



*Little*  
*Red Riding Hood*  
By the BROTHERS GRIMM  
Translated by LUCY CRANE  
Illustrated by WALTER CRANE

**A Critical Theory Approach**  
[Adapted from an idea  
by J. D. Wilson, Jr.]

Examining a text through the lens of critical theory, with the idea of ascertaining a deeper meaning, can be an intimidating task to high school and college students alike. This examination of *Little Red Riding Hood* is meant to allow you, the student, to learn about critical analysis. We will learn about prevailing critical theories and how they would be applied to a text that many of you might remember from childhood. The goal of taking a children's story like this is that it can be read superficially as an entertaining story with a moral or more analytically through looking at the implications of the text and images. In fact fairy tales like *Little Red Riding Hood* are so pervasive in Western culture that often they serve as allegories that other writers use as the basis for their stories. When you read Joyce Carol Oates' "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" do not be surprised if you see a connection to this fairy tale.

Now while we do not wish to take the text and "tie [it] to a chair with rope and torture a confession" as poet Billy Collins would admonish us for doing. We do need to look below the surface of what we read to become critical readers and thinkers.

First we need to gain knowledge of the critical theories that will be employed in analyzing *Little Red Riding Hood*.

**Pre-critical:** This is not really a theory of literary criticism so much as the basic groundwork that must be done before any theory can be employed. A pre-critical reading is one that identifies the basics of plot, theme, character, setting, tone, atmosphere and the like. All readers, no matter how sophisticated, or unsophisticated, must read at this level if what they read is to make any sense.

**Formalist:** A formal critic is one who seeks to understand the text by identifying the various literary and rhetorical devices that are employed. The critic goes on to explain how the author uses these devices to add meaning and richness to the work. Formal critics will pay attention not just to the use of imagery or metaphor in a work, for example, but how these images and metaphors form patterns of meaning throughout the work. They will also pay attention to how the words sound together and how techniques from one genre (poetry, for example) are used to enrich a work written in another genre (prose, for example). This is what the Advance Placement English Literature Exam is asking you to do on the Poetry Essay (Q1) and the Prose Essay (Q2).

**Mythological / Archetypal:** This approach to literature assumes that there is a collection of symbols, images, characters, and motifs (i.e. **archetypes**) that evokes basically the same response in all people. According to the psychologist Carl **Jung**, mankind possesses a "**collective unconscious**" that contains these archetypes and that is common to all of humanity. For Jung this explains how similar myths developed among groups of people that had no known contact with each other and also explains why they remain important to storytellers to the present day. A mythological critic might read a novel like *The Great Gatsby* and show how it is really just a sophisticated retelling of the story of "Beauty and the Beast" or how the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* is a modern retelling of an initiation quest found in the myths and rituals of various cultures around the world. Myth critics identify these archetypal patterns and discuss how they function in the works. They believe that these archetypes are the source of much of literature's power.

**Psychological:** These critics view works through the lens of psychology. They look either at the psychological motivations of the characters or of the authors themselves, although the former is generally considered a more respectable approach.

**Freudian Approach:** A Freudian approach often includes pinpointing the influences of a character's *id* (the instinctual, pleasure seeking part of the mind), *superego* (the part of the mind that represses the id's impulses) and the *ego* (the part of the mind that controls but does not repress the id's impulses, releasing them in a healthy way). Freudian critics like to point out the sexual implications of symbols and imagery, since Freud's believed that all human behavior is motivated by sexuality. They tend to see **concave** images, such as ponds, flowers, cups, and caves as female symbols; whereas objects that are longer than they are wide are usually seen as **phallic symbols**. Dancing, riding, and flying are associated with sexual pleasure. Water is usually associated with birth, the female principle, the maternal, the womb, and the death wish. Freudian critics occasionally discern the presence of an **Oedipus complex** (a boy's unconscious rivalry with his father for the love of his mother) in the male characters of certain works, such as Hamlet.

