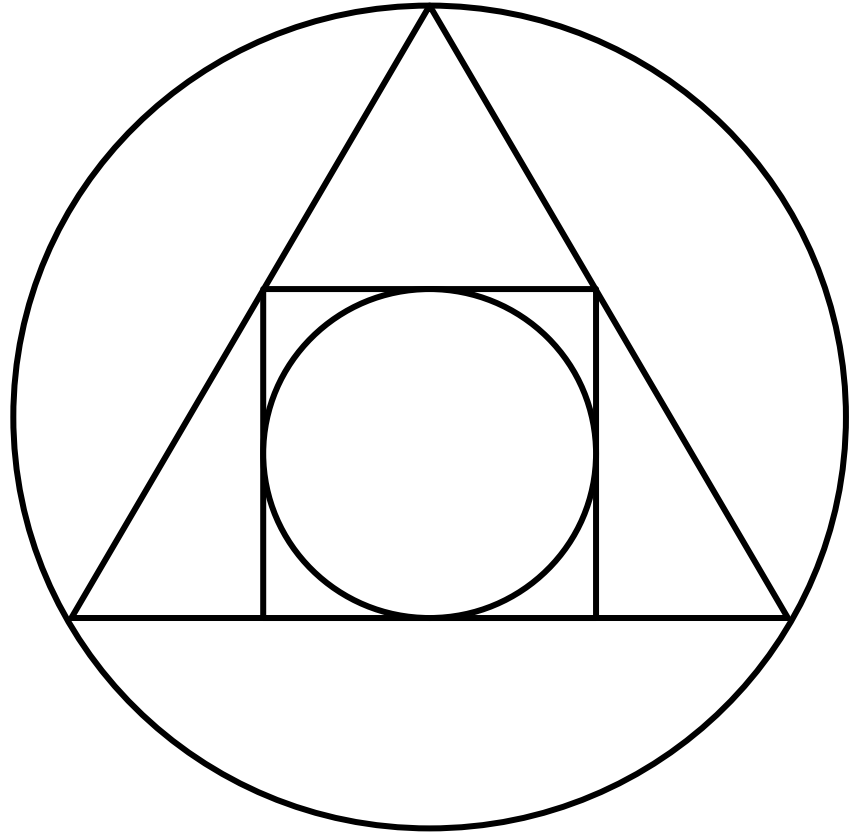


The Teaching of English Language, Aesthetics and Ethics in a Global Community

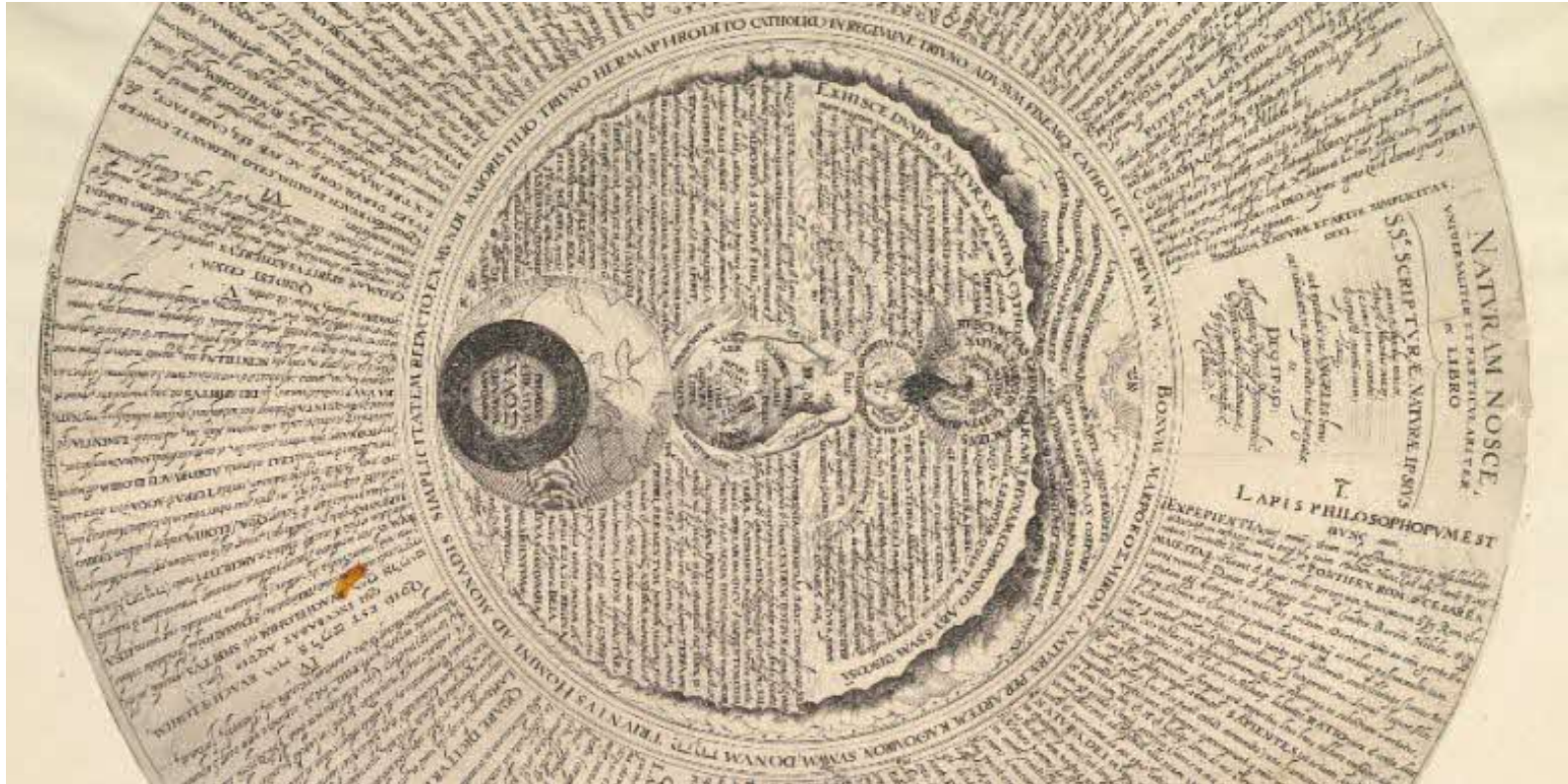


Learning Objectives:

1. Raise awareness of the design principles for:
"Ethical Criticism, Literary Theory, and Philosophy" in English Language Arts pedagogy.
2. Identify relevant learning opportunities for students to develop their 21st Century Competencies to thrive in the global community.

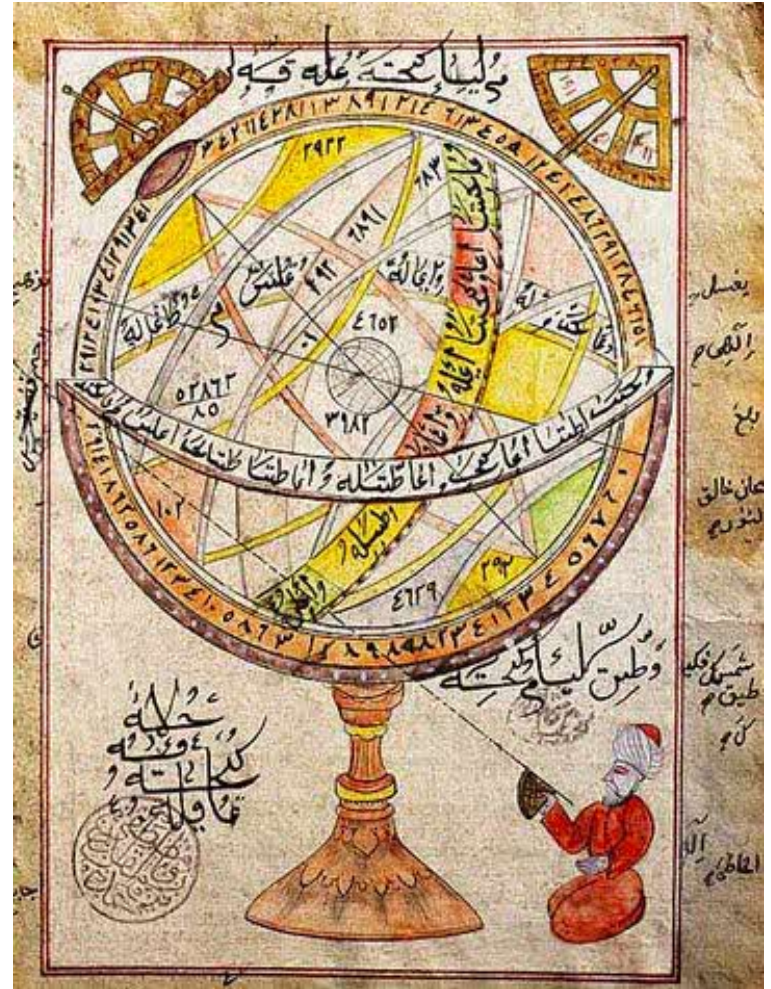


Philosopher's Stone



The Philosopher's Stone

The sacred symbols, the “*Keys of Wisdom*”, that grant the alchemist the power to transform elements, transform themselves, and even transform others, in the pursuit of perpetual illumination - *Enlightenment* to find *The Way*.

