**Writing Conclusions**

* Evaluate what the application of your two theoretical approaches to your text/s reveals about how different readers, or the same reader, might interpret these texts in different ways. What have been the consequences of applying these different theoretical positions? How well did these theories work in combination with one another?
* Evaluate the relative merits of each theoretical approach in enabling you to answer your initial focus question.
* Perhaps end with a relevant quote or statement. (See p3 of this document)

**Previous students’ conclusions**

1. Post-modernists claim that nature is a “*social and psychological construct*”, as all writing is anthropocentric. However, **when carefully read using ecocritical attitudes and methods**, it is possible for a text to be read alternatively **in order to reveal biocentric ideologies**. However, any reading of a text, though illuminating, is partial and limited. Thus, the very nature of literariness itself is unstable.

**Comment:** This draft conclusion is a little short but it does briefly comment on what has been revealed (‘*biocentric ideologies’*). The general statements about reading at the end are not quite applicable to your task.

1. In this essay I have examined the role of nature in the formation and alteration of outcast characters in two recent narratives. By applying first ecocritical and then postcolonial literary theory from differing perspectives, I have reached the conclusion that nature acts as a catalyst to these marginalized individuals, inspiring change, freeing them from the mundane restriction s of society, allowing their true identities to be revealed.

**Comment:** Again this is a little too brief but the last evaluative sentence is very good. Note that it’s best not to use ‘I’ or to refer to the essay.

1. In conclusion, for all the holes in its logic, an application of New Historicism proves that literature has multiple meanings and allows me to deduce the relationships between the textual world represented in Sexton’s and Carter’s works with the real world of the 1960s to the 1990s. This historical knowledge, in conjunction with my knowledge of fairytale characters, enabled me to determine whether Sexton’s and Carter’s female characters have been empowered or further imprisoned in the roles defined by patriarchal society.

Comment: Again a little brief but does contain reasonable evaluation.

1. **It is clearly evident** that both psychoanalytical approaches **are highly useful** in exploring the ability of Pi’s psyche to balance his morality and instincts. The application of Freud’s theory of the id, ego and superego clearly demonstrated the plurality of Pi’s internalized sense of self. His superego, based on his religion, created a strong sense of morality that forced the separation of his id from his psyche. **Similarly**, Lacan’s theory of the real, the imaginary and the symbolic explains the separation of Pi’s primitive animalistic desires from his conscious mind. However, **unlike Freud, Lacan’s concept of the Law of the Father recognizes man as a cultural being** and **accounts for the presence of cultural discourses operating within language**. **Additionally,** **Lacan’s theory of ‘the other’ explicitly explains the censorship of primitive desires, whereas Freud only implicitly refers to the separation of repressed desires from the conscious psyche.** **Furthermore,** a Lacanian approach allows for the explanation of Pi’s growth from cannibalism to civilization. Thus, it can be said that a **Lacanian approach allows for a deeper interpretation of Pi’s psyche** and has **more clearly illuminated how Pi balances his primitive instincts and his morality.**

**Comment:** This is a little long with perhaps too much detail from theory but it is otherwise very good. Note the use of high modality and precise text connectors.

1. At the end of the novel Flora, with the help of a psychologist friend, moves Judith’s obsession from the abject Seth, onto another man. This makes the relationship disappear and stops Judith attempting to reach her *objet petit a* as her desire has been removed. Though Judith’s fixation is moved to another, her attitude does not improve throughout the novel and in the end she still needs a way to focus her obsessive tendencies. Therefore, Flora succeeds, separating Judith and her *objet petit a* and allowing Seth to live a life outside of Cold Comfort Farm and his mother’s obsession. The application of psychoanalysis to Stella Gibbons’ *‘Cold Comfort Farm’* allowed for insight into Judith’s detestable relationship with her son. While *jouissance* displayed Judith’s need to reach her *objet petit a*, even if she was not aware of her desire, the abject investigated Judith’s need for Seth even though she was aware of the negative impacts her relationship with her son could have.

