

Creative Visual Journaling & Blogging

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Visual journaling and blogging are alternative ways to reflect/write and make thinking visual/visible. If you wish to learn more on visual journals, there is a breadth of information online as well as numerous helpful articles on the topic written by Dr. Kit Grauer (UBC Art Education) and others.

As a reflective, creative process, I have found visual journaling to be quite a generative process for teacher candidates (TCs). TCs can use the visual journal/blog to:

- a) Reflect on what is being learned/taught and how this comes alongside their long practicum (or other teaching/learning) experiences;
- b) Record daily events, thoughts, questions, and ideas as they change over time;
- c) Connect experiences with theories on teaching/learning;
- d) Collect, arrange, and respond to significant artifacts/images; and
- e) Think/write about the value of alternative educative spaces and where they may want to work.

How I use visual journals on CFE/in courses:

- I require a **daily, dated entry** in journal or on a blog (can combine) with long or short written reflections and a heading/title. Friday reflections are a bit longer to reflect the week (summative).
- A **written piece** is accompanied or **created in tandem with a visual response page**. Sometimes I provide **daily/weekly themed prompts as guides for reflection**, but not often. I find TCs desire a space to call their own and navigate independently. We share these weekly, at the end as a group, and regularly with community site partner(s). I check in regularly on the responses and provide feedback.
- Moleskine 9x12 is a great size, or smaller - any brand works but I like the **ones with pockets to collect artifacts. Journals can also be handmade or easily repurposed from other courses to save \$.** (Note: Evernote has now partnered with Moleskine to combine digital note taking and handwritten notes...<https://evernote.com/partner/moleskine/>)
- **Journals might include:** *personal writing, pasted-in text, collage, found materials, documents related to CFE site/course, photos, related articles, artwork, poetry, drawings, postcards, curricular planning ideas, etc. (just no confidential info or photos of student faces).* See link #2 below for examples.
- **Paper, hands-on journaling can be combined with a blog** by scanning/photographing the journal pages and including those on blog. **Cameras on newer smartphones are of excellent quality** and can be easily used for this kind of **daily documentation** (or whatever cameras TCs have access to).
- Artistic iPad apps like **Paper53** and creative writing platforms like **Scrivener** can offer some unique digital ways for creating pages/reflections. **Wix** and **Weebly** are good free blog sites, as well as UBC blogs which use **WordPress**.
- ****Ethically, if an FA or CFE partner wishes to show, collect, or photograph examples of TC visual journals, student permission must of course be granted first** and names may need to be removed.

Some helpful links (Note: For those working with younger students, some content might be considered mature and can benefit from teacher/FA review first.)

- <http://visualjournaling.com>
- <http://www.1000journals.com>
- <http://www.danelondon.org/about/journals/>
- <https://www.pinterest.com/whitneywpanetta/visual-journaling/>
- <http://www.creativity-portal.com/howto/writing/journal.html>
- https://naea.digication.com/SummerVision_Information/SummerVision_Visual_Journal
- <http://blogs.ubc.ca/about/>
- <http://www.wpbeginner.com>
- <https://www.fiftythree.com/paper>
- <https://www.literatureandlatte.com/scrivener.php>