

Literary criticism is the study, discussion, and interpretation of literature. Nowadays, most literary critics use some form of literary theory to appraise novels, poems, and plays. Literary theory is based on certain philosophical ideas that critics use when they discuss certain books or poems. These philosophical ideas might include Marxism, feminism, or realism. Most professional literary critics are university professors or reporters who write for literary magazines. An example of a Marxist literary critic might be a university professor who examines *The Little Prince* based upon social theories created by the economist and philosopher Karl Marx. Therefore, he would argue that all of the characters that the Little Prince meets in his travels act greedily because humans are basically all greedy. This is a simplified concept of Karl Marx.



Question 1: Why does the author mention Marxism, feminism, or realism?

- (A) To argue that philosophical perspectives must be considered in literary criticism
- (B) To name a few perspectives on which literary theory can be based
- (C) To show what philosophical ideas professional critics study
- (D) To prove that literary critics cannot discuss literature without philosophy

Question 2: The author discusses *The Little Prince* in order to

- (A) show how it can be interpreted from a Marxist perspective
- (B) argue that it was written based on Marxist social theories
- (C) describe how it was criticized by a Marxist professor
- (D) explain Marxist philosophy in a simple way



Urbanization is the increase in population over time or the increase in area of towns and cities. Critics argue that urbanization has created many problems and has dramatically decreased people's quality of life in the cities. In America, urbanization has had a largely negative impact on the economies, societies, and ecosystems surrounding towns and cities. In particular, the city of Los Angeles in California has had a lot of problems with urbanization. It has led to a degradation of the city and an increase in ghettos.

The city of Los Angeles is the largest city in America in terms of the area that it occupies. There, the negative effects of urbanization include urban sprawl. Urban sprawl is the unplanned, uncontrolled spreading of development in and around a large city. Critics of Los Angeles point out that urban sprawl is responsible for many ugly and unsafe buildings and neighborhoods that have resulted in heavy amounts of pollution and violent crime. Los Angeles city planners were in such a hurry to increase the size of the city that they quickly and cheaply constructed its buildings and neighborhoods, thus creating a series of unattractive neighborhoods and environments. As a consequence, the attitudes of the residents have become largely negative as a reflection of their unattractive environments. Negative attitudes lead to negative behavior, such as the forming of violent gangs and the increased use of drugs and alcohol. Furthermore, as the number of people living within each neighborhood increases, so do the pollution and the unsanitary living conditions that characterize those city neighborhoods.

Economically, the process of urbanization was intended to create economic opportunities for all people who move to the cities. In America, urban planners felt that citizens would have access to better jobs, education, and markets. To a large extent, many American citizens have enjoyed these opportunities. But in cities like Los Angeles, the city space and houses became limited, which made certain communities very expensive to live in. Thus, the poor people could not afford to live in the nice communities, and they all moved to areas known as ghettos. Usually, the people who live in ghettos do not have access to better education because they cannot afford it, and thus they cannot get better jobs later in life. For people who live in ghettos, it is very hard to make better lives for themselves and leave the area. This is perhaps the most negative aspect of urbanization.

Question 1: The author discusses **the city of Los Angeles** in paragraph 2 in order to

- A. identify the city as a major source of pollution
- B. illustrate an example of random urbanization
- C. describe what urbanization is like
- D. show the reason why people are attracted to big cities

Question 2: Why does the author mention **Los Angeles city planners were in such a hurry?**

- A. To describe the negative attitudes of the city planners
- B. To show a cause for the ugly and unsafe neighborhoods
- C. To explain how quickly Los Angeles became the largest city in America
- D. To state the increased number of people that live in unattractive neighborhoods

Rattlesnakes are venomous snakes found all over North and South America. Unlike many other reptiles, they bear their babies live rather than in eggs. These young rattlesnakes emerge fully loaded with deadly venom. After shedding their skin several times, these snakes develop rattles. The rattle is a formation of dead skin at the end of the snake's tail. Rattlesnakes shake their rattles when they perceive a threat. They also use them to communicate with other rattlesnakes in a process called caudaling.



Rattlesnakes have sophisticated skin membranes between their eyes and nostrils called pits. These organs can detect motion, vibrations, or changes in temperature at a great distance. Rattlesnakes do not have ears, but they use their pits to register sound, and they can use their tongues to detect predators by picking up air molecules.

The fangs of the rattlesnake work like the hypodermic needles used in a doctor's office. They are a defensive measure that can inject venom into the body of a would-be attacker. This venom acts to paralyze and sometimes kill a victim, and its potency varies according to the type of rattlesnake that produces it. People who have survived a venomous rattlesnake bite often suffer a loss of motor skills and tissue damage even after they have recovered from the initial bite.

Seventeen types of rattlesnakes can be found in Arizona. The most common variety is the Western Diamondback. These snakes have camouflage patterns on them and can be very difficult to see since they blend in with their surroundings. This makes Western Diamondbacks especially dangerous to hikers and other people who walk around in areas that they inhabit. Many people are bitten after unwittingly stepping on these snakes.

The Mohave, also known as the Three-stepper or Greenback snake, is the most poisonous rattlesnake in North America. Its venom has twenty times the toxicity level of other common rattlesnakes such as the Western Diamondback, and most human deaths by rattlesnake bite in North America are caused by bites of the Mohave snakes. The nickname "Three-stepper" refers to how many steps a person usually takes before he collapses and dies after getting bitten.

Only one kind of rattlesnake has blue eyes. It is the Arizona speckled rattlesnake. Its eyes have been known to take on coloring from white to gray to blue, and they can even change to red when the snake is surrounded by red rocks. Although this snake is not as deadly as the Mohave, it is twice as venomous as the Western Diamondback and is known to eat bats for sustenance.

Generally, however, snakes are not known to initiate attacks on humans and will almost always flee if given the opportunity. As a matter of fact, some specialists believe that rattlesnakes can sense the intentions of a person in their proximity and react accordingly. For example, one controlled study demonstrated that rattlesnakes in an enclosed space will react more defensively to ranchers who are prone to kill them but will react more passively to herpetologists who like and do not threaten them.

Question 1: In paragraph 1, the author mentions that rattlesnakes **bear their babies live** to emphasize that

- A. snakes should hatch from eggs
- B. rattlesnakes are venomous from birth
- C. people have misjudged rattlesnakes
- D. rattlesnakes are different from other reptiles

Question 2: Why does the author mention people who have survived a venomous rattlesnake bite in paragraph 3?

- A. To show that venom sometimes has long-lasting effects
- B. To demonstrate an advantage of camouflage
- C. To illustrate a new medical treatment
- D. To explain the aggressive nature of snakes