

THE GREAT TRADITION



You believe there is a **link between all great writers**, because each learns from the writers that came before. You prefer literature that has outlasted fashion.

You read the text closely, without wondering about the social context: you want to see how the art of writing has developed.

- What do you find interesting about this text?
- What do you dislike about it?
- Sum the text up in a sentence

READER RESPONSE



You believe you understand the text through the **connection made between words and your perception of their meaning**.

You make the meaning by reading between the lines, predicting what will happen and seeing how the writer confirms and disappoints those expectations.

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RUSSIAN FORMALISTS



You are interested in the **literary devices** used by the author, the 'form' or structure rather than the meaning.

You look at **what the writer has done**, rather than what the writing is about: notice the way the story has been told, the order in which the information is imparted and the 'tricks' the writer uses.

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STRUCTURALISM



You are interested in **literature as a system of codes rooted in culture** that build a world rather than just describe it.

You look at how the text is constructed, **what the text doesn't** say as well as what it does and focus on the **patterns in a text**.

- What do you find interesting about this text?
- What do you dislike about it?
- Sum the text up in a sentence

PSYCHOANALYSIS



You believe language denies us direct access to reality, instead creating our reality for us. You want to discover what is **unconscious in the text**.

You look beyond the superficial meaning to see what has been glossed over or repressed and look for **emotional conflict**.

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FEMINIST LITERARY CRITICISM



You realise the literary tradition was created overwhelmingly by men. You focus on what the text shows of the **power struggle between men and women**. You want to read about women's experiences and explore how female writers interpret and use the literary and linguistic traditions differently to men.

- What do you find interesting about this text?
- What do you dislike about it?
- Sum the text up in a sentence

MARXIST LITERARY CRITICISM & POST-COLONIAL LITERARY CRITICISM



You believe text is related to the **social context of its author and the historical contexts in which it was written and read**.

Likewise, you are interested in **the struggle against injustice and oppression**, chiefly between black and white. You look at what a text reveals about attitudes to social class, race and gender.

You want to read about the experiences of writers outside the Anglo-Saxon tradition.

- What do you find interesting about this text?
- What do you dislike about it?
- Sum the text up in a sentence

GENRE THEORY



You believe you can only make sense of a text when you see it in the context of its generic tradition.

You classify literature into genre categories – types, e.g. thriller, comedy, romance – then judge it against the **conventions** of that genre. You decide on the genre according to generally accepted indicators and then measure the work against other works in that genre.

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