Were Not Our Hearts Burning Within Us Notes on a Literary Reading

Literary Reading (How do we find meaning in the details of this text?)

- Literary Type Exercise: Explain how a good story works.
- Literary Context
- Setting: Spatial, Temporal, & Social

Exercise: Circle/Note any place names or particular settings.

Character Analysis

Exercise: Take on one of the characters. What is their name?
How do they feel? What might they be thinking? How do you know from the text?

- Points of View -- What is the narrator/ story teller's point of view? How do you know?
- Important Themes Exercise: Underline the verbs and or repetitions.

Riblical Text Luke 24·13 - 35	Your Reflections
Biblical Text Luke 24:13 - 35 13 Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and talking with each other about all these things that had happened. 15 While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, 16 but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17 And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad. 18 Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?" 19 He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, 20 and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him. 21 But we had	Your Reflections
Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned	

Biblical Text Luke 24:13 - 35	Your Reflections
²² Moreover, some women of our group	
astounded us. They were at the tomb early	
this morning, ²³ and when they did not find	
his body there, they came back and told us	
that they had indeed seen a vision of	
angels who said that he was alive. ²⁴ Some	
of those who were with us went to the tomb	
and found it just as the women had said;	
but they did not see him."	
²⁵ Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish	
you are, and how slow of heart to believe	
all that the prophets have declared! ²⁶ Was	
it not necessary that the Messiah should	
suffer these things and then enter into his	
glory?" ²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and	
all the prophets, he interpreted to them the	
things about himself in all the scriptures.	
²⁸ As they came near the village to which	
they were going, he walked ahead as if he	
were going on. ²⁹ But they urged him	
strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it	
is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with	
them. ³⁰ When he was at the table with	
them, he took bread, blessed and broke it,	
and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were	
opened, and they recognized him; and he	
vanished from their sight. ³² They said to	
each other, "Were not our hearts burning	
within us while he was talking to us on the	
road, while he was opening the scriptures	
to us?"	
³³ That same hour they got up and returned	
to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven	
and their companions gathered together.	
³⁴ They were saying, "The Lord has risen	
indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!"	
³⁵ Then they told what had happened on the	
road, and how he had been made known	
to them in the breaking of the bread.	

- I. Know the General Themes and Purpose of the Book
- II. Set the story in context. Know the plot and put story in the context of the larger plot. Connect details with what comes before and after. Note use of similar words in seemingly unconnected events. Note objects such as clothing, water, etc.
- III. Describe the major movement/structure of the story (type-scene; forms)
 - A. Outline story (which events are crucial or peripheral)
 - B. Identify other stories with similar structure

(Genesis: endangerment of matriarch; betrothal; rival wife; birth of children)

- C. Notice what happens at the beginning, end, and middle of the story
- D. Notice repeated words or phrases and descriptive details

(also puns, irony, symbolism, dramatic connections)

E. Attend to issues of causality and conflict

(Why do events happen and where are the major conflicts)

- IV. Identify major & minor characters (round, stock, and flat; full-fledged, type, and agent; multi-dimensional, stereotyped, one dimensional)
 - A. Notice who has name
 - B. Notice who has voice. How does speech function? Who talks to whom? (dialog, reporting --all Hebrew narrative is drawn toward dialog)
 - C. Notice who is both subject and object of action
 - D. What do you know about characters and how do you know?

 (Do you know from narrator, from character, or

from another character's speech or action?)

- E. What don't you know?
- F. When do you learn what you know?
- G. With whom do you sympathize, empathize? Who do you dislike? Why?
- V. What are the settings of the text?
 - A. Attend to spatial settings. (inside/outside; sacred space; doors)
 - B. Attend to temporal setting (time of day; festival). Time can be chronological or typological; locative or durative.
 - C. Attend to social settings. (banquets; gates; wells)
- VI. What is the narrator's point of view? How do you know? What is the rhetoric of the text? How does it persuade?
- VII. Notice important themes such as the role of violence, power, election, morality.
- VIII. Where is God in the text? Do we know God's point of view concerning the action and characters? How? Where is the theological/moral force?

Sources: Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, N.Y.: Basic, 1981. Berlin, Adele. *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994. Powell, Mark Allen. *What is Narrative Criticism?* Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990.