

## Theory Introduction

It is important to introduce high school students to literary criticism not only because it allows them to think about literature more critically but it also helps them see their whole world in a new—more critical—light. In this lesson seven literary theories are addressed. One literary theory is Feminist theory which is basically a theory that evaluates how a piece of literature interacts with women, female roles, and gender stereotypes. The Reader Response theory is basically a theory designed to evaluate how a piece of literature is interpreted by the reader based on the experiences and knowledge the reader has before reading or experiencing the literature. Basically, the meaning of the text depends on the reader and what experiences that literature brings to the interpretation of that text through personal connections. A third theory being studied is the archetypal theory which analyzes literature and its meaning based on the archetypes that are present within the literature. Marxist theory engages with literature in an analysis of how power relations and social class are presented and work within the piece of literature. Psychological theory focuses on the mental capacities of the characters or the authors. When doing a psychological reading, one would analyze a character or the author's psychological motivation, feelings, state of mind, and desires. The Historical approach would evaluate how the text is influenced by or comments on the historical time period or culture from which it was written. Lastly, the Formalist theory focuses on the form of a piece of work by analyzing literature through close readings in which the use of literary devices, word choice, and poetic devices are evaluated very carefully as to how they develop the meaning.

I chose to have students learn these theories by using the jigsaw method in which students begin in a larger group then are assigned to a smaller group where they become experts on a particular theory after which they go back and teach said theory to their original group. I chose this method because I think it is important to develop 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that students learn how to collaborate in a variety of situations and take control over their own learning. Students

will be working in class so I will be available if they need help or clarification, but for the most part I want them to do the work on their own so I can see that they can take control of their learning. I also like using this method with this topic because I find that by in-depth discussions of the material is one of the best ways to learn literary theory and usually in whole class discussions not all students participate. Students will be forced to contribute and participate in each group because in their larger group they will be solely responsible for on theory and in the smaller group there are only three members so it is crucial that everyone contribute with such small numbers. This is also a great way to introduce them to a lot of literary theories quickly.

## Lesson Plan

Name: Danielle Cook

Date of Lesson:

Content Area: Language Arts

Grade/Age:12

Cooperating Teacher: Professor Spradlin

Duration of Lesson: one 50 minute block; 5 days

- I. Topic of Lesson: Literary Theory
- II. Prerequisite Knowledge: Students must already know how to analyze a text using characterization, plot devices, symbolism, irony, paradox, theme and plot devices.
- III. Goal or SPA (NCTE) Standards:

Standard	
<i>Standard 1</i>	Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
<i>Standard 3</i>	Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context, graphics).
<i>Standard 4</i>	Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

## IV. Objective/ Ohio Academic Content Standards/ Common Core

Standard	
<i>S.L.11-12.1</i>	Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on <i>grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues</i> , building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

	<p>a. Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.</p> <p>b. Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.</p> <p>c. Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.</p> <p>d. Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.</p>
<i>S.L.11-12.4</i>	Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.
<i>R.L.11-12.5</i>	Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

#### V. Materials/Technology:

- Three iPads

- Literary Theory Information Sheets:

The following are from Meridith Niekamp's materials package:

- Feminist
- Reader Response
- Archetypal
- Psychological
- Historical

The following were created from information found in Deborah Appleman's "Critical Encounters in High School English 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition":

- Marxism
- Formalism

- Poster Paper

- Markers

- Access to YouTube

- Pencil

- Paper

- Song Lyrics:

- Aerosmith's "Eat the Rich"
- Bad Company's "If You Needed Somebody"
- Bon Jovi's "Livin' on a Prayer"

- Notes handout (adapted from Niekamp's materials package)

#### VI. Activities/Procedures:

Day One:

1. Discuss the definition of literary criticism, literary theory, and literary critics with students. Discuss the importance of literary theories and why there are many of them. (20 mins)
2. Divide the students up into three groups of seven. Each group is given an iPad and song lyrics. Students will be able to spread out into resource rooms or the library where permitted. (5 mins)
3. In groups students are to watch the music video of their group song. (Bad Company's "If You Needed Somebody" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-EXh2ZJ9VVY>, Bon Jovi's "Livin' on a Prayer" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDK9QqIzhwk>, or Aerosmith's "Eat the Rich" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-0IAhnoDIU> )They will then discuss the song and look up background information of the song (when it was created, why, the inspiration behind the song). They will discuss the following questions and others they develop: (25 mins)
  - What does the song mean?
  - What is the subject of the song?
  - What is a theme of the song?
  - Who is the main character of narrator? What is significant about him or her?
  - What sort of characterization does the song offer of this person?
  - What is the message of the song?
  - Are there different ways to interpret the message?
  - What images in the video helped convey the message?

