

AP English Literature - *Heart of Darkness* - Literary Criticism Presentation

Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* is among the most studied, debated, contested, and theorized works of Western literature. The novella can be viewed through many critical lenses. Your task is to apply a particular lens to your interpretation of the text.

In a **10 minute** presentation you will explore and apply a critical literary perspective to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. It is your goal to clearly and insightfully describe how the critical theory is both relevant and meaningful to our understanding of this novella. Your group, which will consist of 3-4 people, will have the opportunity to share this new lens of perspective to the class. Due **Thursday, January 16.**

Your task is twofold: You must become familiar with one type of literary criticism and use this critical approach to interpret *Heart of Darkness*.

During your presentation, you must **present** the following:

1. **Briefly** teach the critical theory and how to view a text through that lens (2-3 minutes).
2. **Apply** the critical perspective to analyze *Heart of Darkness* (7-8 minutes). You must look closely at three substantial passages of the text rendering an holistic interpretation of the text.

Presentation Expectations:

- **Group involvement:** It is important that each group member plays an active role *throughout* the presentation. Simply isolating one group member to one task or topic is not an effective approach.
- **Audience consideration:** Your audience is far more likely to stay engaged if you interact with them. While it is not necessary to include them in every aspect of your presentation, it is important that you consider your audience's needs and interests. Presentations should be engaging!
- **Visual aid:** Part of engaging your audience is requiring something visual for them to observe. It is up to you to determine what will help with such engagement. A PowerPoint may be used as an example of a visual aid; however, if it is used merely as a reference for notes, this visual is NOT a tool for your audience but more for you. Consider what you will use and how it will play an effective role in the presentation.
- **Turn in:** You must share on Google your visual aid and presentation notes with me before class on 2/16.

Critical Approaches:

1. Feminist Criticism
2. Marxist Criticism
3. Psychoanalytic Criticism
4. Post-Colonial Criticism
5. Archetypal/Mythological Criticism
6. New Historicism/Cultural Studies
7. Gender/Queer Studies

The following general rubric will be used:

PRESENTATION (Professionalism, creativity, group dynamics, time, visual aid)

- Attempts to connect and engage audience and addresses entire class
- Maintains composure, avoids vague words and slang
- Makes audience interested in topic because you are excited to present it
- Creativity in your presentation; set yourself apart from the rest of the presentations
- All group members participate equally and preparation is evident
- Meets the required 10 minutes
- Any visual used doesn't take up whole presentation time but **enhances** the presentation

IDEAS/CONTENT:

- Thorough and accurate explanation of critical theory
- Cohesive transitions between critical theory and application of theory
- Strong **interpretation** of novel revealing knowledge and mastery of text and the critical theory as it is applied
- Analysis reveals higher-level thinking and thoughtful consideration
- Strives for specificity and complexity by using consistent and considerable textual support (actual quotes!).
- Well-developed application of theory that reveals a holistic understanding and discussion of the text

**While this is a group grade, individual scores may vary based on deductions, work, and contribution.

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