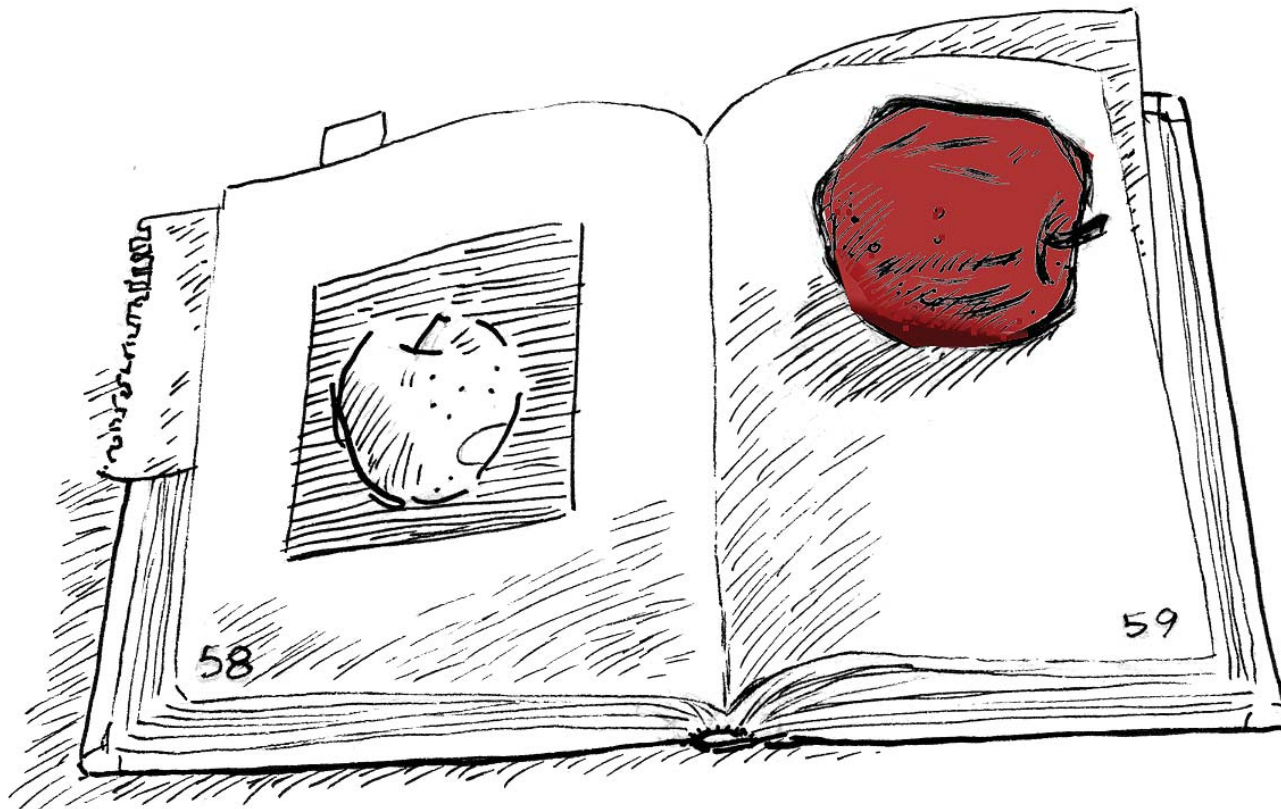# Critical Analysis & the Reading Process

