

HOW
to
READ
Lit
LIKE A
PROFESSOR



analysis:

When you move beyond the affective/emotional response of a text to engage with the textual elements of a text. Feelings no longer matter.

- ✓ Where did that effect come from?
- ✓ Whom does this character resemble?
- ✓ Where have I seen this situation before?
- ✓ Didn't author say that?

More beyond your emotions and look for symbols and patterns. Rely on your memory of other texts. Build back ground. READ. MODE.

INTRODUCTION: How'd He Do That?



Faustian Legend

- Something hero wants (power, knowledge, etc.)
- hero gives up soul/identity

PATTERN

Grammar of literature

= language of reading
a set of conventions, patterns, codes, and rules employed by writers.

READERS + WRITERS agree on meaning

Stories/Novels

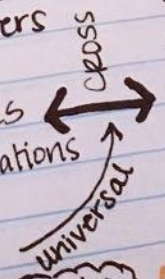
- types of characters
- plot rhythms
- chapter structures
- point of view limitations
- setting
- theme/symbol

POEMS

- form
- structure
- rhythm
- rhyme
- fig. lang.
- Speaker

PLAYS

- plot
- character
- Act structures
- setting
- theme/symbol



GENRE

meaning

SPRING/SNOW/DARKNESS/SLEEP

{MEMORY}

Where have I seen this before? What else has the same themes? Same characters? Etc.

{SYMBOL}

Everything is a symbol of some-thing until proven otherwise. Metaphor? Analogy? IMAGINATION

{PATTERN}

What elements add to the significance? What are the tropes? Archetypes?

youth, promise, new life, young lambs, children skipping

rebirth, fertility, renewal

ABSTRACT

NOTE: "Always" and "never" are not words that have much meaning in literary study... Someone will come along and disrupt the absolute... pay attention to the PATTERNS, though

CHAPTER 1: Every Trip Is a Quest (Except When It's Not)

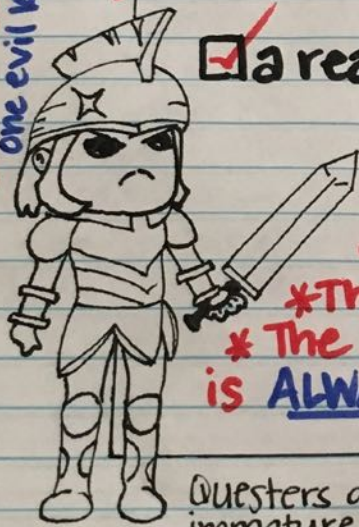
A knight a dangerous road a Holy Grail at least one dragon
one evil knight one princess

5 ASPECTS of the QUEST

- ☑ a quester
- ☑ a place to go
- ☑ a stated reason to go there
- ☑ challenges + trials enroute
- ☑ a real reason to go there

stated goal
faces away

mistaken for
real mission



*The REAL reason for a quest NEVER involves the stated reason.

*Their quest is EDUCATIONAL.

*The REAL reason for a quest is ALWAYS self-knowledge.

Questers are usually young, inexperienced, immature, and sheltered.

Ex: Huck Finn, Lord of the Rings, Star Wars, Harry Potter
Hunger Games

BILDUNGSROMAN

genre that focuses on the psychological and/or moral growth of the protagonist.

"Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar." - Freud

↳ it is equally true that just as cigars maybe just cigars, so sometimes they are not.

apocryphal (dubious/authenticity)

Not always holy or decent.

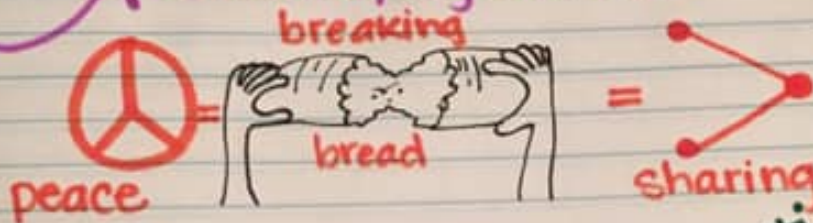
CHAPTER 2: Nice to Eat with You: Acts of Communion

COMMUNION

the sharing or exchanging of intimate thoughts or feelings at the mental or spiritual level.

whenever people eat or drink together.

"I'm with you, I like you, we form a community together" (8).