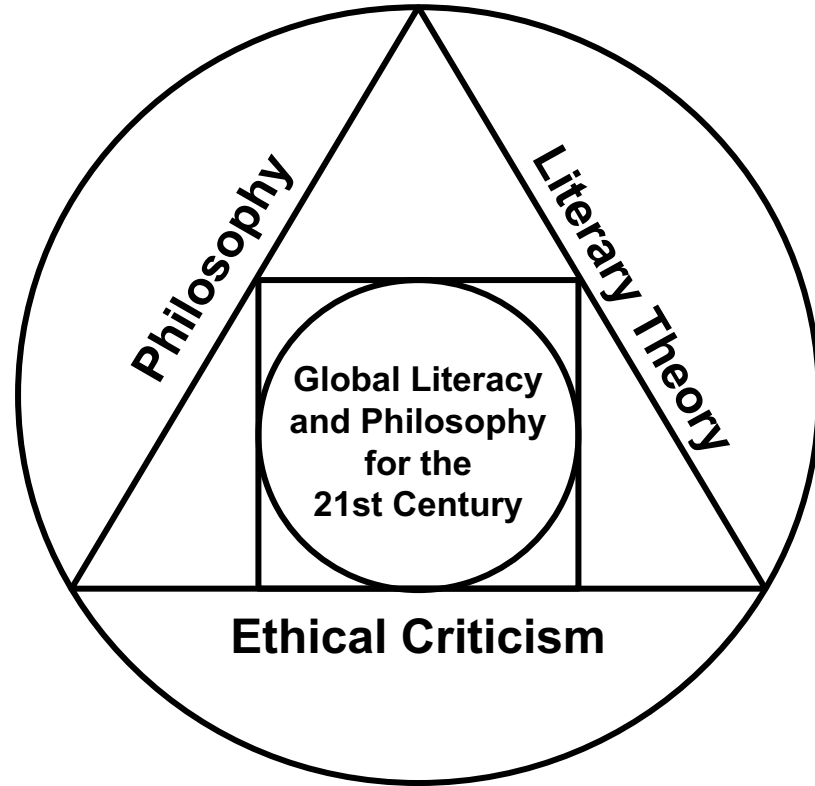


The Pedagogy

This is an **integrated pedagogy** that combines **three powerful elements**:

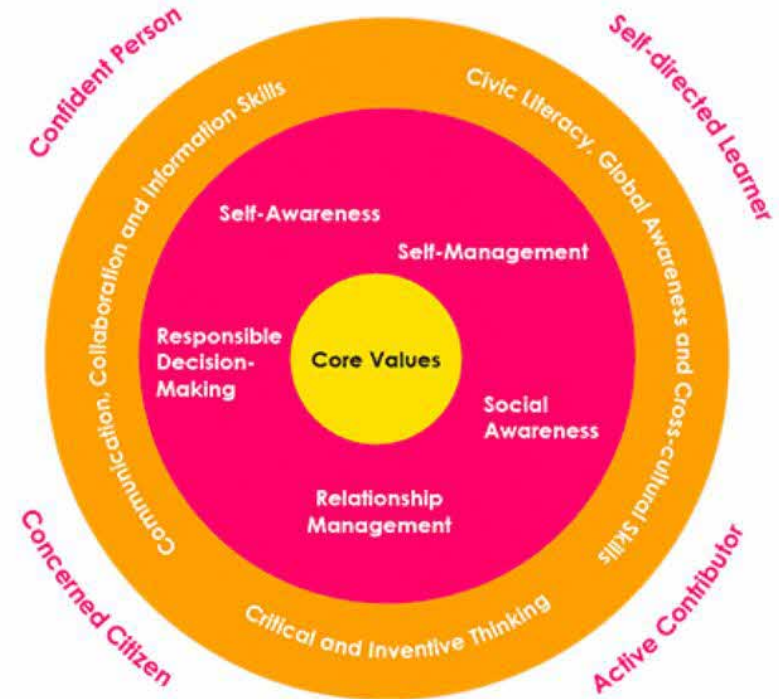
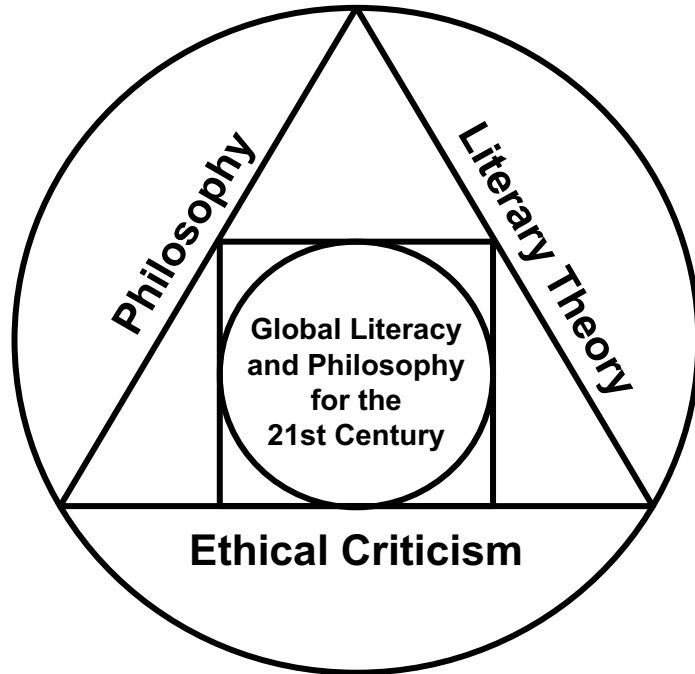
- Ethical Criticism,
- Literary Theory, and
- Philosophy.

With these elements, students become “alchemists” (enlightened witnesses); **empowered inquirers and practitioners** who read texts critically, just as they read the world critically. Then they find and define meaning and understanding through **thoughtful and critical discussions** among their fellow philosophers.



Promotion! Two for One Special!

When you teach “Global Literacy and Philosophy”,
you *are* Teaching Global Citizenship!



Work Smarter Not Harder?



These three components effectively teach students:

1. Foundational Reading skills
2. Critical Reading
3. Critical Inquiry and Thinking
4. Critical Dialogue
5. Critical Writing
6. Self-reflection
7. Community engagement and collaboration
8. Global History, Tradition, and Heritage.

And...

We are already teaching *many* of these ideas/concepts. So, this is in many ways a practice of **translating ideas into our existing language/pedagogies** to broaden and deepen our dialogue and perspectives as educators.

Guiding Questions

1. How do you **effectively** teach literacy and literature in a **diverse-multicultural** and **multilingual classroom/community**?
2. How do you effectively teach history, social studies, civics, and ethics in:
 - a. an increasingly **politically polarized culture, society, and nation**;
and
 - b. an **increasingly interconnected** global community?
3. How can the teaching of literature cultivate **mutual understanding and communication** among disparate cultures/traditions as well as a foundation for **ethical engagement**?

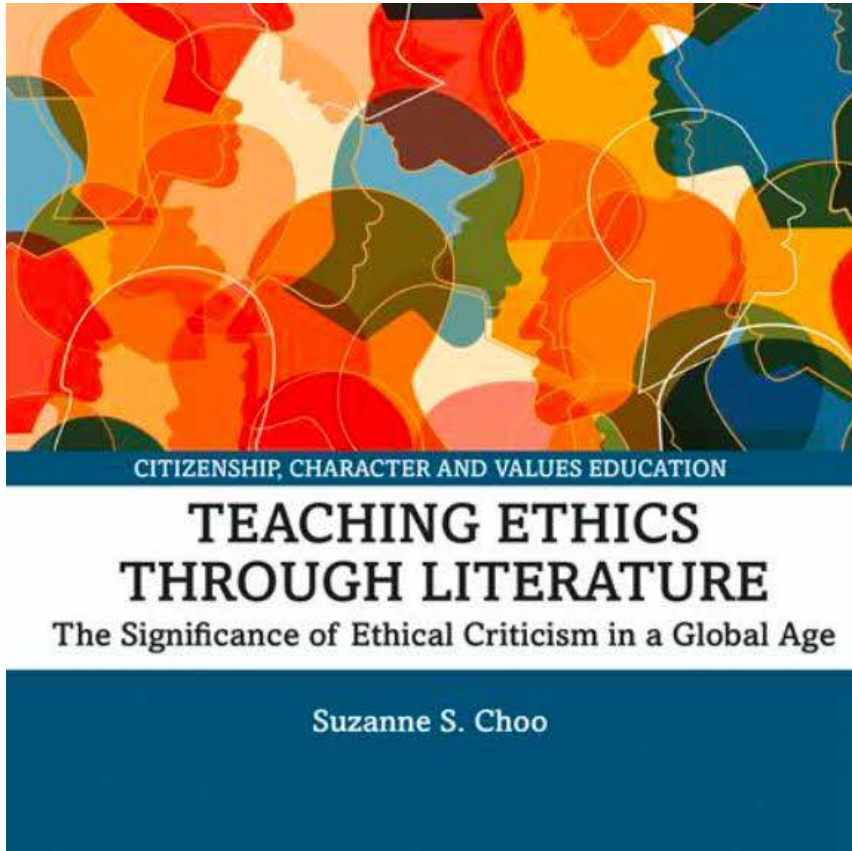
What are some of the **most significant challenges you see, or foresee, facing students in the coming years, decades, century?**

How and why are these significant challenges for the next generation of students?

