**Critical Journal**

**Date:**

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| **RECORD:** Favorite words, phrases, and Quotations; take notes on the presentation. (3 pts.)   * “The best soils contain 3 to 10 percent organic matter” (pg. 28) * “dead hamsters buried in the backyard will add organic material too, as will anything that was once living.” (Pg. 28) * “most soils are perfectly capable of sustaining plant life unless they’ve been highly disturbed by humans” (pg. 30) * “The longer you compost your manure the safer your compost will be.” (Pg.31) * “Plants that are grown in an area and then cut down and allowed to rot will supply nutrients to future crops… These plants are known as green manure.” (Pg. 33) | **RESPOND:** Observations, responses, insights. Where do you agree with the Presenter? Disagree? (3 points)   * The author mentions that it is very important to get a soil test done. He mentions that with it you determine the nutrients and other things you need to help your plants grow the best. * For the average gardener fresh manure should NOT be used. It needs to be composted first to get rid of the bad chemicals. * I agree that compost should be used as a soil enhancer and not a fertilizer. * I agree in one of the “Bottom Line” it mentions that compost can be good to add to your soil as long as it is done appropriately. * The writer constantly brings back points to how synthetic and organic both have their pros and cons which I agree with. |

**REFLECT:** Critical Reflections. Make a personal connection. Ask, “How has my thinking modified because of what I heard? What is the action I will take due to what I have learned?” (*Action includes any change—a change in thinking, in beliefs, or in behavior.*) Be specific about your plan, and how you will use what you have learned in your classes, in your personal life, and/or in your future career. (4 pts.)

After reading this chapter I have realized the importance of my soil. The nutrients provided need to be perfect for the plants and every plant is different. The pros and cons of each synthetic and organic fertilizers were given and with knowing this information I know that balance is most important. Even farmers who use synthetic fertilizers continue to use organic matter and vice versa. To get the best results I need to understand this balance and apply it which I plan to do with my future gardens in my home.