

Literary Analysis
Aspects to consider when analyzing a text
(Degen)

- **Theme**

Does the story depict an abstract idea, a moral or psychological struggle, or an aspect of human life? Does the plot suggest an analogy?

- **Character**

Do characters change, and why or how (do they experience a transformation)? What are the characters' prominent qualities? What is the function of certain characters- is he or she the hero, the servant, the sage, the antagonist, a Christ figure, a tempter, a trickster? Is a character similar to another, perhaps a foil? Do characters react in the same manner when confronted by another character or setting?

- **Plot**

What is the conflict? Is the work a comedy, a tragedy, an epic, etc.? What type of novel is it? Is it picaresque, a bildungsroman, a fable, an allegory, etc.?

- **Setting**

What is important about the setting? Are there multiple settings? How are they different? What does the landscape or dwelling suggest about theme or character?

- **Style**

How does the writer use imagery, diction, language, and syntax to express tone or mood? What is the tone? Is there a motif; what is significant about it?

- **Symbol**

What does a symbol mean? What is its role in the story? Does its function change?

- **Allusions**

Does the plot of the story or certain characters remind the reader of someone historical, biblical, mythological?

- **Point of view**

What is the function of the narration? How does first person, third person omniscient, objective, or third person limited affect the story?

- **Judgment of Importance**

What is the most important word in the text and why? What is the most important passage in the text and why? What is the most important aspect of the text and why?