#### Day Two:

1. Students should get back into their groups of seven. From there they are each given an index card that contains one of the following theories on it: (2 mins)
  - Formalism
  - Marxism/Social
  - Historical
  - Psychological
  - Reader Response
  - Feminism/Gender
  - Archetypal
2. The groups will now split up and compile smaller groups centered on the theory they have drawn (there will now be seven groups of three). After the groups have gathered their materials (information on the theory) they can seek out their own work space throughout the room, in the library, or other resource rooms. (3 mins)
3. The groups will now read the material on their theory and discuss in their groups how they can apply it to literature they have read throughout the year and to their song while taking notes. Each group member will be responsible for mastering this theory so that they can teach it to their other group members. (45 mins)

#### Day Three and Four:

1. Students are to get into their groups of seven. Each member needs to explain the theory that they have now become an expert on to their group members. From here the group should discuss how the group song could be analyzed using this theory or "lens". Group member are encouraged to add to other group members' analysis or ask questions. Before moving on to the next theory, as a group they must come to a consensus as to how the song could be analyzed using the theory. They can replay the song as much as they feel is necessary. They

should discuss and take notes on three theorists one day and four the next. While discussing one person should be tracking the ideas of the group on a poster that is divided into seven sections which will be presented to the class.(50 mins)

Day Five:

1. Each group will play their video for the class and briefly explain how they have analyzed the song using each theory. Each group member should talk during this presentation. (15 mins each group; 45 mins total)
2. Wrap up- answer any questions and clear up any confusion.

VII. Accommodations/Differentiated Instruction:

Students will be grouped by their ability level. Lower achieving students will be grouped with higher achieving students in the larger groups to help them. In addition lower-level readers will be given easier theories that they are probably already somewhat familiar with such as reader-response theory, feminism, or Marxism. Gifted students will be challenged by being assigned to more complex theories such as archetypal, psychological, or formalist. Auditory learners will benefit the most from this lesson with the incorporation of music, but visual learners will benefit as well from the music videos. Gifted students will be challenged by the complex nature of this topic, where as lower-level students will benefit from the group discussions and application of the material.

VIII. Assessment/Evaluation:

During presentations and group discussions students will be assessed according to the following rubric:

	Great 5	Good 4-3	Poor 2-1
Analysis of Text	The presenter was able to go beyond just knowing what the theory is and actually use it correctly for analysis. The presentation effectively demonstrated the students' ability to fully apply the theory to the song assigned and analyze the meaning of the song by using said theory and by analyzing the choices made by the artist or producer.	The presenter was able to go beyond just knowing what the theory is and actually use it some-what correctly for analysis. The presentation vaguely demonstrated the students' ability to fully apply the theory to the song assigned and analyze the meaning of the song by using said theory and by analyzing the choices made by the artist or producer.	The presenter could not go beyond just knowing what the theory is and actually use it correctly for analysis. The presentation failed to demonstrate the students' ability to fully apply the theory to the song assigned and analyze the meaning of the song by using said theory and by analyzing the choices made by the artist or producer.
Presentation	The presentation presents information and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically so that it is easy for the audience to follow and understand. The student made his or her points clearly and persuasively. They stayed within the time limit and on topic.	The presentation uses information from the articles to support their presentation. The presentation fails to present information and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically so that it is easy for the audience to follow and understand. The student vaguely made his or her points. They slightly went over the time limit but stayed on topic.	The presentation fails to use information from the articles to support their presentation. The also presentation fails to present information and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically so that it is easy for the audience to follow and understand. The student failed to make his or her point clearly and persuasively. He or she did not stay within the time limit and often rambled off topic.

Collaboration	During discussion students initiate and participate in a collaborative conversation while referring to the text under study. Students set and abide by the rules of collaborative discussions while propelling the conversation by posing and responding to questions relevant to the discussion while responding thoughtfully to their peers' thoughts.	During discussion students initiate and participate in a collaborative conversation while referring to the text under study. Students fail to set and abide by the rules of collaborative discussions. They fail to propel the conversation by posing and responding to questions relevant to the discussion while responding thoughtfully to their peers' thoughts.	During discussion students fail to initiate and participate in a collaborative conversation while referring to the text under study. Students fail to set and abide by the rules of collaborative discussions. They fail to propel the conversation by posing and responding to questions relevant to the discussion while responding thoughtfully to their peers' thoughts.
			Total: _____/15

If 80% of students are able to demonstrate competency in these areas I will know that my objective has been met.

