

From *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster

Adapted from Notes by Marti Nelson

1. Every Trip is a Quest (except when it's not):

- a. A quester - person who goes on the quest, whether he knows it's a quest or not; often young, inexperienced, immature, sheltered
- b. A place to go
- c. A stated reason to go there
- d. Challenges and trials
- e. The real reason to go is **never** for the stated reason. The quester usually fails at the stated task. The real reason is educational - *always self-knowledge*.

2. Nice to Eat With You: Acts of Communion

- a. Whenever people eat or drink together, it's communion
- b. Not usually religious
- c. An act of sharing and peace
- d. A failed meal carries negative connotations (*a bad sign*)

3. Nice to Eat You: Acts of Vampires

- a. *Literal Vampirism*: Nasty old man, attractive but evil, violates a young woman, leaves his mark, takes her innocence (ability to marry)
- b. Sexual implications—a trait of 19th century literature to address sex indirectly - biblical allusion - Eve and the serpent
- c. *Symbolic Vampirism*: selfishness, exploitation, refusal to respect the autonomy of other people, using people to get what we want, placing our desires, particularly ugly ones, above the needs of another.
- d. Ghosts and vampires are **never** only about ghosts and vampires.
 - i. Don't have to appear in visible forms
 - ii. Can be entirely human
- e. Essentials of the vampire story
 - i. Older figure representing corrupt, outworn values
 - ii. A young, preferably virginal female
 - iii. A stripping away of her youth, energy, virtue
 - iv. A continuance of the life force of the old male
 - v. The death or destruction of the young woman

4. If It's Square, It's a Sonnet

- a. Versatile, ubiquitous (*ever present*), varied, and agreeably short
- b. Fourteen lines long and written in iambic pentameter (5 iambs - 10 syllables) - Ten syllables long x fourteen lines high - SQUARE
- c. Usually has two units of meaning that are closely related and broken into a basic pattern of 8/6
 - i. Petrarchan sonnet - rhyme scheme that ties the first 8 lines (octave) and unifies the last six lines (sestet)
 - ii. Shakespearean sonnet - divided up in four units
 1. first four lines (quatrain), next four, and third four
 2. last two (couplet) - usually a statement of its own that ties in with the third quatrain
- d. Takes far more time to write because of the structure

5. Now, Where Have I Seen Her Before?

- a. *There is no such thing as a wholly original work of literature*—stories grow out of other stories, poems out of other poems.
- b. There is only one story—of humanity and human nature, endlessly repeated
- c. “Intertextuality”—
 - i. Recognizing the connections between one story and another deepens our appreciation and experience
 - ii. Brings multiple layers of meaning to the text, may not be conscious of
 - iii. The more consciously aware we are, the more alive the text becomes to us
 - iv. Anything you write is connected to other written things
- d. If you don’t recognize the correspondences, it’s ok. If a story is no good, being based on Hamlet won’t save it.

6. When in Doubt, It’s from Shakespeare...

- a. Writers use what is common in a culture as a kind of shorthand. Shakespeare is pervasive (*constant*), so he is frequently echoed.
- b. A kind of authority and universally known - most quoted
- c. See plays as a pattern, either in plot or theme or both. Examples:
 - i. Hamlet: heroic character, revenge, indecision, melancholy nature
 - ii. Henry IV—a young man who must grow up to become king, take on his responsibilities
 - iii. Othello—jealousy
 - iv. Merchant of Venice—justice vs. mercy
 - v. King Lear—aging parent, greedy children, a wise fool

