

AUSTIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ENG 1302 COMPOSITION II

FINDING LITERARY CRITICISM FOR THE A-LEVEL PAPER

If you are doing the A-Level Paper that requires using and documenting literary criticism of a short story, the following resources should help you.

Be sure you know the complete title of the story and author's name. It also can help if you know when it was originally published. This will help when you use the resources listed below.

REFERENCE SOURCES (Books and Online)

Short Story Criticism

REF PN 3321 .S5 (Complete sets at EVC, NRG, RGC, RVS, SAC. Partial sets at CYP, PIN,)

Excellent collection of over 120 volumes of criticism that was first published elsewhere. You can get several different critics' views on a story gathered together. Use index at the end of the set to look up the title of your story. It will give you the volume and page number. Stories are often mentioned in more than one volume.

Short Stories for Students

REF PN 3373 .S3485

Multivolume print set or part of *Literature Resource Center* database (see next column). Each story is covered in depth, usually over 15 pages. Includes criticism by at least three experts. Also has author biography, comments on style, plot summary, and more. If using print, start with author/title index in last volume.



Gale Literary Databases:

- Contemporary Literary Criticism
- Dictionary of Literary Biography
- Contemporary Authors



On library web site: library.austincc.edu

Three literary databases that can be searched simultaneously or separately. Criticism of short stories, novels, poetry, and drama. Biographical information on authors. *Contemporary Literary Criticism* starts in 20th Century.

Literature Resource Center

On library web site: library.austincc.edu

Criticism and biographical information. Be careful that you're in the criticism area; it can be a bit confusing. Covers all time periods.



Magill on Literature

On library web site: library.austincc.edu

Plot summaries, brief criticism, literary history. Good starting point often. Covers all time periods.



There are additional databases for literary criticism. This is just a sample.

To access the databases, click on **Articles & Research**. Then click on **E-Resources by Subject**. Then click on **Literature & Literary Criticism**. Select the one you want.

Use your ACCeID to access the databases from off-campus.

BOOKS & JOURNAL ARTICLES

- Entire books of literary criticism may seem like overkill for this project, but many of them are collections of shorter writings, which can be perfect for your paper. From the library homepage, click on **Books & Videos** then on **ACC Library Catalog**. You may want to change to a "Subjects" search. Enter your author's last name. When you find the books on the shelves, look in the tables of contents or indexes for the specific story you are researching. Even if you don't find your story, the general criticism of the author can be useful.
- Literary journals publish articles of criticism. To search for these, visit the library web site (library.austincc.edu) and click on **Articles & Research** then on **A-Z List of Resources**. Click on **Academic Search Complete**. Search for your specific story.

MORE SOURCES AND MORE HELP

World Wide Web Sites – The public part of the Web isn't very useful for finding literary criticism in most cases. The sources listed above are almost always better. However there is some good stuff out there. Go to the library's **English Research Guide** (researchguides.austincc.edu/english). The "Finding Web Sites" area lists recommend web sources.

Didn't find anything on your story?

This is a guide to sources that are most likely to be useful. There are many additional places that can help. Ask the reference librarian if you want more sources or anytime you have problems using any of the ones described here. If you're not on campus, you can e-mail questions (library@austincc.edu) or call: CYP 223-2030, EVC 223-5116, NRG 223-4744, PIN 223-8150, RGC 23-3068, RVS 223-6005, SAC 223-9181 or you can do an online chat from the library's homepage.

Sometimes you can't find information on your specific story. You may have to use the overall criticism on your author and apply it to the story you are working on.

Remember: The library provides a free handout on MLA documentation. It is also available on the web at library.austincc.edu/help/MLA/

