

SMART™ Lesson

Interpreting Literature

Literature is an art form that allows the reader to interpret and understand the world in unique ways. It is important for readers to become comfortable with interpreting literature because it allows them to develop a deeper understanding of the text and the author's intentions.

How to Interpret Literature

- **Read the Text Carefully:** The first step to interpreting literature is to read the text carefully. Pay attention to the language used, the characters and their actions, and any symbols or motifs that appear throughout the text.
- **Consider the Historical and Cultural Context:** The historical and cultural context of the text can greatly influence its meaning. Consider when and where the text was written, and think about how the author's experiences and surroundings may have influenced the writing.
- **Identify Literary Devices:** Authors often use literary devices such as symbolism, foreshadowing, and irony to convey their message. Identifying these devices can help the reader understand the underlying message of the text.
- **Consider the Theme:** Every piece of literature has a theme, or a central message that the author wants to convey. Identifying the theme is crucial to interpreting the text.

Questions to Consider when Interpreting Literature

1. What is the main idea or message of the text?
2. What are the specific literary devices used in the text and how do they contribute to the meaning?
3. What is the historical or cultural context of the text and how does it relate to the message?
4. How do the characters and their actions contribute to the meaning of the text?
5. What is the significance of the title?

Conclusion

Interpreting literature can be a challenging but rewarding experience. By carefully reading and considering the different elements that make up a piece of literature, readers can gain a deeper understanding of the text and its underlying message.

Additional Resources

If you're interested in learning more about interpreting literature, check out these helpful resources:

- [Khan Academy's Visual Analysis of a Painting](#)
- [University of Oklahoma's Guide to Literary Analysis](#)
- [Cliffnotes' Analysis of Lord of the Flies](#)

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