AP Lit: Literary Analysis Skills

See Literary the Criticism Units, read How to Read like a Professor, and use the Lit. Analyses for Poetry and Drama for more info.
Know the terms. Identify them and explain why/how they <u>function</u> in the work to communicate the tone/theme.

Section I: Multiple-Choice

The seven AP English Literature and Composition skill categories are assessed in the multiple-choice section with the following weighting:

Skill Category	Exam Weighting
1: Explain the function of character	**16–20%**
2: Explain the function of setting	**3–6%**
3: Explain the function of plot and structure	**16–20%**
4: Explain the function of the narrator or speaker	**21–26%**
5: Explain the function of word choice, imagery, and symbols	**10–13%**
6: Explain the function of comparison	**10–13%**
7: Develop textually substantiated arguments about interpretations of part or all of a text	**10–13%**

The multiple-choice section will include five sets of 8 to 13 questions per set, with each set preceded by a passage of prose fiction or poetry of varying difficulty. Each multiple-choice section will include at least two prose fiction passages and at least two poetry passages.

Section II: Free-Response

The second section of the AP English Literature and Composition Exam includes three questions.

FREE-RESPONSE QUESTION 1: POETRY ANALYSIS

Free-response question 1 presents students with a passage of poetry of approximately 100 to 300 words. This question assesses students' ability to do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents an interpretation and may establish a line of reasoning.

- ·Select and use evidence to develop and support the line of reasoning.

- ·Explain the relationship between the evidence and the thesis.

- ·Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating the argument.

Sample Question
In the following poem "Plants" by Olive Senior (published in 2005), the speaker portrays the relationships among plant life and the implied audience. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Senior uses poetic elements and techniques to develop those complex relationships.
Stable Prompt Wording
The text in italics will vary by question, while the remainder of the prompt will be consistently used in all Poetry Analysis essay questions.
In the following poem [*or excerpt from poem*] by [*author, date of publication*], the speaker [*comment on what is being addressed in the poem*]. Read the poem carefully. Then,
in a well-written essay, analyze how [*author*] uses [*poetic or literary*] elements and techniques to [*convey/portray/develop a*

thematic, topical, or structural aspect of the poem that is complex and specific to the passage of the poem provided].

FREE-RESPONSE QUESTION 2: PROSE FICTION ANALYSIS

Free-response question 2 presents students with a passage of prose fiction of approximately 500 to 700 words. This question assesses students' ability to do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents an interpretation and may establish a line of reasoning.

- ·Select and use evidence to develop and support the line of reasoning.

- ·Explain the relationship between the evidence and the thesis.

- ·Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating the argument.

Sample Question

The following excerpt is from an 1852 novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne. In this passage, two characters who have been living on the Blithedale farm—a community designed to promote an ideal of equality achieved through communal rural living—are about to part ways. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Hawthorne uses literary elements and techniques to portray the narrator's complex attitude towards Zenobia.

Stable Prompt wording

The text in italics will vary by question, while the remainder of the prompt will be consistently used in all Prose Fiction Analysis essay questions.

The following excerpt is from [*text and author, date of publication*]. In this passage, [*comment on what is being addressed*

in the passage]. Read the passage carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how [*author*] uses literary elements and techniques to [*convey/portray/develop a thematic, topical, or structural aspect of the passage that is complex and specific to the passage provided*].

FREE-RESPONSE QUESTION 3: LITERARY ARGUMENT

Free-response question 3 presents students with a literary concept or idea, along with a list of approximately 40 literary works. Students are required to select a work of prose fiction either from their own reading or from the provided list and analyze how the literary concept or idea described in the question contributes to an interpretation of the work as a whole. This question assesses students' ability to do the following:

▪ Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents an interpretation and may establish a line of reasoning.

▪ Select and use evidence to develop and support the line of reasoning.
▪ Explain the relationship between the evidence and the thesis.
▪ Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating the argument.

Sample Question

Many works of literature feature characters who have been given a literal or figurative gift. The gift may be an object, or it may be a quality such as uncommon beauty, significant social position, great mental or imaginative faculties, or extraordinary physical powers. Yet this gift is often also a burden or a handicap.

Either from your own reading or from the list below, choose a work of fiction in which a character has been given a gift that is both an advantage and a problem. Then, in a well-written essay,

analyze how the gift and its complex nature contribute to an interpretation of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

Stable Prompt Wording

The text in italics will vary by question, while the remainder of the prompt will be consistently used in all Literary Argument essay questions.

[*Lead that introduces some concept or idea that students will be asked to apply to a text of their choosing*.]

Either from your own reading or from the list below, choose a work of fiction in which [*some aspect of the lead is addressed*]. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how [*that same aspect of the lead*] contributes to an interpretation of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

Task Verbs Used in Free-Response Questions

The following task verbs are commonly used in the free-response questions:

Analyze: Examine methodically and in detail the structure of the topic of the question for purposes of interpretation and explanation.

Choose: Select a literary work from among provided choices.
Read: Look at or view printed directions and provided passages.

1. What, then, seems fictional about the work, whether imagined or stylized?
2. What ideas do those qualities suggest?

Literature is "aesthetic"; it gives pleasure. The aesthetic quality of literature—its "beauty"—is hard to define and describe. In a sense, it just *is*. Like various other art forms—music, patterns of color in paintings, photographs of sunsets, dance—literature is an end in itself. The pleasure of literature rests in the way authors use literary conventions, such as metaphor, plot, symbolism, irony, suspense, themes, and poetic language. Taken together, they constitute the *form* of the work, the order authors impose on their material. Such order is not typical of real life. In real life, events can be random, disconnected, and inconsequential. Problems can remain unresolved. The murderer may not be caught, the cruel parent may continue to be cruel, the economic crisis may persist, the poor but honest youth may not be rewarded. We cannot be aware of all the things that happen to us, much less remember them. Nor do we always know which events are important, which trivial. But literature can give order to events in the form of a *plot*. Unimportant events are excluded, cause-and-effect relationships established, conflicts resolved. Events are arranged in logical order so that they form a sequence with a beginning, a middle, and an end. Plot is but one of a multitude of ways that artists give order to material. They may also arrange language into patterns, reduce characters to recognizable types, connect details to ideas, elegantly describe setting. In works of literature, all of the elements combine to form an *overall* order, an *overall* coherence.

1. What conventions (of language, plot, characterization, etc.) does the author use to give us pleasure?
2. Why does the author's manipulation of these conventions affect us so strongly?
3. How does the author use pleasurable conventions to communicate ideas and make them appealing?

ANALYSIS OF A LITERARY WORK:

THE AUTHOR AND HIS/HER TIMES:

Born/died; biographical background important to understanding the novel; important family, community, national, and world events that influenced author and work. *See Literary Criticism Units and Philosophy.

PLOT/STRUCTURE/FORM:

See story versus plot. Plot is the sequence of events in a narrative; events throughout a narrative are connected, with each event building on the others, often with a cause-and- effect relationship.

STR-1

The arrangement of the parts and sections of a text, the relationship of the parts to each other, and the sequence in which the text reveals information are all structural choices made by a writer that contribute to the reader's interpretation of a text.

STR-1.A

Plot is the sequence of events in a narrative; events throughout a narrative are connected, with each event building on the others, often with a cause-and- effect relationship.