7. ...Or the Bible

- a. Before the mid 20th century, writers could count on people being very familiar with Biblical stories, a common touchstone a writer can tap
- b. Modern and postmodern texts use biblical allusions as irony
 - i. To illustrate a disparity or disruption
 - ii. Is not always received favorably
- c. Recognizing biblical allusion - if something is going on in the text that seems **beyond** the scope of the story’s immediate dimensions (resonates outside itself) then start looking for allusions to older/bigger texts.
- d. Common Biblical stories with symbolic implications
 - i. Garden of Eden: women tempting men and causing their fall, the apple as symbolic of an object of temptation, a serpent who tempts men to do evil, and a fall from innocence
 - ii. Cain and Abel - denies responsibility toward brother or betrays brother
 - iii. David and Goliath—overcoming overwhelming odds
 - iv. Jonah and the Whale—refusing to face a task and being “eaten” or overwhelmed by it anyway.
 - v. Job: facing disasters not of the character’s making and not the character’s fault, suffers as a result, but remains steadfast
 - vi. The Flood: rain as a form of destruction; rainbow as a promise of restoration
 - vii. Christ figures (a later chapter): in 20th century, often used ironically
 - viii. The Apocalypse—Four Horseman of the Apocalypse usher in the end of the world.
 - ix. Biblical names often draw a connection between literary character and Biblical character.

8. Hansel and Gretel--using fairy tales and kid literature

- a. A common body of knowledge that most readers know and recognize– fairy tales, kiddie literature – familiar
- b. Ambiguous – stands the test of time and history
 - i. Hansel and Gretel: lost children trying to find their way home
 - ii. Peter Pan: refusing to grow up, lost boys, a girl-nurturer/
 - iii. Little Red Riding Hood: See Vampires
 - iv. Alice in Wonderland, The Wizard of Oz: entering a world that doesn't work rationally or operates under different rules, the Red Queen, the White Rabbit, the Cheshire Cat, the Wicked Witch of the West, the Wizard, who is a fraud
 - v. Cinderella: orphaned girl abused by adopted family saved through supernatural intervention and by marrying a prince
 - vi. Snow White: Evil woman who brings death to an innocent—again, saved by heroic/princely character
 - vii. Sleeping Beauty: a girl becoming a woman, symbolically, the needle, blood=womanhood, the long sleep an avoidance of growing up and becoming a married woman, saved by, guess who, a prince who fights evil on her behalf.
 - viii. Evil Stepmothers, Queens, Rumpelstiltskin
 - ix. Prince Charming heroes who rescue women. (20th century frequently switched—the women save the men—or used highly ironically)

9. It's Greek to Me

- a. Myth is a body of story that matters—the patterns present in mythology run deeply in the human psyche
- b. Why writers echo myth—because there's only one story (see #4) – reaching back for stories that matter to him and his community
- c. Fall of Icarus – failed to follow his father's advice, plunged to his death
 - i. Parental attempt to save the child and the grief having failed
 - ii. Youthful exuberance that leads to self destruction
 - iii. Sober, adult wisdom vs. adolescent recklessness
- d. Odyssey and Iliad
 - i. Men in an epic struggle over a woman, heroes, characters have unmistakable nobility, rivalry and violence
 - ii. Great struggles of the human being
 1. With nature
 2. With the divine
 3. With other humans
 4. With ourselves
- e. Achilles—a small weakness in a strong man; the need to maintain one's dignity
- f. Odysseus – struggle to return home
- g. Penelope (Odysseus's wife)—the determination to remain faithful and to have faith
- h. Hector: The need to protect one's family
- i. The Underworld—an ultimate challenge, facing the darkest parts of human nature or dealing with death
- j. Metamorphoses by Ovid—transformation (Kafka)
- k. Oedipus: family triangles, being blinded, dysfunctional family
- l. Cassandra: refusing to hear the truth
- m. A wronged woman gone violent in her grief and madness—Aeneas and Dido or Jason and Medea
- n. Mother love—Demeter and Persephone

