Genrer og tekstanalyse

Toolbox

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How to Get Started on Text Analysis

Progression from "basis" to "niveau D":

1. Describe the man – What does he look like? – What is he like?
   Is he honest – arrogant – shy – racist – quiet – lively?

2. When – where – who – what (happens)? – why?

3. Setting – character- narrator – composition – plot – theme – perspective.

Fiction

- Describe your house/flat/room/school
- Use some of these words (ugly, big, beautiful, traditional, modern, lovely and expensive) and describe the train station, the school, the town and the country.
- Describe your favourite subject/ favourite TV-programme/favourite app
- Describe your neighbour: What does he/she look like? (direct)
- Describe your neighbour: What is he/she like? (direct/indirect)
- Describe one of your classmates – let the others guess the person
- How long time did it take you to go to school/ do your homework/ to read a book?
- When did you leave your home? (time span)
- When did you start school/ get married/ get your driver's licence/ read a book? (historical time)
- Why did you come to school/ did you settle in this town/ do you like your favourite dish?
- What was your motive to start school/ to be in a certain group / to have a Facebook profile?
- Summarize the lesson/ the morning/ the weekend you just had
- Summarize the plot of a film/ TV-series/a sketch/ YouTube Clip you have seen.

Words for Description

- Adventurous
- Aggressive
- Ambitious
- Annoying
- Arrogant
- Athletic
- Awkward

- Bossy
- Brave
- Bright
- Burley
- Busy

- Calm
- Careful
- Careless
- Caring
- Cautious
- Cheerful
- Clever
- Clumsy
- Compassionate
- Complex
- Conceited
- Confident
- Considerate
- Cooperative
- Courageous
- Creative
- Curious

- Dainty
- Daring
- Dark
- Defiant
- Demanding
- Determined
- Devout
- Disagreeable
- Disgruntled
- Dreamer

- Eager
- Efficient

- Embarrassed
- Energetic
- Excited
- Expert

- Fair
- Faithful
- Fancy
- Fighter
- Forgiving
- Free
- Friendly
- Friendly
- Frustrated
- Fun-loving
- Funny

- Generous
- Gentle
- Giving
- Gorgeous
- Gracious
- Grouchy

- Handsome
- Happy
- Hard-working
- Helpful
- Honest
- Hopeful

- Humble
- Humorous

- Imaginative
- Impulsive
- Independent
- Intelligent
- Inventive

- Jealous
- Joyful
- Judgmental

- Keen

- Kind
- Knowledgeable

- Lazy
- Leader
- Light
- Light-hearted
- Likeable
- Lively
- Lovable
- Loving
- Loyal

- Manipulative
- Materialistic
- Mature
- Melancholy
- Merry
- Messy
- Mischievous

- Naïve
- Neat
- Nervous
- Noisy

- Obnoxious
- Opinionated
- Organized
- Outgoing

- Passive
- Patient
- Patriotic
- Perfectionist
- Personable
- Pitiful
- Plain
- Pleasant
- Pleasing
- Poor
- Popular
- Pretty
- Prim
- Proper

- Proud

- Questioning
- Quiet

- Radical
- Realistic
- Rebellious
- Reflective
- Relaxed
- Reliable
- Religious
- Reserved
- Respectful
- Responsible
- Reverent
- Rich
- Rigid
- Rude

- Sad
- Sarcastic
- Self-confident

- Self-conscious
- Selfish
- Sensible
- Sensitive
- Serious
- Short
- Shy
- Silly
- Simple
- Simple-minded
- Smart
- Stable
- Strong
- Stubborn
- Studious
- Successful

- Tall
- Tantalizing
- Tender
- Tense
- Thoughtful
- Thrilling

- Timid
- Tireless
- Tolerant
- Tough
- Tricky
- Trusting

- Ugly
- Understanding
- Unhappy
- Unique
- Unlucky
- Unselfish

- Vain

- Warm
- Wild
- Willing
- Wise
- Witty

Short Story Analysis

Setting	• Geographical locations • Social environment
Time	• Historical period • Time span • Flash-backs
Characters	• Facts: age, gender, appearance, education, social background. • Attitudes towards life: relaxed, tense, sensible, extroverted etc. • Attitudes towards other people: quarrelsome, honest, easy-going • Relations
Narrator	• 1st or 3rd person
Plot	• What has happened before the story begins? • What starts the events of the story? • What happens as a result of that? • What happens in the end?
Theme and message	• General theme: love, crime, idols, discrimination, loneliness, loss etc. • What does the title mean? • What does the author wish to convey?

