

Journal Entries 3-6 for *The Awakening*

These prompts arise from the themes and issues presented in the text, and the purpose of this writing is to reflect on how these themes are relevant to you and your own personal development. At times, these questions will be the basis for class discussions and “check ins,” so please write only that which you would be comfortable sharing with your instructor and classmates.

Instructions:

- 1) We have already completed Journals 1 & 2. Please complete this assignment in the same Google Doc that you have already used for Journals 1 & 2.
- 2) For this assignment, please choose four of the prompts below. Then, for each of your four chosen prompts, respond in at least a thorough paragraph (approximately 150-250 words).

CHOOSE FOUR TOPICS:

A. Patterns & Motifs in Your Character & Life - In *The Awakening*, Edna Pontellier strives to understand herself fully and to recognize the patterns in her character and in her life. (For example, we learn in Ch.7 that “Edna often wondered at one propensity which sometimes had inwardly disturbed her without causing any outward show or manifestation on her part”; this propensity is Edna’s pattern of powerful infatuations, which includes her “falling in love” with the sad-eyed cavalry officer, the engaged young gentleman, and the distinguished tragedian.) When you look at your own life, what patterns or motifs can you recognize (in your thoughts, feelings, actions, relationships, and life events)? Identify and discuss at least one significant pattern or motif that you can recognize in your character and in your life. Moreover, how does it feel for you to recognize this pattern or motif in your life—are you glad to discover these traits about yourself and your life, or do you find this awareness troubling in any way? Explain why.

B. Balancing Responsibilities with Passions - Edna struggles between her perceived responsibilities as a wife and mother and her awakening passion and desire to live on her own terms. How do you balance your responsibilities with school, family, and work (if applicable) with your interests and passions? With so much competing for your time, how do you prioritize? Which activities do you give up first, and why? Do you feel that the way you prioritize your time reflects your own values, or are they reflective of someone else’s expectations?

C. Your Own Sensibility & Character - Edna is described as having a “sensuous susceptibility to beauty” (18), and obviously art and music are integral to her awakening and sense of fulfillment. Likewise, she is lured by passion and Romantic idealism. How would you characterize your own sensibility? Are you more idealistic or realistic, Romantic or pragmatic? Are you, like Edna, prone to the lure of art, beauty, and passion? How does this sensibility benefit you? Hinder you?

D. Gender Roles - In *The Awakening*, some gender roles are reinforced while others are reversed and challenged. What gender expectations do you feel exist for you as you emerge into your adulthood? How do you feel about these expectations? Will you embrace them willingly, accept them begrudgingly, disregard them, or work to change them? Explain.

E. Future Plans - As you start your senior year, you are likely full of thoughts regarding your future plans. Describe these plans. Are you only thinking about which college to which to apply, or do you have a vision beyond the next four years? What excites you about the college admissions process and college itself? What are your fears or concerns? What factors are influencing which colleges you are applying to? What are you doing—both academically, psychologically, and practically—to prepare yourself for the transition to post-high school life?

F. The Ocean - “The voice of the sea is seductive; never ceasing, whispering, clamoring, murmuring, inviting the soul to wander for a spell in abysses of solitude; to lose itself in mazes of inward contemplation...The voice of the sea speaks to the soul. The touch of the sea is sensuous, enfolding the body in its soft, close embrace” (17). Reflect on your relationship with the ocean. What purposes and roles does it play in your life? What does the ocean mean to you? How is it integrated into your life experience and memory?