**Jungian Approach:** Jung is also an influential force in myth (archetypal) criticism. Psychological critics are generally concerned with his concept of the process of **individuation** (the process of discovering what makes one different from everyone else). Jung labeled three parts of the self: the **shadow**, or the darker, unconscious self (usually the villain in literature); the **persona**, or a man's social personality (usually the hero); and the **anima**, or a man's "soul image" (usually the heroine). A **neurosis** occurs when someone fails to assimilate one of these unconscious components into his conscious and **projects** it on someone else. The persona must be flexible and be able to balance the components of the psyche.

**Feminist:** A feminist critic sees cultural and economic disabilities in a "patriarchal" society that have hindered or prevented women from realizing their creative possibilities and women's cultural identification as merely a negative object, or "Other," to man as the defining and dominating "Subject." There are several assumptions and concepts held in common by most feminist critics.

1. Our civilization is pervasively patriarchal.
2. The concepts of gender" are largely, if not entirely, cultural constructs, effected by the omnipresent patriarchal bias of our civilization.
3. This patriarchal ideology also pervades those writings that have been considered great literature. Such works lack autonomous female role models, are implicitly addressed to male readers, and leave the alien outsider or else solicit her to identify against herself by assuming male values and ways of perceiving, feeling, and acting.

Feminists often argue that male fears are portrayed through female characters. Under this theory you would focus on the relationships between genders by examining the patterns of thought, behavior, values, enfranchisement, and power in relations between the sexes.

**Marxist:** A Marxist critic grounds theory and practice on the economic and cultural theory of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, especially on the following claims:

1. The evolving history of humanity, its institutions and its ways of thinking are determined by the changing mode of its "material production"—that is, of its basic economic organization.
2. Historical changes in the fundamental mode of production effect essential changes both in the constitution and power relations of social classes.

3. Human consciousness in any era is constituted by an ideology—that is, a set of concepts, beliefs, values and a way of thinking and feeling through which humans perceive and explain what they take to be reality. A Marxist critic typically undertakes to “explain” the literature of any era by revealing the economic, class, and ideological determinants of the way an author writes, and examine the relation of the text to the social reality of that time and place.

This school of critical theory focuses on power and money in works of literature. Who has the power/ money? Who does not? What happens as a result? For example, it could be said that *Wuthering Heights* is about how love cannot survive a difference in class. Heathcliff and Catherine’s love is destroyed because Hindley has placed Heathcliff so low that it would “degrade” Catherine to marry him as much as she loves him, thus she “betrays [her] own heart” to marry Edgar who has the class and wealth to elevate Catherine. Young Catherine and Hareton’s love is only possible when she raises him up to her class with literacy and because they inherit *Wuthering Heights* and Thrushcross Grange upon Heathcliff’s death

**Historical:** Historical / Biographical critics see works as the reflection of an author's life and times (or of the characters' life and times). They believe it is necessary to know about the author and the political, economical, and sociological context of his times in order to truly understand his works. Using this theory requires that you apply to a text a specific historical information about the time during which an author wrote. History, in this case, refers to the social, political, economic, cultural, and or intellectual climate of the time. For example, William Faulkner wrote many of his novels and stories during and after World War II, which helps explain the feeling of darkness, defeat, and struggle that pervade much of his work.

**Reader-Response:** These critics place their focus on the reader rather than text. Rather than looking for a definitive reading of a text they are interested in readers’ responses to the text, how they *experience* the text. Some would argue that in trying to dig out hidden meanings in a text the enjoyment of the text is lost as is its effect on the life of the reader. Reading is a creative act and as a text only provides the words the reader’s imagination must supply the images and make the applications of the text’s meaning to her or his own life experience. For some reader-response critics the text is re-authored each time it is read and no two people read the same text in exactly the same way, they do not author the same book. There is also inherent in this critical approach a desire to return ecstasy, awe, and wonder to our reading of literature. Because each reader responds to the text differently this analysis is left blank so that each reader can create her or his own literary response to the text. As you examine the packet, write your own response to the text and images you read and see.





A LONG time ago, in a house near a wood,  
As most pretty histories go,  
A nice little girl lived, called Red Riding Hood,  
As some of us already know.  
One day said her mother, "Get ready, my dear,  
"And take to your granny some cakes,  
And a bottle of wine to soothe her  
And ask after her pains and aches.  
Set out before it gets hot  
And when you are on your journey,  
Walk nicely and quietly, not off like a shot.  
Do not run off the path along the way,  
Or you may end up falling and break the wine pot."