#### IX. Reflection

### Social-Class/Marxist Criticism

A Marxist critic grounds his or her theory and practice on the economic and cultural theory of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

#### **Key Points:**

- The evolving history of humanity, its institutions, and its ways of thinking are determined by the changing mode of its "material production"—that is, of its basic economic organization.
- Historical changes in the fundamental mode of production effect essential changes both in the constitution and power relations of social classes, which carry on a conflict for economic, political, and social advantage.
- Human consciousness in any era is constituted by an ideology—that is, a set of concepts, beliefs, values, and ways of thinking and feeling through which human beings perceive, and by which they explain what they take to be reality.
- A Marxist critic typically undertakes to "explain" the literature of any era by revealing the economic, class, and ideological determinants of the way an author writes.
- A Marxist critic examines the relation of the text to the social reality of that time and place.
- This school of critical theory focuses on power and money in works of literature.
- This perspective helps us understand how people from different social classes understand the same circumstances in very different ways.
- When we see members of different social classes thrown together in the same story, we are likely to think in terms of power and advantage as we attempt to explain what happens and why.

#### **Questions/Strategies to Apply:**

- Who has the power/money?
- Who does not?
- What happens as a result?



## Archetypal/Mythological Theory

### Key Points:

- An archetypal approach to literature assumes the existence of a collection of symbols, images, characters, and motifs (*i.e.*, archetypes) that evokes basically the same response in all people.
- According to psychologist Carl Jung, all humans recognize and understand these archetypes because they are part of our "collective unconscious," a reservoir of common knowledge or understanding, a sort of "psychic inheritance," that all of us are born with, but are never directly conscious of.
- Archetypal/mythological critics identify archetypal patterns and discuss how they function in different works. They believe that these archetypes are the source of much of literature's power.

### Some archetypes:

#### Human Archetypes

- archetypal women - the Good Mother, the Terrible Mother, the Temptress (*e.g.*, Eve, Sirens)
- archetypal men - the Wanderer, the Trickster, the Sage, the Hero Rebel (these may also apply to female characters, but are typically male)

#### Nature Archetypes

- water - creation, birth-death-resurrection, purification, redemption, fertility
- garden - paradise (Eden), innocence, fertility
- desert - spiritual emptiness, death, hopelessness

#### Color Archetypes

- red - blood, sacrifice, passion, disorder
- green - growth, fertility
- black - chaos, death, evil

#### Animal Archetype

- serpent - evil, sensuality, mystery, wisdom, destruction

#### Number Archetypes

- three or seven - perfection

#### Archetypes identified by Carl Jung

- the shadow, the persona and the anima/animus (see Psychological theory handout)

### Questions/Strategies to Apply:

- What characters, symbols, and images do you see in the text that you have noticed in other texts? Identify the archetypes.
- What is the universal function or meaning of such archetypes? How do the archetypes add meaning to the text?

### Arguments in favor:

- + Provides a universal approach to literature and identifies a reason why certain literature (and literary types) survive the test of time.

### Argument against:

- Literature may become little more than a vehicle for archetypes, and this approach may ignore the "art" of literature.

**Notable Practitioners:**

Maud Bodkin, Bettina L. Knap

**JUNG ARCHETYPES****Characters**

**A. The Hero** – Lord Raglan in *The Hero: A Study in Tradition, Myth, and Drama* contends that this archetype is so well defined that the life of the protagonist can be clearly divided into a series of well-marked adventures, which strongly suggest a ritualistic pattern. Raglan finds that traditionally the hero's mother is a virgin, the circumstances of his conception are unusual, and at birth some attempt is made to kill him. He is, however, spirited away and reared by foster parents. We know almost nothing of his childhood, but upon reaching manhood he returns to his future kingdom. After a victory over the king or a wild beast, he marries a princess, becomes king, reigns uneventfully, but later loses favor with the gods. He is then driven from the city after which he meets a mysterious death, often at the top of a hill. His body is not buried; but nevertheless, he has one or more holy sepulchers. Characters who exemplify this archetype to a greater or lesser extent are Oedipus, Theseus, Romulus, Perseus, Jason, Dionysos, Joseph, Moses, Elijah, Jesus Christ, Siegfried, Arthur, Robin Hood, Watu Gunung (Javanese), and Llew Llawgyffes (Celtic).