Why a New Pedagogy for English Teaching?

- Increasingly interconnected global communities
- Intensifying political/ideological polarization
- Growing populist movements and movements of identity politics.
- Continued Warfare and Terrorism
- Vast amounts of information instantly available
- Ever multiplying sources of information (Both credible and non-credible)
- Disinformation
- *Artificial Intelligence*: the artificial creation, interpretation, and valuation of information.





Ethical Criticism

An argument for the prioritization of ethics in the objectives of Literature education and its infusion in curricula via World Literature, Human Rights and Social Justice.

<https://nie.edu.sg/about-us/news-events/news/news-detail/new-book-publication-by-a-p-suzanne-choo---teaching-ethics-through-literature-the-significance-of-ethical-criticism-in-a-global-age-%28routledge-2021%29>

The Why: Ethical Criticism

- ***Ethical Criticism* is a pedagogy that brings deep inquiry of global ethics into focus.**
- **Students explore, diverse perspectives in critical analyses of global texts, that is, where and how values originate, diverge, and converge.**
- **Finally, students actively engage in how these values connect to themselves as well as their community.**

The How: Ethical Criticism

- **Objective 1:**
 - Expose students to diverse perspectives from around the world, enabling them to inquire into ethical issues in connection to broader issues.
 - Explore complex sociopolitical and historical factors.
- **Objective 2:**
 - Uncover **ideological** values in texts in their analysis of aesthetic language, in order to connect issues in texts to complex **ethical realities** in the world.



The How: Ethical Criticism

- **Objective 3:**
 - Encourage students' active ethical engagement in order to **empathize** with the perspectives of others in the world.
- **Objective 4:**
 - Think **critically** and act **responsibly** in order to effect transformative changes in society and the world.



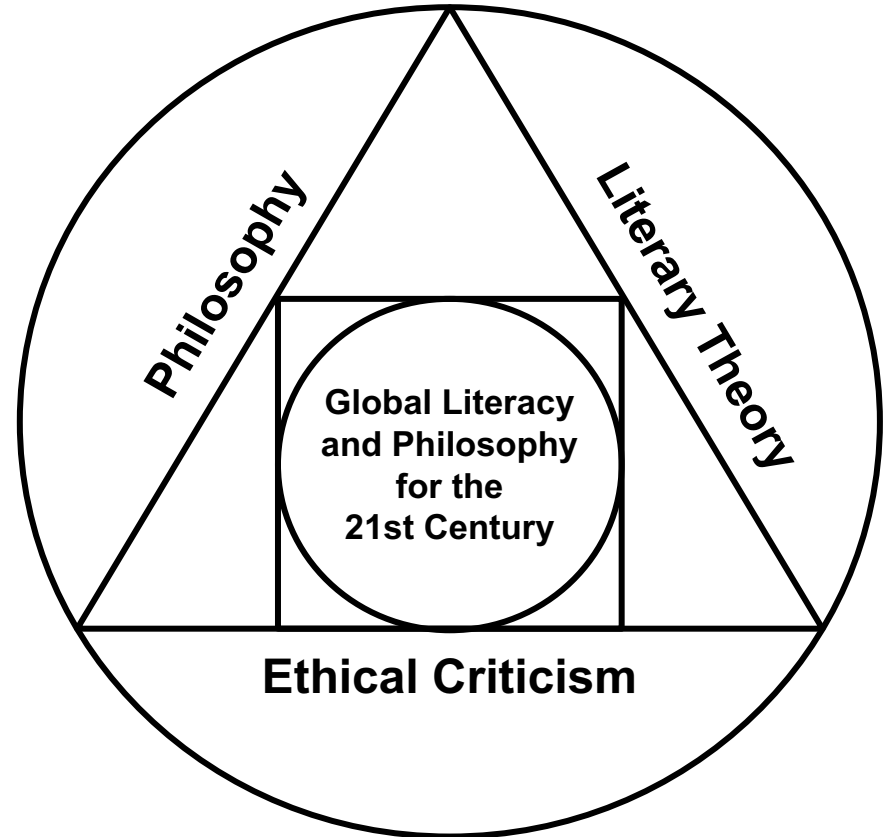
Themes in Ethical Criticism

1. Search for Meaning
2. Meaning of Love
3. Revolution and War
4. Purpose of Suffering
5. The Nature of Good and Evil



Part II: Literary Theory

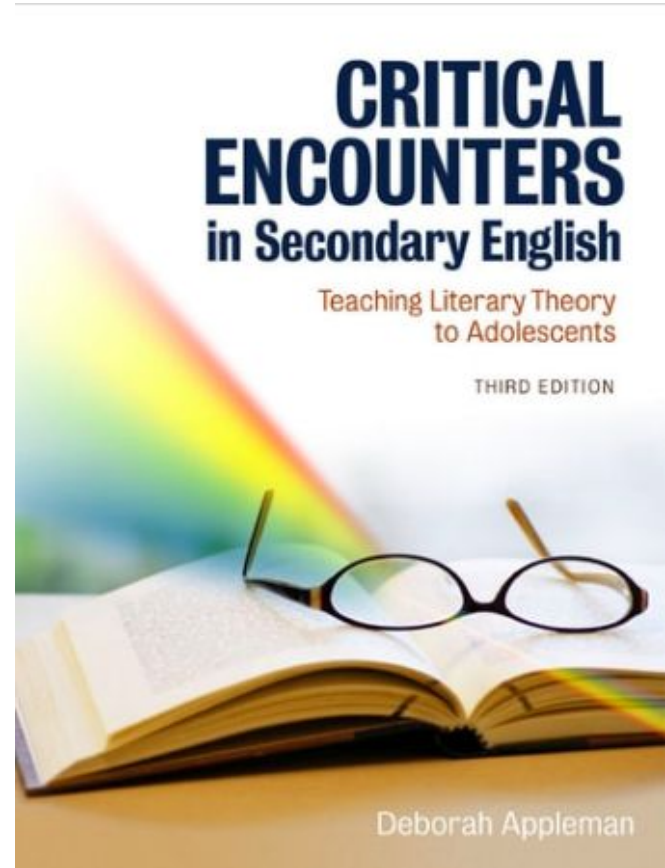
The “*Cheem*” Element



What is Literary Theory?

Literary Theory is a **pedagogical tool** that supports critical analysis of texts. With this tool students can **interpret multiple meanings and perspectives** within a text.