STR-1.B

The dramatic situation of a narrative includes the setting and action of the plot and how that narrative develops to place characters in conflict(s), and often involves the rising or falling fortunes of a main character or set of characters.

STR-1.C

Plot and the exposition that accompanies it focus readers' attention on the parts of the narrative that matter most to its development, including characters, their relationships, and their roles in the narrative, as well as setting and the relationship between characters and setting.

STR-1.D

Line and stanza breaks contribute to the development and relationship of ideas in a poem.

STR-1.E

The arrangement of lines and stanzas contributes to the development and relationship of ideas in a poem.

STR-1.F

A text's structure affects readers' reactions and expectations by presenting the relationships among the ideas of the text via their relative positions and their placement within the text as a whole.

STR-1.G

Contrast can be introduced through focus; tone; point of view; character, narrator, or speaker perspective; dramatic situation or moment; settings or time; or imagery.

STR-1.H

Contrasts are the result of shifts or juxtapositions or both.

STR-1.I

Shifts may be signaled by a word, a structural convention, or punctuation.

STR-1.J

Shifts may emphasize contrasts between particular segments of a text.

STR-1.K

A story, or narrative, is delivered through a series of events that relate to a conflict.

STR-1.L

Events include episodes, encounters, and scenes in a narrative that can introduce and develop a plot.

STR-1.M

The significance of an event depends on its relationship to the narrative, the conflict, and the development of characters.

STR-1.N

Conflict is tension between competing values either within a character, known as internal or psychological conflict, or with outside forces that obstruct a character in some way, known as external conflict.

STR-1.O

A text may contain multiple conflicts. Often two or more conflicts in a text intersect.

STR-1.P

A primary conflict can be heightened by the presence of additional conflicts that intersect with it.

STR-1.Q

Inconsistencies in a text may create contrasts that represent conflicts of values or perspectives.

STR-1.R

Some patterns in dramatic situations are so common that they are considered archetypes, and these archetypes create certain expectations for how the dramatic situations will progress and be resolved.

Note: For the exam, students are not expected to identify or label archetypes.

STR-1.S

The differences highlighted by a contrast emphasize the particular traits, aspects, or characteristics important for comparison of the things being contrasted.

STR-1.T

Contrasts often represent conflicts in values related to character, narrator, or speaker perspectives on ideas represented by a text.

Comparisons, representations, and associations shift meaning from the literal to the figurative and invite readers to interpret a text.

STR-1.U

Closed forms of poetry include predictable patterns in the structure of lines, stanzas, meter, and rhyme, which develop relationships among ideas in the poem.

Note: The AP Exam will not require students to label or identify specific rhyme schemes, metrical patterns, or forms of poetry.

STR-1.V

Open forms of poetry may not follow expected or predictable patterns in the structure of their lines or stanzas, but they may still have structures that develop relationships between ideas in the poem.

STR-1.W

Structures combine in texts to emphasize certain ideas and concepts.

STR-1.X

Some narrative structures interrupt the chronology of a plot; such structures include flashback, foreshadowing, in medias res, and stream of consciousness.

STR-1.Y

Narrative structures that interrupt the chronology of a plot, such as flashback, foreshadowing, in medias res, and stream of consciousness, can directly affect readers' experiences with a text by creating anticipation or suspense or building tension.

STR-1.Z

Contrasts often represent contradictions or inconsistencies that introduce nuance, ambiguity, or contradiction into a text. As a result, contrasts make texts more complex.

STR-1.AA

Pacing is the manipulation of time in a text. Several factors contribute to the pace of a narrative, including arrangement of details, frequency of events, narrative structures, syntax, the tempo or speed at which events occur, or shifts in tense and chronology in the narrative.

STR-1.AB

Narrative pacing may evoke an emotional reaction in readers by the order in which information is revealed; the relationships between the information, when it
is provided, and other parts of the narrative; and the significance of the revealed information to other parts of the narrative.

STR-1.AC

Ideas and images in a poem may extend beyond a single line or stanza.

STR-1.AD

Punctuation is often crucial to the understanding of a text.

STR-1.AE

When structural patterns are created in a text, any interruption in the pattern creates a point of emphasis.

STR-1.AF

Juxtaposition may create or demonstrate an antithesis.

STR-1.AG

Situational or verbal irony is created when events or statements in a text are inconsistent with either the expectations readers bring to a text or the expectations established by the text itself.

STR-1.AH

Paradox occurs when seemingly contradictory elements are juxtaposed, but the contradiction—which may or may not be reconciled—can reveal a hidden or unexpected idea.

STR-1.AI

Significant events often illustrate competing value systems that relate to a conflict present in the text.

STR-1.AJ

Events in a plot collide and accumulate to create a sense of anticipation and suspense.

STR-1.AK

The resolution of the anticipation, suspense, or central conflicts of a plot may be referred to as the moment of catharsis or emotional release.

STR-1.AL

Sometimes things not actually shown in a narrative, such as an unseen character or a preceding action, may be in conflict with or result in conflict for a character.

STR-1.AM

Although most plots end in resolution of the central conflicts, some have unresolved endings, and the lack of resolution may contribute to interpretations of the text.

Thinking on Paper About Plot
1. List the conflicts revealed in each major section of the play (usually acts, but sometimes scenes).
2. Explain how one or more of these conflicts is first made evident. Pay close attention to dialogue.
3. Summarize how a conflict is developed throughout the whole play and how it is resolved.
4. Summarize the events, either in the past or present, that cause conflict. If there is one event that caused of causes all the conflicts, summarize it in detail and explain why and how it is important.
5. List the external conflicts. How are they represented on stage? Through dialogue? Through physical action? Through symbolic stage props?
6. List the events that precede the action of the play. Explain the effect, if any, of these prior events on the action.
7. Summarize the events in each major structural unit of the play. Explain the relationship of the play's units to the plot's structure. Show how the action in each unit rises to a climax.
8. Mark some informal structural divisions in the play. Note the rising action and climax of these units. Explain how each is important.
9. Describe one important scene in detail. Explain how the characters' actions and dialogue reveal conflict. Explain

the importance of the scene to the whole play.
10. Describe the climax of the play. Explain what conflicts are resolved.
11. List the main plot and the subplots. Explain the relationship of the subplots to the main plot.
12. List the events that occur offstage. Explain why the playwright has one or more of these occur offstage rather than onstage.
13. Summarize the situation at the beginning of the play and state what you expect to happen. Explain how the play does or does not fulfill those expectations.

Questions About Plot: Conflict
1. What conflicts does the work dramatize?
2. What is the main conflict? What are minor conflicts? How are all the conflicts related?
3. What causes the conflicts?
4. Which conflicts are external, which internal?
5. Who is the protagonist? Who or what is the antagonist?
6. What qualities or values are associated with each side of the conflict?
7. Where does the climax occur?
8. How is the main conflict resolved? Which conflicts go unresolved?

Other Questions About Plot
- ·To what degree does a plot's ordering of events reflect a chronological sequence?

- ·Which plot event(s) seems to break an established chronological sequence, and where does this event fit into the chronology of other events?

- ·How does a particular sequence of events affect the presentation and/or development of characters and conflict?

