Hard Times:



Lesson One: Context, Structure and Style:

Learning Objective: To explore the socio-historical context of Northern England in the 19th Century, as well as the role of the periodical in the Victorian period.

Part One: Students will look at the specific socio-historical context of the novel and read excerpts from the novel which provide insight into these conditions. Students will also analyse the effectiveness of the language used, such as any striking metaphors within the working environments of the characters.

Part Two: We will analyse the role of the Victorian periodical, and how this impacts the structure and reading experience of the novel, if at all. We will also debate if books would be popular if they were written like this today, and how it worked so well in the past.

Homework: Students will write a short, descriptive summary of what life was like in a poorer area of Northern England in the Victorian era, with attention to historical detail.

Lesson Two: Character Development and Gender Politics:

Learning Objective: To analyse the protagonists’ traits and roles, focusing on the gender dynamics within the novel.

Part One: Students will study the protagonists of the novel, and how they each contribute to different themes and ideas. Students will write a short piece on which character they empathise the most with, as well as which character they like the least and why.

Part Two: Students will specifically focus on the difference in characterisation between the male and female characters; they will look at these depictions by Dickens with a socio-historical lens.

Homework: Students will write a descriptive paragraph on the physical appearance of a male or female factory worker.

Lesson Three: The Importance of Place:

Learning Objective: To better understand the geographical and physical role of setting (Northern England) within *Hard Times*, as well as within wider literatures.

Part One: Students will discuss and draw conclusions on the role of setting, analysing excerpts of famous settings from several other novels, such as the Harry Potter series. Students will then write a short paragraph on why setting personally matters to them in literature.

Part Two: Students will analyse several excepts on setting in the novel and how it is symbolic regarding the novels main themes. Students will explain how the setting is a valuable moral lesson for the readership of the novel’s time.

Homework: To write a short paragraph on whether students preferred the use of setting in *A Tale of Two Cities,* or *Hard Times.*