**Pre-critical:** This is the story of a little girl who is being sent out on her own on a journey. The implication that this might be a quest is presented; which means that self-knowledge will be the outcome. The illustration shows the mother as both comforting as she encircles the girl and intimidating as she points out her path in both an authoritative and warning manner.

**Formalist:** "A long time ago," a traditional opening for a fairy tale, suggests immediately a world of fantasy and that we are reading a story that will contain a moral. Much of the language is focused on the mother giving the daughter directions on not only where to go but how to go. The fact that the mother has to give so many directions suggests that our heroine has difficulty conforming. Her mother's wish that she leave before it gets "hot" along with the red color of her cloak suggests that Red Riding Hood might be a passionate character.

**Mythological/ Archetypal:** In the opening we are introduced to the archetypal mother. She represents life, nourishment, nurture, warmth, and protection. The fact that she commands the daughter to stay on "the path" suggests that she takes on the role of mentor as her daughter/pupil begins on a journey that is not simply to deliver goodies, but that she is on a path to maturity and self knowledge. The mother and archetypal wise woman is sending Red Riding Hood to her mother who once guided her on the right path to take in life.

**Psychological:** Even though Red Riding Hood is presenting herself submissively to her, the fact that the mother feels the need to warn her to stay on the path suggests that Red Riding Hood may be a bit rebellious as the red color of her cloak implies.

**Feminist:** The illustration shows both Red Riding Hood and her mother wearing aprons, which suggests time spent doing traditional female activities of cleaning and cooking, and a stereotypical concern to keep their clothing and thus appearance attractive. No father is present or mentioned; however, the mother's concern that Red Riding Hood stays on "the path" and be careful not to break open the wine bottle indicates a patriarchal fear of the maiden being compromised and sullied by an outside world full of amorous males. She is also given instructions by her mother on how to present herself in a proper feminine fashion; "walk nicely and quietly" and stay on "the path."

**Marxist:** This tale is already setting up the beginning of a lesson. Red Riding Hood is being told how to follow the rules of society. She has a place and she must stay in it. However, she is wearing a red riding hood. The fact that it is red suggests a desire to stand out and not be subjugated by class also it is a "riding" coat indicating that she has a desire to be a rider as the bourgeoisie or upper class would be able to do.

**Historical:** In France in the 1600's, when the version originated that gave the main character a red riding hood, clothing codes were strictly enforced. For a village girl like Little Red Riding Hood to wear a "red riding hood" made her a nonconformist. Thus the wearing of the red cap sets up Little Red Riding Hood as not doing what one should.



Out set Riding Hood, so obliging and sweet,  
And she met a great Wolf in the wood,  
Who begun most politely the maiden to greet.  
In as tender a voice as he could  
He asked in what house she was going and why;  
Red Riding Hood answered him all:  
He said, "Give my love to your Gran; I will try  
At my earliest leisure to call."

**Pre-critical:** This is Red Riding Hood's first meeting with the Wolf. His human-like stance and the wearing of a cloak that mimics the look of sheep's wool makes us wonder about the intentions of a 'wolf in sheep's clothing.' While his words are polite and tender, the wolf's garb and how he leans into her space implies that he may pose danger—the danger Red Riding Hood's mother has warned her about.

**Formalist:** Red Riding Hood is "obliging" in listening and the Wolf is "tender" in speaking with her. A connection is being made and the fact that Red Riding Hood tells him "all" indicates that she is surrendering to him. His familiarity in asking her to give his "love" to her grandmother and his promise to call on her as soon as he can also illustrates an intimacy between the two of them.

**Mythological/ Archetypal:** The fact that this seduction by the wolf is occurring under a tree connects it with the devil's seduction of Eve in the Garden of Eden. Red Riding Hood is our Eve who is being tempted into knowledge of good and evil. Instead of following the orders of her mother (creator) she has been tempted to stop. The question is will she stay on the path or make take a bite from the proverbial apple and make her own choices.

