Most literature students are introduced to literary theory and writing about literature as separate subjects, though the two are intimately linked in the practice of literary scholarship. Literary scholarship is guided by literary theories and expressed through writing; it doesn’t make sense to learn each in isolation. Literary theories are intellectual models that scholars use to understand stories, novels, poems, plays, and other texts. Different theories prioritize different historical, social, or methodological concerns. The authors believe students of literature should learn about many literary theories so they can discover which interpretive tools work best for them when they write about literature in their classes (and beyond). This book aims to help students build up a personal toolbox of interpretive possibilities.
1: Introduction - What Is Literary Theory and Why Should I Care?

• 2: Writing about Form - Developing the Foundations of Close Reading

• 3: Writing about Character and Motivation - Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism

• 4: Writing about Gender and Sexuality - Applying Feminist and Gender Criticism
5: Writing about Racial, Ethnic, and Cultural Identity

6: Writing about Readers - Applying Reader-Response Theory

7: Writing about History and Culture from a New Historical Perspective

8: Writing about the Natural World
9: Reading and Writing in the Digital Age

10: Appendix - Peer Review Sheets

Back Matter

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