**09/03/2023 – Withington Girls School: ‘student postcards to my future self’**

**Morning Session**

1. I hope that you read more modernist works. I also hope that you do well in exams and follow your interests. It would be good to look at the form of texts too, rather than just the content.
2. People will always try to ‘brand’ others. In 1883, Olive Schreiner hoped this would change. It hasn’t yet. Texts have ‘multi-layered narratives’ when they are allegorical, Try to interpret more things allegorically. ‘Only poetry is truth’ – O.S (poetry can capture the woman condition better than realist writing). This is true.
3. Carry on doing what u are doing. Give yourself a break and some credit pls. read “one story of an African farm”
4. Collective view of feminism =oppressive + restrictive VS TRUTH…liberation of women so that they can reach EQUALITY! Power of literary techniques in feminism. Feminism = wrongly branded, associated with neg baggage e.g. ~~men~~ STAY STRONG AS A FEMINIST LEILA – DON’T LET THOSE WRONG SOCIETAL VIEWS CORRUPT YOU.
5. Long time no see? My advice is for you to remember the specific definitions of ‘feminism’, ‘colonialism’, and ‘eco-criticism’ and use their historical context to aid your exam technique rather than only relying on your personal, modern interpretation. P.S. Please enjoy you’re A-Levels while they last! Apparently, enjoyment and exam success are directly proportional!
6. Yo read sum Elleke Boehmer + Adichie ‘we should all b feminists’. Mwa mwa luv u I think ur the bee’s knees.
7. Hello! Fun things from today: Being a woman branded you in past, new being a feminist does. Feminist thoughts cannot override the connotations of being a woman. Look in pink pukka pad 4 lotssssss of helpful info from today on modernity, feminism and colonialism. P.s. do your homework.
8. Today we talked about feminism – it has inspired me to do more reading (both fiction + non-fiction) about feminism, particularly ‘We Should All Be Feminists’ and ‘Purplee Hibiscus’ as I don’t think I have read many modern feminist works. P.s. also maybe some colonialism/post-colonialism reading too!
9. So today you have been learning about feminism…And what is MINDBLOWING is that even today women are still being ‘branded’ or labelled by being a woman. The masculine view of feminism is that women are angry men without husbands and being a feminist is intrinsically associated with certain labels. Therefore be a Free Thinker. Be FREEEE. Ok bye. Also read those books by Adichie that are sat on your bookshelf.
10. Had a great time today. Olive Schreiner is a 10/10. Hope you read The Story of an African Farm – the writing looks very interesting. Learnt today: colonialism = bad, feminism + racism are intertwined - shouldn’t be viewed as completely separate issues, don’t have to justify why you are a feminist – strive to be a free thinker and educate yourself on topics that concern you, don’t second guess ur opinions (be assertive like bezzie Olive)
11. I learnt today allegory and the importance of having multiple views on texts. Separating feminism, femininity and being a female. Olive Schreiner was one of the first modern feminist writers. Colonialism & colonialisation led to modernity which is the historical movement of become a modernic shift/having/from feudalism to capitalism as the primary organising mode of economic & social life. Women are ‘branded’ as women or feminists. Labels and society’s ideologies and expectations are damaging/could be. Hope in the future. I hope your NEAs are ok. She covers psychological space of women.
12. I love you so much # selflovematters. I hope you still think feminism is important. I hope you are still friends with Chiara because she is a feminist icon you should surround yourself with. Olive Schreiner is also iconic so I hope you will read her book!
13. You’ll probs be 18 now which is so cool because that will be exactly 168 years after Olive Schreiner was born. I hope you are slaying/have slayed you’re A-levels because that’s what Olive would have wanted. Learn to be awesome ALWAYS. Only wear lip gloss only if you want to.
14. I don’t know what to write but you just learned some stuff about feminism + how women can’t define themselves which is #kindadepressing. Hope you’re having a not horrendous time: it’ll be over soon (in an end of A-Levels not suicide way)
15. Hope you are slaying right now and hope you’re still alive. If you are not still a feminist then you disgust me to the nth degree, but if you are then good. Keep those feministic ideas and ideals and don’t take any shit from lanky gross boys. Remember that you define your own feminism #slay #cute #wearthatlipglossqueen. You are the slay. (Hope you meet Oscar one day)
16. I hope you aren’t still over contemplating essays, it’s not a slay. Please read some Schreiner. Remember time motifs, clocks/bells in Handmaids, constricts them, particularly according to religion. GMT = corollary of western, temporal imperialism to replace miscellany of ‘local times’. You will get into law school and have such good fashion taste.
17. I hope you are living, laughing and loving and have read more books about feminism to help better your understanding and love for yourself & the people around you. I hope school is going well or at least better and you’re feeling insanely slay #behappy&free
18. Hope you are still secure in your femininity and not afraid to shout at men when they deserve it. Hope A-Levels aren’t proving too challenging and you’re ok with all the stress. Hopefully you’ve read the story of an African Farm and learned more about Olive Schreiner by now. Fuck the patriarchy always and are #happy+free.
19. I hope you are being king to yourself and making the most of every opportunity. Take each day as it comes and don’t sweat the small stuff. Don’t feel ‘branded’ by anything or anyone – you always have the power to make a change and you are in control of your future. Nothing lasts forever, so make the most of everything as you won’t always feel this way. Hope you are feeling happy and free.