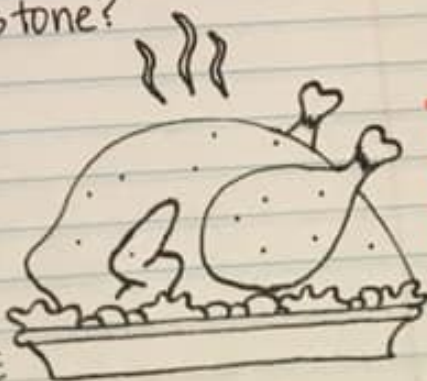
how CHARACTERS are getting along OR not getting along.

Q: What kind of communion?
What kind of result can it achieve?
What is the dinner's tone?

KIND | RESULT

SEXUAL HANG-UPS
FAILED DEATH
EDUCATION

CONSUMING DESIRE
CHANCE TO OVERCOME
BAD SIGN
COMMON EXPERIENCE
CHANCE TO LEARN FROM OTHERS.



"We're all in this TOGETHER." (A).

"WRITING A MEAL SCENE IS SO INHERENTLY UNINTERESTING AND SO DIFFICULT, THAT THERE REALLY NEEDS TO BE SOME COMPELLING REASON TO INCLUDE ONE." (8)

Vampire: alluring, dangerous, mysterious, tends to focus on beautiful, unmarried (19th c. = virginal) women. **Victims** tend to become more like him/her.

CHAPTER 3: Nice to Eat You: Acts of Vampires

- an older figure representing corrupt, outworn values
not always an actual vampire, ghost, or doppelgänger
- a young, preferably virginal female
not always in visible form
- a stripping away of her youth, energy, virtue, virginity
have to do with things beyond themselves
- a continuance of the life force of the old male
- the death or destruction of the young woman.

ESSENTIALS of the VAMPIRE STORY

Vampirism is often about things other than literal vampirism:

- selfishness
- exploitation
- a refusal to respect the autonomy of other people
- Etc. (16).

★ A vampire is selfish; uses others to get what it wants.

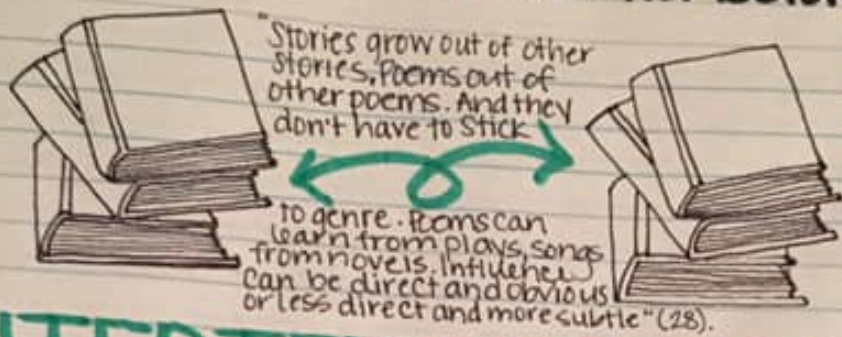
ghosts and vampires are never only about ghosts and vampires (18).



VICTORIAN: believed in the dual nature of humans; writers found ways to write about taboo subjects and issues (sex and sexuality) in indirect ways and other, hidden forms (17). (1837-1901)

"There is no such thing as a wholly original work of literature" (24). "There's only one story. Ever. One" (27).

CHAPTER 4: Now, Where Have I Seen Her Before?



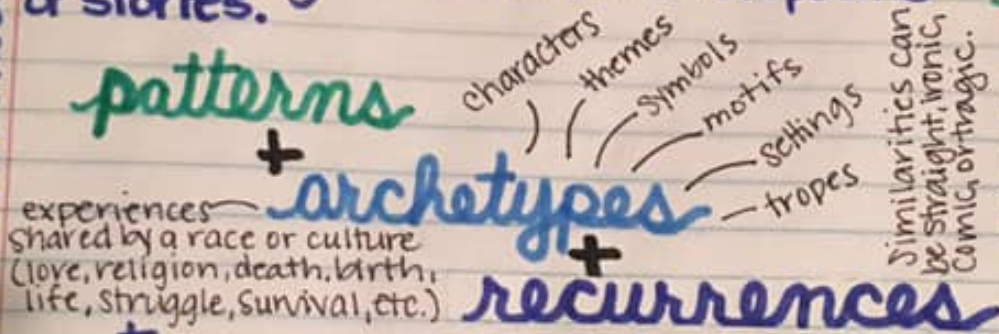
READ MORE.

↳ current events

↳ childhood experiences ↳ past reading ↳ every movie ever seen ↳ life

Develop a habit of asking where you've seen something before.