**Comment:** This is a different approach as it begins with some concluding remarks on the novel. This approach is good because it allows you to showcase your knowledge of the novel. There is not quite enough detailed evaluation.

1. **Evidently, both** Lacanian and Freudian psychoanalytical approaches **are useful in unveiling** that Agnes is an essentially ‘good’ person. Freud’s tripartite model of the psyche, when applied to “Burial Rites**”, reveals** Agnes’ tendency to regress psychologically in response to emotional trauma and physical threats. **Furthermore,** it explores how Agnes’ ethical consciousness is founded directly upon her childhood experiences, namely the death of Inga. **Conversely,** Lacan’s constructions of the real, imaginary and symbolic orders also illuminate how Agnes’ tragic relationship with Natan directly influences her decision to commit murder. **However,** **Lacan’s approach can be evaluated to be the superior of the two, primarily because** it acknowledges the relationship between the Icelandic Christian discourse and Agnes’ decision to commit murder in her experience with the symbolic realm. **Furthermore,** Lacan’s theorem of the Imaginary and the mirror stage reveals how Agnes’ adult experiences correlate to her psychological development. **In contrast**, the application of Freudian psychoanalysis to “*Burial Rites”* **is problematized because it fails to acknowledge** the influence of her adult experiences on her behaviour. Therefore, **it is clear** that the application of psychoanalysis reveals that Agnes is, in fact, a moral, essentially humanitarian woman; thus, she is a good woman.

**Comment:** A little long and detailed but quite good as it integrates evaluation of theory with conclusions drawn and references to the novel. Note the text connectors.

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| Draw **firm conclusions** and make **discerning evaluations** that strongly back map to your introduction. | Half of the conclusion can be a summary but the other half should be a conclusion in the sense of deepening the thesis established in the introduction. |

**Possible ideas to use in conclusion**

*The goal of the exercise is to illustrate: 1) the power of theory to bring out elements of a literary work; 2) the fact that any one theory will always remain to some extent limited in the sorts of things that it will see; and 3) the incredible complexity of great literature, a complexity that is continually open to new ways of thinking and reading.* Dino Felluga

<https://cla.purdue.edu/academic/english/theory/>

So, the purpose of a **literary theory** is to give you a certain way of looking at a text. A good reader will actually apply multiple lenses to the same text and see how different **theories** and different texts inter-connect with each other. This type of reading makes every text richer.

<https://www.quora.com/What-is-the-importance-of-literary-theory>

It talks of the hermeneutic process and the hermeneutic principles, wherein the meaning and significance of literary works is dependent upon the concepts, categories and questions we bring to them.

<https://yale.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.12987/yale/9780300104493.001.0001/upso-9780300104493-chapter-3>

Studying different ways of interpreting offers not only perspectives on works of literature that are new, interesting and exciting, but also helps to generate new ideas and understandings about our world and our own selves.

<http://personal.rhul.ac.uk/uhle/021/WhatisLiteraryTheory.htm>

**End with a bang! Did the application of your theory:**

* **challenge assumptions about human differences**, especially those relating to gender and sexuality, race, ethnicity, and nationality?
* **challenge social hierarchies** and **redefine human differences as an effect of cultural practices and power dynamics?**
* expose the ways that literature of the **past has depended upon inequalities to produce literary genres and establish cultural and social power?**
* give voice to diverse cultural positions to better a**lign literature with political justice and cultural truth?**
* allow you to **explore the fundamental nature of identity, the mind, the body, and the self, especially as it relates fictional characters**?
* allow you to **understand the individual as a subject who can act within larger social structures, but who is also subjected to expectations of economic and political institutions** (e.g. interpellated by ideology)?
* Understand **the relationship between individuals and the institutions of power in the world**?

<https://www.uscupstate.edu/globalassets/academics/college-of-arts-humanities-and-social-sciences/languages-literature-and-composition/english-and-writing/a-guide-to-basic-literary-theory.pdf>

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| Draw **firm conclusions** and make **discerning evaluations** that strongly back map to your introduction. | Half of the conclusion can be a summary but the other half should be a conclusion in the sense of deepening the thesis established in the introduction. |