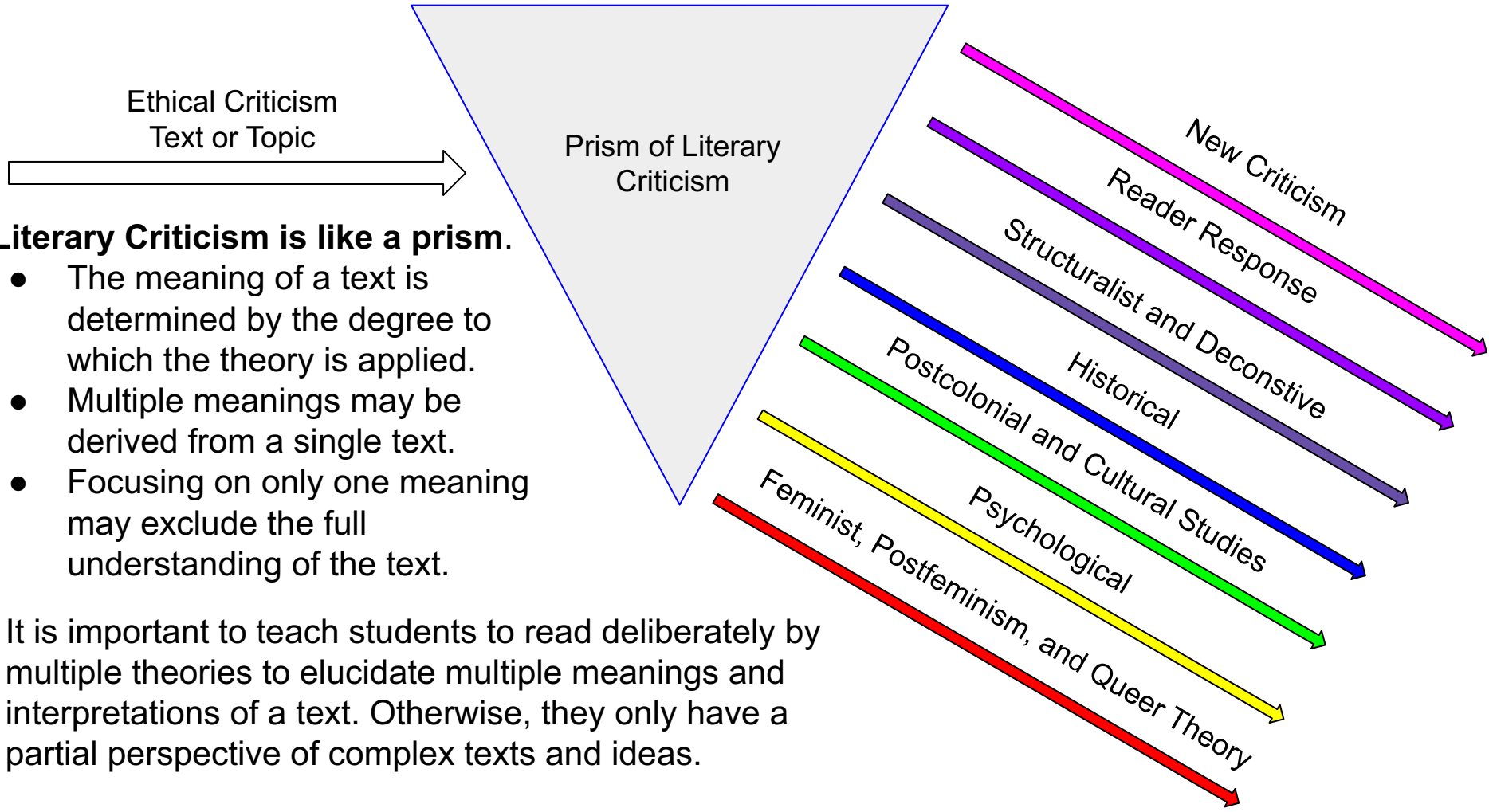
This is a bit like putting on a new set of glasses: suddenly you see things more clearly.



Lenses of Literary Theory

- *New Criticism*
- *Reader-Response*
- *Structuralist Criticism*
- *Deconstructive Criticism*
- *Historical Criticism*
- *Post-Colonialism*
- *Psychological Criticism*
- *Feminist, Postfeminism*
- *Queer Theory*
- *Cultural Studies*





Literary Criticism is like a prism.

- The meaning of a text is determined by the degree to which the theory is applied.
- Multiple meanings may be derived from a single text.
- Focusing on only one meaning may exclude the full understanding of the text.

It is important to teach students to read deliberately by multiple theories to elucidate multiple meanings and interpretations of a text. Otherwise, they only have a partial perspective of complex texts and ideas.

Why is this important for students?

For the next moment we are going to focus our discussion on politics within the United States.

Currently, what are your thoughts, opinions, or questions about United States' politics?

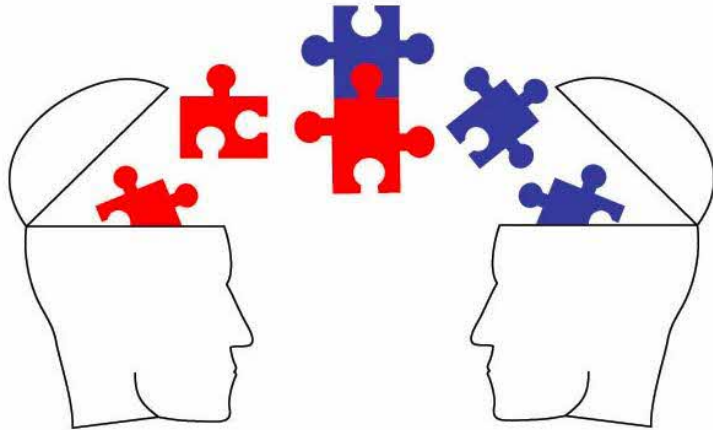
Why is this important for students???

- Increasingly interconnected global communities
- Intensifying political/**ideological polarization**



Ideology (noun)

A system of ideas and ideals, especially one which forms the basis of economic or political theory and policy:



Polarization (Noun)

Division into two sharply contrasting groups or sets of opinions or beliefs.



Defining Ideology by Literary Theory

“Language changes, and even creates the social and political world in which we live. *Ideology in that sense is language.*”

*-An Introduction to Literature,
Criticism and Theory*

“Literature, in the meaning of the word we have inherited, is an ideology.”

-Literary Theory, and introduction



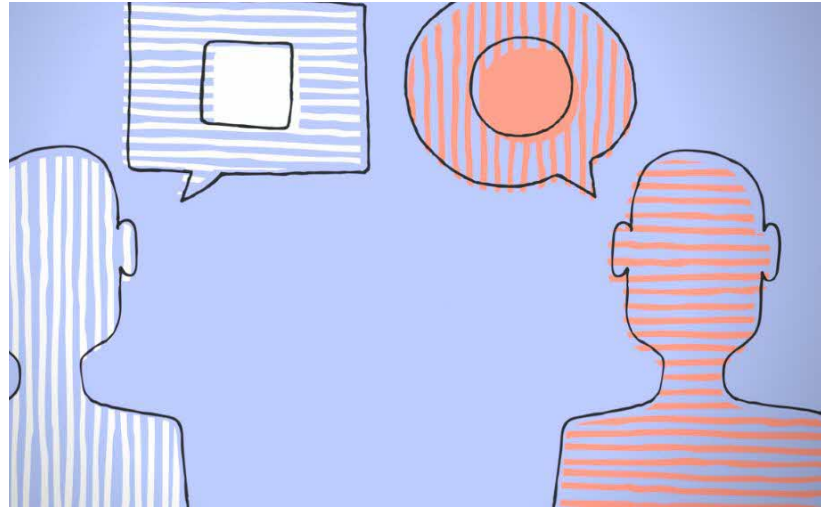
But again, why is this important for students???

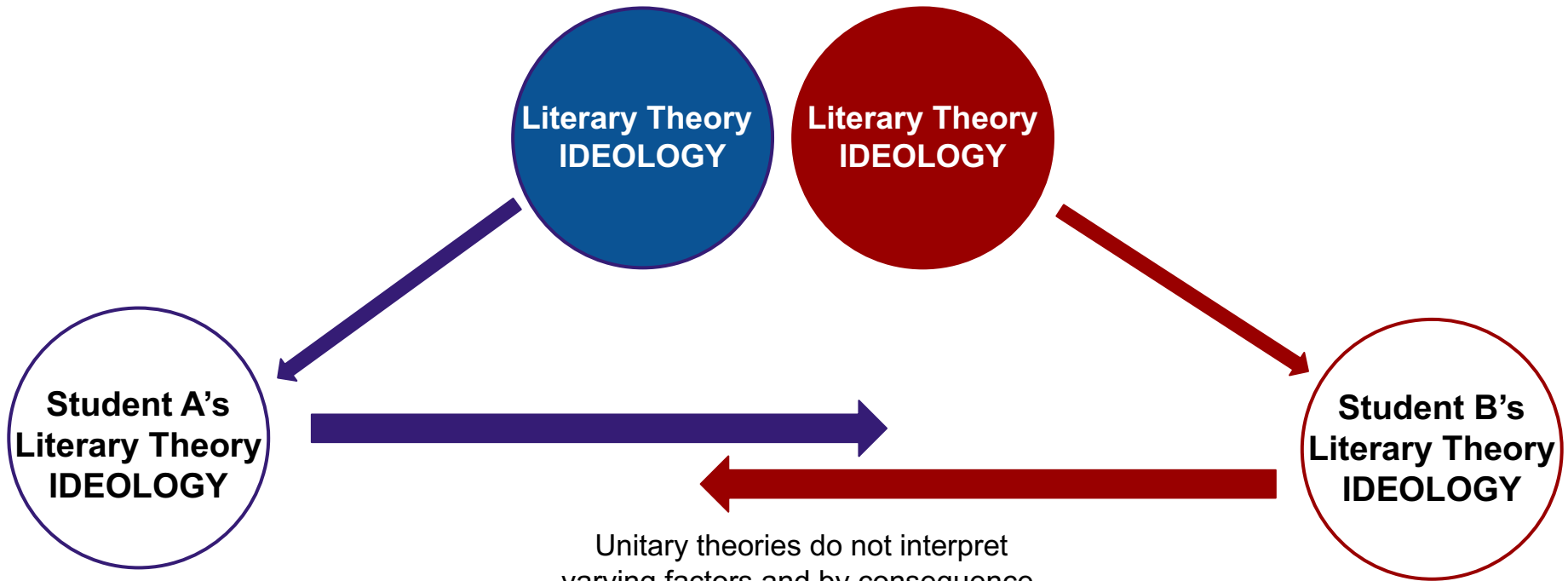
Let us for a moment, model an polarized-ideological discussion.

