

Analyzing Literature

Plot

- Annotate the sequence of events in the story
- What is the plot structure? Linear? Frame? Flashback?
- What moments matter to the character?

Conflict

- What type of conflict is present? Internal? External? Man versus Self, Man, Nature, Society?
- How is the conflict resolved?

Character

- Direct characterization
 - Does the author tell us anything directly about this character?
- Indirect characterization is when the author shows us something about a character.
 - What does the character say, think, feel, do, look like?
 - What qualities does the character have based off of STEAL (Speech, Thought, Emotions, Actions, Looks)?
- What motivates the character?

Irony

- How does irony operate in the passage?
- Verbal Irony: when what is said is the opposite of what is meant
- Situational Irony: when what happens is the opposite of what we expect to happen.
- Dramatic Irony: when the audience knows something the characters do not know.

Imagery

- How do the words in the story appeal to our five senses (sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell)?
- How does imagery affect the mood? How we see characters? How we see the setting?
- Does the story lack imagery? Why?
- Think past saying that the imagery allows the reader to visualize. This response is ineffective.

Themes

- Relate all of these details to possible themes that are both explicitly and implicitly evoked by the passage. Attempt to relate these themes to others appearing outside the immediate passage. These other themes may be from the larger story from which the passage is excerpted; or from other tales; or from knowledge about the narrator; or from the work as a whole.
- Explicit theme: the theme is directly stated in the text
- Implicit theme: the theme is not directly stated but is implied

Literary Lenses

- Historical Lens: How does the passage use historical events to enhance its message?
- Gender Lens: How are gender roles constructed and conveyed in this story?
- Archetypal Lens: How are narrative designs, character types, settings, etc. used again and again in literature?