**B. The Scapegoat** – An animal or more usually a human whose death in a public ceremony expiates some taint or sin that has been visited upon a community (e.g., Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery").

**C. The Outcast** – A figure who is banished from a social group for some crime against his fellow man. The outcast is usually destined to become a wanderer from place to place (e.g., Cain, the Wandering Jew, the Ancient Mariner).

**D. The Devil Figure** – Evil incarnate, this character offers worldly goods, fame, or knowledge to the protagonist in exchange for possession of his soul (e.g., Lucifer, Mephistopheles, Satan, the Faust legend).

**E. The Woman Figure**

1. **The Earthmother** – Symbolic of fruition, abundance and fertility, this character traditionally offers spiritual and emotional nourishment to those with whom she comes in contact (e.g., Mother Nature, Mother Country, alma mater).

2. **The Temptress** – Characterized by sensuous beauty, this woman is one to whom the protagonist is physically attracted and who ultimately brings about his downfall (e.g., Delilah, the Sirens, Cleopatra).

3. **The Platonic Ideal** – This woman is a source of inspiration and a spiritual ideal, for whom the protagonist or author has an intellectual rather than a physical attraction (e.g., Dante's Beatrice, Petrarch's Laura, most Shelleyan heroines).

4. **The Unfaithful Wife** – A woman, married to a man she sees as dull unimaginative, is physically attracted to a more virile and desirable man (e.g., Guinevere, Madame Bovary, Anna Karenina, Lady Chatterly).

**F. The Star-Crossed Lovers** – A young man and woman enter an ill-fated love affair which ends tragically in the death of either or both of the lovers (e.g., Romeo and Juliet, West Side Story, Tristan and Isolde, Hero and Leander).

**G. The Innocent** – A figure who is not sophisticated about the world, one who embodies goodness and purity and therefore is vulnerable.

**Situations**

**A. The Quest** – This motif describes the search for someone or some talisman which, when found and brought back, will restore fertility to a wasted land, the desolation of which is mirrored by a leader's illness and disability. Jessie L. Weston's *From Ritual to Romance* traces one facet of this archetype through the quests of Gawain,

Perceval, and Galahad for the Holy Grail. This situation is also used in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, as well as in shorter poems by Morris, Browning, and Arnold. Ahab's monomaniacal quest for the albino whale in *Moby Dick* is a variation on this archetype.

**B. The Task** – To save the kingdom, to win the fair lady, to identify himself so that he may reassume his rightful position, the Hero must perform some nearly superhuman deed (e.g., Odysseus must string the bow, Arthur must pull the sword from the stone, Beowulf must slay Grendel).

**C. The Initiation** – This usually takes the form of an initiation into life, that is, the depiction of an adolescent coming into maturity and adulthood with all the attendant problems and responsibilities that this process involves. An awakening, awareness, or an increased perception of the world and the people in it usually forms the climax of this archetypal situation (e.g., Holden Caulfield, Huckleberry Finn, Stephen Dedalus, Eugene Gant).

**D. The Journey** – Usually combined with any or all of the foregoing situational archetypes, the journey is used to send the Hero in search of information or some intellectual truth. A common employment of the journey archetype is the descent into hell (e.g., *Odyssey*, *Aeneid*, *Inferno*, *Endymion*, Joyce's *Ulysses*). A second use of this pattern is the depiction of a limited number of travelers on an airplane flight, sea voyage, bus ride, or walking trip for the purpose of isolating them and using them as a microcosm of society (e.g., *The Canterbury Tales*, *Ship of Fools*).

**E. The Fall** – This archetype describes a descent from a higher to a lower being. The experience involves spiritual defilement and/or a loss of innocence and bliss. The Fall is also usually accompanied by expulsion from a kind of paradise as penalty for disobedience and moral transgression (e.g., *Paradise Lost*, *Billy Budd*).

**F. Death and Rebirth** – The most common of all situational archetypes, this Motif grows out of the parallel between the cycle of nature and the cycle of life. Thus, morning and springtime represent birth, youth, or rebirth; evening and winter suggest old age or death. Anthropologists believe that fertility rites and vegetative rituals usually took place in the spring because this is the time of physical regeneration of Nature, an appropriate time to enact ritualistic statements of spiritual rebirth and resurrection.