In other words, let us imagine a discussion from **ONLY two opposing literary theories/ideologies.**

Imagine that:

- the participants **DO NOT UNDERSTAND** they are arguing from opposing theoretical perspectives, and
- they do not know each others' underlying assumptions and first principles.





Unitary theories do not interpret varying factors and by consequence, exclude alternative interpretations. As a result they lack the multiplicity of perspectives necessary to qualify and modify the singular belief system.

POLARIZED IDEOLOGY

- ***Total validity***
- ***Disregard for varying factors***
- ***Inconsistent logic***
- ***Compulsory Conclusions***

POLARIZED IDEOLOGY

- ***Total validity***
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- ***Inconsistent logic***
- ***Compulsory Conclusions***

Question:

Have you ever “talked-past” someone in an discussion, debate, or argument?

What happened in your experience?



Ideologies of Dogism and Catism.

Idiom:

“talk past each other”

A situation where two or more people talk about different subjects while believing they are talking about the same thing.

Example:

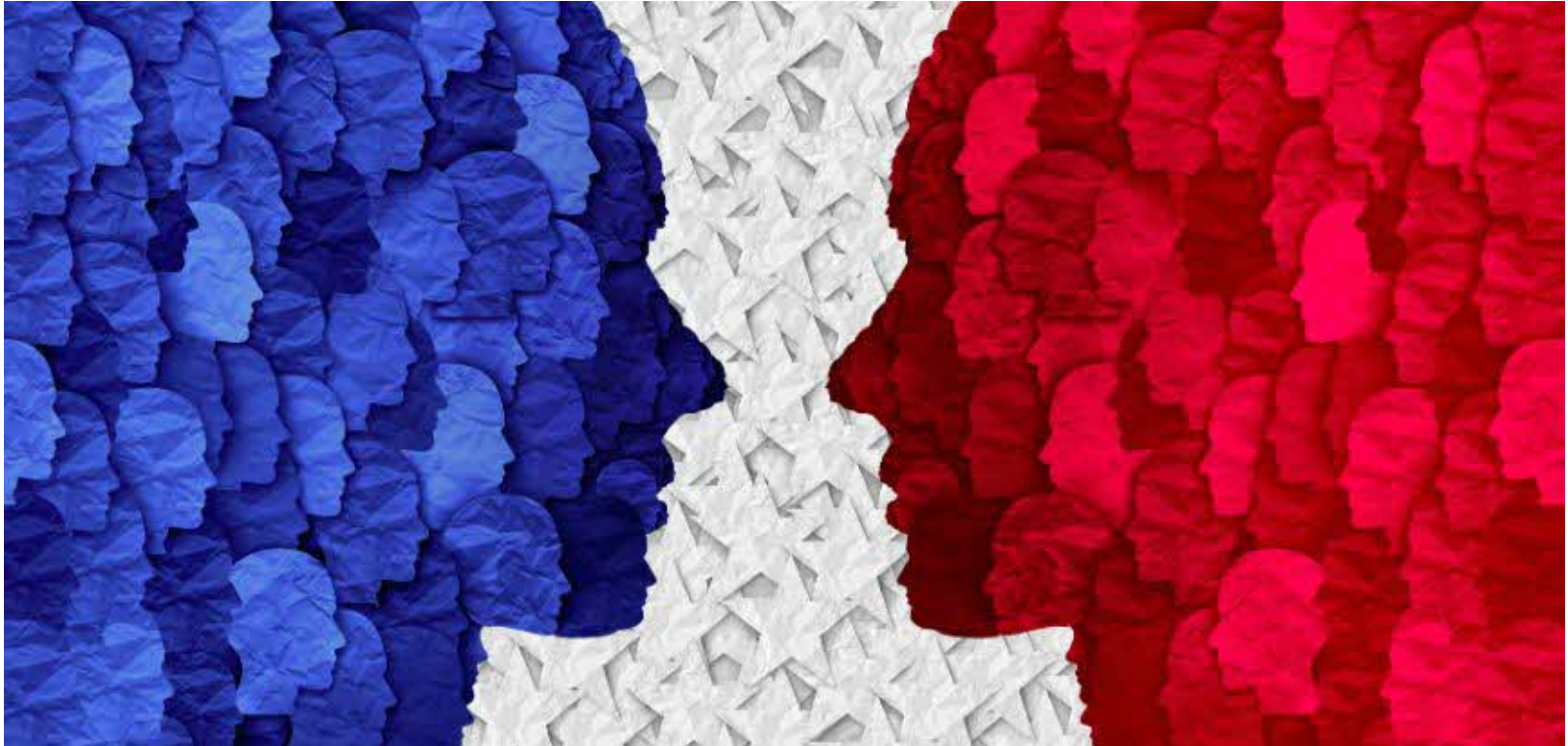
I thought there was a disagreement between us but we were merely **talking past each other.**

The curious logicity of all isms, their simple-minded trust in the salvation value of stubborn devotion without regard of specific, varying factors, already harbours the first germs of totalitarian contempt for reality and factuality

- Hannah Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*

A Consequence...

Theoretical, Ideological, Rhetorical, and Political Polarization

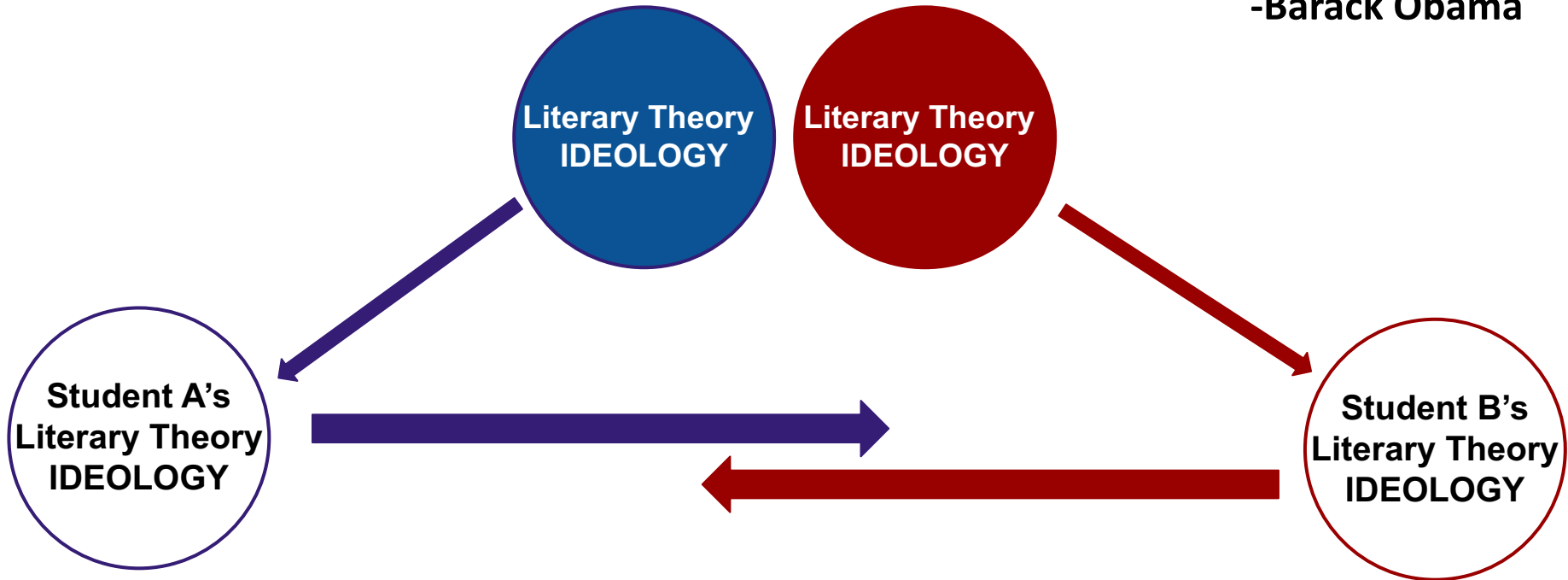




<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/one-nation-divided-making-america-great-means-putting-end-political-ncna882176>

“For too many of us, it’s become safer to retreat into our *own bubbles* . . . surrounded by people who look like us and share the *same political outlook and never challenge our assumptions*. . . . Without a *willingness to admit new information and concede that your opponent is making a fair point*, and that *science and reason matter*, we’ll keep talking past each other, making common ground and compromise impossible.”

