

# Literature Overview

## Syllabus

	Text Analysis	Text Comparison	Poetry Comparison
Texts Involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ariel</li><li>• Age of Iron</li><li>• Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?</li></ul>		Unseen Poems
Time	3 hours: 1h/Essay		
Misc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compare the Text in its Context</li><li>• Relate the Text to the Theme of the Mind &amp; Self</li><li>• Focus: Close Analysis</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focus: Thematic Link to the Mind &amp; Self</li></ul>	

### **SH1 Common Test 2018**

1. Unseen Poetry Comparison
2. Unseen Prose/Poetry
3. Age of Iron Theme-based Essay
  - a. Focus: Link to Mind & Self

### **Logistics**

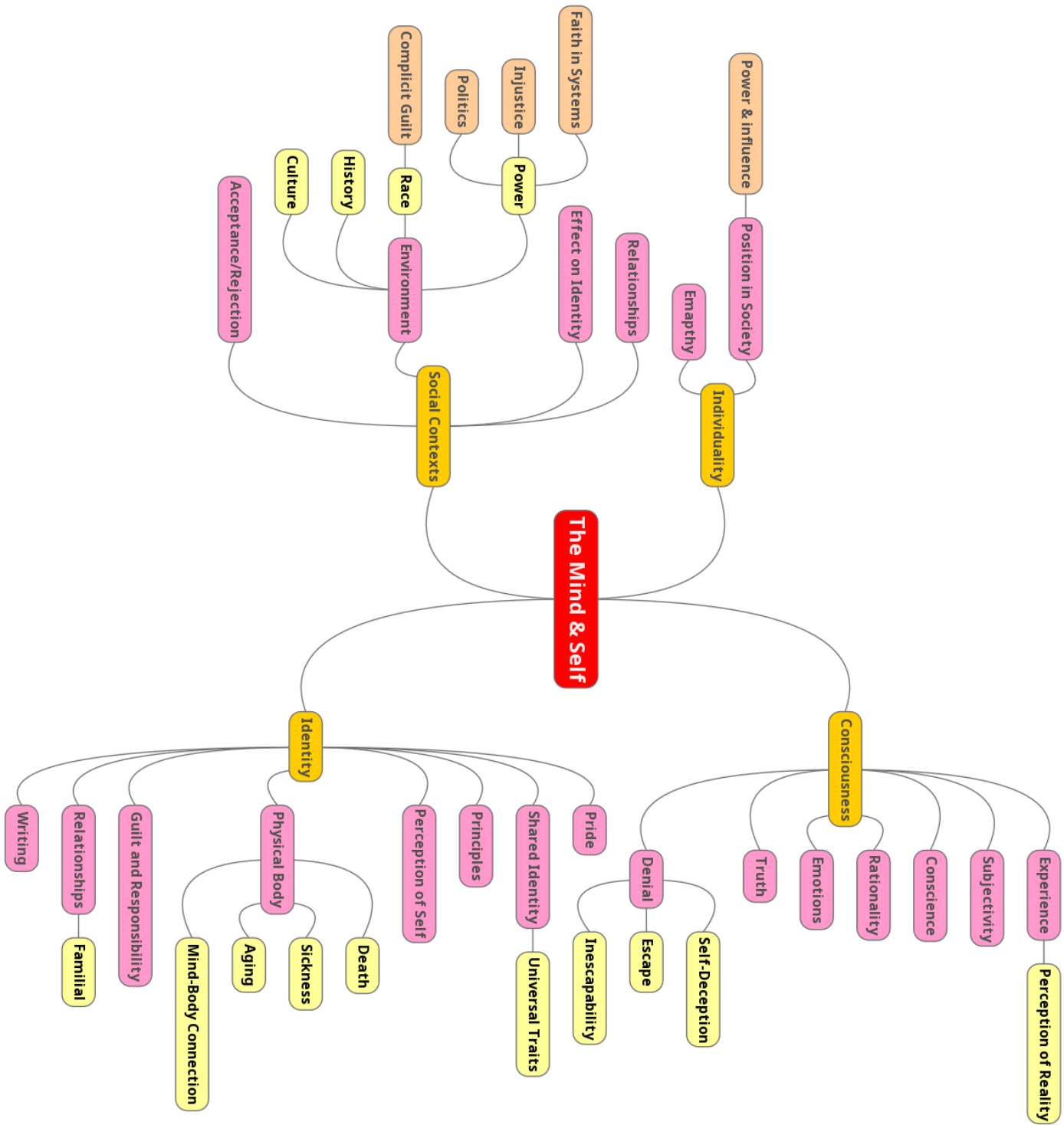
#### Year 1 Timeline

- Term 1: Prose Analysis
- Term 2: Age of Iron and Essay Writing
- Term 3: Ariel

### **Conventions**

- Open Book: Highlighting and Underlining Only
    - No Bookmarks, Folding, Post-its or Writing
  - Start each question/section on a New piece of paper
  - Names
    - Underline the Names of Prose
    - “” Names of Poems
  - Quotations: Use “” and [grammatical changes for interweaving]
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# The Mind & Self



