

## Objectives for Teaching Literature

\* Courtesy of Elaine Showalter's *Teaching Literature*, 2003, Blackwell Pub.

1. How to recognize subtle and complex differences in language use.
2. How to read figurative language and distinguish between literal and metaphorical meaning.
3. How to seek out further knowledge about the literary work, its author, its content, or its interpretation.
4. How to detect the cultural assumptions underlying writings from a different time or society, and in the process to become aware of one's own cultural assumptions.
5. How to relate apparently disparate works to one another, and to synthesize ideas that connect them into a tradition or a literary period.
6. How to use literary models as cultural references, either to communicate with others or to clarify one's own ideas.
7. How to think creatively about problems by using literature as a broadening of one's own experience and practical knowledge.
8. How to read closely, with attention to detailed use of diction, syntax, metaphor, and style, not only in high literary works, but in decoding the stream of language everyone in modern society is exposed to.
9. How to create literary texts of one's own, whether imaginative or critical.
10. How to think creatively within and beyond literary studies, making some connections between literary work and one's own life.
11. How to work and learn with others, taking literature as a focus for discussion and analysis.
12. How to defend a critical judgment against the informed opinions of others.