LITERARY ANALYSIS RESEARCH

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WHY DO WE READ?

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.

"Literature is part of our cultural heritage which is freely available to everyone, and which can enrich our lives in all kinds of ways…These works say something worth saying. Their beauty captures people's attention and satisfies their souls. This beauty does not lie only on WHAT is said, but HOW it is said." The Literature Network Forums blog

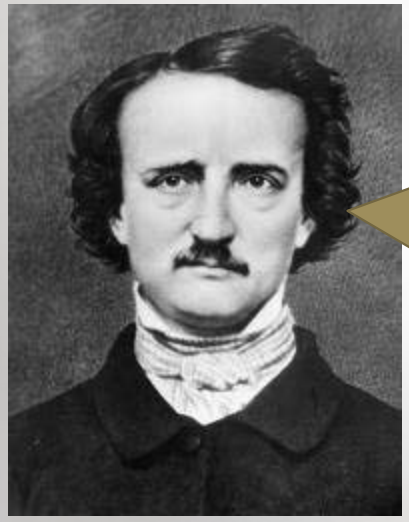
WHY DO LITERARY ANALYSIS?

It lets us formulate and communicate ideas about literature.

It gives us an opportunity to read and enjoy great literature.

Write on, sister!

HOW CAN WE APPROACH LITERATURE?



It was a dark and stormy night…

- Structural/formalist approach: use the elements of literature
- Content approach: use a critical lens

HOW DO WE DO STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS?

Formalists consider how structural elements of the text contribute to the author's message.

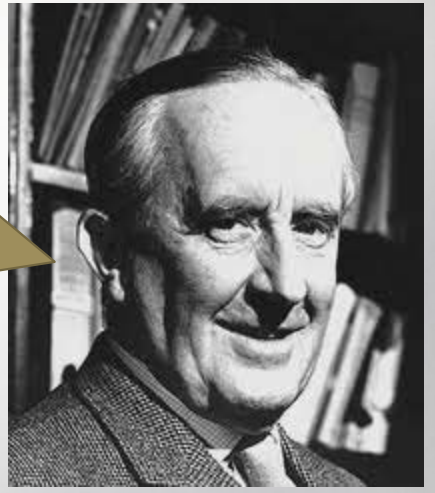
CHECKLIST OF ELEMENTS OF LITERATURE

How to do we do content analysis?

- Postmodern criticism recognizes that literature is social and can be understood from multiple points of view. It seeks inclusiveness, opening the discussion to dominant and minority voices.

VirtualLit Critical Perspectives

What's the hobbit perspective ?



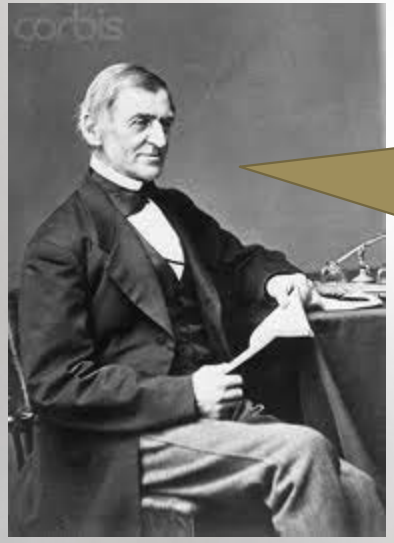
HOW TO APPROACH A LITERARY ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT

Make a claim about a text.

Find expert support for your claim.

Argue the claim using evidence.

TWO TYPES OF EVIDENCE



Louisa, expert evidence is found in scholarly books and articles.

Well, Ralph, textual evidence is in the text itself.

FINDING EXPERT SUPPORT

Tradition demands that research be done with books.

But, mon ami, articles are also important sources.

FINDING CRITICAL SOURCES IN BOOKS

WorldCat ist international !

Use WorldCat to

find:

- Books at USD
- Books elsewhere (anywhere!)

WorldCat

FINDING ARTICLES

Subject-specific databases:

- MLA International Bibliography
- Humanities International Complete

Multi-subject databases:

- JSTOR
- Project MUSE

Get with the times! Use databases to find cutting-edge research.

QUESTIONS?

- Use the ENGL 210 LibGuide to find scholarly books and articles on literary topics.
- Contact Dr. Carol Leibiger, Language and Literature subject specialist

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Take it from a Nobel Prize winner: Use these research methods, and enjoy learning about literature.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- Charles Dickens, Émile Zola (Slide 9)
- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (Slide 10)
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