**LITERARY CRITICISM:**  **THROUGH WHICH LENS DO YOU LOOK?**



**Feminist Lens: Questions to Ask**

* How is the relationship between men and women portrayed?
* What is the power between men and women?
* How are male and female roles defined?
* How do characters embody masculinity and femininity?
* What does the work imply about the possibilities of sisterhood as a mode of resisting patriarchy?
* What does the work say about women and women’s creativity?

**Marxist Lens: Questions to Ask**

* Does the text reflect or reject the society’s dominating system of beliefs? Does it do both?
* Does the main character in the story uphold or reject upper class values?
* Whose story gets told? Are lower economic groups being ignored or devalued?
* Which characters have the **power**? Why or why not?
* Is the author’s economic and social class reflected in the text?
* Does the piece support the way things currently are? Or are they looking for a change to the status quo?
* Are the characters oppressed? How do they overcome the oppression? Or do they just give in to it?

**Psychological Lens: Questions to Ask**

* What unconscious motivations are operating in the main characters? What is being repressed: wounds, fears, unresolved conflicts, guilty desires?
* Is it possible to relate a character’s patterns of adult behavior to early experiences in the family (as represented in the story)? What do these behavior patterns and family dynamics reveal?
* How can characters’ behavior, narrative events, and/or images be explained in terms of regression (return to immature behaviors), fear of or fascination with death or sexuality?
* How might repeating symbols reveal the ways in which the narrator/author is projecting his unconscious desires, fears, wounds, or unresolved conflicts onto other characters or the events?
* What might a given interpretation of a literary work suggest about the psychological motives of the reader?