

## Assertion Journal

**1. a)** Clearly explain the author or artist's assertion (claim). This means you will explain to your reader what the author/ artist is really saying. Instead of always using the same phrase "the author states..." try using verbs that mirror the author's tone:

*advises - asks - asserts - begs - beseeches- cajoles cheers - chimes - commands - complains- confides - conveys - counsels -crows - declares - decrees - demands - describes - dictates - directs - discloses - divulges - encourages - entreats - exclaims -explains - gripes - groans - grouses - grumbles - hints- illustrates - implies - implores - inquires - insinuates - instructs - intimates - justifies - laments - mandates - mocks muses - orders - pleads - ponders - pontificates - proclaims - pronounces - proposes - queries- rationalizes - recommends - recounts - relates - reports - requests - reveals- sighs - sings - snarls sneers - states - submits - suggests - summons - wails - whimpers - whines - wields - wonders*

**1. b)** Analyze the words and their overall arrangement so as to understand the overall meaning. Explain at least one key element, phrase or word from the text and how it helps you understand the author's intended message.

**2. a)** Once you have stated and explained the claim, you must defend, challenge, or qualify the assertion noting any complexities of the issue. This is the part where you include what you believe but make it a statement... *Smith is correct/ incorrect...* (NO I think/ I believe...)

**2. b)** You may use personal relevant examples, including literary/ historical/ contemporary/ pop culture/ etc. Use specific examples and reasoning to support your claim Your argument will be weak and ineffectual if you are vague, general or hypothetical and do not support your claims with specific evidence.

**3. a)** Identify any possible objections to the side taken in 2A.

**3. b)** Make sure to give a rebuttal as to why this objection is incorrect and reinforce why your opinion as stated in 2A is correct.

### Tips:

- .. Avoid first person: I, we, us, our, you, your, me, my
- .. Refer to Authors, or Artists by complete or LAST NAME, never by first name.
- .. Proofread to make sure your sentences are complete and your meaning is clear.

## Example Assertion Journal Entry

Any dictator would admire the uniformity and obedience of the U.S. media.

– Noam Chomsky, Linguist and  
self-proclaimed Libertarian Socialist

Noam Chomsky criticizes the American media for its uniformity and obedience to the American government. He implies that the media does not investigate and report on its own, but prints/airs those things the government and other powers-that-be would have the public know. He goes further, though, and suggests that it is not just laziness, but obedience – the willingness, even desire, to do what is told. Chomsky knows that an unchecked government is liable to slide toward totalitarianism.

These comments are especially prescient, given the state of the media today. Most major newspapers and news organizations use the Associated Press as a major source. And the AP seems to me to parrot the Press Secretary and the dozens of new Czars in the executive branch. In fact, many major newspapers are going out of business – could it be because they are not reporting news but regurgitating soundbites?

Furthermore, the media has picked up the very bad habit of making its coverage of the news, a news story. One network will refute something another network reports, and the first network will lash out. The media has become a commentary trough rather than a source of objective reporting on the day's major events. No wonder our government is running amuck – let's just hope we check the media's check of the government before Chomsky's portent becomes reality.

Journal 1 – 8/27/2009

Colorless green ideas sleep furiously.

- Noam Chomsky

Journal 2 – 9/2/2009

I think when you spread the wealth around, it's good for everybody.

- Barack Obama  
October 15, 2008, on the  
campaign trail talking with  
"Joe the Plumber"

[http://www.nypost.com/seven/10152008/news/politics/obama\\_fires\\_a\\_robin\\_hood\\_warning\\_shot\\_133685.htm](http://www.nypost.com/seven/10152008/news/politics/obama_fires_a_robin_hood_warning_shot_133685.htm)

Journal 3 – 9/4/2009

"The constitution does not just protect those whose views we share; it also protects those with whose views we disagree."

- Edward Kennedy

Journal 4 – 9/11/2009

"Men sleep peacefully in their beds at night because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf."

- George Orwell

Journal 5 – 9/30/2009

Education political cartoon

Journal 6 – 10/6/2009

Obama Olympics political cartoon

Journal 7 – 10/15/2009

“Advertisements contain the only truths to be relied on in the newspaper.”

– Mark Twain

Journal 8 – 10/20/2009

“There are two ways of exerting one's strength: one is pushing down, the other is pulling up.”

– Booker T. Washington

Journal 9 – 10/26/2009

“I'm a firm believer in luck; the harder I work, the more of it I have.”

– Thomas Jefferson

Journal 10 – 11/4/2009

“The ends justifies the means.”

– Machiavelli

Journal 11 – 11/10/2009

“Beauty is only skin deep” video

Journal 12 – 11/16/2009

“It's good to have an end to journey toward, but it's the journey that matters in the end.”

– Ursula LeGuin

Journal 13 – 11/20/2009

“Coincidence is God's way of staying anonymous.”

– Albert Einstein

Journal 14 – 12/7/2009

(this is part of the Macy's drive to donate \$1,000,000 to the Make-a-Wish Foundation – see

<http://social.macys.com/believe2009/#!/make-a-wish-foundation>)

Write your own assertion to Santa Claus in the form of a three-paragraph letter.

1. Make your request.
2. Defend your position on his “Nice” list.
3. Assert why his granting of your wish is best, or at least better, than denying it.

Journal 15