- ·How does a text's organization and arrangement of ideas and details in lines, stanzas, sentences, paragraphs, chapters, or other sections of text contribute to a text's structure?

- ·How does a poem's rhythm and/or rhyme contribute to its structure?

- ·What is the organizing principle in a section of text that makes it a cohesive unit?

- ·What is the relationship of a section of a text to the text's setting, character, plot, conflict, point of view, thematic idea, or other literary elements?

- ·What is the relationship of a section of a text to other sections of the text?

- ·What is the relationship of a section of a text to the text as a whole?

- ·How does a particular sequence of events and the manner in which a text presents those events to a reader affect a reader's experience with the text?

- ·What is the relationship between a particular sequence of events and a text's structure as a whole?

- ·What are some striking contrasts in a text?

- ·How do you identify contrasts, shifts, and juxtapositions in a text?

- ·How might a contrast indicate a conflict of values?

- ·What ideas, traits, or values are emphasized in a contrast?

- ·How does a contrast contribute to complexity in a text?

- ·How does a contrast contribute to meaning in a text?

- ·How does a text's organization and arrangement of ideas and details in lines, stanzas, sentences, paragraphs, chapters, or other sections of text contribute to a text's structure?

- ·How does a poem's rhythm and/or rhyme contribute to its structure?

- ·What is the organizing principle in a section of text that makes it a cohesive unit?

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- ·How might a contrast indicate a conflict of values?

- ·What ideas, traits, or values are emphasized in a contrast?

- ·How does a contrast contribute to complexity in a text?

- ·How does a contrast contribute to meaning in a text?

- ·Which event in a plot has a significant relationship to a character, conflict, another event, thematic idea, etc., and what is the relationship?

- ·How is an event in a plot a cause or effect of another event?

- ·How does an event or related set of events cause, develop, or resolve a conflict?

- ·How can an event or related set of events represent competing value systems?

- ·How does an event create anticipation or suspense in a reader?

- ·How does an event or related set of events contribute to meaning in the whole work?

- ·How might a conflict represent opposing motivations or values?

- ·How might a conflict arise from a contrast?

- ·What is the relationship of a particular conflict to other conflicts?

- ·How does the resolution or continuation of a conflict affect a character, plot, narrator, or speaker, etc.?

- ·How does the resolution or continuation of a conflict affect a reader's experience with the text?

- ·How does a conflict contribute to meaning in the whole work?

1. How are the "story" and "plot" different? Why does the author arrange events out of chronological order? Can you retell the story in chronological order? Does the plot have gaps—events that are omitted or only hinted at in the text. In "Hills Like White Elephants," for example, we have to guess information about the couple's relationship before the text begins.
2. If the work has multiple plot lines, what links them together?
3. If the work has embedded or frame stories, how are they related to the main stories?

4. When does the author use summary narration and scenic narration? Is the work primarily one or the other? How do the two kinds of narration complement one another?
5. Does the ending follow logically from the plot? Cam you think of a better or equally good ending?

POINT OF VIEW (NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVE):

A narrator's or speaker's perspective controls the details and emphases that affect how readers experience and interpret a text. Identify and describe the narrator or speaker of a text. Identify and explain the function of point of view in a narrative.

NAR-1.A

Narrators or speakers relate accounts to readers and establish a relationship between the text and the reader.

NAR-1.B

Perspective refers to how narrators, characters, or speakers see their circumstances, while point of view refers to the position from which a narrator or speaker relates the events of a narrative.

NAR-1.C

A speaker or narrator is not necessarily the author.

NAR-1.D

The point of view contributes to what narrators, characters, or speakers can and cannot provide in a text based on their level of involvement and intimacy with the details, events, or characters.

NAR-1.E

Narrators may also be characters, and their role as characters may influence their perspective.

NAR-1.F

First-person narrators are involved in the narrative; their relationship to the events of the plot and the other characters shapes their perspective.

NAR-1.G

Third-person narrators are outside observers.

NAR-1.H

Third-person narrators' knowledge about events and characters may range from observational to all- knowing, which shapes their perspective.

NAR-1.I

The outside perspective of third-person narrators may not be affected by the events of the narrative.

NAR-1.J

Narrators may function as characters in the narrative who directly address readers and either recall events or describe them as they occur.

NAR-1.K

Narrative distance refers to the physical distance, chronological distance, relationships, or emotional investment of the narrator to the events or characters of the narrative.

NAR-1.L

Stream of consciousness is a type of narration in which a character's thoughts are related through a continuous dialogue or description.

NAR-1.M

The narrators', characters', or speakers' backgrounds and perspectives shape the tone they convey about subjects or events in the text.

NAR-1.N

Descriptive words, such as adjectives and adverbs, not only qualify or modify the things they describe but also convey a perspective toward those things.

NAR-1.O

The attitude of narrators, characters, or speakers toward an idea, character, or situation emerges from their perspective and may be referred to as tone.

NAR-1.P

The narrator's or speaker's tone toward events or characters in a text influences readers' interpretation of the ideas associated with those things.

NAR-1.Q

The syntactical arrangement of phrases and clauses in a sentence can emphasize details or ideas and convey a narrator's or speaker's tone.

NAR-1.R

Information included and/or not included in a text conveys the perspective of characters, narrators, and/ or speakers.

NAR-1.S

A narrator's or speaker's perspective may influence the details and amount of detail in a text and may reveal biases, motivations, or understandings.

NAR-1.T

Readers can infer narrators' biases by noting which details they choose to include in a narrative and which they choose to omit.

NAR-1.U

Readers who detect bias in a narrator may find that narrator less reliable.

NAR-1.V

The reliability of a narrator may influence a reader's understanding of a character's motives.

NAR-1.W

Some narrators or speakers may provide details and information that others do not or cannot provide. Multiple narrators or speakers may provide contradictory information in a text.

NAR-1.X

Multiple, and even contrasting, perspectives can occur within a single text and contribute to the complexity of the text.

NAR-1.Y

A narrator or speaker may change over the course of a text as a result of actions and interactions.

NAR-1.Z

Changes and inconsistencies in a narrator's or speaker's perspective may contribute to irony or the complexity of the text.

Questions About Narration/Point of View:
- Who is the narrator or speaker of a text?

- Which details from the text indicate the identity of the narrator or speaker?

- ·What is the difference between a first- person point of view and third-person point of view, and how does the particular point of view used in a text affect the details and information presented to a reader?

- ·How does a narrator's distance from the events of a narrative affect the details and information presented to a reader?

- ·How does a shift in point of view contribute to the development of a literary element (e.g., character, conflict, tone, theme) and contribute to meaning?

- ·What is a narrator's or speaker's tone toward a particular subject, and which diction, imagery, details, and syntax in the text contribute to that tone?
- ·What is the relationship between a narrator's or speaker's tone toward a particular subject and their perspective, more generally?

- ·How does a narrator's or speaker's background and perspective shape a tone toward a particular subject?

- ·How do the diction, imagery, details, and syntax in a text support multiple tones?

- ·How might a change in tone toward a particular subject over the course of a text indicate a narrator's or speaker's change?

- ·To what extent can a narrator or speaker of a first-person point of view narrative be trusted?

- ·How might a third-person point of view narrator or speaker be more reliable than a first-person point of view narrator or speaker?

