**AP Literature and Composition**

**Literary Theories**

Literary theories were developed as a means to understand the various ways people read texts and to gain insight into the ways that author produced them. The proponents of each theory believe their theory is *THEE theory.* Nonetheless, in reality most of us interpret texts according to the “rules” of several different theories simultaneously. All literary theories are lenses through which we can see texts. There is nothing to say that one is better than another or that you should read according to any of them, but it is sometimes fun to “decide” to read a text with one in mind because you often end up with a whole new perspective on your reading.

The lenses include:

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| 1. New Criticism - Formalist | 1. Mythological / Archetypal |
| 1. Psychoanalytical/Psychological | 1. Feminist/Gender |
| 1. Marxist | 1. New Historical |
| 1. Cultural/Postcolonial | 1. Structuralism & Syntagmatic Paradigmatic |
| 1. Deconstruction/Myths & Demystification | 1. Vico’s 4 Stages of Mental Life |

Work with a partner to define the lenses listed above. Split the list, define, and then teach the terms to each other go gain a full set of notes.