### Critical Approaches Inquiry Questions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Critical Approaches</th>
<th>Inquiry Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formalism/ New Criticism</td>
<td>1. What formal elements, such as imagery, symbols, conflict, diction or structure convey the meaning or central themes of the work?</td>
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| New Historicism | 1. Who is the intended audience of the work?  
2. Is social commentary or social criticism present in the work?  
3. How was the writer influenced by specific experiences or events?  
4. What historical or social issues are presented in the text?  
5. Is there a bias evident in the work, as a result of the historical orientation of the author?  
6. What significant historical, cultural or social events were occurring during the time of the work’s setting and publication?  
7. How might the author have been affected by the social/historical and political milieu at the time? |
| Reader Response | 1. Identify the elements within the work that are controversial or open to reader interpretation.  
2. What is your personal interpretation of the work?  
3. Which parts of the text are ambiguous and open to reader interpretation?  
4. Who is the intended reader for this work?  
5. How might the reader’s interpretation of the text be influenced by personal experience or a biased critical approach to the text?  
6. With whom do you most identify within the text, and why?  
7. How do the age and experiences of the reader contribute to the reader’s understanding of the text’s meaning? |
| Feminist | 1. How are women presented in the text?  
2. What is the social/political context for women characters in the work? Do these contexts reflect social inequities or imbalance?  
3. What were the social and historical conditions for women in this time period that might help us to understand both the author’s intent and the roles of women within the text? |
| Marxist | 1. How are social institutions represented in the text?  
2. What does the text say about social structures and conflicts?  
3. What role does class play in the work? What is the author’s analysis of class relations?  
4. How do characters overcome oppression?  
5. How does the work serve as propaganda for the status quo? Does the text attempt to undermine it? |
| Psychoanalytic | 1. How does imagery in the text encourage readers to explore their inner fantasies and desires?  
2. Does the text unintentionally relay an unconscious message to the reader?  
3. How does the unconscious mind dictate how the characters interact with the world?  
4. What unconscious or unstated conflicts are conveyed through imagery within the text?  
5. How do symbols reflect unconscious ideas, conflicts or desires within the text? |
| Archetypal Studies | 1. What archetype is suggested by seasons, imagery, and symbols?  
2. Does the speaker/protagonist reflect any of the archetypal qualities of comedy, tragedy, romance, or irony?  
3. Do the symbols, imagery, conflicts, or protagonists reflect similar patterns found in other works of literature or myths? |

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