## Symbols and Associations

*The collective unconscious makes certain associations between the outside world and psychic experiences. These associations become enduring and are passed from one generation to the next. Some of the more common archetypal associations are as follows:*

**A. Light-Darkness** – Light usually suggests hope, renewal or intellectual illumination; darkness implies the unknown, ignorance, or despair (e.g., "Dover Beach").

**B. Water-Desert** – Because water is necessary to life and growth, it commonly appears as a birth or rebirth symbol. It is archetypally significant, anthropologists believe, that water is used in baptismal services, which solemnize spiritual birth. Similarly, the appearance of rain in a work of literature can suggest a character's regeneration or rebirth (e.g., *The Ancient Mariner*). Conversely, the aridity of the desert is often associated with spiritual sterility and desiccation (e.g., *The Waste Land*).

- Feminist theorists are concerned with the inclusion of women authors in the literary canon.

### Feminist Theory

#### Key Points:

- Feminist theory is concerned with how texts portray women. For example, many "traditional" works lack autonomous female role models.
- Feminist theory seeks to expose the portrayal of stereotypical female characters and sexist attitudes in texts.
- Feminist theorists pay close attention to patterns of gender stereotyping such as: dominant (male) v. submissive (female); active (male) v. passive (female); rational (male) v. emotional (female); desirer (male) v. desired (female).
- Feminist critics also are concerned with the place of women authors in the literary canon. Traditionally, women authors have not been included in the canon.

#### Questions/Strategies to Apply:

- What roles are women assumed/presumed to have?
- How are gender differences portrayed (stereotypically?) and hierarchies represented (see third arrow, above)?
- How are women viewed or defined in relationship to men?
- If your only understanding of what it means to be a woman comes from this text, what have you learned about women?

#### Arguments in favor:

- + Women authors have been underrepresented in the traditional canon, and a feminist approach to literature redresses this problem.
- + Feminist theory exposes restrictive gender roles, highlighting that such roles may be entirely culturally constructed.

#### Argument against:

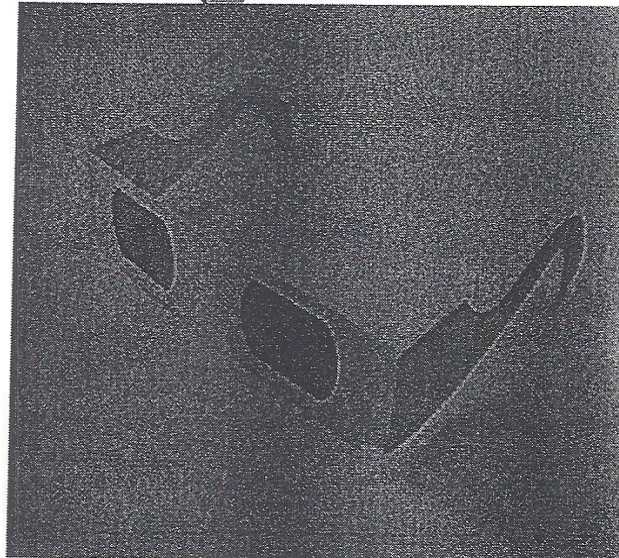
- Opponents argue that feminists may turn literary criticism into a political battlefield and overlook the merits of works they consider "patriarchal."

#### Notable Practitioners:

Elaine Showalter, Ellen Mores, Sandra Gilbert, Nina Baum

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# Psychological Criticism



- Psychological theorists look at the psychological motivations, state of mind, feelings and desires of either the characters OR the author.
- Most frequently, psychological theorists apply Freudian psychology to texts, but other approaches (Jungian) also exist.
- Freudian approach: Human behavior is motivated by early childhood experiences and sexuality.
  - Oedipus complex - boy's unconscious rivalry with his father for the love of his mother
  - Electra complex - a girl's unconscious rivalry with her mother for the love of her father
  - Three parts of self - **Id** (instinct), **Ego** (part of self we show the world), **Superego** (conscience)

Psychological Theory

## Key Points:

- Psychological critics view works through the lens of psychology. They look either at the psychological motivations of the characters or of the authors themselves, although the former is generally considered a more respectable approach.
- Most frequently, psychological critics apply Freudian psychology to works, but other approaches (such as a Jungian approach) also exist.
- **Freudian Approach (Sigmund Freud):**
  - ☞ Three Parts of the Self:
 

