takes place in your class. Also, the Lecture Journal learning task can serve as a major graded writing assignment.

Here are the guidelines for the Lecture Journal assignment that are included in my class syllabus for all my psychology and sociology courses.

It reads as follows:

Many activities and topics discussed in this class are generally not evaluated on multiple-choice tests. In addition, since some of you excel on essay-type assignments, the Lecture Journal will give you an opportunity to be evaluated according to a second style of measurement.

The Lecture Journal consists of a summary of class activities and a personal applications section. It is evaluated on the following criteria:

- » For each week of class, write a one-to-two paragraph summary of what went on in class including demonstrations, experiments and activities.
- » Write at least two personal applications from this material for each week, i.e. show how you could use this information in your own life to better understand yourself or to improve your life.
- » Use appropriate psychology or sociology analysis and language when possible.
- » Papers should be double-space typed with approximately one-inch borders. Spelling and grammar count.
- » Lecture Journals will be collected on (add appropriate date).

The Lecture Journal assessment helps to balance common grade emphasis on short-answer tests with a significant writing assignment. Finally, this document will serve as an accurate record of what went on in your class throughout the semester. And if anyone wants to know what your class is like, all you have to do is hand them a Lecture Journal.