Tools for texting

Working with fiction[1]

Narrator

   The author (=writer) is the person who wrote the story and had it published.

   The **narrator** is the fictional character or voice that tells the story.

   1st **person narrator:** an "I" tells us the story; the 1st person narrator is often the main character, or may play an active role in the story.

   3rd **person narrator:** an anonymous observer describes events and characters, but does not take part in the action of the story.

Point of view

The angle from which the action and the characters are observed.

   A 1st person narrator can only see things from his/ her point of view and can therefore only observe the other characters from the outside.

   Sometimes such a narrator cannot be trusted and may be keeping things from the readers.

   At other times, a 1st person narrator is not aware that the information he or she gives can be understood in more ways than one. This is often seen when the narrator is a child.

   An adult narrator may tell a story from childhood, but with the point of view of the child.

   A 3rd person narrator may have a **limited point of** view, telling us only what he/she sees or hears.

If the narrator is **unlimited** and moves freely in time and space and in and out of the characters' minds, he /she is an **omniscient** (=alvidende) narrator.

Clues to look for

- How much does the narrator know? Is it an omniscient (=alvidende) narrator?

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[1] Kirsten Egebjerg m.fl.:Texting, 1st Year Fiction, Systime 2005-2009.

- Is this a reliable narrator? How much knowledge does the narrator share with the reader?
- In what tone of voice does the narrator speak?
- Which character do we follow all the time or most of the time?
- Why did the author choose this particular angle? Is this angle narrow or wide? Can we as readers make our own conclusion?
- To what degree are we controlled by the narrator's attitude?

Character

The narrator describes the **characters,** either by **telling** us about their personalities directly, or by **showing** us what the characters are like through their **actions, dialogue** and **interaction.** In this way their feelings, motives, attitudes, their inner lives, etc. are revealed.

Depending on how well we get to know the characters they are called **flat,** (one-sided, perhaps stereotyped), or **round** (complex, perhaps hard to describe briefly).

When we **characterize,** we sum up our impressions of the character based on evidence in the text. To characterize, we use **adjectives** that match the **qualities** we see in the person: naive, inexperienced, immature, simple, stupid, brainless, - or clever, smart, responsible, mature.

Clues to look for

- What do we learn about the characters, - and how?
- Does the story focus on one or more main characters?
- Does the main character change or develop? How?
- What are the relationships between the characters?
- Are the characters flat (one-sided, stereotyped), or round (complex, perhaps hard to describe)?

Time aspect

The narrator may tell the story as the action develops so that the action and the telling of the story run **parallel** in time.

Very often the narrator is looking back to what happened; in this case there is a **time gap** between the **narrated time** of the action and the **time of telling.** A narrator often chooses to leave out much or all of the time in between the scenes that interest him so there may be **jumps in time** in the story, and **narrated time** may be different from **chronological time.**

Sometimes the narrator may jump to a point in time that lies before the action **(flashback)** or to a point in time after the action **(flash forward).**

Clues to look for

- When is this story told?
- When does (did) the action take place?
- If there is a time gap what is the effect?
- What is the time span of the story?
- Are there jumps in time? To what effect?
- Is there any use of flashback or flash forward?

Setting

The **background** against which the story unfolds.

Time: the time of day, the season, the year, period, etc.

Place: the room, house, town, country, continent.

Environment: the kind of community or society we are in, and the culture.

Clues to look for

- Where does the story take place? Country? Village? "Town? City?
- Is it a rich/ poor environment? Upper class/ middle class/ working class/ underclass?
- Modern life or old-fashioned, traditional?
- When does the story take place? In modern times or in the past?
- What life styles and values are represented? Modern, old-fashioned, traditional?
- Does the setting create any particular atmosphere?
- Does the main character experience conflicts due to the setting of the story?