Id	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ instinctual, pleasure-seeking part of self</li> <li>▪ driven by the libido (sexuality) and death instinct (accounts for instinctual, violent urges)</li> <li>▪ Notice how Hollywood often capitalizes on the id. Box office success often correlates with the amount of sex and violence in a movie.</li> </ul>
Ego	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ part of self one shows the world</li> <li>▪ ego realizes the consequences of behavior and keeps the id in check</li> <li>▪ controls but does not completely repress the id's impulses, instead releasing them in a socially acceptable way</li> <li>▪ develops with experience</li> </ul>
Superego	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ conscience (internalized morals or values; understands difference between "right" and "wrong")</li> <li>▪ A person with a weak superego often gives in to the id's urgings and feels little guilt.</li> <li>▪ A person with a strong superego rarely gives in to the id's urgings, and experiences significant guilt when he or she does so.</li> </ul>
  - ☞ Since Freud believed that most human behavior is motivated by sexuality (the libido), Freudian critics like to point out the sexual implications of symbols and imagery. They tend to see round, concave images, such as ponds, flowers, cups, and caves as female ("yonic") symbols, oftentimes representing the absence of power. Objects longer than they are wide are usually seen as male ("phallic") symbols, representing power.
  - ☞ Dancing, riding, and flying are associated with sexual pleasure. Water is usually associated with birth, the maternal, the womb, or the death wish.
  - ☞ Freudian critics occasionally discern the presence of an Oedipus complex (a boy's unconscious rivalry with his father for the love of his mother) in the male characters of certain works. In female characters, they occasionally discern the presence of an Electra complex (a girl's unconscious rivalry with her mother for the love of her father).
- **Jungian Approach (Carl Jung):**
  - ☞ Three parts of the self:
 

The shadow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ darker, unconscious part of self</li> <li>▪ usually the villain in literature</li> </ul>
The persona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ public part of self; part of self shown to world</li> <li>▪ usually the hero in literature</li> </ul>
The anima/animus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ anima is the female gender spirit - usually associated with deep emotionality and the force of life</li> </ul>

- animus is the male gender spirit - usually associated with logic and rationality
- In literature, the anima may be personified as a spontaneous and intuitive young girl, a witch, or the earth mother, among other female characters. Heroines often personify the anima.
- The animus may be personified as a wise old man, a sorcerer, among other male characters.

**Questions/Strategies to Apply:**

- What are the psychological motivations of the characters or of the author?
- How are the id, ego, and superego of a character represented in a text or in a character? (Freudian approach)
- Identify Freudian imagery in a text and explain its meaning.
- Does the text suggest the existence of an Oedipus or Electra complex? (Freudian approach)
- How is the shadow, the persona, and the anima/animus represented in a text or in a character? (Jungian approach)

**Argument in favor:**

- + This approach can be a useful tool for understanding why characters act the way they do. In addition, it can be interesting to see whether an author's personal experiences have shaped the writing.

**Argument against:**

- Psychological criticism can turn a work into little more than a psychological study, neglecting to view it as a piece of art.
- Freudian critics tend to see sex in everything, exaggerating this aspect of literature.
- Many of the hypotheses of psychological theory are sexist.

**Notable Practitioners:**

Ernest Jones, Otto Rank, Marie Bonaparte

## Reader Response Theory

### **Key Points:**

- Reader response theory focuses on the reader's role in creating the meaning of a text. The text itself has no meaning until it is read by a reader. The reader creates the meaning.
- Readers bring their own thoughts, moods, and experiences to whatever text they are reading and get out of it whatever they happen to, based upon their own expectations and ideas.
- The features of the work, such as narrator, plot, character, style, and structure are less important than the personal connection the reader makes with the text.
- This theory denies the possibility that works are universal (*i.e.*, that they will always mean more or less the same thing to readers everywhere).

### **Questions/Strategies to Apply:**

- What does the text or a portion of it remind you of?
- How does it make you feel?
- How does it connect to your life or other lives you know?
- **WHY** does the text make you think about certain things in your own life or feel a particular way? What is it about the text that makes you think of a certain thing or feel a certain way?

### **Arguments in favor:**

- + Reader response theory recognizes that different people view works differently, and that people's interpretations change over time.
- + Reader response theory validates the importance of the reader as a co-creator of the experience.

### **Arguments against:**

- Reader response theory tends to make interpretation too subjective and may not provide adequate criteria for evaluating one reading in comparison to another.

