What is Literary Criticism?

Literary criticism is an analysis of a literary work. This is different from an overview, which describes aspects of a work (such as plot, characters, and theme) instead of analyzing the item. Literary criticism might include the following:

- A defense of the work
- An analysis of its structure or style
- An interpretation of its meaning
- A prediction of its effects on readers
- And more

Where can you find literary criticism?

- Books: for broad coverage of a subject at a moderate to deep level. You will use chapters or just pages, not the whole book.
- Periodicals/Scholarly Journals: for articles on specific themes, characters, or events written by experts in academic or professional fields.

LibGuides

For more information, check out the library’s online guide devoted to English Literature and literary criticism:

http://libguides.blinn.edu/literature2

For help with MLA or APA citation formatting, check out the following libguide:

http://libguides.blinn.edu/citingsources

Contact the Library

If you need additional help, please stop by the Research Assistance Desk in the library or use one of the features below.

Brenham: 979-830-4451
Bryan: 979-209-7273
Schulenburg: 979-743-5526

Text: 979-457-4051
Email: library@blinn.edu
Chat: http://www.blinn.edu/library/chat/

Website: www.blinn.edu/library or scan the QR code for direct access:
**Reference Books**
Reference books are mainly literature encyclopedias and subject-specific dictionaries that provide general background knowledge of a topic. Books within the following number ranges in the Reference section of the library can include a wide variety of useful information, such as:

- plot summaries
- character analysis
- biographies
- criticisms

R 800 to R 809  General Literature & Rhetoric
R 810 to R 819  American Literature
R 820 to R 829  British Literature
R 830 to R 879  European Literature
R 880 to R 889  Classical Literature

**Note**
Books in the library’s Reference section are intended for in-library use only. They cannot be checked out or taken out of the library building.

**Library Catalog**
The library catalog provides citation, location, and circulation information for all the books, ebooks, and audiovisual materials owned by the library.

To access the catalog:
- go to the library website (www.blinn.edu/library)
- click Search the Catalog under the Books, DVD’S, and More section
- in the Keyword search box, type the title OR author of the work you are researching and click Search
- under the Refine Your Search column on the left side of the page, look for Subject and then click Criticism and Interpretation
- Use the call number included in the catalog description to find a book that is located in your home campus library

**Note**
Your search results might also include links to full-text electronic books. Click on the web link in the book record to access ebooks. When accessing ebooks from off-campus, you will be prompted to enter your MyBlinn username and password.

**Articles & Databases**
The library databases listed below provide citations, and often, full-text articles from literary journals and books. To access the databases that focus on literature:

- go to the library website (www.blinn.edu/library)
- click Databases by Subject under the Articles & Databases section
- Click on the Literature & Literary Criticism section
- Click on the blue title of any of the literature databases to begin your search

**Helpful Literature Databases**
- Humanities Full Text
- Literary Reference Center
- Literary Sources—Gale
- MLA International Bibliography

**Note**
When accessing one of the library’s databases from off-campus, you will be prompted to enter your MyBlinn username and password.