- ·How does a narrator's or speaker's inclusion or exclusion of particular details affect their reliability?

- ·To what degree is the narrator or speaker of a first-person point of view narrative aware of their own biases?

- ·What is the relationship of a narrator's or speaker's reliability and a reader's understanding of a character's motivations?

1. Why did the author choose the work's point of view? How would the story be changed or affected by a different point of view?
2. What effect does the point of view have on us? If, for example, the point of view is first person, how does this character (rather than author character) affect our reception of the story? How would the story be different if told by another character? If the point of view is objective (dramatic), what do we gain or lose by not being able to enter the character's minds?
3. If the work includes more than one point of view, how are they different? Why does the author use each one?
4. How reliable is the narrator? If a narrator unreliable, how can you tell what the truth is?
5. What do we learn about human perception from the author's handling of point of view? Henry James's third-person limited point of view, for example, often shows people to be blind to the

needs and desires of other people and blind to their own nature as well.
6. Who is the narratee (listener or reader)? Is it one person or a group of people inside the story? What characterizes this audience? Why does the narrator tell the story to this audience? If the narratee is not inside the story, does the author or narrator seem to have a special audience in mind? What characterizes this audience?

<u>CHARACTERIZATION</u>:

Characters in literature allow readers to study and explore a range of values, beliefs, assumptions, biases, and cultural norms represented by those characters.

CHR-1.A

Description, dialogue, and behavior reveal characters to readers.

CHR-1.B

Descriptions of characters may come from a speaker, narrator, other characters, or the characters themselves.

CHR-1.C

Perspective is how narrators, characters, or speakers understand their circumstances, and is informed by background, personality traits, biases, and relationships.

CHR-1.D

A character's perspective is both shaped and revealed by relationships with other characters, the environment, the events of the plot, and the ideas expressed in the text.

CHR-1.E

Characters reveal their perspectives and biases through the words they use, the details they provide in the text, the organization of their thinking, the decisions they make, and the actions they take.

CHR-1.F

The description of a character creates certain expectations for that character's behaviors; how a character does or does not meet those expectations affects a reader's interpretation of that character.

CHR-1.G

Details associated with a character and/or used to describe a character contribute to a reader's interpretation of that character.

CHR-1.H

Readers' understanding of a character's perspective may depend on the perspective of the narrator or speaker.

CHR-1.I

A character's perspective may shift during the course of a narrative.

CHR-1.J

When narrators, characters, or speakers compare another character to something or someone else, they reveal their perspective on the compared character and may also reveal something innate about the compared character.

CHR-1.K

Readers can infer a character's motives from that character's actions or inactions.

CHR-1.L

A dynamic character who develops over the course of the narrative often makes choices that directly or indirectly affect the climax and/or the resolution of that narrative.

CHR-1.M

Character changes can be visible and external, such as changes to health or wealth, or can be internal, psychological, or emotional changes; external changes can lead to internal changes, and vice versa.

CHR-1.N

Some characters remain unchanged or are largely unaffected by the events of the narrative.

CHR-1.O

The significance of characters is often revealed through their agency and through nuanced descriptions.

CHR-1.P

Characters' choices—in speech, action, and inaction— reveal what they value.

CHR-1.Q

The main character in a narrative is the protagonist; the antagonist in the narrative opposes the protagonist and may be another character, the internal conflicts of the protagonist, a collective (such as society), or nature.

CHR-1.R

Protagonists and antagonists may represent contrasting values.

CHR-1.S

Conflict among characters often arises from tensions generated by their different value systems.

CHR-1.T

Different character, narrator, or speaker perspectives often reveal different information, develop different attitudes, and influence different interpretations of a text and the ideas in it.

CHR-1.U

Foil characters (foils) serve to illuminate, through contrast, the traits, attributes, or values of another character.

CHR-1.V

Inconsistencies between the private thoughts of characters and their actual behavior reveal tensions and complexities between private and professed values.

CHR-1.W

A character's competing, conflicting, or inconsistent choices or actions contribute to complexity in a text.

Explain the function of a character changing or remaining unchanged.

CHR-1.X

Often the change in a character emerges directly from a conflict of values represented in the narrative.

CHR-1.Y

Changes in a character's circumstances may lead to changes in that character.

CHR-1.Z

While characters can change gradually over the course of a narrative, they can also change suddenly as the result of a moment of realization, known as an epiphany. An epiphany allows a character to see things in a new light and is often directly related to a central conflict of the narrative.

CHR-1.AA

An epiphany may affect the plot by causing a character to act on his or her sudden realization.

CHR-1.AB

A group or force can function as a character.

CHR-1.AC

When readers consider a character, they should examine how that character interacts with other characters, groups, or forces and what those interactions may indicate about the character.

CHR-1.AD

The relationship between a character and a group, including the inclusion or exclusion of that character, reveals the collective attitude of the group toward that character and possibly the character's attitude toward the group.

CHR-1.AE

Minor characters often remain unchanged because the narrative doesn't focus on them. They may only be part of the narrative to advance the plot or to interact with major characters.

CHR-1.AF

Readers' interpretations of a text are often affected by a character changing—or not—and the meaning conveyed by such changes or lack thereof.

CHR-1.AG

A character's responses to the resolution of the narrative—in their words or in their actions—reveal something about that character's own values; these responses may be inconsistent with the previously established behaviors or perspectives of that character.

CHR-1.AH

Inconsistencies and unexpected developments in a character affect readers' interpretation of that character; other characters; events in the plot; conflicts; the perspective of the narrator, character, or speaker; and/or setting.

1.D Describe how textual details reveal nuances and complexities in characters' relationships with one another.

General comments: flat/round characters; Believable? How are they revealed? How complex? Protagonist/antagonist? Then describe 4-6 central characters: name, age, three descriptive adjectives, appearance, personality, function in novel, a short quote that reveals character.

Questions About Characters

·Which words, phrases, and details contribute to a character's characterization?

- ·How is a character described physically, emotionally, and/or psychologically?

- ·Which aspects of a character's background contribute to how the character perceives his or her world?

- ·What drives the character to think, feel, and/or act in the manner he or she does?

- ·What provokes a character to change or remain unchanged?

- ·What are the comparable traits of a character before and after he or she changes?

- ·To what degree does the text convey empathy for those characters who change or for those who remain unchanged?

- ·To what degree does a character's changing constitute progress or decline?

- ·How does a character's changing or remaining unchanged affect other elements of the literary work and/or contribute to meaning of the work as a whole?

- ·How do comparable traits of two or more characters contrast?

- ·What do the differing traits between characters reveal about them individually, their relationships with one another, and their relationships with other characters?

- ·How does considering the significance of a contrast between characters contribute to meaning in the text?

- ·Which particular images, character speech, and textual details are relevant for examining characters' relationships?

- ·How do images, character speech, and other textual details reveal how characters interact?

- ·How do diction and the details that a narrator or speaker offers (or does not offer) convey a particular perspective, ambiguity, and/or inconsistency and convey nuances and complexities in character relationships?

- ·Which of a character's choices, actions, and/or speech seem contradictory or inconsistent?

- ·How do a character's contradictory or inconsistent traits contribute
to a reader's understanding of the character's complexity?

