

# English 2332: Dual Credit Reader-Response Theory



## Objectives

Develop a stronger understanding for Reader-Response Criticism.

## On completion of this exercise students will be able to:

- confirm their understanding of literary criticism as a whole
- understand the complexities analytical criticism while utilizing a lens
- uncover strong, viable evidence to defend observations (CEC methods)

## GROUP MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

**Reader-response theory** focuses on a reader's reactions and the audience's reading experiences towards a particular creative work or individual author. This contrasts with other literary criticisms where the attention highlights the forms and elements within a specific text or highlights expectations from a targeted school of literature or centers attention to a selected author's style.

Reader-response wants to pair up possible diverse interpretations of "**experience**," that is to document the kinds of reactions the audience may encounter when they are examining various creative works. **In particular, when surveying plot development and character transformations within fiction, a reader is expected to connect or relate to the various actors within the supplied text.** Individual encounters and unique reactions are expected; these place value on the subject-product itself.

Such analysis is closely related to book reviews, where the "performance" of art is questioned and closely examined for emotional engagement and empathic responses from the viewer to the actual art. These analyses contrast with the ideas expressed in Formalism Criticism which narrows the focus down to the text only, to the actual word choices, word patterns, and collective images, not the writer's intentions or the reader's (mis)interpretation.

This type of analysis shares **one individual reader's overall experiences** with other readers maintaining the goal of recommending or rejecting the methods of a specified author. The reader examines what elements work and what elements should be strengthened all in order show where the work fits in the literary canon.