

Survey of Critical Opinion of British Literature Topics

Topics:

Jane Austen

- Pride & Prejudice

Beowulf

- Tracking Grendel: The uncanny in Beowulf
- Structure, mood & meaning in Beowulf
- Water imagery & the Baptism in Beowulf
- Religion and language in Beowulf
- Religious elements in Beowulf: Original or added later?
- The necessity of evil in Beowulf
- Presence of evil in Beowulf & Lord of the Rings
- Cain's monstrous progeny in Beowulf
- Irony and understatement in Beowulf
- To translate a hero: The Hobbit as Beowulf retold
- Symbolism in Beowulf

William Blake

- Reality and fantasy in Blake's poetry
- Symbolism and imagery in Blake's poetry
- Blake's religious and philosophical beliefs as shown in his poetry

Charlotte Bronte

- Themes in Jane Eyre

Emily Bronte

- Wuthering Heights

Robert Browning

- Themes in his poetry

Robert Burns

- Use of language in Burns' poetry

Lewis Carroll

- Themes in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland & Through the Looking Glass

Cavalier Poets—Robert Herrick, Richard Lovelace, John Suckling

- Carpe diem theme in poetry of the Cavalier Poets

Geoffrey Chaucer—The Canterbury Tales

- Chaucer's views on marriage

- Chaucer's views on religion
- Medieval romance & feminine difference in "The Knight's Tale"
- Imagination, order & ideology: "The Knight's Tale"
- Antifeminism in The Canterbury Tales
- Heresy in The Canterbury Tales
- Pardoner's hypocrisy & subjectivity
- Role of women in "The Wife of Bath's Tale" and "The Knight's Tale"
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- Themes in "The Knight's Tale"

Samuel Taylor Coleridge

- Elements of fantasy in Coleridge's works
- Role of imagination in literature in Coleridge's works

Charles Dickens

- The death of children
- Ghosts & the supernatural in David Copperfield
- Great Expectations—Symbolism, imagery, motif
- Women & social status in Great Expectations
- Guilt & complicity in Great Expectations
- Shadows & darkness in A Tale of Two Cities
- Violence & oppression in revolutionaries in A Tale of Two Cities
- The role of children in Dickens' works
- Suicidal deaths in Dickens' works

John Donne

- Intellectual arguments in Donne's poetry
- Death imagery in Donne's poetry

Arthur Conan Doyle

- Themes in Sherlock Holmes

George Eliot

- Themes in Silas Marner

T. S. Eliot

- Themes in Murder in the Cathedral

"Sir Gawain & the Green Knight"

- Role of women
- Themes in "Sir Gawain & the Green Knight"

George Gordon, Lord Byron

- Themes in his works

Thomas Gray

- The use of emotion in Gray's poetry
- Compare Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Graveyard" to Tennyson's In Memoriam

John Keats

- Themes in his works

D. H. Lawrence

- Themes in Sons & Lovers
- Themes in his other works

Sir Thomas Malory—Morte d'Arthur

- Themes in Morte d'Arthur
- The Holy Grail: From romance motif to modern genre
- Prophecy, dragons & meaning in Malory
- Evidence against Lancelot & Guinevere
- Human relationships & materialism in Great Expectations & Morte d'Arthur

Christopher Marlowe

- Themes in Doctor Faustus

Andrew Marvel

- Themes in his poetry

John Milton—Paradise Lost

- Compare the disruptions of the English Civil War with the disruptions and war in Paradise Lost
- Themes in Milton's sonnets
- Allegory of sin and death in Paradise Lost

Alexander Pope—The Rape of the Lock

- Pope's mockery of high society and its displays in The Rape of the Lock

William Shakespeare—Sonnets

- Themes in Shakespeare's sonnets

George Bernard Shaw

- Themes in Major Barbara
- Themes in Pygmalion
- Saint Joan

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

- Themes in Shelley's Frankenstein

Percy Bysshe Shelley

- **Themes in his works**

Jonathan Swift—Gulliver's Travels

- **Satire in Gulliver's Travels**
- **Jonathan Swift's Indictment of Humanity in Part IV of Gulliver's Travels**
- **Swift's satire on science**
- **Satire in Gulliver's Travels—religious & political**

Alfred, Lord Tennyson—Idylls of the King

- **Dreams in Idylls of the King and Great Expectations**
- **Evils of materialism in Idylls of the King and Great Expectations**

J.R.R. Tolkien—The Lord of the Rings

- **Elves and Faerie—The development of Elves in Tolkien's mythology**
- **Tolkien and the world wars**
- **Construction of the women in The Hobbit**
- **Good vs. evil in The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit**
- **Themes in The Lord of the Rings**
- **Themes in The Hobbit**

William Wordsworth

- **Themes in Wordsworth's works**