- ·How do a character's contradictory or inconsistent traits contribute to meaning in a text?

1. Are the characters flat or round? What types do they represent? What makes them complex? Do they have traits that contradict one another and therefore cause internal conflicts?
2. Are they dynamic or static? What, if anything, changes about them? What steps do they go through to change?
3. What problems do they have? How do they attempt to solve them? Are they sad, happy, or between?
4. Do they experience epiphanies? When, why, and what do their epiphanies reveal – to themselves, to us? Does what they learn help or hinder them?
5. How do they relate to one another?
6. How do we learn about their inner lives – their conscious and unconscious thoughts, their ambitions, their ideas? Do they have speech mannerisms, gestures, or modes of dress that reveal their inner selves? What narrative devices does the author employ to render characters' thoughts?

More Questions About Characterization

1. If the characters are flat, what are their dominant traits? What is their function in the plot? How do they help establish the conflicts in the plot?
2. If the characters are dynamic, how do they change—from what to what?
3. If they are static, do their traits intensify or become clearer as the play moves on?
4. If the characters are round, what can you learn from the subtext of the play about their inner states?
5. What "masks" are the characters wearing? Who is hiding what from whom? When are the masks removed? What causes their removal, and what are the results?
6. How would you play a particular character if you were the actor? What physical devices would you use? Hedda Gabler is aristocratic, proud, and forceful; she seems strong but has an inner fragility. Her rival, Thea, is hesitant, unsophisticated, and afraid; she seems weak but has an inner strength. If you were to act these characters, how would you present yourself physically to convey these qualities? How would you show that Hedda seems strong but is in fact weak? You may not actually act Hedda but determining a physical presence for her helps you analyze and understand her.

Thinking on Paper About Characterization

1. List the character traits of each major character.
2. List the devices, such as dress, names, and gestures that help establish the traits of a character.
3. Describe in detail the traits of a complex character, especially contradictory and seemingly inexplicable traits.
4. Explain a character's motivations for doing the things he or she does. Focus especially on what the character seems to want.

Explain the situations from which the character's motivations seem to emerge.

5. Describe the strategies a character devises for getting what he or she wants. Explain how effective those strategies are.

6. Describe the miscalculations a character makes and the effect they have.

7. Summarize how a character intensifies, changes, or comes into sharper focus for the audience. Trace the intensification, change, or focus through each major unit of the play. Explain what causes it.

8. Summarize a scene in which a major character faces a crisis. Explain what we learn about the character from the character's words and actions.

9. Summarize a scene in which a major character has a startling or affecting revelation. Explain what the revelation is, what causes it, and its effect on the character's future.

10. Explain how you would portray one of the characters in an important scene. Show how your performance would reveal the character's inner state.

11. Explain the relationship a major character has with the other major characters. Describe the alliances and conflicts the character has with the other characters. Describe the attitudes the character has toward the other characters and their attitudes toward him or her.

<u>SETTING/PLACE</u>:

Setting and the details associated with it not only depict a time and place,but also convey values associated with that setting. Where and when does this narrative occur? How is the environment describes? Any symbolic meanings in the settings? What ATMOSPHERE is created by the setting?

Questions about Atmosphere

Atmosphere refers to the emotional reaction that we and—usually—the characters have to the setting of a work. Sometimes the atmosphere is difficult to define, but it is often found or felt in the

sensuous quality of the setting. Our emotional reaction to the Hamlin Garland passage is probably pain, discomfort, weariness, and oppression, mainly because of his emphasis on the thermal sense, the sense of hot and cold. Fruitful questions about atmosphere are:

1. What methods does the author use to create the work's atmosphere?
2. What does the author achieve by creating this atmosphere?
3. Why does the author create this particular atmosphere?

Sometimes, authors want simply to play upon our emotions- give us chills(gothic), make us weep (romances), stir anxiety(thrillers), Garland's purpose, however, is more meaningful. He uses atmosphere to raise a philosophical point: Physical environment affects human behavior. Joseph Conrad in *Heart of Darkness* creates an atmosphere of mystery, foreboding, and imminent danger to reflect his hatred of colonialism and his believe that "civilized" people are capable of terrible deeds.

SET-1.A

Setting includes the time and place during which the events of the text occur.

SET-1.B

Setting includes the social, cultural, and historical situation during which the events of the text occur.

SET-1.C

A setting may help establish the mood and atmosphere of a narrative.

SET-1.E

When a setting changes, it may suggest other movements, changes, or shifts in the narrative.

SET-1.F

Settings may be contrasted in order to establish a conflict of values or ideas associated with those settings.

SET-1.G

The way characters interact with their surroundings provides insights about those characters and the setting(s) they inhabit.

SET-1.H

The way characters behave in or describe their surroundings reveals an attitude about those surroundings and contributes to the development of those characters and readers' interpretations of them.

Thinking on Paper about Setting

1. For each major unit of the play, describe the place where the action occurs. If the playwright gives a description of the place, summarize the description. If the playwright does not give a description, use information from the dialogue to construct a description. Explain the relationship of place to action, characterization, and theme.
2. Identify the time of day of each unit of the play. Explain how the time of day is represented on stage and its effect on the characters and the action.
3. Identify the time of year of each unit of the play. Explain the relationship of time of year to action, characterization, and theme.
4. Identify the historical period of the play. Give any background information that would be useful for understanding the play.

Explain the relationship of the historical period to action, characterization, and theme.
5. Describe the atmosphere of each major unit of the play.
6. Describe the costumes the characters wear. Explain the relationship between costumes, characterization, and theme.
7. Describe your design for the physical world-sets, costumes, sounds, lighting, the works- of one major nit of the play. Explain the reasons for your choices.
8. List the details of setting that have symbolic value. Explain what each symbolizes. Explain the relationship of symbolism to characterization and theme.
9. Explain each major character's attitude toward the setting.

Questions about Setting

1. What do you learn about the setting form characters' behavior and dialogue?
2. What kind of sets does the play seem to call for?
3. What costumes would you have the actors wear?
4. What costumes would best fit particular characters?
5. Does the play seem to require background knowledge on your part to understand its setting?
6. What are the symbolic possibilities in particular objects or in larger portions of the set?
7. What relationship does the setting have to characterization?
8. What emotional feel-atmosphere-does the setting have?
9. What relationships does the setting have to theme?

1. Mark descriptions of physical place Underline telling words and phrases.
2. Characterize physical locales, such as houses, rooms, and outdoor areas.
3. Explain the connection of physical place to one or more of the characters.
4. Arrange key events in chronological order. Indicate when each event occurs.

5. Mark passages where a character's emotional state affects the way the passage of time is presented to us.
6. Explain how historical circumstances and characters are important.
7. Lit the thoughts and actions of characters that seem to typify the social environment of the work. They drink heavily, go to church, obey rules of etiquette, gamble, throw parties, get in fights, cheat in business, wander restlessly, and so forth.
8. Mark scenes in which the narrator or characters express approval or disapproval of these patterns of behavior.
9. Explain how these patterns influence characters.
10. List traits of the atmosphere.

Questions About Place
▪ How do details in a text convey or reveal one or more aspects of a setting (e.g., location, time of day, year, season, geography, culture)?

▪ ·What are the relationships between a text's setting and other literary elements?