- Mind: The element of a person that enables them to be aware of the world and their experiences, to think, and to feel
- Self: A person's essential being that distinguishes them from others, especially considered as the object of introspection or reflexive action
  - Constructed by the mind in order to create a consistent sense of meaning, agency and individuality from the rush of experiences and thoughts in the midst of society
- Value of the self: BAD PIE
  - Purpose
  - Efficacy
  - Agency
  - Dignity
  - Individuality
  - Belonging

## Definition → Representation → Perception

- Process Changes over Time
- Perception:
  - Others
  - State of Society
  - Efficacy of Actions
  - Oneself

### Key Question

## How is one's Identity Formed by their Perception of the World?

- Problems with methods of Definitions
  - Factors are in Flux
- Significance Problems
  - Physical Body
    - If a person were annihilated and a molecule-by-molecule replica was created simultaneously, would the replica be him?
    - Changes in Body: Ship of Theseus, Aging, Sickness
  - Psychological Factors: If all of a person's memories, desires and psychological elements were switched with the Queen of England's, who would be the original person?

- Such definitions of Self by the Description of Qualities provide distinctions between Selves but do not explain which the Distinctions between Selves are Significant

## The Persistence Question

What is necessary and sufficient for a past/future being to be him/herself?

- What is needed for identity to be consistent across time?

## Essentialism as a Response to the PQ

For any specific kind of entity, there are a set of fixed and unalterable characteristics which any entity of that kind must possess in order to be classified as so

- Identity is a constant
- Challenge: Inevitable changes in maturity

### Somatic Approach

Bodily continuity is necessary and sufficient sufficient in justifying that one is the same Person

- BUT: How much bodily change is allowed for continuity to remain?
- BUT: Loss of body parts = Change in identity?
- BUT: Different parts of the body seem to be more crucial to identity than others
  - E.g. Brain vs Left Pinky Fingernail

### Psychological Approach

Psychological relation is necessary and sufficient in justifying that one is the same Person

- Expected continuity with brain transplants
  - Contains memories and mental features → Behavior, Attitude and Outlook
- BUT: Fetuses without mental capacity
- BUT: Two halves of a person's brain transplanted into two separate bodies?

### Memory Criterion

The memories of a person are necessary and sufficient in justifying that one is the same Person

- Personal identity is a result of the mapping and interpretation
  - Past experiences give us patterns for present interpretation
  - *BUT: Problem of Induction*
- Values and attitudes created invariable from experience
  - Selection by significance decided by self
- BUT: Unreliability of Memory
- BUT: Memory Loss; Dementia = Loss of/Change in Identity?
- BUT: Spontaneous modification of Memory on Reflection

### **Personal Identity as a Narrative**

Fundamental Belief: Humans are all sense-making tellers; “Homo Narrans”

Definition: The self is defined by the Story one tells about Himself

- Story: Events and Plans within one’s life shaped into a meaningful well-rounded whole

Benefits

- Fulfills Intuition that some Events/Plans are Impactful on one’s identity while others are Incidental
  - E.g. Incidental: Works at a Pharmaceutical Company ≠ Impactful: Passion for Science
- Allows for the Self-Construction to be an Active, Ongoing Process
  - Movement of Events and Plans from “Incidental” to “Impactful” and vice versa
- Creates Significance in Nihilistic nature of how we are trivially distinct from others
  - Focus on events/plans particular to the Self at specific moments in life
  - Meaning found in Actualising the Self a person is in the midst of becoming
    - Connection between Self and Meaning

Limitations

- Teleological: Significance of Self hinges on its End Purpose
  - Narratives have a Beginning, Middle and End
  - Most lives would fail to Achieve the Actualisation of Self due to dying too Early or Drag on after the Purpose is Achieved due the temporal nature of this definition
  - ∴ Implies that a Self is less/more significant due to its time of death
- A Self may have Significant (or Worthwhile) Qualities that do not Cohere with the Narrative Structure
  - ∴ Implies that Selves with Worthwhile plans/events that do not cohere to form a compelling narrative are less Significant
- What makes a Story Compelling is often based on the culture of a society
  - ∴ Suggests that the Significance of what makes a person distinct is in what he has in common with societal expectations
- Self-Deception of Objective and Honest Reflection
- Some people may not Engage in self-reflection and forming their narratives deliberately

### **Personal Identity as a Character**

Definition: The Self consists of a Coherent Texture of personal Qualities

- Coherent: Hangs together in a Comprehensible Whole
- Avoids Teleological Problem of the Narrative Theory

## **Flow Concept of Identity**

Identity invariably changes across time and surroundings

- Permanence is a permanence of form rather than content
  - Form: The entity in the process of change

- Heraclitus: One cannot step in the same river twice
  - Does not require that river cannot be named
  - Analogy: Material flows with consistency in formal identity
    - Strands of physical, mental and emotional aspects flowing
- BUT: Suggests that one is subject to external forces due to lack of internal consistency
- Social Construction: Focus on interaction between person and social forces