10. It's More Than Just Rain Or Snow

- a. Rain
 - i. fertility and life
 - ii. Noah and the flood
 - iii. Drowning—one of our deepest fears
- b. Why?
 - i. plot device - forces men together in uncomfortable circumstances
 - ii. atmospheric - mysterious, murkier, more isolating
 - iii. misery factor—challenge characters physically and emotionally
 - iv. democratic element—the rain falls on the just and the unjust alike
- c. Symbolically
 - i. rain is clean—a form of purification, baptism, removing sin or a stain
 - ii. rain is restorative—can bring a dying earth back to life, new growth
 - iii. destructive as well—causes pneumonia, colds, etc.; hurricanes, etc.
 - iv. Ironic use—“April is the cruelest month” (T.S. Eliot, *The Wasteland*) plays off our cultural expectations of spring and rain and fertility
 - v. Rainbow—God’s promise never to destroy the world again; hope; a promise of peace between heaven and earth
 - vi. fog—almost always signals some sort of confusion; mental, ethical, physical “fog”; people can’t see clearly
- d. Snow
 - i. negatively—cold, stark, inhospitable, inhuman, nothingness, death, suffocating
 - ii. positively—clean, pure, playful, inviting, warm
 - iii. great unifier - falls “upon all the living and the dead”

11. ...More Than It's Gonna Hurt You: Concerning Violence

- a. Violence can be symbolic, thematic, biblical, Shakespearean, Romantic, allegorical, transcendent.
- b. The universe is indifferent to our mortality
- c. Two categories of violence in literature
 - i. Character caused—shootings, stabbings, drownings, poisonings, bombings, hit and run, etc
 - ii. Narrative - Death and suffering authors introduce for plot advancement or thematic development and for which they, not the characters, are responsible.
 1. Make action happen
 2. Cause or end plot complications
 3. Put other characters under stress
- d. Violence is symbolic action, but hard to generalize meaning
 - i. Example: In Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*, Sethe kills her own daughter. If we only look on the surface, we cannot feel any sympathy for her - feel disgust and loathing. Symbolically, it is an action that speaks for the experience of a race at a certain horrific moment in history (slavery, rape, loss of freedom, physically and mental cruelty at the hands of others). She is freeing her from this future.
- e. Questions to ask:
 - i. What does this type of misfortune represent thematically?
 - ii. What famous or mythic death does this one resemble?
 - iii. Why this sort of violence and not some other?

12. Is That a Symbol?

- a. Yes. But figuring out what is tricky. Can only discuss possible meanings and interpretations
- b. There is **no** one definite meaning unless it's an allegory, where characters, events, places have a one-on-one correspondence symbolically to other things.
 - i. Allegory – convey a certain message – Christian based
 - ii. Names indicate their qualities: Despair, Faithful, Suffering
- c. Each reader brings an individual history to our reading and their own interpretations
 - i. Mix of previous readings
 - ii. Educational attainment, philosophical inclination
 - iii. Gender, race, class, faith, social involvement
- d. Rivers – takes lives, escape, freedom, a road, danger and safety, solitude
- e. Actions and events, as well as objects and images, can be symbolic.
 - i. “Mowing” – sweeping clean, physical labor, solitary life
 - ii. “After Apple Picking” – point in life, wear and tear of the activity of living on the psyche
 - iii. “The Road Not Taken” – universal graduation poem – choices to make
- f. Ask questions:
 - i. What's the writer doing with this image, this object, this act?
 - ii. What possibilities are suggested by the movement of the narrative or lyric?
 - iii. What does it *feel* like it's doing? Listen to your instincts and pay attention to what you feel about the text.

13. It's All Political

- a. Literature tends to be written by people interested in the problems of the world, so most works have a political and historical element in them
- b. Issues:
 - i. Individualism and self-determination against the needs of society for conformity and stability.
 - ii. Power structures
 - iii. Relations and criticism among social classes
 - iv. Issues of justice and rights
 - v. European society (opposition, corruption) vs. American society (freedom)
 - vi. Interactions between the sexes and among various racial and ethnic constituencies.
- c. Historical and social implications in a writer's work – emulate the time period.