▪ ·How does a setting affect readers of that text?

▪ ·How do a text's various settings contribute to meaning and its overall effect?

▪ ·What is the relationship between the aspects (e.g., location, time of day, geography) of a setting and a character?

▪ ·What is the relationship between a setting's historical time period and a character?

▪ ·What is the relationship between the society or culture of a setting and a character (e.g., what is the character's role in the society/culture, to what degree is a character accepted by his or her

society/ culture, to what degree does the society/ culture esteem a character)?

1. Where does the action take place? On what planet, in what country or locale?
2. What sensuous qualities does the author give to the setting? That is, what does it look like, sound like, feel like?
3. Do you receive a dominant impression about the setting? What is the impression, and what caused it?

Facts about place: First get the details of the physical setting clear in your mind.

Questions About Time
Historical Period:
1. First, at what period in history does the action take place?
Passage of time:
2. How long does it take for the action to occur?
3. How many days, hours, weeks, years are involved?
4. What clues, the, indicate how much time passes?
5. Is the passage of time related to characterization and theme?
6. If the author seems to obscure how much time is passing, why?
7. Does the author use time as a structuring device?
Perception of time:
8. How is the passage of time perceived?
9. What, then, is the relationship between the length of narrated events and the amount of time in which they occur?
10. Is the author purposely slowing down or speeding up our perception of time? If so, why?
11. What mental states or internal conflicts does a character's perception of time reveal?

Often the social environment represented in a work is of little importance. There may even be virtually no social environment. When it is important, however, it affects interpretations of the work.

1.What, then, is the social environment portrayed in the work – the manners, mores, customs, rituals, and codes of conduct of a society?

2. What does the author seem to think about them? (Approving? Ambivalent? Disapproving?)

3. How do they affect the character?

STYLE, FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE and TONE:

Author's attitude toward the subject, characters, and audience. Could be playful, serious, angry, ironic, formal, somber or satiric. A writer could deal with the same subject, plot, and characters, but by adopting different tones, achieve completely different stories. Discuss how the writer creates his tone(s) by the diction, details and techniques he chooses.

STYLE: How does the novelist make his ideas come alive? What are his techniques? Make a few general comments before delving into the specific element of style below.

Comparisons, representations, and associations shift meaning from the literal to the figurative and invite readers to interpret a text.

FIG-1.A

An antecedent is a word, phrase, or clause that precedes its referent. Referents may include pronouns, nouns, phrases, or clauses.

FIG-1.B

Referents are ambiguous if they can refer to more than one antecedent, which affects interpretation.

FIG-1.C

Words or phrases may be repeated to emphasize ideas or associations.

FIG-1.D

Alliteration is the repetition of the same letter sound at the beginning of adjacent or nearby words to emphasize those words and their associations or representations.

FIG-1.E

A simile uses the words "like" or "as" to liken two objects or concepts to each other.

FIG-1.F

Similes liken two different things to transfer the traits or qualities of one to the other.

FIG-1.G

In a simile, the thing being compared is the main subject; the thing to which it is being compared is the comparison subject.

FIG-1.H

A metaphor implies similarities between two (usually unrelated) concepts or objects in order to reveal or emphasize one or more things about one of them, though the differences between the two may also be revealing.

FIG-1.I

In a metaphor, as in a simile, the thing being compared is the main subject; the thing to which it is being compared is the comparison subject.

FIG-1.J

Comparisons between objects or concepts draw on the experiences and associations readers already have with those objects and concepts.

FIG-1.K

Interpretation of a metaphor may depend on the context of its use; that is, what is happening in a text may determine what is transferred in the comparison.

FIG-1.L

Words with multiple meanings or connotations add nuance or complexity that can contribute to interpretations of a text.

FIG-1.M

Descriptive words, such as adjectives and adverbs, qualify or modify the things they describe and affect readers' interaction with the text.

FIG-1.N

Hyperbole exaggerates while understatement minimizes. Exaggerating or minimizing an aspect of an object focuses attention on that trait and conveys a perspective about the object.

FIG-1.O

Descriptive words, such as adjectives and adverbs, contribute to sensory imagery.

FIG-1.P

An image can be literal or it can be a form of a comparison that represents something in a text through associations with the senses.

FIG-1.Q

A collection of images, known as imagery, may emphasize ideas in parts of or throughout a text.

FIG-1.R

Metaphorical comparisons do not focus solely on the objects being compared; they focus on the particular traits, qualities, or characteristics of the things
being compared.

FIG-1.S

Comparisons not only communicate literal meaning but may also convey figurative meaning or transmit a perspective.

FIG-1.T

An extended metaphor is created when the comparison of a main subject and comparison subject persists through parts of or an entire text, and when the comparison is expanded through additional details, similes, and images.

FIG-1.U

Interpretation of an extended metaphor may depend on the context of its use; that is, what is happening in a text may determine what is transferred in the comparison.

FIG-1.V

Personification is a type of comparison that assigns a human trait or quality to a nonhuman object, entity, or idea, thus characterizing that object, entity, or idea.

FIG-1.W

Allusions in a text can reference literary works including myths and sacred texts; other works of art including paintings and music; or people, places, or events outside the text.

FIG-1.X

When a material object comes to represent, or stand for, an idea or concept, it becomes a symbol.

FIG-1.Y

A symbol is an object that represents a meaning, so it is said to be symbolic or representative of that meaning. A symbol can represent different things depending on the experiences of a reader or the context of its use in a text.

FIG-1.Z

Certain symbols are so common and recurrent that many readers have associations with them prior to reading a text. Other symbols are more contextualized and only come to represent certain things through their use in a particular text.

FIG-1.AA

When a character comes to represent, or stand for, an idea or concept, that character becomes symbolic; some symbolic characters have become so common they are archetypal.

Note: The AP Exam will not require students to identify or label archetypes.

FIG-1.AD

A motif is a unified pattern of recurring objects or images used to emphasize a significant idea in large parts of or throughout a text.

FIG-1.AE

The function of a simile relies on the selection of the objects being compared as well as the traits of the objects.

FIG-1.AF

By assigning the qualities of a nonhuman object, entity, or idea to a person or character, the narrator, character, or speaker communicates an attitude about that person or character.

FIG-1.AG

Ambiguity allows for different readings and understandings of a text by different readers.

FIG-1.AI

A conceit is a form of extended metaphor that often appears in poetry. Conceits develop complex comparisons that present images, concepts, and associations in surprising or paradoxical ways.

FIG-1.AJ

Often, conceits are used to make complex comparisons between the natural world and an individual.

FIG-1.AK

Multiple comparisons, representations, or associations may combine to affect one another in complex ways.

FIG-1.AL

Because of shared knowledge about a reference, allusions create emotional or intellectual associations and understandings.

- ·What are the denotations of specific words and phrases in a text?

- ·How does knowing the denotative meaning of specific words and phrases in a text facilitate a literal understanding of the text?

- ·What are the connotations, representations, and associations of specific words or phrases in a text?

- ·How does considering the connotations, representations, and associations of specific words or phrases in a text convey figurative meaning and facilitate an interpretation of the text?

- ·Which literal objects, images, and events in a text convey figurative meaning through representations and associations?

- ·How do multiple literal and/or figurative meanings in a text create ambiguity?

