Literary Criticism

"The World of the Text"

Source Criticism and Form Criticism

Attempted to identify sources and processes of literary composition

Literary Context—Narrative and Canonical Contexts

How the text relates to the immediate context and the larger whole, e.g., episodes in the larger story; outline of a book

Literary Form—Primary Genre

The primary genre or literary type and its characteristics which necessitate differing reading strategies

The Text

Literary Function

Placement and function of the passage within its immediate and larger context. May be climactic, transitional, illustrative. How the individual passage shares in the meaning of the larger unit and contributes to it

Literary Structure

How the text is arranged or organized to link smaller subunits and sections. May be structured according to themes, chronology, plots, arguments, speeches and summations, geography, patterns, or series. Use of literary clues and markers to indicate structural divisions and techniques

Embedded Genre

Sub-genre or forms isolated to help determine structure

Rhetorical Criticism

How the author sought to persuade his audience. Note the historical and cultural context that prompted the writing, and the narrator's point of view in narrative prose.

Classical Rhetoric

Elements:

- *invention*—arguments and supports
- *arrangement*—most effective organization
- *style*—effective language

Logical proofs:

- *ethos*—character of speaker
- *pathos*—appeal to emotions and feelings of readers/hearers
- *logos*—coherent and consistent content

Literary Style—Literary Conventions and Rhetorical Features

Linguistic devices used by the author to appeal to the particular audience, helping the readers to wholeheartedly follow and respond

Literary Mood

Elements used to create an effect and elicit emotional reader response, e.g., setting, imagery, grammar

Genre

Composition—Structure

Rhetoric—Style

Hayes, John, and Holladay, Carl, Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook, Chapter 5, Literary Criticism, pp. 90-103