*Journaling*

In this course, we will be writing often; in fact, we will, without fail, be writing daily. Research suggests that students who write with more frequency learn more vocabulary, become more fluid writers, and better organize their formal writing, to name only a few of the many benefits of writing consistently. Ultimately, your goal is to continually write during journaling time without stopping. Hopefully, you will be able to eventually write at least 150 words a day (or more) in your journal.

First, you will need a notebook entirely dedicated ONLY to journaling. If you take notes in the class on other topics, please rip those notes out and place them in your binder or, perhaps more logical, place loose leaf in your binder for notes.

Procedures:

1. Some sort of a prompt will be written on the smart board when you enter the room. When the bell rings, you should immediately begin writing, responding to the prompt with your undivided attention and intellect engaged. Give yourself a minute to think, but then begin writing and do not stop until asked to do so. You will typically be given between 4-7 minutes to journal each day.
2. Be sure to date and title every journal entry (i.e. 9/5/2012 Human Relationships (a title based off of the prompt is most appropriate—be sure to underline your title)). Skip one line between entries, and be sure to use both sides of the paper when writing. Don’t waste space or paper.
3. Do not worry about grammar, spelling, or organization. This is a low-stakes opportunity for you to share your thoughts, feelings, and ideas. By worrying about grammar, you will be less likely to simply write, which of course is the purpose. It is imperative that your pencil is moving continually.
4. If you find that you cannot think of anything else to say regarding a specific prompt or question, write about something (ideally related) else. **The goal is to simply write, wherein you perform a mental conversation with yourself, and if you cannot write any more about the topic, move on to something else, but ultimately continue the conversation.** You can be very personal and honest in these journals.
5. Sometimes, though not always, I will ask you to share your journal entries. You should never feel obligated to do so unless you absolutely want to share your thoughts.

Types of Journal Entries:

1. Prompts will typically ask a question of you or require a response to a thought-provoking quotation, usually based on work we are doing in class. Try to stay on topic if at all possible.
2. Double Entry journals will ask you to write about your thoughts, growth, and learning as it relates to particular topics we are learning in class (more about this later).
3. Free Write entries will be where you can write about anything going on in your life that you find meaningful and important. Once a month, you will have extended free write opportunities (more on this later).

Assessment:

You will be assessed ONLY on your effort and ability to complete the journals and stay on task during journaling time. I will not assess your writing ability or your analysis, though I sincerely hope you put forth your best effort. Journals will be collected periodically; I will only read two entries that you star each time I collect the journals. The rest can remain private to you, though I will scan the pages to see that you put forth the required effort.

If you have any questions or concerns as we begin this process, please see me. Good luck and happy writing!