14. Yes, She's a Christ Figure, Too

- a. Essential to know something about the Old and New Testaments
- b. Religion influences the culture, values, and principles – whether a writer follows the beliefs or not
- c. Characteristics of a Christ Figure:
 - i. crucified, wounds in hands, feet, side, and head, often portrayed with arms outstretched
 - ii. in agony
 - iii. self-sacrificing
 - iv. good with children
 - v. good with loaves, fishes, water, wine
 - vi. thirty-three years of age when last seen

- vii. employed as a carpenter
- viii. known to use humble modes of transportation, feet or donkeys preferred
- ix. believed to have walked on water
- x. known to have spent time alone in the wilderness
- xi. believed to have had a confrontation with the devil, possibly tempted
- xii. last seen in the company of thieves
- xiii. creator of many aphorisms (statement of truth/opinion) and parables
- xiv. buried, but arose on the third day
- xv. had disciples, twelve at first, although not all equally devoted
- xvi. very forgiving
- xvii. came to redeem an unworthy world
- d. As a reader, put aside belief system – be analytical when you read.
- e. Why use Christ figures? Deepens our sense of a character's sacrifice, thematically has to do with redemption, hope, or miracles, triumph over adversity
- f. Does not have to resemble Christ in every way – can be female, doesn't have to be Christian, and doesn't have to be good.
- g. If used *ironically*, makes the character look smaller rather than greater

15. **Flights of Fancy**

- a. Daedalus and Icarus
- b. Flying was one of the temptations of Christ
 - i. Satan asks him to demonstrate his divinity by flying
 - ii. Associated witchcraft with flight
- c. Symbolically: freedom, escape, the flight of the imagination, spirituality, returning home, largeness of spirit, freeing of spirit, love
- d. Interrupted flight or characters don't quite fly
 - i. Generally a bad thing
 - ii. In avoiding death there is an element of rebirth - symbolic
- e. Usually not literal flying, but might use images of flying, birds, etc.
- f. Irony trumps everything.

16. **It's All About Sex...**

- a. Female symbols: chalice, Holy Grail, bowls, rolling landscape, empty vessels waiting to be filled, tunnels, images of fertility
- b. Male symbols: blade, tall buildings
- c. Why?
 - i. Before mid 20th century, encoded sex avoided censorship
 - ii. Can function on multiple levels
 - iii. Can be more intense than literal descriptions

17. ...**Except Sex.** When authors write directly about sex, they're writing about something else, such as sacrifice, submission, rebellion, supplication, domination, enlightenment, psychological neediness, desire for power over another, liberation of women

18. **If She Comes Up, It's Baptism**

- a. Baptism is symbolic death and rebirth as a new individual
- b. Drowning is symbolic baptism, **IF** the character comes back up, symbolically reborn. But drowning on purpose can also represent a form of rebirth, a choosing to enter a new, different life, leaving an old one behind.

- c. Traveling on water—rivers, oceans—can symbolically represent baptism. i.e. young man sails away from a known world, dies out of one existence, and comes back a new person, hence reborn. Rivers can also represent the River Styx, the mythological river separating the world from the Underworld, another form of transformation, passing from life into death.
- d. Rain can be symbolic baptism as well—cleanses, washes
- e. Sometimes the water is symbolic too—the prairie has been compared to an ocean, walking in a blizzard across snow like walking on water, crossing a river from one existence to another (*Beloved*)
- f. There's also rebirth/baptism implied when a character is renamed.

19. Geography Matters...

- a. What represents home, family, love, security?
- b. What represents wilderness, danger, confusion? i.e. tunnels, labyrinths, jungles
- c. Geography can represent the human psyche (*Heart of Darkness*)
- d. Going south = running amok and running amok means having a direct, raw encounter with the subconscious.
- e. Low places: swamps, crowds, fog, darkness, fields, heat, unpleasantness, people, life, death
- f. High places: snow, ice, purity, thin air, clear views, isolation, life, death

20. ...So Does Season

- a. Spring = childhood and youth, fertility, life, happiness, growth, resurrection (Easter)
- b. Summer = adulthood, romance, fulfillment, passion, love
- c. Fall/ Autumn = decline, middle age, tiredness, harvest (agricultural and personal - results of our endeavors), reaping what we sow - both rewards and punishments
- d. Winter = old age, resentment, lack of growth, punishment, anger, hatred, hibernation, death (the big sleep).
- e. Christmas=childhood, birth, hope, family
- f. Irony trumps all “April is the cruelest month” from *The Wasteland*

