

General and Special Categories for Textual Analysis

General Categories	Special Categories				
	<b>Non-fiction prose</b>	<b>Fiction</b>	<b>Poetry</b>	<b>Drama</b>	<b>Film and TV</b>
<b>Subject</b>  What is the work about?	What issue, idea, event, or person is the article, essay, review, biography, etc. about?	What is the story or novel about?	What is the poem or sequence of poems about?	What is the play about?	What is the film or program about?
<b>Structure</b>  How is the work put together?	How is the argument and/or narrative and/or description selected and arranged?	What is the principle behind the selection and arrangement of events ("plot")?	What is the principle behind the selection and arrangement of details in the poem?	What is the principle behind the selection and arrangement of events ("action")?	What is the principle behind the selection and arrangement of events ("action")?
<b>Development</b>  What are the particular details that give the work substance?	<b>Evidence and detail:</b> What kind of evidence does the author give to support the argument? What kind of detail to develop narrative or descriptive writing?	<b>A. Setting:</b> What is the place, time, and social environment in which events take place?  <b>B. Characterization:</b> What are the characters like? What techniques are used to portray them?	<b>A. Setting:</b> What is the place, time, and social environment in which the development of the poem takes place?  <b>B. Characterization:</b> What are the characters like? What techniques are used to portray them?	<b>A. Setting:</b> What is the place, time, and social environment in which events take place? What do costuming, music, lighting, sets, etc. indicate about the setting?  <b>B. Characterization:</b> What are the characters like? How are various techniques, including dialogue and acting, used to portray them?	<b>A. Setting:</b> What is the place, time, and social environment in which events take place?  <b>B. Characterization:</b> What are the characters like? How are various techniques, including dialogue and acting, used to portray them?
<b>Style</b>  How does the author or director use the "language" of the medium?	<b>A. Diction:</b> What do usage level and word choice tell me?  <b>B. Images</b>	<b>A. Diction:</b> What do usage level and word choice tell me?  <b>B. Images and Symbols:</b> Do these create patterns of	<b>A. Diction:</b> What do usage level and word choice tell me?  <b>B. Images and Symbols:</b> Do these create patterns of meaning? How?	<b>A. Diction:</b> What do usage level and word choice in individual characters and in the play as a whole tell me?  <b>B. Images and Symbols:</b> Do these create patterns of	<b>A. Shooting techniques:</b> What do camera angles, shot lengths, etc., convey about setting or characters?  <b>B. Images and Symbols:</b> Do these

	<p><b>and Symbols:</b> Are these used to comment on the subject? How?</p> <p><b>C. Sentence structure:</b> What do sentence patterns tell me?</p>	<p>meaning? How?</p> <p><b>C. Sentence structure:</b> What do sentence patterns tell me?</p>	<p><b>C. Prosody:</b> How are sound and rhythm used in the poem?</p>	<p>meaning? How?</p> <p><b>C. Pacing:</b> What is the rhythm of dialogue and action?</p>	<p>create patterns of meaning? How?</p> <p><b>C. Editing techniques:</b> What movement of action does the editing create?</p>
<p><b>Tone</b></p> <p>What is the author's or director's attitude towards the subject and audience, as conveyed by the work?</p>	<p>What is the author's attitude to subject and reader, as conveyed by the work?</p>	<p><b>A. Point of view:</b> Who is the narrator? How does this affect the way the story is told?</p> <p><b>B. Tone:</b> What attitude does the narrator (and/or the author) adopt towards the story and the reader?</p>	<p><b>A. Point of view:</b> Who is the speaker ("persona") in this poem? How does this affect the way the story is told?</p> <p><b>B. Tone:</b> What is the tone and how does it reflect the speaker's attitude?</p>	<p><b>Tone</b></p> <p><b>a. Playwright:</b> What attitude to subject and audience is evident?</p> <p><b>b. Director:</b> What attitude to subject and audience is evident?</p>	<p>What is the director's attitude to the subject and audience, as conveyed by the film or program?</p>
<p><b>Theme or thesis</b></p> <p>What is the central idea of the work?</p>	<p>What is the main point or argument of the work?</p>	<p>What is the central idea or theme of the story or novel?</p>	<p>What is the central idea or theme of the poem?</p>	<p>What is the central idea or theme of the play?</p>	<p>What is the central idea or theme of the film or program?</p>

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