

**Class Objectives** – After this class you will be able to:

- Discuss the intentional fallacy and how a reader can understand the author's point of view.
- Defend (against deconstructionism) that texts cohere.
- Discuss the concept of the Hermeneutical Spiral.

**Key Terms:**

- Structuralism / Post-Structuralism
- Hermeneutical Circle / Hermeneutical Spiral

**How do we know that we know? — The Interpretive Process**

**I. Devotional:**

A. Matthew 5:1-12

1. Context

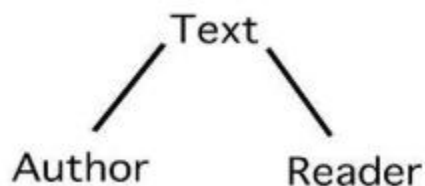
2. Interpretation

B. Practical Application

**II. Literary Theory (cont.):**

A. Participants

1.



B. On the “Intentional Fallacy”

1. some truth – drastic overstatement
2. authors reveal themselves – basis of communication
3. areas of commonness
4. text is the point of contact

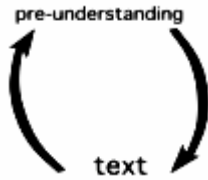
C. Does the text cohere?

1. Structuralism
2. Deconstruction
3. assume coherence; accept author’s social conventions; assume rationality
4. understand before critiquing
5. texts have meaning because they are authored

D. Should we not just privilege the reader?

E. Is it possible for a reader to objectively understand a text?

1. Hermeneutical Circle:



2. Hermeneutical Spiral:



### III. Questions for Consideration:

1. How does the author's intention factor into proper interpretation? Why should one not just privilege the reader's own thoughts/feelings about the text?
2. How would you respond to someone who says that your pre-understanding of a text is what determines the outcome of your interpretive act (in short: do you just see what you want to see)?