

TEXTUAL QUESTIONS

- Is the piece of text the whole of the text?
- Does the text exist in only one version, or many different versions?
- If in many versions, are there likely to be significant differences between them?
- Has the text been cut, edited or expurgated?
- Has the text been annotated?

CONTEXTUAL QUESTIONS

- Is the author male or female? Professional or amateur? Native English speaker?
- How old was he/she when the text was produced?
- Who was the text originally aimed at? Are you part of that anticipated audience?
- Where, when and in what circumstances was the text produced?

REFERENTIAL QUESTIONS

- Does the text contain quotations?
- Does it refer to particular social attitudes, facts or suppositions about the world, or to particular interests or geographical knowledge?
- Does the text contain specific references to other literary, media, historical, mythological or religious texts, events or figures? Do you know what these references refer to?

LANGUAGE QUESTIONS

- Is the text in its original, or a translation?
- Is it likely that all the words mean what you think they mean?
- What sort of vocabulary do the words of the text generally come from?
- Were all the words and structures current at the time the text was written, or are some archaisms?
- Are the sentences generally of the same length and complexity?
- Is a very „literary“ language used?

SYMBOLIC QUESTIONS

- Do names in the text refer to unique, particular individuals, or are they representative, standing for general characters or character types?
- Are there any symbolic meanings of the places, weather, or events?
- Does the text relate a specific set of events, or does it function allegorically?
- Is the text's title a key to its meaning?

QUESTIONS OF CONVENTION

- Should the way you look at the text be guided by conventions about the sort of the text it is (e.g. satire, pantomime, sitcom)?
- How realistic do you expect the text to be? Is it appropriate to ask such a question of the text?

QUESTIONS OF REPRESENTATION

- Is the text typical of the theme it represents, or significantly different from other texts on similar topics?
- Does the text create images of race, women, industry, money or other socially centred themes? If so, are these images problematic? Why?