

AP Literature and Composition - Maite & Meyer

Kate Chopin's The Awakening Study:
Literary and Thematic Context Preparation

In groups of two or three, complete the activities below. Your purpose is to create an understanding of these concepts that will inform your Chopin Paper.

Part I: Talk as a group, and take notes individually to prepare for you formal literary analysis.

All class members are expected to have answers/notes prepared for discussion.

Please bring your text of The Awakening.

Example Literary Analysis Questions:

1. How does alienation affect literary characters? How are personality, conflict and circumstance tied into effect?
2. What might be the role of ethics and values in alienation?
3. What causes human alienation?
4. How may alienation be important to artists and writers?
5. Why is alienation a common theme in works about rite of passage or self actualization?
6. What are some implied links between insanity and alienation?
7. What is the relationship between alienation and epiphany?
8. Based on these questions, what parallels can you identify between The Awakening and Lear
9. What is the role of alienation in modernism?

Modernism Defined through these characteristics

- a) Rejection of Traditional themes (i.e. love); instead they focused on broken lives and the inability to commit.
 - b) A focus on alienated individuals rather than heroes
 - c) Frequent themes of impermanence and change (i.e. nothing lasts)
 - d) Instead of directly relating emotions and ideas as the romantics did, they used understatements and irony to reveal these concepts.
 - e) Symbols and images are used to suggest meaning rather than statements that explain meaning.
 - f) The use of stream-of-consciousness technique to show both inside and outside the characters
10. What does Chopin imply about conformity?
 11. Is there a correlation between conformity and alienation?

Part II: Use your literary devices handout and search for examples of any in the text. Place in your notes.

How can these examples be used in answering one of the prompts for the paper? Take some good, brief notes on your findings.

Once finished, we will discuss questions and brainstorm the paper in a large group.