**Writing in & for Digital Environments Journal Assignment**

On your course schedule (and on the schedule posted to our blog) there are a number of assignments labeled JNL. These assignments are to be completed in your analogue (paper) notebook and are due in class on the day they are listed. These journal assignments will serve as reading notes, reflections, discussion starters, and also brainstorming/prewriting for work in this class. Any explorations you do from Keri Smith’s *How to be an Explorer of the World* will also count as part of your journal.

As I said in class, this journal will be our analogue component in this digital course. The idea is to make sure we are properly prewriting and brainstorming before we move to our online work. Your journal can take any form you like as long as it is with you in class the day it is due. You can use a loose leaf binder or folder, spiral notebook, small moleskin journal—I do not care as long as it is something physical and not digital. You may print things and add them to your journal.

The grade for your Journals, including *How to be an Explorer of the World* explorations, will be added to your blog post grades and will make up 30% of your total course grade. I will collect the journal 2-3 times over the semester; I will give you one class period’s notice before I collect them.

* **Journal Assignment for Thursday 9/7:**

You have read pages 1-25 in *How to be an Explorer of the World* and thought about how points from these pages resonate with the things we have talked about in class so far.

Complete **three** Explorations (your choice) in your journal. No—these are not online and yes, they might seem silly. But remember, we are opening ourselves up to possibility and we are stretching some mental muscles that have atrophied. Have some fun! (NOTE: at a later time in the semester, I

will ask you to reflect on these assignments from *How to be an Explorer.* More details TBA.)

Some explorations students have liked in the past:

* See something in a new way: #1, 48, 54, 55, 59
* Thought Experiments: #35, 37, 44, 57
* Experience Explorations: #4, 14, 31, 40, 42, 49
* History Explorations: #6, 10, 15, 30

**Some thoughts on how to use Keri Smith’s *How to be an Explorer of the World***

Pay special attention to pages 7 and 17-19 and take note of how Smith describes an approach to seeing that is very similar to what Rosenwasser & Stephen call “The Method.” My goal with this book is to help you engage parts of your brain that we often let go dormant. Our job for the semester is to see new connections, new ideas, and then write about them. *How to be an Explorer of the World* and *Writing Analytically* urge us to develop new habits of mind that will help us to be better thinkers and writers. Both books encourage us to **close read**, but they do so in radically different ways.

I want you to think of your blog and course project as an “exploration” and the exploration activities from this book will help you stretch how you see and interact with the world around you. You are the explorer who must sort through all the information you have been gathering over the course of your time here at Dickinson, and over the course of your life, and start to try to make sense of it. In the same way that Smith suggests you “always be looking” and “document your findings in a variety of ways” (page 5) this class will ask you to make sense of your disparate interests in order to make connections and complete a semester-long blog project. What are your interests? What do you read? What kinds of things do you want to talk about? How will you begin to make your mark on the world? It will require some sleuthing to figure out how to articulate answers to these questions and even more work to figure out how to create an ongoing project that addresses one or more of your findings. As Smith says, “Life is a scavenger hunt” (24) — have **fun** with these exercises!