-Barack Obama



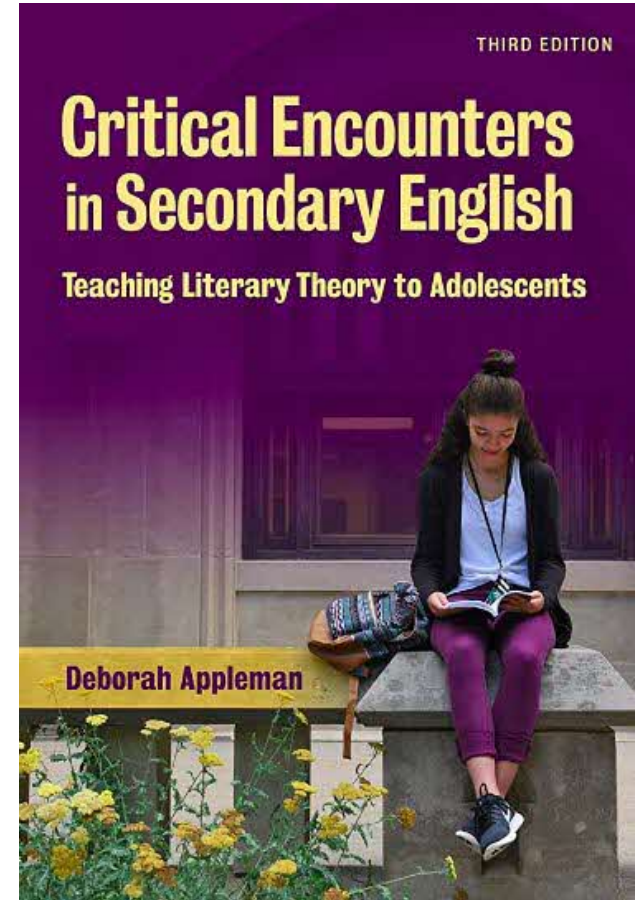


<https://wwwFOUNDERSMEMORIAL.gov.sg/shapeourmemorial/en/onlineexhibition/detail/fostering-racial-harmony>

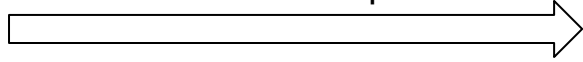
Therefore...

How do educators support students in analyzing texts and ideas from **multiple theoretical perspectives**?

Explicit teaching of **literary theory** to students!



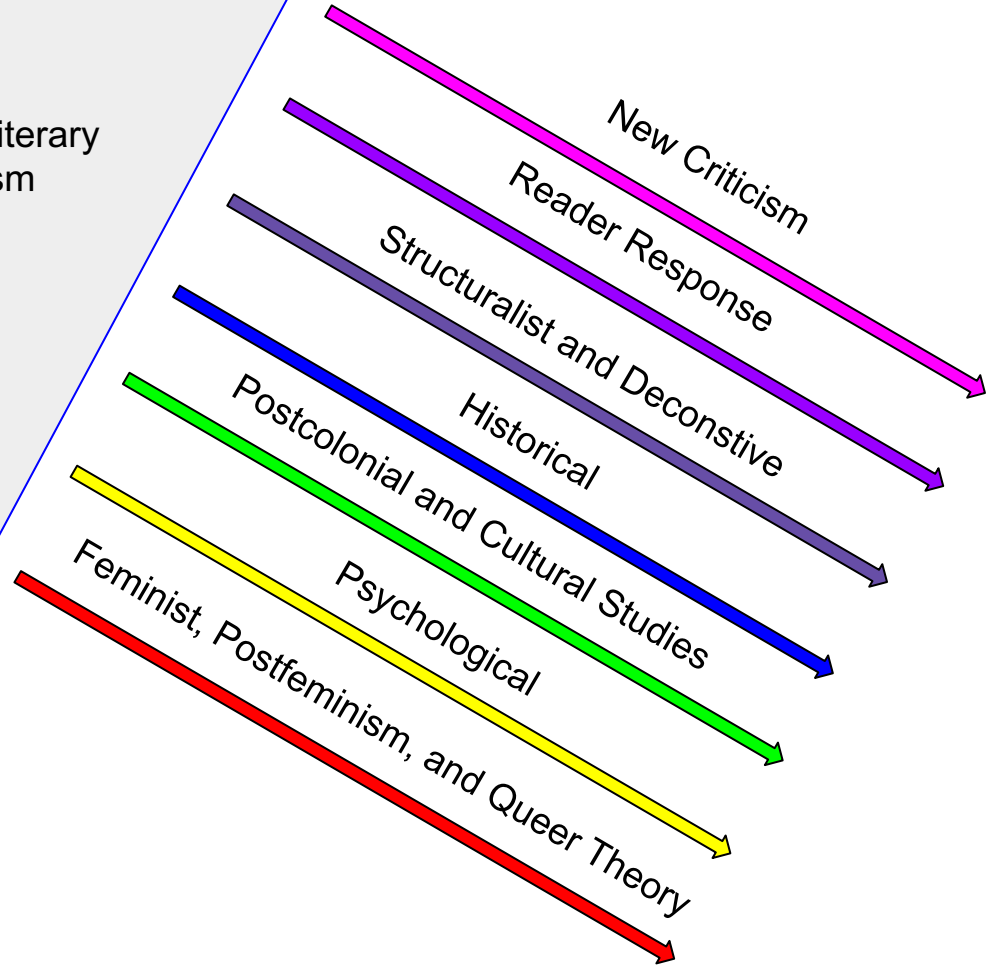
Ethical Criticism
Text or Topic



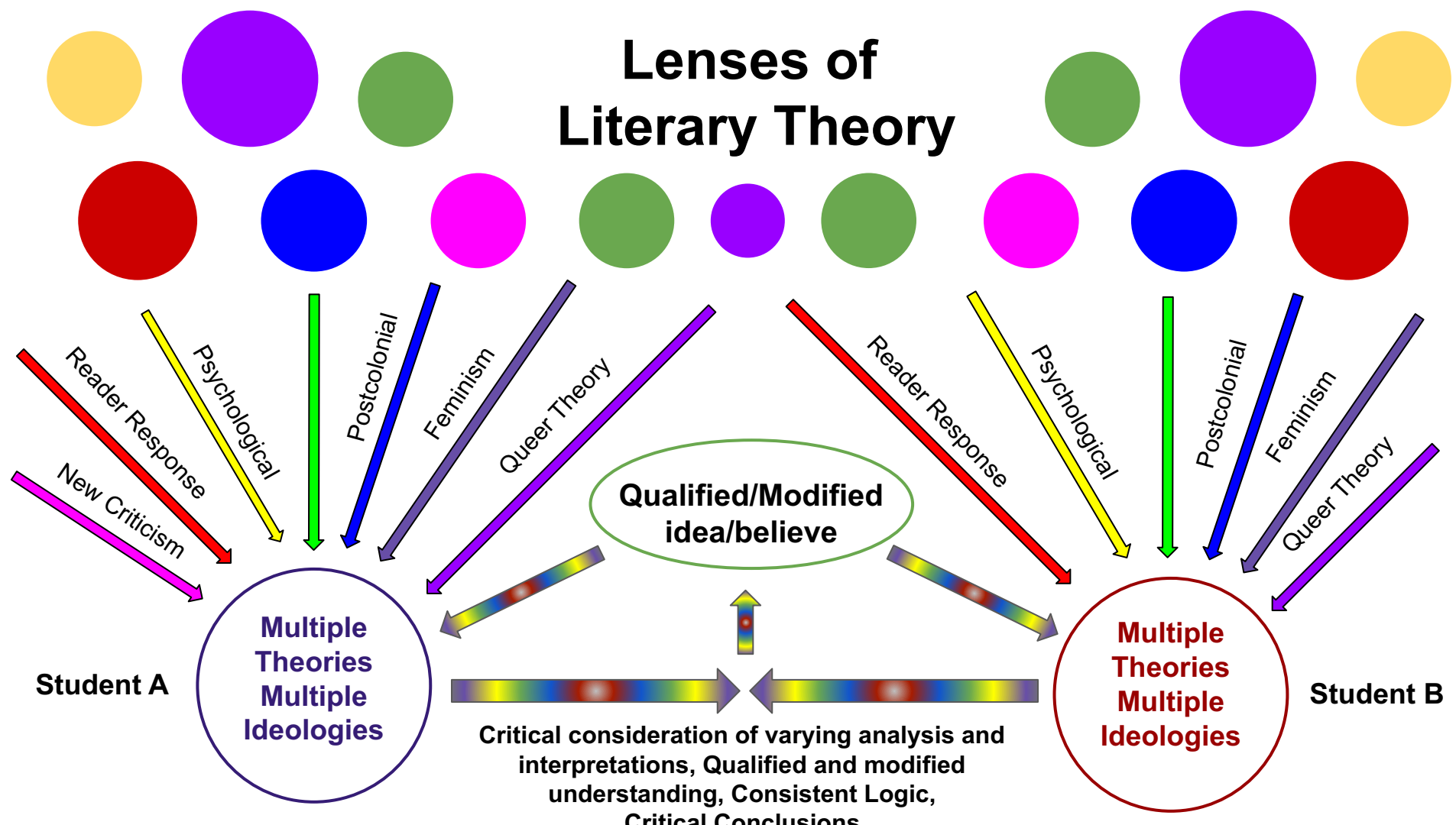
**Literary theory will support
students' critical inquiry,
interpretation, and evaluations
of texts and ideas**