**Psychological:** Eye contact is very important in the Wolf/maiden intimacy of this moment. The *shadow*, or the darker, unconscious self, our wolf villain and the heroine, the *anima*, or a man's "soul image" gaze into each other's eyes. Their eyes (I) are on the same plane, and they mirror each other with the casually crossed arms. The Wolf is anamorphized and friendly as if he had been waiting for her. The implication is that they are connected.

**Feminist:** An intimate gaze has been established but the wood staff separates them. This phallic symbol draws a clear line between them—one is masculine and one is feminine. The desires of the unconsciousness will not be fulfilled as the woodcutters; the moral guardians of the patriarchal system keep watch from the background.

**Marxist:** The fact that Red Riding Hood and the Wolf meet in the forest a place without society and its social designations means that they can meet as equals; however, the finer garb of Red Riding Hood's cloak suggests that she is attempting to associate herself with a higher class than the wolf or the two woodcutters who look on and inadvertently act as protectors.

**Historical:** Perrault and the Grimm versions of this tale were written with an upper class audience in mind, and so by dressing the Wolf in peasants clothing they signal that their audience is not to be associated with the wolf and his possibly nefarious intentions.





Off he ran, and Red Riding Hood went on her way,  
But often she lingered and played,  
And made as she went quite a pretty nosegay  
With the wild flowers that grew in the glade.  
So as she ran from the path (against which she had been warned)  
Looking for flowers farther than she should.  
With each one, she saw a still prettier one for which she yearned  
And so got deeper and deeper into the wood.

**Pre-critical:** As the Wolf exits he reverts to his animal persona by running off on all fours, and now Red Riding Hood has moved lower to the ground as well giving into her desires rather than staying on the path.

**Formalist:** Red Riding Hood lingers and looks collecting flowers giving into the pleasures of the senses rather than staying on her mission to her grandmother. Her quest is in jeopardy because she seems to be yearning for something she cannot find. Her love of “wild flowers” indicates a desire to be as wild and free as the flowers she is collecting.

**Mythological / Archetypal:** Like Narcissus Red Riding Hood has fallen in love with her own image—the image of herself that she sees metaphorically reflected in the flowers. The danger is that like Narcissus she will fall to her doom.

**Psychological:** The Wolf acts as her Id and represents her desires. After meeting him, she no longer walks purposefully, but lingers and plays. The Wolf by stopping her has enlightened her to the sensory (sensual) pleasures that are just beyond the well-worn path, the flowers. The path is her conscious or knowable mind, while the woods representing her unconscious also symbolize all that she has yet to explore.

**Feminist:** Free from the watchful eyes of the woodcutters, Red Riding Hood is able to make her own decisions. She is no longer a bud but has become a blooming flower. She is becoming a woman and running off the path designated by a patriarchal society that wishes her to be a good girl.

**Marxist:** Free from the watchful eyes of society and no longer concerned with manners or class, Red Riding Hood lowers herself to the ground, the earth. She enjoys the true worth of the land rather than the trappings of society. It is wild flowers that intrigue her and even the Wolf begins to remove the trapping of class, his peasant clothes.

**Historical:** Grimm’s version was based on Perrault’s tale that saw female independence as a dangerous thing. The Grimm’s were influenced by the fear of foreign invasion as a result of the Franco-Prussian war. These elements serve to illustrate that Red Riding Hood is moving into dangerous terrain by leaving the safe path of society.



But in the meanwhile the Wolf went, with a grin,  
 At the Grandmother's cottage to call;  
 He knocked at the door, and was told to come in,  
 Then he ate her up—sad cannibal!  
 Then the Wolf shut the door, and got into bed,  
 And waited for Red Riding Hood;  
 When he heard her soft tap at the front door, he said,  
 Speaking softly as ever he could:



**Pre-critical:** The grandmother appears weak and vulnerable and is enveloped in white suggesting purity and possibly the paleness of death. The wolf appears more menacing as if he is trying to scratch down the door. A human persona seems more out of place than it did in his interaction with Red Riding Hood.