**Afternoon Session**

1. Never collonalise \*colonise anyone because it’s not good. Let everyone own their culture.
2. Ecocriticism (literature & environment). Some thoughts: Nature being interlinked with class, tradition, gender, colonialism, etc. Ecocriticism sometimes reads like a textbook. Ecocriticism helps understand through connections to characters.
3. I hope your English NEA has gone well. After today’s sessions I am now thinking about ecocritical/post-colonial theory but I guess we’ll find out! See you in a few months.
4. Loved how literature can be used to represent and educate people on different aspects of modern day society. Modernist works cleverly involve problems of the world in a way people can understand and empathise with. Literature can evoke sympathy and force people to take action against a particular problem. By making issues more personable and relatable, greater knowledge on a subject can be gained. Colonisation + ecocriticism very prevalent issues that require immediate actions, literature can help achieve this.
5. I’ve learnt about the connections between colonisation and climate change which seems a bit surprising, but shows yet again how everything is always connected, keep slaying #behappyandfree. Look after out home.
6. Being open-minded and accepting of other’s cultures and understanding the idea that the ecosystem and nature is a part of that. Context is important and often overlooked. Colonisation has a detrimental impact- mentally + physically. The destroying of culture and epistemicide should be remembered so we can learn from it.
7. Protect the environment and be open to alternative viewpoints.
8. Read some more books to do with eco-crit/post-colonialism. You will need it next year!
9. I hope you have read some postcolonial ecocritical novels because they all seem really interesting. If not – read them!
10. Work hard, don’t let anyone colonise you or your mind. If you have your own ideas that work, don’t let anyone tell you to change them.
11. Link between colonisation and ecocide, inextricable links, metaphors, all that jazz. General guidance for life! Don’t colonise people. Make sure to never colonise anyone.
12. LOOK AT THE INTERACTION OF WILDLIFE & CONTROL. NATURE ALSO GETS COLONISED – cool concept. Colonialism is VIRTUALLY over but IMPERIALISM REMAINS – exploitation for economic, social & political gains by the west.
13. Use your knowledge from these lectures for two main purposes: 1. to have a greater literary view of life, 2. to have a greater, life-focused view of literature
14. I hope you recycle. It will be interesting to read more with eco-crit in mind e.g. Lord of the Flies, Blake.
15. OMG read Bessie Head! Your very cool mwa mwa.
16. New species emerge in the borderlife, not the large fields of single crop species. This could be a metaphor for something really deep. We can use literature to make people care about things they otherwise would not, too.
17. Please read when the rain clouds gather.
18. So we have been linking post-colonialism and eco-criticism…It is very geography based and Chloe is very excited. On the other hand Simi believes geography is taking over her life. For me it is unearthing Y7 geography trauma. I like the idea of colonizing land and instead leaving it to its own devices. PS. I bet Chloe does ecocriticism and romantic poets…
19. The importance of find a midpoint with ideas to care of the land in the best possible way for nature and people. The climate change problems will affect us in the future if we don’t prioritise it now. Not to just follow tradition but feel free to question them and adapt. People judge things like people and nature by looks. Colonisers may not always be selfish but could go about things in wrong way like mansplaining or controlling. Trying to teach people how to take care of nature when they already have a way to do & being stubborn could close you off from a lot of things. Changing tradition even if it affects you is hard. Linking to feminism/worth & postcolonialism. Ecosystem & economic benefits tend to influence ideas.