

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

- Use blank areas to write your own notes and questions
- **Bold** words are used to emphasize things to pay attention to when writing a paper, including terms that may be useful when writing
- While we don't know what you may be asked to write from your instructor, this guide will go over several themes and tropes within the text that can serve as support for a thesis statement, aka the foundation of your paper

Key facts

- When was the text written?
- Why was the text written? (ex: to make a political or social statement, to shock society, to be artful, to praise nature or beauty, to contemplate human nature, to warn about how our failures affect our future, etc)
- What genre of literature does it fall under (ex: Romantic, Gothic, Tragedy)
- How did the text affect society? How was it received by the public?
- Any critical acclaim the author received?
- Major plot points of the text

Things to consider when reading/thinking/writing

- Why might I think this text **was** important when it was first received by the public

- How might I think the message of this text **is** valuable today?

More advanced questions for critical writing:

The time period of (*the text you're reading*) and the life of (the author) - the context of time

How this author's writings are in relationship with and reflect the work of their peers

How this trope in particular has influenced other work - does this author write about the same thing frequently?

How (author's) work might rely on themes and tropes from works before their own

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Use this space to study characters

Main Characters

- What are their strengths/flaws?
- Major scenes or plot points with this character
- How do the characters relate to one another
- What symbols, tropes or motifs do the main characters play into?