**Formalist:** The knock at the door is the knock of death. The grandmother has two lines of life before the Wolf eats her up in the fourth line. The description of him as a cannibal is telling. How can an animal eating a human be a cannibalistic act? The Wolf is not just an animal he is the animal side of our human nature.

**Mythological / Archetypal:** The grandmother has failed to fulfill the role of the wise woman. The spinning wheel echoes the idea of the three fates spinning the length of our life. One spins (the grandmother), one measures (the mother) and one cuts it (Red Riding Hood). By Red Riding Hood's indiscreet disclosure to the Wolf she has cut short her Grandmother's life. It is left to see if her grandchild will have the maturity to act as the heroine and save her own life or if she will become the virgin sacrifice to this Wolf's desires.

**Psychological:** The Wolf as humanity's animal instincts and specifically man's instinct to hunt women is clearly shown. The grandmother as an older non-fertile woman deserves little attention. The waiting and work for the nubile young girl is the primary focus of this wolfish being.

**Feminist:** The Wolf's easy and brutal disposal of the grandmother illustrates the lack of value that a male dominated society places on older women who are no longer attractive or able to bear children. The attempt to feminize, speak "softly" as he can to Red Riding Hood is an attempt to lure a naïve young woman into his dominating male clutches. It mimics the act of seduction.

**Marxist:** The grandmother while weak has still attempted to be a useful member of society as the industry of her spinning wheel suggests. The disposal of her by the Wolf illustrates the danger of individualism. The Wolf wants something, something that is not good for the collective society. In order to gain it he must destroy the communal good.

**Historical:** The height of the witch hunts were just calming down when Perrault began to write down his version of this previously oral tale. Older women, who were seen as a burden on society, were often targeted as witches and killed. The grandmother, who seems bedridden, echoes this. The fact that many versions of the tale present the grandmother as the creator of Red Riding Hood's red cloak also connects her with the idea of witches corrupting others.





“Who is there?”

“It is I, your dear grandchild; I’ve brought  
Some wine and nice little cakes.”

“Pull the bobbin<sup>1</sup>, my child, and come in as you ought;  
I’m in bed very bad with my aches.”

When she entered the room, the old Wolf hid himself  
Very carefully (such was his plan):

“Put your basket and things, little dear on the shelf,  
And come into bed to your Gran,”

<sup>1</sup>device consisting of a short bar and a length of string, used to control a wooden door latch

**Pre-critical:** Red Riding Hood’s far from innocent now her direct gaze indicates that her journey has matured her. The wolf prints on the stoop illustrate a danger beyond the door that Red Riding Hood is oblivious to.

**Formalist:** Red Riding Hood’s declarative statement, “It is I” and characterizing herself as her grandmother’s “dear grandchild” illustrates the confidence she has gained as a result of her journey.

**Mythological / Archetypal:** This lack of awareness of the danger facing her signals “The Fall” for Red Riding Hood: a descent in action from a higher to a lower state of being, an experience which might involve defilement, moral imperfection, and/or loss of innocence. This fall is often accompanied by expulsion from a kind of paradise as penalty for disobedience and/or moral transgression.

**Psychological:** The door in the picture remains closed, but the text clearly shows that Red Riding Hood has opened a door to enter into what she believes is the safe domain of her grandmother. The Wolf’s request that she not only enter but “come into bed to your Gran” demonstrates the male desire to lure young women into bed. The fact that Red Riding Hood is wearing a red cloak and has wine (a red liquid) suggest a complicity in this attempt by the Wolf—an attempt of seduction or perhaps rape.

**Feminist:** Red Riding Hood’s assertive and level stare illustrate her desire to be the equal to a man as she authoritatively knocks on the door. However, this image makes it clear that an obedient downcast feminine gaze, as she displayed in the first image of the story, would have alerted her to the impending danger, signaled by the wolf prints on the stoop. Red Riding Hood is being punished for her independence.

**Marxist:** The fact that Red Riding Hood is bringing her grandmother indulgent treats such as wine and nice little cakes shows a concern with the trappings of the bourgeoisie class rather than providing good nourishing staples such as buttermilk and bread. This again demonstrates that the intended audience for this tale is an upper class reader.