### **Notable Practitioners:**

Louise Rosenblatt, I.A. Richards, Walter Gibson, Norman Holland

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## New Historical Theory

### Key Points:

- According to new historical theory, a text reflects the environment and culture in which it was created.
- New historicists believe that knowing about the political, economical, sociological, and/or intellectual climate of the time period in which a text was written enhances understanding of the text's meaning.
- For example, William Faulkner wrote many of his novels and stories during World War II, which helps to explain the feelings of darkness, defeat, and struggle that pervade much of his work.
- Came about largely in reaction to *formalism* (aka *new criticism*), which believed that a text is self-contained and has nothing to do with outside forces, such as culture.

### Questions/Strategies to Apply:

- How does the text reflect the culture and environment in which it was produced?
- Think of the text as a relic of the culture in which it was written.
- How did the social, political, economic, cultural, and/or intellectual climate of the time impact the work?
- Consider how the author's culture or environment influenced the text that she or he produced.

### Arguments in favor:

- + Knowing the historical context of obviously historical works like Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* (about the Salem witch trials), F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (about the "Roaring '20s") and Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried* (about the Vietnam War) aids understanding of the text.
- + Allows readers to place allusions in their proper classical, political, or biblical context (e.g., allusions to Zeus, George Washington, or Adam and Eve).

### Argument against:

- Opponents argue that this approach tends to reduce art to the level of biography or historical commentary, thus making it relative (to a particular time and place) rather than universal.

### Formalism Theory

#### **Key Points:**

- The word *formal* has two related meanings, both of which apply within this perspective.
  - The first relates to its root word, *form*, a structure's shape that we can recognize and use to make associations.
  - The second relates to a set of conventions or accepted practices. Formal poetry, for example, has meter, rhyme, stanzas, and other predictable features that it shares with poems of the same type.
- The formalist perspective pays particular attention to these issues of form and convention.
- Instead of looking at the world in which a poem exists, for example, the formalist perspective says that a poem should be treated as an independent and self-sufficient object.
- The methods used in this perspective are those pertaining to close reading, that is, detailed and subtle analysis of the formal components that make up the literary work, such as the meanings and interactions of words, figures of speech, and symbols.
- Very interested in universal meanings and universal human experiences (death, birth, pain, suffering, etc.)
- Interested in canonical works of literature—or "great" literature.

#### **Questions/Strategies to Apply:**

- How do the literary devices used in the text work together to create the meaning of the text?
- What universal meaning is present within the text?
- How do the symbols of the text work to convey the meaning?

#### **Arguments in favor:**

+ Literature is like a painting, it should be appreciated for its artwork and creativity. It should not be socialized. This theory allows readers to truly appreciate the beauty of the literature and what insights it has to offer towards the human condition.

#### **Arguments against:**

- Opponents argue that there is no universal or human conditions which exist.  
 -Formalist criticism fails to account for historical, social, or biographical influences of the work and without those the work can not truly be understood.

Theory:	Notes:	Application to Song:
<p><b>Psychological Theory</b>            Look for evidence of struggle in relationships. What is subconsciously motivating the characters to act as they do? Is there evidence of the Id, Ego, and Superego at play? Pahllic or Yonic symbols? What meaning can you construct from this evidence?</p>		
<p><b>Historical Theory</b>            What was going on in the world when this visual text was created? What were relevant national events? What experiences did the author have prior to writing this text? What meaning can you construct when you consider these historical factors?</p>		
<p><b>Marxist Theory</b>            Which character(s) is at the top of the social ladder? Who is at the bottom? Who has the money? Who has the power? What is the result? Where do you see yourself on the social and economic ladder? Does this affect you reading of this visual text?</p>		
<p><b>Formalist Theory</b>            What "literary elements" does the author use? In the visual text, what elements of the director's craft help you create meaning?</p>		
<p><b>Feminist Theory</b>            Is there evidence of character fitting gender stereotypes or not fitting them? What is the result? How are women portrayed? Based on this information, what meaning can you construct?</p>		
<p><b>Reader Response Theory</b>            What personal experiences do the character/actions in this video bring to mind? How do both you past experience and the emotions you've attached to this experience help you create meaning from this visual text?</p>		
<p><b>Archetypal Theory</b>            What archetypes of mythological allusions are present? How do they work in this visual text?How do they help you construct meaning?</p>		

**"Eat the Rich" by Aerosmith**  
**From 1993 album *Get a Grip***

Well I woke up this morning  
 On the wrong side of the bed  
 And how I got to thinkin'  
 About all those things you said  
 About ordinary people  
 And how they make you sick  
 And if callin' names kicks back on  
 you  
 Then I hope this does the trick

