

**NOTES**

Chapter 3, "The Lens of Reader Response: The Promise & Peril of Response-Based Pedagogy" in *Critical Encounters in High School English: Teaching Literary Theory to Adolescents* by Deborah Appleman defines the reader-response lens as a negotiation between the author's intent and the reader's response. It is not simply the question "What does it mean to me?" that captures the essence of a reader response lens (31).

Reading texts with a reader-response lens requires the reader to turn from the traditional conception of a work as an achieved structure of meaning to the responses of readers to the text. Readers deemphasize the narrator, plot, characters, style, and structure of the text; and emphasize the connections between a reader's experience and the text.

Assumptions of Reader-response

1. An author's intentions are not reliably available to readers; all they have is the text.
2. Out of the text, readers actively and personally make meaning.
3. Responding to a text is a process, and descriptions of that process are valuable (150).

Strategies for Reading with a Reader-response Lens

1. Move through the text in super-slow motion, describing the response of an informed reader at various points.
2. Or describe your own response when moving through the text.
3. React to the text as a whole, embracing and expressing the subjective and personal response it engenders (150).

Questions Readers ask about Literary Works

1. How do readers make meaning as they read the text?
2. What is the relationship between the meaning they make and the text? (Tyson 451)

References

- Appleman, Deborah. (2009). *Critical Encounters in High School English: Teaching Literary Theory to Adolescents* (2nd ed). Urbana, Illinois: NCTE.
- Tyson, Lois. (2006). *Critical Theory Today: A User Friendly Guide* (2nd ed). New York, NY: Routledge.