

# Assertion Journals

The Purpose of the Assertion Journal is to strengthen your analysis skills and your critical thinking skills. Your job is to read the quote given to you and perform the following tasks:

1. Copy the quote in your journal (on a page of notebook paper).
2. Identify the author's claim. In other words, what is the author really saying? You will need to analyze the words and their arrangement to understand the overall meaning.
3. Comment on how this quote is meaningful to you. You can relate similar experiences, refute the author's claim, or otherwise explain how and why the quote pertains to your life, something you've read, or the world in general. Use specific examples and reasoning to support your explanation.

This is not an opinion. Your connection must make sense. If your connection isn't immediately logical, walk your reader's (me) through the logic.

Each journal entry should be at least 1 page long.

## 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 and 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.

Brenda Suchy 8/26/2009 6:30 PM

**Comment [1]:** Reading between the lines for a fuller understanding of the quote.

Brenda Suchy 8/26/2009 6:31 PM

**Comment [2]:** definition

Brenda Suchy 8/26/2009 6:28 PM

**Comment [3]:** First paragraph explains Chomsky's quote.

Brenda Suchy 8/27/2009 6:37 AM

**Comment [4]:** Connection to current events

Brenda Suchy 8/26/2009 6:33 PM

**Comment [5]:** Another current events connection

Brenda Suchy 8/26/2009 6:34 PM

**Comment [6]:** Speculation reached through logical progression of connections.

Brenda Suchy 8/27/2009 6:40 AM

**Comment [7]:** Nice word choice.

Brenda Suchy 8/26/2009 6:35 PM

**Comment [8]:** Tie back to quote