21. Marked for Greatness

- a. Physical - marks or imperfections, lame, wounded
 - i. Indicators of the damage life inflicts
 - ii. Marking oneself - atonement, guilt, contrition
 - iii. Signifies some psychological or thematic point by the writer
- b. Symbolically - mirror moral, emotional, or psychological scars or imperfections.
- c. Landscapes can be marked as well—*The Wasteland* by T.S. Eliot - society has been rendered barren spiritually, morally, intellectually, and sexually by the war.
- d. Physical imperfection, when caused by social imperfection, often reflects not only the damage inside the individual, but what is wrong with the culture that causes such damage
- e. Monsters
 - i. *Frankenstein*—monsters created through no fault of their own (perils of man seeking to play God); the real monster is the maker; science without ethics, forbidden insights; a modern pact with the devil.
 - ii. Faust—bargains with the devil in exchange for one's soul
 - iii. *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*—the dual nature of humanity, that in each of us, no matter how well-made or socially groomed, a monstrous Other exists.

- iv. Quasimodo, Beauty and the Beast—ugly on the outside, beautiful on the inside. The physical deformity reflects the opposite of the truth.

22. He's Blind for a Reason, You Know

- a. Physical blindness = psychological, moral, and intellectual blindness
- b. Sometimes ironic; the blind see and sighted are blind
- c. Many times blindness is metaphorical, a failure to see—reality, love, truth, etc.
- d. darkness=blindness; light=sight

23. It's Never Just Heart Disease...

- a. Heart disease=bad love, loneliness, cruelty, disloyalty, cowardice, lack of determination. Symbolic - center of emotion.
- b. Socially, something on a larger scale or something seriously amiss at the heart of things (Heart of Darkness) - their character's humanity
- c. If physical heart trouble, look for the significance.
- d. If emotional heart trouble, look for the physical ailment to appear.

24. ...And Rarely Just Illness

- a. Not all illnesses are created equal.
 - i. Romantics/ Victorian era - consumption or tuberculosis
 - ii. Modern/ Post Modern era - AIDS
- b. It should be picturesque - bizarre beauty: pale skin, appearance of a martyr/ artistic
- c. It should be mysterious in origin - mode of transmission was unclear or unknown
- d. It should have strong symbolic or metaphorical possibilities
 - i. Tuberculosis—a wasting disease: physically wasting away and the waste of lives that were unfulfilled
 - 1. Common disease in novels
 - 2. Writers either suffered from disease personally or watched friends/family suffer with the disease
 - ii. Physical paralysis can mirror moral, social, spiritual, intellectual, political paralysis - *Illness parallels life choices*. Example: small pox - character takes as a sign of divine judgment against vanity and her marital lapse.
 - iii. Plague: divine wrath; the communal aspect and philosophical possibilities of suffering on a large scale; the isolation and despair created by wholesale destruction; the puniness of humanity in the face of an indifferent natural world
 - iv. Malaria: great metaphor - literally means “bad air” (contracted from harmful vapors in hot, moist night air) and figuratively as malicious gossip, hostile public opinion
 - v. Venereal disease: reflects immorality OR innocence, when the innocent suffer because of another's immorality; passed on to a spouse or baby, men's exploitation of women, i.e. syphilis, cholera
 - vi. AIDS: the modern plague.
 - 1. Symbolic
 - a. Tendency to lie dormant for years and then appear
 - b. Turn every victim into unknowing carriers of death 100% mortality rate
 - 2. Metaphor, Theme, Plot

- a. Disproportionately hits young people, gay community, developing countries, artistic circles, poor, etc.
- b. An opportunity to show courage and resilience and compassion (or lack of)
- c. Political and religious angles
 - i. Divine retribution in religious conservatives
 - ii. Activists saw slow govt response as evidence of official hostility to ethnic and sexual constituencies
- vii. The generic fever that carries off a child
- e. *Modern writers are at a disadvantage with diseases in their writings; modern medicine has identified so many germs/illnesses/diseases - no mystery.*