introduction

Creative writing remains a focal point of our society—it explains our diversity as humans and enables different ideas to be traded between people and cultures.
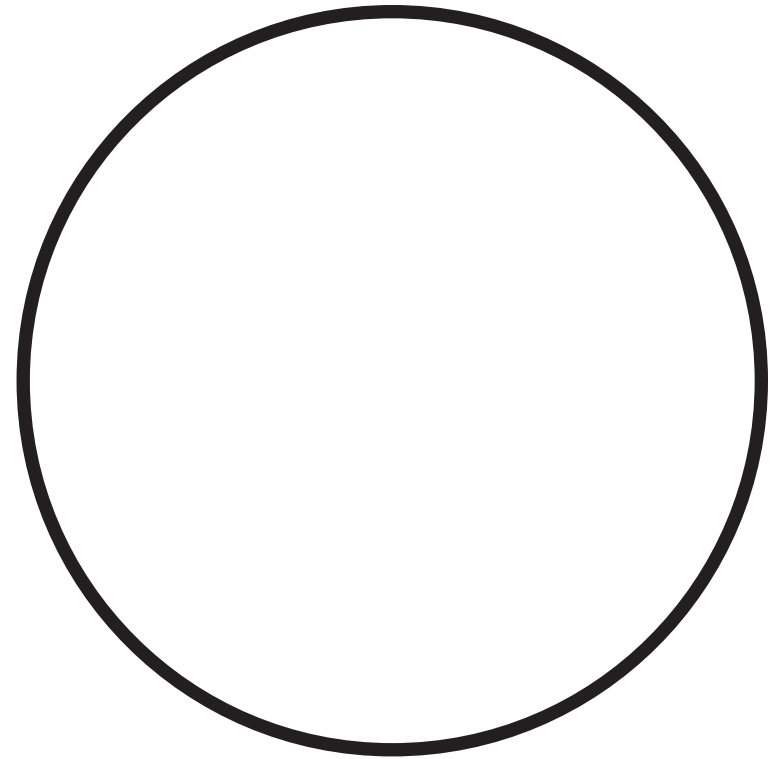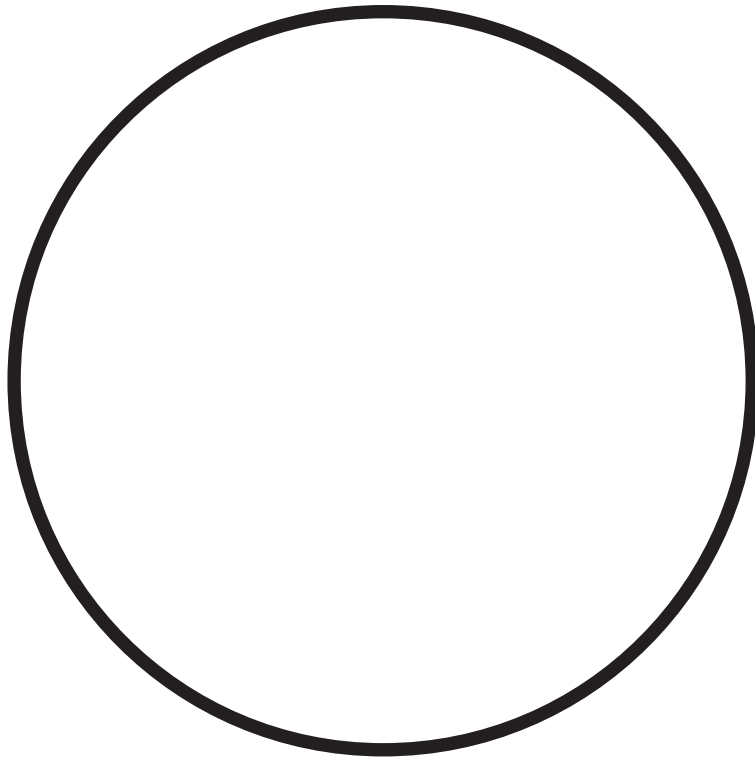
critical analysis

Examining past and current literature helps:

- understand the creative process of an individual author or group of authors

- show the understanding of a specific culture

- show possible (dis)connection between the author and the culture

- develop new literature

critical analysis

$$you \;\; = \;\; the\ text$$

As students, the analytical process should be habitual for any course and for any reading assignment.

- This is what enables *you* to understand the *text*.

assessing word choice

For example:

In the "Cask of Amontillado" Edgar Allan Poe uses the specific word 'impunity.'

This deliberate choice does reflect back on the theme of the story.

As a reader you should ask yourself:

 Why does Poe choose this one word for this one particular story?

  —or—

 How does this wording affect the main theme?

impunity: to escape punishment for a crime committed

Guidelines for Reading

Elements Which Enhance Developments of Stories:

1. characters' actions

2. characters' intentions $\Big\}$

3. plot rhythms— combination of protagonist's journey, flow of information

   and literary modes

4. story structure— also referred to as Freytag's Pyramid

5. points of view— or Narrative Voice

Guidelines for Reading

Literature grows out of other literature. This is nothing new.

No idea is original— *nothing is original in the creative process*;

borrowing from other established authors is frequent, consciously

and subconsciously.

intertextuality: the reinvention, insertion of situations and conflicts in a new

sequence of thought to present a new idea; creation of something new out of an

older concept.

• *With frequent readings, it is easier to spot intertextuality.*

intertextuality

The Top Four Literature which are referenced, reworked, reinvented :

1. Biblical stories

2. Shakespearean plays

3. Greek/Roman myths

4. Fairy tales

Why do you think this is the case?

Look for these emulations; they establish mood, atmosphere, scenery, and theme

— consciously and *subconsciously*.