# **Intro to American & British Lit: Reading Responses**

Good writing has good ideas and good thinking. It is clear, precise, and concise. Make your answers reflect these qualities.

Do NOT summarize the story or include long quotes. I know the story well. Instead, react and respond to ideas in the story. Why are they important or interesting or worth thinking about? How do the ideas in the story connect to your life and experienceWhat questions do you have? (Not “what questions might impress the teacher?”

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| English name (optional) |  | | Date | | 2024/7/1 |
| Reading Response to Book/Chapters | | About how long did this take to read? | | | 6h |
| The Witch of Blackbird Pond  Chapter 1 to 4 | | How difficult was it? (0-5)  (0 = easy …5 = impossible to understand) | | | 4 |
| How interesting was it? (0-5)  (0 = so boring … 5 = loved it) | | | 3 |
| New vocabulary/language | | | | | |
| **10+ Words I needed to look up** (with brief English definition) | | | | **10+ Words I guessed the meaning of** (with your guess) | |
| **Heathen** : not acknowledging the God of Christianity and Judaism and Islam  **Brigantine** : A two-masted sailing ship with square sails on the foremast and a fore-and-aft sail on the mainmast.  **Capstan** : A vertical-axled rotating machine used on ships for winding in heavy ropes or cables.  **Scornfully** : In a way that shows a lack of respect or disdain.  **Scudded** : Moved swiftly and smoothly.  **Punctilious** : Showing great attention to detail or correct behavior.  **Quizzical** : Indicating mild or amused puzzlement.  **Clutched** : Grasped or seized something tightly or eagerly.  **Plodded** : Walked doggedly and slowly with heavy steps.  **Regal** : Resembling, or fit for a monarch, especially in being magnificent or dignified. | | | | **Glistening** : Shining?  **Scowled**: Frowned angrily  **Plunged**:Jumped  **beckoned** : Wave a greeting  **Gasped** : Breathed in suddenly, **Tantalize** : tease?  **Glance** : a hurried look  **Relish** : enjoyment  **Scramble** : Move hurriedly  **Pondering** : Thinking about something carefully | |
| Ideas from this reading that would be interesting to discuss | | | | | |
| 1. I thought the description about John Holbrook is quite interesting. The author has depicted his gaze multiple times. Is this to show his conflicting psychology towards Kit and his fear of her non Puritan identity? Did Kit and John indeed have an ambiguous period? (I'm not quite sure here, but I noticed some details.) Furthermore, although there have been previous writings about mutual misunderstandings and inappropriateness between the two parties, the process of their separation was briefly mentioned by the author, which I think is also worth pondering. I guess John is just a supporting role for the whole novel, and will not appear later. 2. The first time when I understand the suffocating environment the little Kit faced is in the second half of Chapter 3, the conversation between Kit and her uncle Matthew Wood.Kit She lost everything and even her home. (Of course she can’t stay in the same place as the old man who wants to marry her.) Then she left and defected to her aunt Rachel. Then She may not be able to adapt to the United States, living in poverty, being discriminated against due to cultural conflicts, and so on. Then she may feel frustrated and be redeemed by a "witch" or become this witch herself …. If the following plot is really what I guess now without any other novelty, then this book is at best a children's literature about growth and motivation. It's really childish. | | | | | |
| Questions about the story (include language, culture, story) | | | | | |
| 1. Why should everyone on the ship be Puritans? According to John Holbrook's inquiry about Kit, "You are not a Puritan then?" Is this related to the United States? And why they can't swim? 2. I didn't understand the plot of "voyage from Saybrook to Wethersfield". The ship is moving slowly three. Is it a geographical inevitability, a plot requirement, or a technique to set it off? And why does Kit lose patience while sailors are not in a hurry, 3. Why is Matthew's image so ridiculous and pretentious? Is it the author deliberately smearing the Puritans?(I don’t mean the answer is right.) I guess I know the reason why this novel is not very famous, it is indeed average. Compared to the few English classics I have read, there are too many marks of carving. 4. Why does the captain want Kit to go to dinner with the Graf family? I don't quite understand the principles here. | | | | | |
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