

Unpacking Texts: How to Read, What to Notice (especially in Literary Analysis)

Unpacking a text is an essential skill in literary critical analysis. Analyzing the purpose and meaning of a statement, phrase, or even a single word within the larger text begins with paying close attention to the various rhetorical devices used. In a longer passage or section, not every word or detail will be useful or especially meaningful. Your first task is to look carefully at the given passage and note which elements stand out in some way. How can we establish which details are important? Paying attention to the “small” stuff, as suggested in the below list, might