### **Social Constructivist View**

Social forces are the sole shaper of identity

- Pitches self in the backdrop of society and its relation/decisions within it

Cultural Identity: Culture defines all

- Use of cultural/racial identity as first and foremost identification in a social context
- Cultural, Racial, Ideological, Religious
- BUT: Not all circumstances require one to adhere strictly to one identity in culture
  - Familial and Workplace Contexts
  - Possibility of multiple social identities at one time
  - Many axes of identification from a single social circumstance
- BUT: Globalisation → Cosmopolitanism

Social Identity Theory: Identity can be both thinking of oneself as a group member at times and an individual at other times

## **Synthesis of Essentialism and Flow Concept**

### **Existentialism**

- Existence precedes essence
- Individual self is lost in a universe of abstracts in which no fixed forms exist
- Men choose to make meaning and define themselves
- The Self is a historic and cultural creation to prevent one from being lost in a universe of abstraction and anarchy
- *“To be nobody but yourself...in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else” (E.E. Cummings)*
- BUT: Encouragement of extreme Individual Subjectivism
  - Society without collective identities will → Chaos/Anarchy
  - Inevitable social forces: Cannot be both joyful at a Friend’s wedding and funeral

### **Self-Categorisation Theory**

At different times, human beings perceive themselves as unique individuals, and at other times as members of particular groups/social organisations

- Acknowledges changes in self-perception
  - Multiple social and personal identities: Situations, roles, relationships
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# Essay Writing

## Sample Question

Discuss the Presentation of Aging in Age of Iron, paying attention to how it affects the Sense of Self

- Focus on the **SELF** your essay
  - Response of the self
  - Nature of the self in struggles

## Planning

- Draw a Mindmap of Ideas for Keywords by Defining and Setting Boundaries for them and Link them together
  - E.g: Messages of Author about Aging → Factors in one's Sense of Self
    - Aging: Growth of the Physical Body; Effect on self? Think of Moments when Aging causes problems for Mrs Curren, Separates her from Bheki and John, and causes her to doubt her significance in Society
- Decide on the Number of Paragraphs
  - For controversies: Argumentative
  - For clear issues: Discursive Essay with 3 points on one side

## Introduction: HDTTO

- Begin with a hook
- Define the question: Address key terms, interpret quote if given
- Link to thesis statement: rhetorical questions relating to the topic
- State your thesis statement: Use relative qualifiers (e.g. often, primarily, frequently) as they are much easier to prove
- Give an overview of your points

## Unseen Prose Introduction

- Overview of Given Text: Subject Matter & Themes
- Argument of How Text highlights Theme
- Overview of Points

## Thematic Prose Introduction

- Hook
- Context of Theme: How is the Theme Featured in the Text?
- Define
- Thesis
- Overview of Points

## Body Paragraphs: PEEL / What → How → Why / Technique → Effect → Significance

- State your topic sentence: present point in first sentence

- Use Connectors for Subsequent Paragraphs
  - Consider the relationship between different points
    - “Beyond a physical representation of the past, both poets also portray memories as emotional attempts to...”
- Signpost with the word “self” or “mind” somewhere
  - E.g. Plath presents the self as...
- Analysis: Use the P.E.E.L / What → How → Why / Technique → Effect → Significance
  1. Quote
  2. Technique:
    - a. ‘Facts about quote’ e.g. Literary techniques
  3. Effect
    - a. Draw clear links
  4. Personal Response through adjectives
  5. Significance
    - a. Mainly value-judgement on theme, may be for character and plot development
    - b. Now that you’ve proven your point, so what? Implications on impression of char, thematic concern, plot?
    - c. Process, Outcome, Role (Message, Character, Theme, Plot), Nature
- Point: Ensure point is explicit and closely adhered to
  - E.g.: Aging has an Oppressive quality that sparks Questions pertaining to one’s Self-worth and Value to Society
- Examples: Have ≥ 2
  - Interweave into your Writing: Do not use ‘this is seen in “she toiled up the duneside, her huge backside quaking”’ but ‘This is seen from how the girl “toiled up the duneside, her huge backside quaking”’
  - Give Context if necessary
- Link: State the Authorial Judgement on the Topic Sentence and Link to the Mind & Sense of Self
- Have around 3 Body Paragraphs

### **Counter-Argument + Rebuttal**

- Use a connector (On the other hand, however, in contrary)
- Make it clear that it is an opposing view (e.g On the other hand, opponents of this view claim that (opposite of thesis) as (strong opposing substantive point). Such people maintain that (PEEL of anti-thesis)
- Connector: However, in the defense of my argument.....
- Rebut through : flaws in opponent’s argument, new unconsidered fact, point which undermines opponent’s argument
- Reinstate your stand to show it is still strong

### **Conclusion**

- Summarise main arguments and reaffirm your stand
- Do not introduce new points



- Concluding thought/reflection/recommendation
  - Thematic Significance + Authorial Judgement on Significance
- May link to the first paragraph

*But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. (Isaiah 40:31)*