- ·Which repeated sound, word, or phrase in a text emphasizes an idea or association, and what is the emphasized idea or association?

- ·How do you trace a referent to its antecedent, and how might ambiguous referents affect an interpretation of a text?

- ·How do the relationships between adjectives and adverbs and the words they modify affect a reader's interaction with the text?

- ·How does the use of hyperbole and understatement convey a particular perspective of their subjects?

- ·How do words and phrases create ambiguous meanings and invite multiple interpretations of a text?

- ・Which object, action, or event represents an idea or concept beyond itself?

- ・How can an object, action, or event represent multiple ideas or concepts?

- ・Which symbol in a text is present in other texts, and how is the symbol's meaning(s) in this text similar to or different from its meaning(s) in other texts?

- ・How do these symbolic objects, actions, events, characters, and settings contribute to a text's complexity and to the meaning of the work as a whole?

- ・Which words contribute to the sensory details in an image?

- ・How might an image form a comparison through associations made with the senses?

- ・What does a set of images have in common so that the images work together?

- ・What associations do images or imagery evoke?

- ・How do images and/or imagery emphasize ideas in a portion of text or throughout
a text?

- ・Which two elements are being compared in a particular simile?

- ・What is significant about the selection of the objects being compared?

- ・How does a comparison through a simile contribute to meaning in the text?

- •Which two elements are being compared in a particular metaphor?

- •What is significant about the selection of the objects being compared
and their particular traits, qualities,
or characteristics?

- •How does a comparison through a metaphor contribute to meaning in the text?

- •How might the figurative meaning of a metaphor depend on the context in which it is presented?

- •How does an extended metaphor continue a comparison in several portions of text?

- •How does a metaphorical comparison contribute to the figurative meaning of a character, conflict, setting, theme, etc.?

- •Which nonhuman entity is described with or ascribed human traits, and what are the specific human traits?

- •How does making a comparison between a nonhuman entity and some human trait characterize the nonhuman entity and convey meaning?

- •How does a narrator, speaker, or character convey an attitude toward a nonhuman entity by personifying it?

- •Where does the text make a direct or subtle reference to a person, place, object, event, literary work, or idea that is culturally, historically, and/or literarily consequential?

- •What is the background of the person, place, object, event, literary work, or idea that is referenced in the text?

- ▪ ·What are the points of comparison between the person, place, object, event, literary work, or idea that is referenced in the text and some aspect of the text?

- ▪ ·How does an allusion affect a reader's experience with a text? What is the
effect of an allusion on a reader who understands it? What aspects of meaning are lost by readers who fail to recognize or comprehend an allusion?

DICTION: Analyze the novelist's word choices.
1. First discuss the work in general: Is the language formal, neutral, or informal? Explain and give a example. Does the writer use lots of imagery? Metaphoric or ironic devices? Is the language plain? Flowery? Concise? Strong? Lewd, crude, rude or shrewd? Does diction indicate social status, education, region? Are the sounds cacophonous (k, t, p, ch, ow) or euphonous (m, s, she, I, wash)? Does this seem patterned or random?
2. SELECT THREE PASSAGES from three different plot segments. Copy or Xerox them. Referring to the passage, discuss specific diction choices; how does diction help define character, set tone

What is Literature? Questions:
Language is one of the "places" we can look for meaning in literature. Be alert to how writers convey ideas in their subtle and complex language.

1. How does an author us language to signal ideas?
2. What seems significant about such thngs as the author's choice of words (diction), ways of constructing sentences (syntax), word sounds, repetitions of key words and phrases, archaisms of diction or syntax (as in language that echoes the King James Bible or Shakespeare)?

SYNTAX: Analysis of sentence and phrase patterns.
1. Make some general observations: Do some characters ramble on? String together phrases? Speak in fragments? Form their thoughts carefully? Are the sentences simple, compound, complex, compound/complex? Loose, periodic, inverted? What's common, what's rare?
2. Select three passages from three different characters (can be the same as diction selections.) Focus on how writer's syntax helps to define the character and set the tone.

IMAGERY: Words or phrases that appeal to the five senses – most commonly visual. Look for recurrent images in the story (ex: light/ darkness, clothing; water; sounds; nauseating odors; bees; birds) Offer direct quotes from the novel and describe how they are used.

SYMBOLISM: When an image is used to suggest complex or multiple meanings (hawk for war, dove for peace, swan from stately beauty) it becomes a symbol. Point out images in the novel that are used as symbols – quote or refer to each directly. Discuss how they are used. Is the work highly symbolic?
Questions about Symbolism

Not every work uses symbols and not every character, incident, or object in a work has symbolic value. You should ask the fundamental question:

1. What symbols does the work seem to have? You should, however, beware of finding "symbols" where none were intended. A second question, then, is necessary to the believability of any interpretation based on symbols:
2. What makes you think that certain things in the work are symbols? (That is, how does the author signal that they are symbolic?) Once you answer this question you can move on to a third and more interesting question:
3. What does the symbol mean?

In Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, for example, the following dialogue between Frederic Henry and Catherine Barkley suggests that Hemingway intended a symbolic meaning for rain; it also suggests what the symbol represents:

[Frederic says] "It's raining hard."
    "And you'll always love me, won't you?" [Catherine replies]
    "Yes."
    "And the rain won't make any difference?"
    "No."
    "That's good. Because I'm afraid of the rain."
    "Why?...Tell me."
    "All right. I'm afraid of the rain because sometimes I see me dead in it."
    "No."
    "And sometimes I see you dead in it. . . It's all nonsense. It's only nonsense. I'm not afraid of the rain. I'm not afraid of the rain. Oh, oh, God. I wish I wasn't. She was crying. I comforted her and she stopped crying. But outside it kept on raining. (125-26)

Thinking on Paper about Symbolism

1. List the symbols in the work.
2. State why you think the objects are meant as symbols.
3. Mark the descriptions or episodes that give the symbols meaning.
4. List each symbol's possible meaning

IRONIC DEVICES: Seek to obscure meaning; often employed in comedy and satire, most common are verbal, situations, and dramatic IRONY, PARADOX, OXYMORON, EUPHEMISM, HYPERBOLE, UNDERSTATEMENT, LITOTES, AND DOUBLE ENTENDRE. Point out examples using quotes and discuss how and how much writer uses these devices.

Questions about Irony
1. What are the ironies in the work?
2. How are the ironies important?
3. What are their implications?

An example of a work whose ironies suggest themes is Shirley Jackson's short story "The Lottery". The setting seems like everyone's nostalgic image of the ideal American small town, with its agricultural economy, central square, post office, country store, cranky old men, gossipy housewives, laconic farmers, mischievous children, settled routine, and friendly atmosphere. But the townspeople commit horrible deeds. What might Jackson be hinting at with this strange juxtaposition? Do "normal" American communities conduct "lotteries" to destroy innocent people? Yes, perhaps. Not as it's done in the story but with equal arbitrariness and cruelty. If this is one of her themes, she makes it more emphatic through irony than direct comment. She shocks us into rethinking our own ways of life.