**Historical:** The fact that the grandmother has to tell her how to open the door indicates that the door is usually barred and must be opened by the grandmother. This unconsciously echoes the fears experienced at the time the Grimm brothers were composing this tale—the fear of foreign invaders (symbolized by the Wolf) getting in and attacking them.



The obedient child laid herself down by the side  
 Of her Grandmother dear (as she thought):  
 But all at once, "Granny!" Red Riding Hood cried,  
 "What, very long arms you have got!"  
 He answered, "The better to hug you, my child."  
 "But, Granny, what very large ears!"  
 "The better to hear you," the voice was still mild,  
 But the little girl hid her fears.  
 "Grandmother, you have very large eyes!"  
 "The better to see you, I trow<sup>2</sup>."  
 "What great teeth you have got!" and the wicked Wolf cries,  
 "The better to eat you up now!"

<sup>2</sup>(verb) to think, believe, or trust

**Pre-critical:** Although the text makes it clear that the interaction between the Wolf and Red Riding Hood occurs with Red Riding Hood in bed, the image places Red Riding Hood across the room. She is also removing her red cloak as if to symbolically remove her seductive persona.

**Formalist:** Throughout the dialogue in which Red Riding Hood is laying down next to the Wolf that she believes is her grandmother, we begin to question her gullibility. She points out how all of his protruding parts (arms, ears, teeth) are so big. She also comments on his large eyes

**Mythological / Archetypal:** Now that Red Riding Hood is finally faced with her fate in a place that should be a refuge she is confronted with 'the creature of nightmare' – this monster, is both physical and abstract, is summoned from the deepest, darkest parts of the human psyche (the inference is it is from Red Riding Hood's psyche) to threaten her life, implying that she is culpable for her own attack.

**Psychological:** If the Wolf is the *shadow*, or the darker, unconscious self, the villain and the heroine, is the *anima*, or a man's "soul image." Then it is the unconscious desires of men (the hero's villainous side) to seduce and control women that are being illustrated through Red Riding Hood's predicament. She becomes an image of lust for the male reader and a warning to the female reader.

**Feminist:** The comments on arms, ears, teeth, and eyes being large and the Wolf's response that these attribute will better allow him to take her in by holding, hearing, seeing and ultimately eating her illustrates the culture of male domination and perhaps even brutal domination of rape prevalent in patriarchal societies.

**Marxist:** Her obedience and conforming to authority even when it is threatening is illustrated by the removal of her red cloak. That fact that she lays down as commanded but still questions shows that oppressed groups must question and protest dictatorial ways.

**Historical:** This ready obedience of Red Riding Hood illustrates the developing middle class value being placed on the obedient behavior of children.





Red Riding Hood shrieked, and—bang! off went a gun  
And shot the old Wolf through the head:  
One howl and one moan, one kick and one groan,  
And the wicked old rascal was dead.  
Some sportsman (he certainly was a dead shot)  
Had aimed at the Wolf when she cried;  
So Red Riding Hood got safe home—did she not?  
And lived happily there till she died.

**Pre-critical:** Red Riding Hood is back where she started. A protective and authoritative figure envelopes her and points out the dangers of life (the Wolf) as her mother pointed authoritatively for her to stay on the correct path.

**Formalist:** The only language that Red Riding Hood gets, after her previously talkative questioning of the Wolf, is a shriek and a cry. Her failed attempt at independence has failed and now she is even denied a voice.

**Mythological / Archetypal:** Red Riding Hood is no longer the quester. She has failed ‘the initiation’ and her ‘journey’ that led to maturity has resulted in her experiencing ‘the fall.’ She is no longer the hero of her own story. She has become the ‘damsel in distress’—a vulnerable woman must be rescued by the hero.

**Psychological:** The red cloak is no where in the sight and as in the first image Red Riding Hood is now Little Red Riding Hood again. She is diminished and clutches at the man’s label as if begging to be protected in an embrace from a father figure. As a father has been missing through the entire story the implication is that the Red Riding Hood has been seeking a father figure and that is why the Wolf is almost successful in his attack.