INTERTEXTUALITY: the ongoing interaction between poems or stories.



History + Culture + Literature

"Literature grows out of other literature" (24).
New books have dialogues - Northrop Frye with older ones.

aha! factor the delight we feel at recognizing a familiar component from earlier experience (28).

Once you recognize a story from something else you've read/seen, the current story changes in meaning or purpose; your understanding deepens and becomes more meaningful, more **COMPLEX**. It's okay if you don't understand EVERYTHING.

Everything a writer/creator draws upon to create a text. Write some of it may be subconscious, usually a writer is consciously making these decisions. In purpose (25)



The relevancy of Shakespeare in modern times shows his importance to the literary world, esp. from the 18th-20th centuries.

CHAPTER 5: WHY SHAKESPEARE?

- great characters
- fabulous speeches
- witty repartee
- authority
- ubiquitous / omnipresence
- provides a figure against whom writers can struggle
- provides a source of texts against which other texts can source ideas
- adds meaning to conversation

WRITERS

- rework a message
- explore ethics
- trades across ages
- highlight features of a new narrative
- draw on reader associations
- irony



When in Doubt, It's from Shakespeare...
As you read Shakespeare, you keep chomping down lines you've heard/read about your entire life.

"The more we know of Shakespeare, the more we love him." (1.1.100)
"I have seen the world, and I have seen the world, and I have seen the world, and I have seen the world." (1.1.100)
"I have seen the world, and I have seen the world, and I have seen the world, and I have seen the world." (1.1.100)
"I have seen the world, and I have seen the world, and I have seen the world, and I have seen the world." (1.1.100)

Shakespeare means something to us as readers in part because he means so much to our writers. So many writers allude to Shakespeare in their work and complexity in their work that it's like to have something to read that's just you're getting to read Shakespeare's work. It's like you're getting to read Shakespeare's work, and you're getting to read Shakespeare's work, and you're getting to read Shakespeare's work.

Arch: all villains descended from the life of Cain?

Poetry is full of Scripture. Early literature in English is frequently biblical and nearly always informed by religion. It isn't just a zombi problem... it's been going on since forever! (6.7).
Or the Bible theme

CHAPTER 6:

- garden = serpent
- food = porring of waters, toaves
- fishes = forty days
- denials = sustenance
- foiled calves = milk and honey
- voices from whirlwinds
- Apocalyptic = wilderness
- four horsemen = the Fall
- Hah (small cup) = falch
- Prodigal son
- sacrifice = villains



allusions

Common

Every writer prior to something in the middle of the 18th century in the West is likely to have been familiar with the Bible. It's not just a zombi problem... it's been going on since forever! (6.7).
if something seems to be doing the same thing over and over again, it's probably a common theme.
illusions tend to stick to their original meaning, even when used ironically. So that a reader can recognize the illusion.

Arch: all villains descended from the life of Cain?

INTERLUDE: Does He Mean That?

* You keep saying that the writer is alluding to this obscure work and using that other that I never heard of but damn I'm Yes. Maybe. Probably... Since proof is rarely impossible, discussions of the writer's intentions are not especially profitable. Instead let's restrict ourselves to what he did do and more important, what we readers can discover in his work.

* The best method used for analysis prior to reading would be reading a synopsis of the novel. This is usually done in the form of a summary or a list of events. This is usually done in the form of a summary or a list of events.

* Lateral thinking (the thinking an author does between moments of active writing) is what we're really discussing: the way writers can keep their eye on the target of the plot or ending of the novel or the argument of a poem, and at the same time bring in a great deal of at least tangentially related material with allusions and devices that make reading interesting and worthwhile (95).

Reasons for Violence

- * more active readers
- * cause plot complications
- * Authorial Violence

the death and suffering authors introduce into their work in the interest of plot advancement; they're their characters, are responsible.

Categories of Violence

- * All other characters under focus
- * bad-pair comparisons
- * Antagonist



- * Redemption or corruption
- * Personal intimate act
- * Cultural
- * Symbolic
- * Historical
- * Mythological
- * Political
- * Psychological

CHAPTER 11

metaphor/figure of speech meaning

* Violence in literature is usually also "More Than It's Gonna Hurt You" concerning violence.

Possible Themes
 • the hostile or uncaring relationship we have with the universe.
 • Our lives and deaths are as random in the universe or actively interested in our demise.
 • The frightening and alien universe.
 • The essential qualities of men and women have been lost in the demands of technology.
 • Redemption or corruption

- * Personal intimate act
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