Literary Criticism
“The World of the Text”

Source Criticism and Form Criticism
Attempted to identify sources and processes of literary composition

Literary Context—Narrative and Canonical Contexts
How the text relates to the immediate context and the larger whole, e.g., episodes in the larger story; outline of a book

Literary Form—Primary Genre
The primary genre or literary type and its characteristics which necessitate differing reading strategies

Literary Function
Placement and function of the passage within its immediate and larger context. May be climactic, transitional, illustrative. How the individual passage shares in the meaning of the larger unit and contributes to it

Literary Structure
How the text is arranged or organized to link smaller subunits and sections. May be structured according to themes, chronology, plots, arguments, speeches and summations, geography, patterns, or series. Use of literary clues and markers to indicate structural divisions and techniques

Embedded Genre
Sub-genre or forms isolated to help determine structure

Rhetorical Criticism
How the author sought to persuade his audience. Note the historical and cultural context that prompted the writing, and the narrator’s point of view in narrative prose.

Classical Rhetoric
Elements:
• invention—arguments and supports
• arrangement—most effective organization
• style—effective language

Logical proofs:
• ethos—character of speaker
• pathos—appeal to emotions and feelings of readers/hearers
• logos—coherent and consistent content

Literary Style—Literary Conventions and Rhetorical Features
Linguistic devices used by the author to appeal to the particular audience, helping the readers to wholeheartedly follow and respond

Literary Mood
Elements used to create an effect and elicit emotional reader response, e.g., setting, imagery, grammar

Hayes, John, and Holladay, Carl, Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner’s Handbook, Chapter 5, Literary Criticism, pp. 90-103

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