'cause I'm sick of your complainin'  
 About how many bills  
 And I'm sick of all your bitchin'  
 'Bout your poodles and your pills  
 And I just can't see no humor  
 About your way of life  
 And I think I can do more for you  
 With this here fork and knife

Eat the rich  
 There's only one thing that they  
 are good for  
 Eat the rich  
 Take one bite now - come back for  
 more  
 Eat the rich  
 I gotta get this off my chest  
 Eat the rich  
 Take one bite now - spit out the  
 rest

So I called up my head shrinker  
 And I told him what I'd done  
 He said you best go on a diet  
 Yeah, I hope you have some fun  
 And a don't go burst the bubble  
 On rich folks who get rude  
 'Cause you won't get in no trouble  
 When you eats that kinda food

Now they're smokin' up their junk  
 bonds  
 And then they go get stiff  
 And they're dancin' in the yacht  
 club  
 With muff and uncle biff  
 But there's one good thing that

happens  
 When you toss your pearls to swine  
 Their attitudes may taste like shit  
 But go real good with wine

Eat the rich  
 There's only one thing that they  
 are good for  
 Eat the rich  
 Take one bite now - come back for  
 more  
 Eat the rich  
 I gotta get this off my chest  
 Eat the rich  
 Take one bite now - spit out the  
 rest

Believe in all the good things  
 That money just can't buy  
 Then you won't get no bellyache  
 From eatin' humble pie  
 I believe in rags to riches  
 Your inheritance won't last  
 So take your gray poupon my friend  
 And shove it up your ass

Eat the rich  
 There's only one thing that they  
 are good for  
 Eat the rich  
 Take one bite now - come back for  
 more  
 Eat the rich  
 I gotta get this off my chest  
 Eat the rich  
 Take one bite now - spit out the  
 rest  
 Eat the rich  
 There's only one thing that they  
 are good for  
 Eat the rich  
 Take one bite now - come back for  
 more  
 Eat the rich  
 Don't stop me now, I'm goin' crazy  
 Eat the rich  
 That's my idea of a good time baby

**"Livin' on a Prayer" by Bon Jovi**

From 1986 album Slippery When Wet

Once upon a time  
Not so long ago

Tommy used to work on the docks  
Unions been on strike  
He's down on his luck... it's  
tough, so tough  
Gina works the diner all day  
Working for her man, she brings  
home her pay  
For love - for love

She says we've got to hold on to  
what we've got  
Cause it doesn't make a difference  
If we make it or not  
We've got each other and that's a  
lot  
For love - well give it a shot

Chorus:  
Whooah, we're half way there  
Livin on a prayer  
Take my hand and we'll make it - I  
swear  
Livin on a prayer

Tommy's got his six string in hock  
Now he's holding in what he used  
To make it talk - so tough, it's  
tough  
Gina dreams of running away  
When she cries in the night  
Tommy whispers baby it's okay,  
someday

We've got to hold on to what we've  
got  
Cause it doesn't make a difference  
If we make it or not  
We've got each other and that's a  
lot  
For love - well give it a shot

Chorus:  
Whooah, we're half way there  
Livin on a prayer  
Take my hand and we'll make it - I  
swear  
Livin on a prayer

We've got to hold on ready or not  
You live for the fight when it's  
all that you've got

Chorus:  
Whooah, we're half way there  
Livin on a prayer  
Take my hand and we'll make it - I  
swear  
Livin on a prayer

**"If You Needed Somebody" by  
Bad Company**

From *Holy Water* album

Should have told you by now  
But I can't find the words, oh, no  
If I could show you somehow  
But I don't have the nerve

And you don't see me looking at you  
How can love be so blind?  
Somehow, you don't notice me  
Sooner or later there will come a  
time, baby

If you needed somebody  
The way that I need you  
If you wanted somebody  
The way that I want you  
The way that I want you

If I could hold you tonight  
It would last me forever  
But the time's never right  
When will we be together, oh, no  
If I could make you understand  
What you're doing to me  
Maybe there will come a time

When sooner or later I will make  
you see, baby

If you needed somebody  
The way that I need you, baby,  
tonight  
If you wanted somebody  
The way that I want you

If I could tell you now  
The way you make me feel  
If I could show you somehow  
Don't you know my lovin' is loved  
so real?

If you needed somebody  
The way that I need you and baby,  
tonight  
If you wanted somebody  
The way that I want you  
(If you need somebody)  
I need you, I want you, I gotta  
tell you  
The way that I need you  
And if you wanted somebody  
The way that I want you  
(If you need somebody)