**Literary Theory**

**Liberal Humanism**

Human nature, which literature represents, is essentially unchanging.

- **Professor F.D. Maurice (1840-)**
  Study of English literature connects to the ‘fixed and enduring’ aspects of national identity.

- **Literary Critic I.A. Richards (1929-)**
  Precise readings in isolation from context

**Structuralism (France 1950s-)**

Things cannot be understood in isolation.

- **Swiss Linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-)**
  Words are arbitrary, ‘unmotivated signs’.
  Language is relational: chain of dwellings
  There is no truth only a choice of words.
  Language doesn’t just label the world, it creates it.

- **Anthropologist Claude Levi-Strauss (1908-)**
  Interpretation of myth
  The parole can be better understood in the context of the langue.
  Analysis of similarities and differences between connected tales

- **Literary Critic Roland Barthes (1915-)**
  Items are ‘contextualised by structure’.

**Post Structuralism (France 1960s-)**

The decentred universe without fixed linguistic landmarks.

- **Roland Barthes**
  Death of the Author

- **Philosopher Jacques Derrida (1930-)**
  With each revelation we are caused to question what we knew.
  Decentring of the intellectual cosmos after an ‘event’
  ‘There is nothing outside of the text’.
  Language comes with built-in logic.
  Language commands meaning as much as the writer.

**Deconstruction**

Poststructuralist reading against the grain. (Reading the text against itself)

Process of identifying discrepancies, contrast and contradiction in a text.

**Feminism**

- **Canonical writings**
  1970s: the presentation of women in the currently recognised canonical writing.