**Feminist:** Red Riding Hood has not fought her own battle. Instead she has been saved at the last minute by a man, a man carrying a phallic weapon symbolizing his power and her vulnerability to the dangers offered by the world. She has learned her lesson and will now stay on the right path. Whether this path, dictated by a patriarchal society, will bring happiness is left questionable

**Marxist:** The strong can either protect or oppress the weak, and the implication is that all those oppressed must rise up or they will live at the whims of those both evil and strong and benevolent and strong.

**Historical:** The strong protective man with the gun illustrates how palpable the fear has been historically of wolves in Europe. During harsh winters and in times of conflict wolves were pushed into the places where humanity lived to find food. There are even reports of wolves roaming the streets of Paris during particularly lean times. The killing of the Wolf illustrates this prejudice and why wolves were hunted to near extinction in Europe. Conversely wolves were seen as symbols of strength and for this hunter to overcome the Wolf sends a message of male dominance of nature that was developing through the 1700s and 1800s.



## Moral of the Tale

**Pre-Critical:** The story points out the consequences of attempting independence and individuality. Good little girls, do not stray from the path. Dangerous things can happen.

**Formalist:** Language is used more for description. Looking is important in this story. Most of the dialogue are commands directed at her, and when she is most vocal is at the point when she is in the most danger. Illustrating the desire for children to be seen and not heard.

**Mythological/ Archetypal:** In this story we see the archetypal hero-quest of initiation. The quest follows the three step archetypal pattern of the initiation quest: 1) separation, 2) transformation, and 3) return. But it is a quest whose 'return' is a return to conformity to patriarchal and middle class ideals. Little Red Riding Hood ends the tale with no voice, diminished in size by the looming force of the hunter, and divested of her red hood.

**Psychological:** The message of this story is that if one is to achieve safety in life she or he must not take risks and instead accept the guidance of those older and wiser. Failure to stay on the right path determined by society can lead into danger as shown by the woods and what happens to Red Riding Hood's grandmother and what almost happens to her.

**Feminist:** Red Riding Hood has the mind and desire to seek independence, but not the means to secure or protect it. She questions the Wolf, but cannot fight him off due to a patriarchal society which tells her to respect her elders and has led her to get in to the bed with the Wolf, thus putting her in a vulnerable situation. She does not have a gun or the masculine strength associated with it.

**Marxist:** Little Red Riding Hood's attempt for power of the upper class is stripped away as her red hood and cloak have been. Those that seek to challenge society will be punished or destroyed by it. She is rendered voiceless at the end of the tale represented voiceless oppressed.

**Historical:** The Wolf and the vulnerable Little Red Riding Hood illustrates the times in which this tale was standardized by the Brothers Grimm. The Grimm's were influenced by the fear of foreign invasion as a result of the Franco-Prussian war. Little Red Riding Hood represents the vulnerability of the everyday people "the volk" during this time of war and uncertainty.

**Reader-Response:** \_\_\_\_\_

## CONSULTED WORKS

- Appleman, D. (2009) *Critical Encounters in High School English: Teaching Literary Theory to Adolescents*, 2nd edition. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Collins, B. (1996). "Introduction to Poetry" *The Apple that Astonished Paris*. Fayetteville, Ark: University of Arkansas Press.
- Crane, L., translator. (1882). "Little Red Ridding Hood" ***Household Stories from the Collection of the Brothers Grimm***. Walter Crane, illustrator. London: Macmillan & Co.  
<http://www.usm.edu/english/fairytales/lrrh/lrrhki.htm>
- Foster, T. C. (2003). *How to Read Literature Like a Professor: A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines*. New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Hamilton Burris, S. (1999). *Literary Criticism: An Overview of Approaches*. Retrieved from  
<http://www.editorskylar.com/litcrit.html>
- Wilson, Jr., J.D. (2010, Jan. 10). "The Tale of Peter the Rabbit by Beatrix Potter: A Presentation at The Ohio University Telecommunications Center" [Msg 2: "Critical Theory in AP Lit"].
- Zipes, J. (1993). *The Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood*. London: Routledge.