Thinking on Paper about Irony

1. Mark examples of verbal irony, either by the narrator or other characters. Explain how a character's verbal irony helps characterize him or her.
2. Mark episodes in which a character's beliefs and expectations are contradicted by reality. Explain the importance to characterization of these episodes.
3. List instances of situational irony; identify people, for example, whom we expect to behave in one way but who behave quite differently. Explain the importance to theme of these instances.

WRITING ABOUT LITERATURE:

Two broad questions about theme are: What subjects does the work address? What does the work seem to say about them—what are its themes?

Theme deals with four areas of human experience:
- **The Nature of humanity-What image of humankind emerges from the work?**
- **The nature of society-Is the society flawed? Is it like-enhancing or life-destroying? Are characters in conflict with society?**
- **The nature of humankind's relationship with the world-Fate vs. Destiny? Are character's controlled or in control of their destinies?**
- **The nature of our ethical responsibilities- What are the moral conflicts in the work? Are they clear cut or ambiguous? Who is the moral center (the character that the author sees as clearly right and good)? If there isn't one, why?**

THEMES: Identify at least three major themes: What universal truths is the author concerned with? (Jealousy, love, hatred is built on misunderstanding; love is necessary but also irrational) Express the theme in a phrase or sentence. How are the themes revealed in the novel? It can be expressed in a word, but is clearer in a phrase (not LOVE but what is the work saying about love?) Phrase the theme in a sentence and discuss how it is developed in the work. *USE YOUR OWN WORDS HERE!

The truth of literature is the most important "place" to look for meaning in literature. The following questions encapsulate the points we have made here about the truth in literature.

1. What ideas does the author state directly?

2. How are the characters typical of human behavior? What ideas do they espouse or seem to represent? Which characters—and thus the ideas associated with them—predominate at the end of the work?

3. What ideas are associated with places and other physical properties?

4. Authors sometimes signal ideas through devices like titles, names, and epigraphs. (An epigraph is a pertinent quotation put at the beginning of work or chapter). Examples of suggestive titles are *The Grapes of Wrath* (taken from a line in "The Battle Hymn of the Republic"), *All the King's Men* (from the nursery rhyme "Humpty Dumpty"), *Pride and Prejudice, Great Expectations,* and *Measure for Measure*. What ideas seem embedded in titles, chapter heads, epigraphs, names, and other direct indications of authors' ideas?

5. What do other works by the author suggest about the meaning of this work?

6. As with Björn Kurtén and Jessamyn West (discussed above), authors sometimes comment on their own work. What light does such comment shed on the ideas in the work?

7. What feelings does the work elicit in each of us? What do we experience in the work that we have never gone through? What have we experienced that the work brings powerfully to life?

Questions about CONTRAST and JUXTAPOSITION

1. What repetitions occur in the play? What meanings can you draw from these repetitions?

2. What symbols does the author deliberately establish? How do you know they are symbols? What do the symbols seem to mean?

3. What contrasts does the playwright establish? Which are the obvious contrasts and which are the not-so-obvious contrasts? In *Romeo and Juliet,* for example, we easily spot the contrast between the lovers and the parents, but other contrasts are suggestive Romeo is different from Juliet (less mature) and is perhaps partly to blame for their deaths; Prince Escalus is different from the

parents. The nurse's attitude toward love contrasts starkly with Juliet's. The friar's attitude toward love is different from Romeo's. Any one or a combination of these contrasts would make a good focus for interpretation.

4. How is contrast related to the conflicts in the plot? Hedda and Thea are not only different from each other, they are in conflict. What values, then, do the contrasting sides of a conflict manifest?

Thinking of Paper about Theme

1. List the subjects of the play (the issues or problems the play seems to be about). State themes for each of these subjects (what the play seems to be saying about these issues and problems).

2. Mark speeches and sections of dialogue that help develop a particular theme. Look especially for "the big speech," which will typically be longer than most and will forcefully state a theme. Hamlet's "To be or not to be" speech is an example. There may be more than one "big speech." Summarize them and explain how the actions of the play develop their ideas.

3. Explain in detail how an important scene develop themes.

4. Trace the development of one theme throughout the play. Mark all the passages that help develop this theme. Summarize the plot as it relates to this theme.

5. List the images (sensuous images, metaphors) that recur in the play. Explain the ideas they seem to develop.

6. List other repetitions (characters' actions and words, characters' obsessions, scenes, details of setting). Explain their relationship to characterization and theme.

7. List the symbols in the play. For each symbol, list its meanings.

8. Describe the important contrasts in the play (of characters, scenes, values, actions, physical objects). Explain how these contrasts help expose character traits and develop theme.

THESIS/CLAIM AND SUPPORT

- ·How do you analyze a text to develop a defensible claim about that text?

- ·How do you develop a claim that requires a defense with evidence from the text—and is not simply an assertion of fact or statement of the obvious?

- ·How do you develop a claim that you can defend with logical reasoning and textual evidence?

- ·How do you develop a claim that acknowledges that contradictory evidence or alternative interpretations exist?

- ·How do you develop a claim that articulates how a text explores concepts related to a range of experiences, institutions, and/or social structures?

- ·How do you write a thesis statement that clearly articulates a claim about an interpretation of literature?

- ·How do you preview the reasoning of your argument in your thesis statement, perhaps by considering how your reasoning is organized?

- ·What are the logical reasons, inferences, and/or conclusions that justify your claim?

- ·How do you develop commentary that does more than restate plot details?

- ·How do you develop commentary that explicitly articulates your critical thinking and relationships among ideas rather than

leaving it to readers to make inferences or connections on their own?

- ·How do you develop commentary that carefully explains your reasons, inferences, and/or conclusions; how textual evidence supports your reasoning; and how your reasoning justifies your claim?

- ·How do you develop commentary that conveys your complex argument about an interpretation of literature?

- ·How can an interpretation of a text emerge from analyzing evidence and then forming a line of reasoning or from forming a line of reasoning and then identifying relevant evidence?

- ·Which information from a text can serve as evidence to develop and support your line of reasoning?

- ·How do you know when evidence is relevant to your reasoning?

- ·How do you introduce evidence into your argument and indicate the purpose of the evidence as it relates to your argument?

- ·How do you know when your evidence is sufficient to support a line of reasoning and justify your claim?

- ·How do you address evidence that contradicts your reasoning or your claim?

- ·How do you revise an argument's grammar and mechanics so that they follow established conventions of language to ensure clear communication of ideas?

- ·How can you select organizational patterns (e.g., chronological, compare-contrast, cause-effect, general to specific,

order of importance, part-to-whole) to organize your reasoning and support?

- ▪ ·How do you organize clauses, sentences, and paragraphs to create coherence?

- ▪ ·How do you select and place transitions in sentences to create particular relationships between ideas and create coherence?

- ▪ ·How do you write sentences that convey equality/inequality of importance or balance/imbalance between ideas?

- ▪ ·How do you select words that clearly communicate ideas?

- ▪ ·How do you use punctuation to indicate clear relationships among ideas?

MEMORABLE QUOTES: 4-6; quote the line or line fragment ("To be or not to be…") and discuss its significance to the character and theme ("meaning of the work as a whole").

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS AND ANALYSIS: Did you enjoy the work? Why or why not? Strengths and weaknesses? What questions do you have? Does any facet remind you of other works you've read? What critical reviews did you find valuable? Major insights – jot them down.