Prism of Literary
Criticism



Lenses of Literary Theory



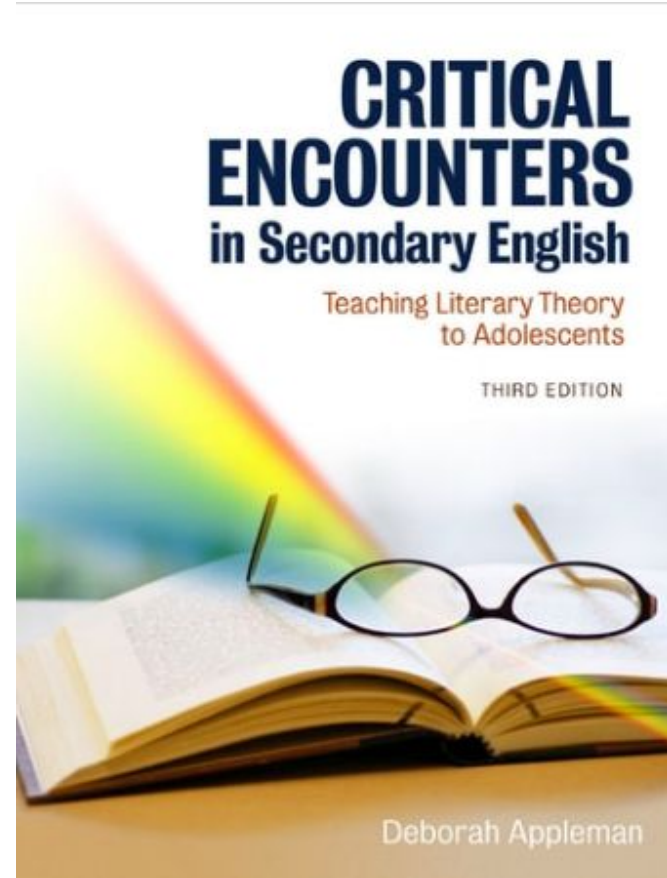
Students; thoughts on the Literary/Critical Theory in the classroom

“The world is like a huge novel that needs to be interpreted. It has a very broad and confusing plot with a variety of settings and many different cultures and themes.”

- **Jesse, Grade 11**

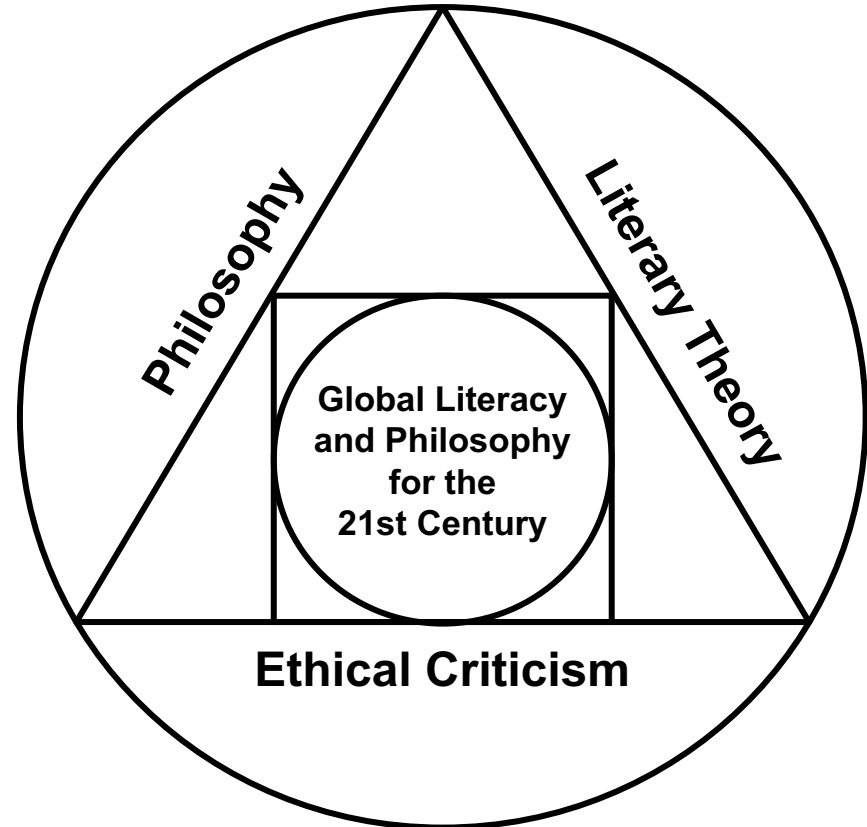
“Critical lenses are devices of interpretation. Just as they are used to interpret literature, they can be used to interpret the world. A critical lens can be used to “read” the world because there is little, if any, difference between what is real and the literature it is customarily used for”

- **Carmen, Grade 12**



Part III: Philosophy

*The Love of Wisdom and the
Art of Discussion*



Pop Quiz!

What is a child's favorite question?



w **h** **y**



Children *are* Philosophers.

Innate in them (and all of us for that *matter*)
is the yearning for the eternal question of why:

*“...the only thing
we require to be
good philosophers is
the faculty of
wonder...”*



What is *Philosophy for Children?*

It presupposes **personal and social (re)construction** (not a transmission), a search for meaning that originates in a **personal and social experience**, a process which occurs in a group or in a community of inquiry, a praxis that is essentially intended at **improving the quality of experience**.

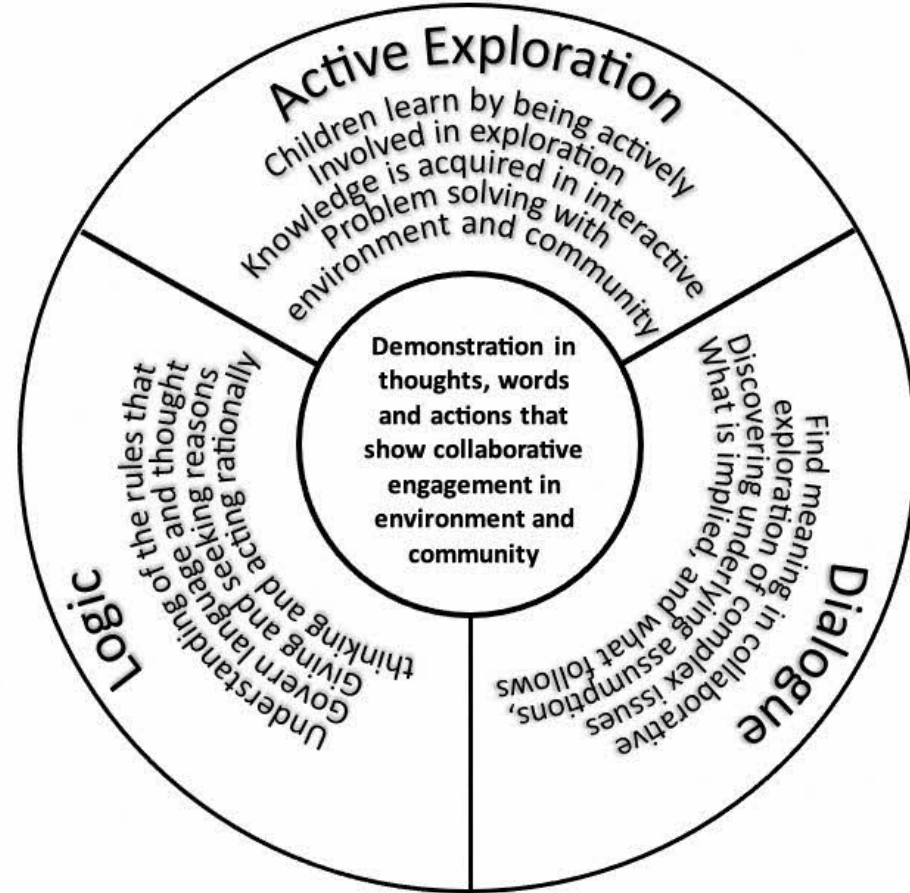


Philosophizing in the Classroom

- **Shared Reading of a *philosophical* text.**
 - Select a text/topic of interest to the students, that is an idea that they are curious to explore. This should also ideally be a text rich with philosophical perspectives.
- **Teaching an understanding of Logic.**
 - Example: Everything that we have observed in the universe is made of fundamental particles. It therefore follows that you, the table, the air, the moon and sun, and yes you and I are made of atoms.
- **Student led inquiry into discussion**
 - Questioning of themselves and formulating questions are not mental acts that are adequately valued in elementary school. This way of learning is fundamental in that it fosters autonomous, creative and critical thinking in pupils.
- **Community of Inquiry and discovery of meaning.**
 - The goal of this step to lead students through dialogue with a perspective of cooperation; each individual intervention thus contributes to enriching the groups' perspective. A true "community of inquiry" is manifested when dialogue among peers is characterized by pluralism, reciprocity and tolerance."

Philosophy for Students in a Nutshell

The teacher's role is not that of a supplier of values or morals, but that of a facilitator and clarifier of the valuing process. This is a process that prepares students to critically inquire into converging and diverging ideas as well as where those ideas logically lead while always keeping in mind the cardinal rule to not block the path of inquiry but to see where it leads!