25. Don't Read with *Your* Eyes

- a. You must enter the reality of the book - history, social issues, time period. Don't read from your own fixed position in the current year.
- b. Find a reading perspective that allows for sympathy with the historical movement of the story - that understands the text as having been written against its own social, historical, cultural, and personal background.
- c. Negative approach - **Deconstruction** - questioning everything in the story to deconstruct the work and prove the writer wrong
 - i. Example: comment about giving alcohol to an addict - character is not interested in the addiction but the depth, emotional turmoil of the other.
 - ii. *Avoid clouding the story's own goals with pop culture principles.*
- d. We don't have to accept the values of another culture to sympathetically step into a story and recognize the universal qualities present there. We have to accept *those* values for *those* characters.

26. Is He Serious? And Other Ironies

- a. Irony trumps everything. Look for it.
- b. Example: *Waiting for Godot*
 - i. Roads usually represent journeys, freedom, quests, self-knowledge
 - ii. Dido and Gogo show inability to recognize the road exists for them to take, to engage life.
 - iii. They wish for possibilities and change yet they use the road passively, looking at what it brings them.
- c. Other examples:
 - i. The Christ figure causes the destruction of others while he survives nicely
 - ii. Character crashes into a billboard but is saved by his seat belt. While trying to remove the seat belt to get out of the car, the billboard crashes down and kills him. The message on the billboard: Seat belts save lives.
- d. Irony works because the reader understands something that eludes one or more of the characters - what our expectation is and what is portrayed.
- e. Irony doesn't work for everyone. Difficult to warm to, hard for some to recognize which causes all sorts of problems. (*Satanic Verses*, *Rushdie*)

27. Test Case: A Reading of "The Garden Party" by Katherine Mansfield

Works referenced in *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*

Chapter	Title	Genre	Author
1. Quest	<i>The Crying of Lot 49</i>	novel	Thomas Pynchon
	<i>Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>	novel	Mark Twain
	<i>Lord of the Rings</i>	novel	J.R.R. Tolkien
	<i>Star Wars</i>	movie	George Lucas
	<i>North by Northwest</i>	movie	Alfred Hitchcock
2. Food as Communion	<i>Tom Jones</i> (excerpt)	novel	Henry Fielding
	“Cathedral”	SS	Raymond Carver
	<i>Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant</i>	novel	Anne Tyler
	“The Dead”	SS	James Joyce
3. Vampires and Ghosts	<i>Dracula</i>	novel	Bram Stoker
	<i>Hamlet</i>	play	William Shakespeare
	<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	novel	Charles Dickens
	<i>Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</i>	novel	Robert Louis Stevenson
	<i>The Turn of the Screw</i>	novella	Henry James
	<i>Daisy Miller</i>	novel	Henry James
	<i>Tess of the Durbervilles</i>	novel	Thomas Hardy
	<i>Metamorphosis</i> and “Hunger Artist”	novel	Franz Kafka
	<i>A Severed Head, The Unicorn</i>	novels	Iris Murdoch
4. Sonnets			
5. Intertextuality	<i>Going After Cacciato</i>	novel	Tim O’Brien
	<i>Alice in Wonderland</i>	novel	Lewis Carroll
	<i>The Overcoat</i>	SS	Nikolai Gogol
	“The Overcoat II”	SS	T. Coraghessan Boyle
	“Two Gallants”	SS	James Joyce
	“Two More Gallants”	SS	William Trevor
	<i>Beowulf</i>	poem	
	<i>Grendel</i>	novel	John Gardner
	<i>Wise Children</i>	novel	Angela Carter
	<i>Hamlet, Much Ado About Nothing</i>	play	William Shakespeare
	6. Shakespeare Allusions	<i>Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead</i>	play
<i>A Thousand Acres</i>		novel	Jane Smiley
“The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock”		poem	T.S. Eliot
<i>Master Harold...and the Boys</i>		play	Athol Fugard
numerous TV shows and movies			
7. Biblical Allusions	“Araby”	SS	James Joyce
	<i>Beloved</i>	novel	Toni Morrison
	<i>The Sun Also Rises</i>	novel	Hemingway
	<i>Canterbury Tales</i>	poem	Geoffrey Chaucer
	Holy Sonnets	poems	John Donne
	<i>The Wasteland</i>	poem	T.S. Eliot
	“Why I Live at the P.O.”	SS	Eudora Welty
	“Sonny’s Blues,” <i>Go Tell It on the Mountain</i>	SS	James Baldwin
	<i>Pulp Fiction</i>	movie	Quentin Tarantino
	<i>East of Eden</i>	novel	John Steinbeck
8. Fairy Tales	<i>Alice in Wonderland</i> , Sleeping Beauty, Snow White, Cinderella, Prince Charming, Hansel and Gretel,		Angela Carter
	“The Gingerbread House”	SS	Robert Coover
	<i>The Bloody Chamber</i> (collection of stories)	SS	Angela Carter
9. Greek Mythology	<i>Song of Solomon</i>	novel	Toni Morrison