Theme

Very often the themes or **the central ideas** of the story are not shown or stated directly, but **implied** (=underforstået).

Usually the themes cannot be expressed in one brief phrase like "love is blind". The theme or themes of the story can be found in conflicts between characters. Notice that this is a term borrowed from music: the theme crops up, is developed, undergoes changes and variations.

Clues to look for to identify the theme

- Is there any striking repetition of actions, thoughts, words or symbols?
- What are the conflicts in the story? Are they solved? How?
- Has the main character learned something? Reached new insight?
- Does the title of the story indicate anything about the theme?
- What attitude to life is expressed in the story?

Symbols

A **symbol** is a concrete thing in the story: for example a person, a flower, a colour, a room; but at the same time it stands for or represents an abstract idea or meaning which is not expressed directly.

A skull, the colour white, a cross: these are examples of **cultural or shared symbols,** whose meanings are widely recognized. But a writer may invent other, **personal symbols** as well: shoes, cake, skates ...

Clues to look for

- Look for words that in the context seem to mean more than we usually expect.
- What does the symbol represent?
- What is the writer trying to make us see and understand?

Tone

The narrator's **attitude** to his story. Through his **choice of words,** use of symbols, etc. he creates a certain **atmosphere,**

Clues to look for

- Is the tone sincere, ironic or humorous?
- Do we feel claustrophobic/at ease?
- Do we feel involved or distant? Revolted or sympathetic?

Non-Fiction Analysis

Who	• Political stand • Background • Professional/personal
What	• Article • Essay • Letter to the editor • Letter • Diary • Documentary • Speech • Advertisement • Recipe • Message • Blog
To Whom	• Age group • Education • Interests • Political stand
How	• Composition • Language • Type of arguments • References • Layout
Why	• Inform • Instruct • Discuss • Argue • Convince • Entertain • Chat
Where	• TV • Radio • Magazines • Internet • Facebook • Conference • Book

Non-Fiction: How to Read the Text

What type of text is it? And how can you see it?

1. Article
2. Essay
3. Letter to the editor
4. Letter
5. Diary
6. Documentary
7. Speech
8. Advertisement
9. Recipe
10. Message
11. Blog.

What is the theme/topic/subject?

Who is the sender? (background, gender, occupation.)

Who is the receiver? (reader's background, age group etc.)

What is the medium? Where does the text appear?

1. Magazine (what profile?)
2. Newspaper (from which country?)
3. Website (news channel, personal, government, political)
4. Book
5. TV
6. Facebook, Twitter or other social medias.

What is actually said in the text and in what ways?

- Find key words in the text
- Composition: Give each paragraph a headline (if there isn't any already)
- Are there any quotations? If yes, by whom, and in what ways are they used?
- What types of argument are used?

What is the writer's intention?

Does the writer wish to inform, educate, entertain, argue, convince, or discuss?

Find words that support your statement on the writer's intention.

Clues:

An informative text wants to advise or tell you about something, for example:

- A newspaper article or a website may give you information about a certain topic
- A handout from school may advise you to take care of something or act in a certain way concerning homework, lice etc.

An instructive text may tell you what to do in a certain order, for example:

- A recipe, which you have to follow closely.

A descriptive text wants you to picture what is being described, for example:

- A travel book or website may describe their content in a way that you can picture the scene.

A persuasive text wants to make you do something, for example:

- An advertisement may want you to buy their product
- A letter or a text message in which you are trying to persuade your friend to go to a party.

Inspirationskilder:

Eva Rosenvold: Passwords, Systime 2005.

Kirsten Egebjerg m.fl.: Texting, 1st Year Fiction, Systime 2005-2009.

Jonna Engberg-Pedersen m.fl.: Contexts, Gyldendal 2010.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/topic/types-of-text/resources/l1

Denne værktøjskasse er udarbejdet til et kursus, og er et eksempel på, hvordan man kan arbejde med tekstanalyse i engelsk på avu.