Summer Assignment

IB English II

Ms. Swails

2019-2020

Future students,

Welcome to IB English II! Prior to our first day of class, please read the provided information on literary criticism. I invite you to attend an event, read a text, or view a film that would allow you to create your first critique following one of the criticism types listed in the attachment. I have included a few suggestions to consider when selecting your event, text, or film. In addition, I encourage you to select a criticism category that you consider pertinent to your personal goals. For example, if you plan to major in Sociology or Political Science, you may want to select Sociological Criticism as your preferred topic. Please follow The King’s English Sheet for formatting the document properly. It must be one to two pages typed. If you would like feedback on your assignment before class, please add me on your Google Docs as missscarlettswails@gmail.com. Share the assignment with me, and I will offer suggestions and support. If you would like assistance in creating a Google Docs account, please see me after school on May 23, 2019 at 3:35.

Sincerely,

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Pre-IB English II

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“Types of Literary Criticism”

**Biographical Criticism**: This approach emphasizes the importance of the author’s life in comprehending the work. In order to properly create a biographical critique, one must become familiar with biographical information about the author. While it is a practical approach to deciphering meaning in a text, a biographical critic must be careful not to take facts of a writer's life too far in criticizing the works of that writer. The critic must consider, “how will this biographical information reveal more about the text?”

Suggestions: Texts by Alice Walker, Amy Tan, Stephen King, Anne Rice, Sandra Cisneros, attend the Dali museum

**Gender Criticism**: This method suggests that sexual identity affects a literary work. In the past, gender criticism relied heavily on the feminist movement and aimed to attack the patriarchal structure dominating Western society. Modern gender criticism may include analysis on how masculinity, sexual identity, and social norms impact gender inequality. The critic must consider, “how does the author use gender to question societal norms and patriarchal structures?”

Suggestions: Attend a contemporary play by Eve Ensler or a modern adaptation of *Hedda Gabler*, view an art gallery with Frida Kahlo’s paintings, Lorna Simpson’s photography, or Simone de Beauvoir

**Historical Criticism:** This style investigates cultural, intellectual, and social context. It may include some biographical context as well. The critic must consider, “what effect did the author’s original setting and society have on the readers of that era?”

Suggestions: Read *Huckleberry Finn, The Kite Runner, The Poisonwood Bible, Frankenstein,* or *Bend it Like Beckham*

**Mythological Criticism:** This type aims to discuss latent, reoccurring universal truths, archetypes, and symbols. Insight into numerous content areas may be explored (anthropology, history, psychology, and religion). The critic must consider, “how do authors utilize common truths and symbols to enhance their writing?”

Suggestions: This selection would require examining multiple mediums. You may opt to use a past text from last year as one of your selections. For example, use the text *The Odyssey* and view the film *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* Or *Troy* and *Iliad.*

**Psychological Criticism:** This approach examines the artist or human behavior and its connection to fears and desires. The critic may discuss how an author’s creative process requires genius or unique mental health characteristics, such as how an author’s circumstances impact their literary motivations, and how an author uses language and archetypes to explore theoretical concepts. The critic must consider one of the following: how does the author’s mental state affect their writing? How might their circumstances affect their motivation and behavior? How does the author use psychological theory to enhance the text?

Suggestions: *Oedipus Rex, Lolita, Buried Child, The Glass Menagerie, A Movable Feast, or Selected Poems: Emily Dickinson*

**Reader Response**: This type of criticism connects the reader to the text. The most obvious difference in this type of criticism is that the reader may find unique meaning that the author did not intentionally provide. The reader may also find new meaning in the text after revisiting it a second time. The critic must use his/her background knowledge to decipher meaning in the text. This knowledge may influence the interpretation of the text to some extent. The critic must consider, “what is the meaning of the text? Why is it significant?” Note: They may notice overlapping responses regarding other criticism categories.

Suggestions: Select a specific painting, photograph, or film by an artist or era that you are already familiar with and approach the medium with new insight. *The Diary of Anne Frank, Schindler’s List, Mein Kampf, The Green Fairy Book,* or *Son of Patricia*

**Sociological Criticism:** The sociological critic observes cultural, political, and economic factors. This technique examines the significance of studying the artists’ society to determine its impact on the text. It may address the similarities and differences between the actual setting and society and the fictional one (when applicable). The critic must consider, “what is the author conveying culturally, politically, or economically about society?”

Suggestions: *Of Mice and Men, 1984, Death of a Salesmen, The Prince, The Communist Manifesto,* and *The God of Small Things*

We will also examine the following types of criticism in quarter one:

Deconstructionist Criticism

Formalist Criticism