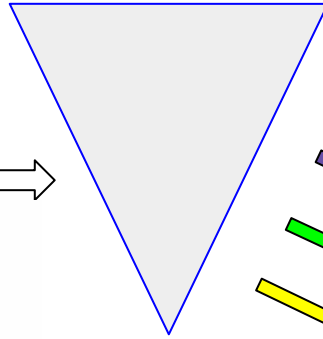
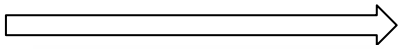


Putting the Puzzle Pieces Together

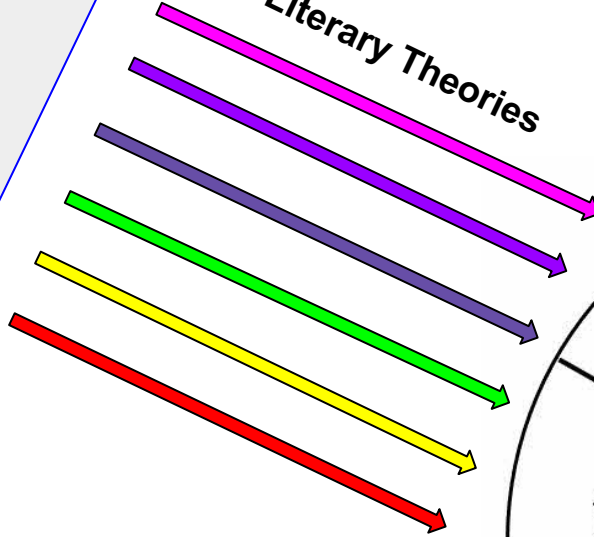


Prism of Literary Criticism

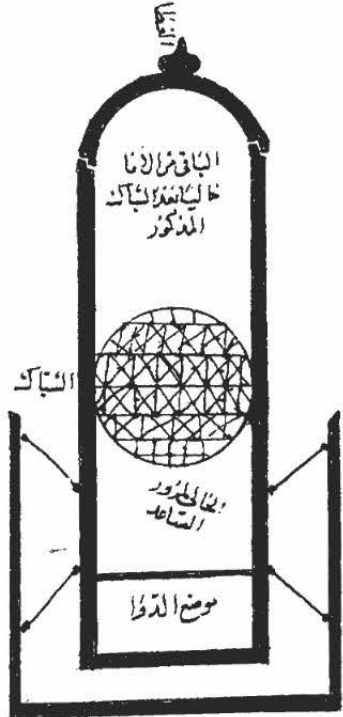
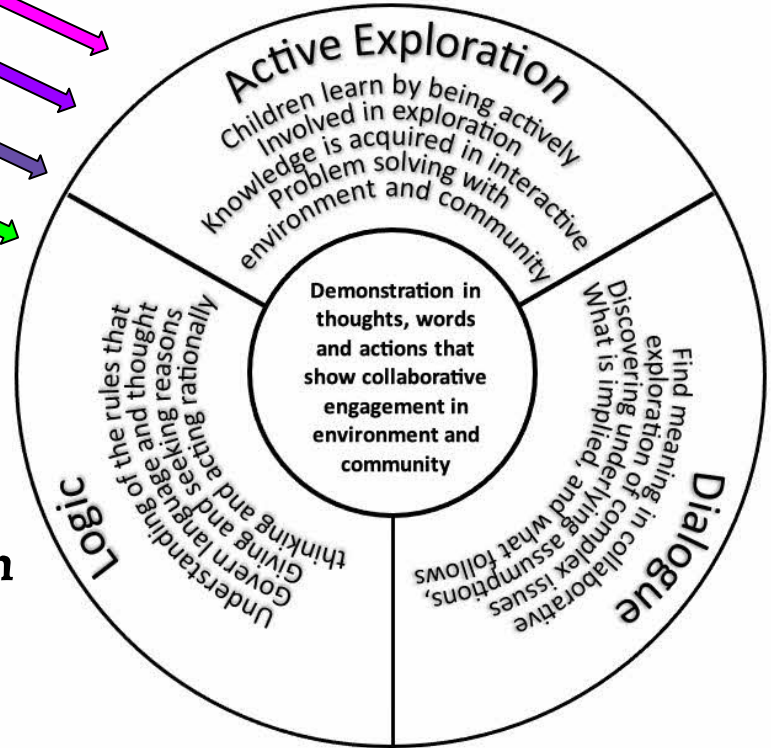
Ethical Criticism



Literary Theories



Frame of Philosophy

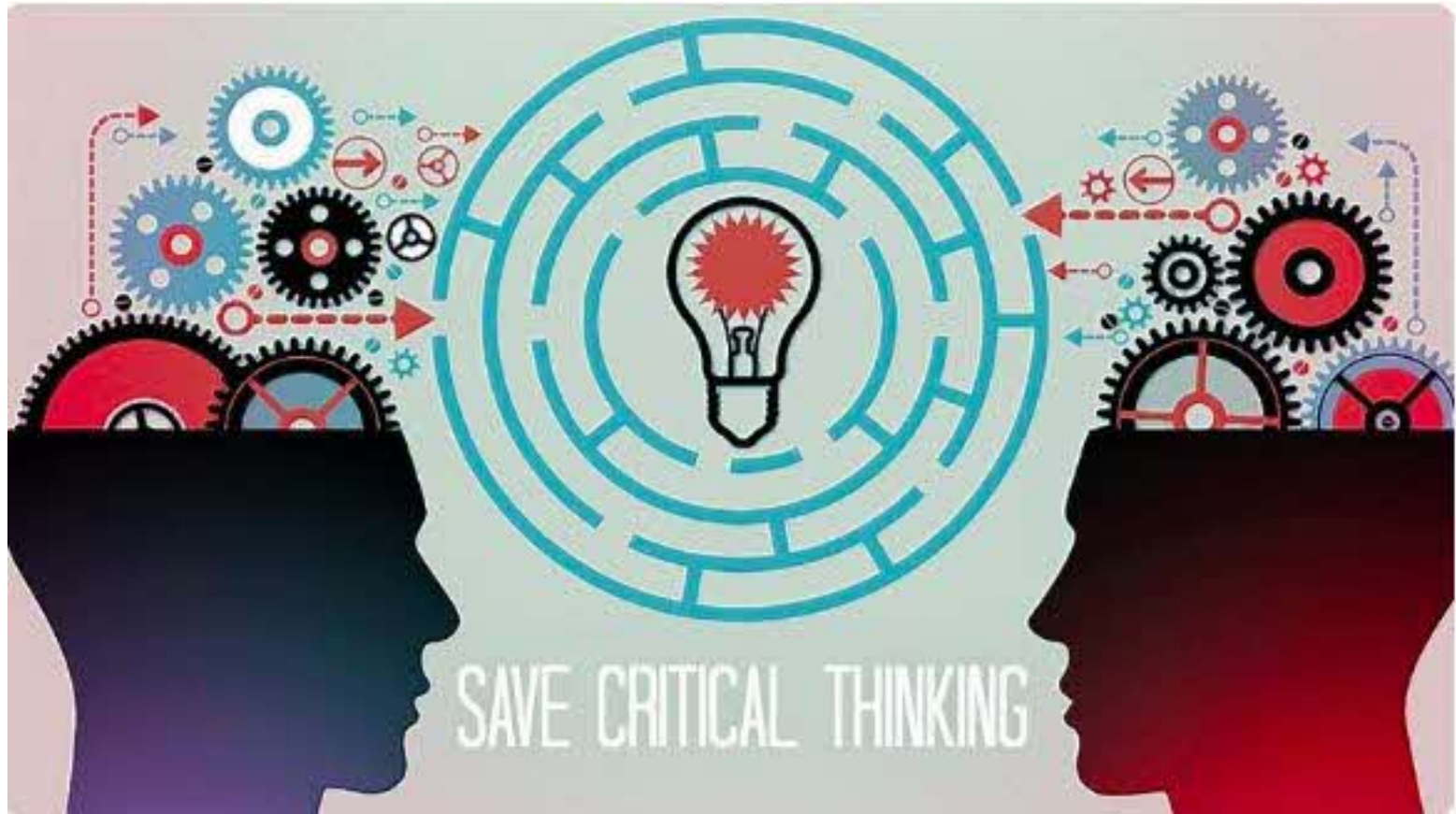


Alchemic Method for Philosopher's Stone:

- One part Ethical Criticism
- One Part Literary Theory
- One Part Philosophy



This pedagogical approach will teach students global traditions, values, and heritage through world literature. It will teach students how to critically analyze these texts and ideas. It will also teach students to evaluate ideas/beliefs in a process of collaborative inquiry among peers. In summary, it will teach students how to interpret the past, articulate the present, and intimate the best way forward in a complex world.



https://www.change.org/p/sir-david-melville-reform-the-critical-thinking-a-level-curriculum-to-continue-the-subject-s-teaching?source_location=topic_page