	“Musée des Beaux Arts”	poem	W. H. Auden
	“Landscape with Fall of Icarus”	poem	William Carlos Williams
	<i>Omeros</i> (based on Homer)	novel	Derek Walcott
	<i>O Brother, Where Art Thou</i>	movie	Joel and Ethan Coen
	<i>Ulysses</i>	novel	James Joyce
10. Weather	“The Three Strangers”	SS	Thomas Hardy
	<i>Song of Solomon</i>	novel	Toni Morrison
	<i>A Farewell to Arms</i>	novel	Ernest Hemingway
	“The Dead”	SS	James Joyce
	<i>The Wasteland</i>	poem	T.S. Eliot
	“The Fish”	poem	Elizabeth Bishop
	“The Snow Man”	poem	Wallace Stevens
11. Violence	“Out, Out...”	poem	Robert Frost
	<i>Beloved</i>	novel	Toni Morrison
	<i>Women in Love</i>	novel	D.H. Lawrence
	<i>The Fox</i>	novella	D. H. Lawrence
	“Barn Burning”	SS	William Faulkner
	<i>Beloved</i>	novel	Toni Morrison
12. Symbolism	<i>Pilgrim’s Progress</i>	allegory	John Bunyan
	<i>Passage to India</i>	novel	E.M. Forster
	“Parable of the Cave” (<i>The Republic</i>)	prose	Plato
	“The Bridge” (poem sequence)	poem	Hart Crane
	<i>The Wasteland</i>	poem	T.S. Eliot
	“Mowing,” “After Apple Picking,” “The Road Not Taken,” “Birches”	poems	Robert Frost
13. Political Writing	<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	novel	Charles Dickens
	“Masque of the Red Death,” “The Fall of the House of Usher”	SS	Edgar Allan Poe
	“Rip Van Winkle”	SS	Washington Irving
	<i>Oedipus at Colonus</i>	play	Sophocles
	<i>A Room of One’s Own</i>	NF	Virginia Woolf
	<i>Mrs. Dalloway</i>	novel	Virginia Woolf
14. Christ Figures	<i>Old Man and the Sea</i>	novella	Ernest Hemingway
15. Flight	<i>Song of Solomon</i>	novel	Toni Morrison
	<i>Nights at the Circus</i>	novel	Angela Carter
	“A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings”	SS	Gabriel Garcia Marquez
	<i>Satanic Verses</i>	novel	Salmon Rushdie
	<i>Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man</i>	novel	James Joyce
	“Wild Swans at Coole”	poem	William Butler Yeats
	“Birches”	poem	Robert Frost
16. All About Sex	<i>North by Northwest</i>	movie	Alfred Hitchcock
	“Janus”	SS	Ann Beattie
	<i>Lady Chatterly’s Lover</i> , <i>Women in Love</i> , “The Rocking-Horse Winner” (SS)	novel	D.H. Lawrence
17. Except Sex	<i>French Lieutenant’s Woman</i>	novel	John Fowles
	<i>A Clockwork Orange</i>	novel	Anthony Burgess
	<i>Lolita</i>	novel	Vladimir Nabokov
	<i>Wise Children</i>	novel	Angela Carter
18. Baptism	<i>Ordinary People</i>	novel	Judith Guest
	<i>Love Medicine</i>	novel	Louise Erdrich
	<i>Song of Solomon</i> , <i>Beloved</i>	novel	Toni Morrison
	“The Horse Dealer’s Daughter”	SS	D.H. Lawrence
	<i>The Unicorn</i>	novel	Iris Murdoch

