

How should I create my journal?

In many ways it is much easier to keep an online journal, either through an online blog or website. The advantages are that you can write as much as you like, you can always access your journal, you can share your journal without handing it in, you can easily add pictures, video and links to useful websites, and most important of all you can't lose it. At West Sound Academy you will be required to create personal IB Theatre website with the following pages: Journal, Research Presentation, Collaborative Theatre Project, Solo Project and Directors Notebook.

You might want to keep a physical notebook to note ideas during lessons which you can then transfer to your blog or website, or you can update your journal from a smartphone or laptop.

The most important thing is to find what works for you and to stick to it.

From the beginning of the course, and at regular intervals, students at both SL and HL are required to maintain a theatre journal. This is the students' own record of their two years of study and should be used to record:

- challenges and achievements
- creative ideas
- critical analysis and experience of live theatre productions as a spectator
- detailed evaluations
- experiences as a creator, designer, director and performer
- feedback
- reflections
- research
- responses to work seen
- responses to diverse starting points
- skills acquisition and development

Students are encouraged to find the most appropriate ways of recording their development and have free choice in deciding what form the journal entries should take. The content of the journal should focus specifically on an analysis of learning experiences, rather than being simply a record of triumphs or an exhaustive chronicle of everything the student experiences in theatre. The IB Theatre Journal is not a diary.

Rationale of the IB Theatre Journal

How specifically does the IB Theatre journal benefit me as a student in terms of each assessment?

The IB Theatre journal is regarded as a fundamental activity of the course, developing the student's ability to record research, process and reflection, skills that are required in all assessment tasks.

It is important to keep in mind that elements of the journal may be selected, adapted and presented for assessment. While the journal itself is not directly assessed or moderated, the creation of the journal is of serious benefit to the student in completing each assessment project.

<https://resources.ibo.org/dp/subject-group/Theatre/?c=769b7db9>

Listed below you will find the IBO Theatre Guide understandings as to *how* the journal supports each assessment.

Solo Project - Creating theatre based on theatre theory (HL only)

The students should use their theatre journal to specifically document their research (carefully recording all sources used), practical explorations, the process of creating their solo performance, directing and design ideas and feedback from their mentors and the teacher and the action they have taken in response to this. Students will select, adapt and present what they have recorded in their journal as the basis and material for the report.

Director Notebook - Working with play texts (SL and HL)

The students should use their theatre journal to document their initial responses to reading the play text and research conducted, as well as influences on their intended process and final production. The journal should also be used to record the thoughts and ideas that contribute to the development of their directorial vision. From the journal they will select, adapt and present for submission an annotated selection of their research and exploration as the basis for the director's notebook, focusing on clearly communicating their processes and justification for their artistic decisions and choices. Students should also use the journal to document their experiences of live theatre productions seen during the course. Particular attention should be given to how directors of live theatre integrate performance and production elements to create effective moments of tension, emotion, atmosphere or the communication of a message.

Research Presentation - world theatre traditions (SL and HL)

The student should use the theatre journal to document the research and discoveries made and to organize the structure of the presentation. It should contain the discoveries of research into the theatre tradition and its relationship to the cultural context of the theatre tradition. Students should identify performance conventions of the chosen theatre tradition; select one to focus on; place the convention within the context of the theatre tradition; record the process of physically exploring and applying the performance convention to a moment of theatre; record their learning and place the experience into a personal context as it relates to their development as a theatre-maker or learner. They should make connections between this performance convention and another theatre practice.

Collaborative Theatre Project - Collaboratively creating original theatre (SL and HL)

Students should use their theatre journal to document their skills, interests and approaches and the way the ensemble has been formed. They record their research into professional theatre companies that collaboratively create original theatre and their initial responses to the starting point. They record their contribution to the process of exploring the starting point and creating, designing and presenting the original theatre piece, paying particular attention to the specific explorations led by them individually as well as their experiences of collaborating. From the journal the students will select, adapt and present for submission an annotated selection of their research, exploration and reflection as the basis for the process portfolio, focusing on clearly communicating their processes, the nature of collaboration and justification for their choices.

The IB Theatre journal is the place to:

- Assess and Evaluate.
- Respond and Reflect.
- Create and Brainstorm.
- Offer suggestions, ask questions.
- Record thoughts and concerns
- Discuss the positive and the negative.

What should go into your IB Theatre journal?

- Questions and answers.
- Reflection on a particular exercise or class.
- Assessment/Evaluation of a student's own work and the work of others.
- The tracking of personal growth.
- The addressing of challenges and possible solutions.
- Expectations and goals.
- Ideas/Research for an upcoming piece.
- Character work for a scene.
- Reaction to a performance.
- A record of achievements and areas of improvement.

What should stay out of an IB Theatre journal?

An IB Theatre journal is not a diary. It is a classroom tool. It's easy for students to misunderstand the purpose of the journal. It can often be mistaken for a diary, which is not its intended purpose. Personal response and reflection is different than writing in a personal diary or having a personal emotional outburst. It's one thing to criticize yourself or a fellow performer. It's another to critique a performance, providing reasons for your opinion and offering suggestions of improvement. It is in this way that journaling is a learning tool and an opportunity to improve a skill.

Expectations and Quality of Work

- Journal entries should use complete sentences unless otherwise specified (e.g. a collage). Every journal entry should start with the date. A standard length should be between 200 and 300 words.
- Your online IB Theatre website should have a separate page for each project i.e. Director Notebook, Solo Project, Collaborative Theatre Project and Research Presentation. You should keep your journals that pertain to those specific projects on those pages. If you are writing to a prompt from the teacher or on a topic of your own choosing then you should post that journal on the journal page of your website.
- In terms of content, the purpose of journal entries is to show the teacher that the student understands and is able to comment thoughtfully on a specific experience. The aim of the student is to demonstrate a skill – whether it is assessment, reflection, or creative brainstorming. To use the journal as a personal outburst or diatribe is inappropriate.

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- To say “I don’t know, I don’t understand, or I have no answer” is inappropriate, unless there is follow up explanation for the confusion. There is always an answer when it comes to personal reflection because there is always a personal point of view.
- Journal entries are due every week posted on your IB Theatre website.
- They are to be turned in whether I have given a journal prompt or not. Sometimes you are given prompts and sometimes you are on your own to write about experiences you decide on and/or the work you are doing in class at the time. I have found that over time, some students become over-reliant on prompts and want them instead of having to use their own initiative.
- You do not need to email the instructor a notification of you journal. They are due on your website by 8AM on the day of first class either on Blue week or Silver week. So if we have class on the following Monday they are due at 8AM that day – if our next class is on Tuesday – then the journal for the week prior is due that day by 8AM. You should always check RenWeb and Google Classroom for notes and prompts from the instructor.
- If you are absent on any given day, your journal is always due the following week. The expectation is you will write one or more journal entries each week.
- When writing your journal entries and reflections always ask yourself:
 - Am I listing my thoughts and ideas?
 - Am I outlining my thoughts and ideas?
 - Am I describing my thoughts and ideas?
 - Am I *explaining* my thoughts, ideas and rationales?
- *The goal when writing in your journal is to explain your work and process.*

Grading - Journals are graded according the criteria provided by the IBO , as well as - promptness, grammar, spelling, organization and academic tone. A rubric will be provided.