

# Contents

Preface xi

Acknowledgements xiii

1 What is theory? 1

2 What is literature and does it matter? 19

3 Literature and cultural studies 43

4 Language, meaning, and interpretation 56

5 Rhetoric, poetics, and poetry 70

6 Narrative 83

7 Performative language 95

8 Identity, identification, and the subject 109

9 Ethics and aesthetics 121

Appendix: Theoretical schools and movements 135

References 147

Further reading 155

Index 161