19. Geography	<i>The Old Man and the Sea</i>	novel	Ernest Hemingway
	<i>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</i>	novel	Mark Twain
	<i>The Fall of the House of Usher</i>	SS	Edgar Allen Poe
	<i>Bean Trees</i>	novel	Barbara Kingsolver
	<i>Song of Solomon</i>	novel	Toni Morrison
	<i>A Room with a View, A Passage to India</i>	novel	E.M. Forster
	<i>Heart of Darkness</i>	novel	Joseph Conrad
	“In Praise of Prairie”	poem	Theodore Roethke
	“Bogland”	poem	Seamus Heaney
	“In Praise of Limestone”	poem	W.H. Auden
	<i>The Snows of Kilimanjaro</i>	novel	Ernest Hemingway
20. Seasons	“Sonnet 73,” <i>Richard III</i> opening, etc.	poem	William Shakespeare
	“In Memory of W.B. Yeats”	poem	W.H. Auden
	“After Apple Picking”	poem	Robert Frost
	<i>The Wasteland</i>	poem	T.S. Eliot
21. Physical Marks	<i>Richard III</i>	play	William Shakespeare
	<i>Song of Solomon, Beloved</i>	novel	Toni Morrison
	<i>Oedipus Rex</i>	play	Sophocles
	<i>The Sun Also Rises</i>	novel	Ernest Hemingway
	<i>The Wasteland</i>	poem	T.S. Eliot
	<i>Frankenstein</i>	novel	Mary Shelley
	versions of <i>Faust</i> , <i>Dr. Faustus</i> , “The Devil and Daniel Webster,” <i>Bedazzled</i> (movie), <i>Star Wars</i>	novel, play	Goethe, Marlowe, Stephen Vincent Benet
	<i>The Hunchback of Notre Dame</i>	novel	Victor Hugo
	<i>Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</i>	novel	Robert Louis Stevenson
22. Blindness	<i>Oedipus Rex</i>	play	Sophocles
	“Araby”	SS	James Joyce
	<i>Waiting for Godot</i>	play	Samuel Beckett
23. Heart Disease	<i>The Good Soldier</i>	novel	Ford Madox Ford
	“The Man of Adamant”	SS	Nathaniel Hawthorne
	<i>Lord Jim</i>	novel	Joseph Conrad
	<i>Lolita</i>	novel	Vladimir Nabokov
24. Illness	“The Sisters” (<i>Dubliners</i>)	SS	James Joyce
	“Illness as Metaphor” (literary criticism)	NF	Susan Sontag
	<i>The Plague</i>	novel	Albert Camus
	“A Doll’s House”	play	Henrik Ibsen
	<i>The Hours</i>	novel	Michael Cunningham
	“The Masque of the Red Death”	SS	Edgar Allen Poe
25. Don’t Read with Your Eyes	“The Dead”	SS	James Joyce
	“Sonny’s Blues”	SS	James Baldwin
	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	play	William Shakespeare
26. Irony	<i>Waiting for Godot</i>	play	Samuel Beckett
	<i>A Farewell to Arms</i>	novel	Ernest Hemingway
	<i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i>	play	Oscar Wilde
	<i>Howard’s End</i>	novel	E.M. Forster
	<i>A Clockwork Orange</i>	novel	Anthony Burgess
	Writers who frequently take ironic stance: Franz Kafka, Samuel Beckett, James Joyce, Vladimir Nabokov, Angela Carter, T. Coraghessan Boyle, Salman Rushdie		
27. A Test Case	Uses “The Garden Party” by Katherine Mansfield as an application of the concepts found in this book.		

Notes by Marti Nelson