

- **Tips for reading and analyzing text**

Text analysis is not always easy. Sometimes a puzzling text can be tricky if you don't know what kind of clues to look for to fill in the gaps. Here are some general questions you should be asking yourself before, during, and after reading a piece of text that can help fill in the gaps.

- **Who** wrote it? What do you know about this author as a person and as a writer? Have you ever read anything by this person before? How do this author's other works compare to this text?
- **When** was it written? What was going on in history at that time? How could the politics, social, or economic situation of this time affect the text?
- What **vocabulary** words or references in the text do you not understand? Make note of them and look them up or ask.
- What **themes/issues** does this text raise? Thematically, how similar or different is this to other texts you have read in or outside of class?
- How would you describe the **style** of the text—the way it was written? Stylistically how is it similar or different to other texts you have read?
- Are there any **objects/places/ideas** that keep popping up in the text? Do you think they might symbolize something else? Why would the author keep including them?
- Think about the **characters** and why they act the way they do. Can you describe their attitudes and motivations?
- From whose **point of view** do you hear the story? Could that be important or affect your reaction to the story?
- What is the **setting** of the text? How is it described? Could this story have taken place in another setting? Why or why not?
- What is **your reaction** to the text? Do you think the author intended for you to react this way or any way in particular? Why or why not?

Now that you have gone through these questions, look at the text again. Are there any parts of the text that you still do not understand at all or do not understand their purpose? If so, analyze them in terms of your responses to these questions. Does that help to clarify the confusion?