PART TWO

Teaching Literature

Instruction in literature has two major functions: (1) to enable students to gain the skills and literary experience necessary for the independent comprehension of the full range of literary meanings (cognitive, affective, and aesthetic); and (2) to help them to find the literary experience—whether it be reading, viewing drama, acting, or some other—that they will enjoy and will seek again. When instruction is successful, it eliminates the need for itself. As the student becomes more and more sophisticated in his response to literature, he should become decreasingly dependent on the teacher and various instructional aids.

The first chapter of this section examines the traditions of teaching literature and attempts to assess their effectiveness in reaching the goals listed above. These various approaches have had a singular concern for the "facts of literature" at one extreme and the social adjustment of the student at the other.

Before developing an alternative approach to teaching literature, it is necessary to determine what literature is, how it differs from other verbal statements, what its values are, and what all this implies for instruction. Accordingly, Chapter 8 attempts to answer some of these questions and to suggest a rudimentary philosophy of literature.

Next, Chapter 9, "The Reading Situation," examines what the elements in any reading situation are: the reader's literary background and experience, the ways in which a text conveys meaning, the immediate reading situation that can be influenced by the teacher, and the responses of the reader. The remaining chapters of Part II examine each of these elements in detail.

Chapter 10, "The Text and the Reader: Levels of Meaning and Response," examines the various aspects of meaning in a text to which a reader responds. The chapter moves from consideration of literal aspects of meaning through inferential meanings to affective and aesthetic

responses. These aspects of meaning and response suggest a hierarchy of skills that can inform the structure of a unit of instruction for a given group of students at a particular time, a course of instruction for a year, or a whole curriculum. If a teacher fails to consider these elements, his instruction runs the serious risk of being inappropriate to his students.

Clearly, if instruction is to be appropriate, the teacher must have more than an intuitive grasp of his students' abilities in responding to literature. Chapter 11, "Assessing the Reader's Literary Experience: The Reading Comprehension Inventory," presents a method for determining the sophistication of a group of students in dealing with the sort of questions about a literary work that they are likely to encounter during the course of a year's work.

Chapter 12, "Designing the Literature Unit, Part I," examines those considerations that are preliminary to the design of a unit for a particular group of students. These include analysis of the unit content, the unit pretest (the function of which is similar to that of the reading comprehension inventory), and the selection of appropriate objectives and materials.

Chapter 13, "Designing the Literature Unit, Part II," focuses on the arrangement of materials and activities for instruction. The chapter recommends beginning with the simplest materials, frequently with materials that students encounter as part of the popular culture, and with activities and procedures that give them maximum support and confidence in their initial contacts with new materials, problems, and concepts. The next phase of the unit promotes independence from the teacher as the students approach a variety of problems in small-group, student-led discussions. The final phase involves totally independent work for which the student must rely on his experience in the preceding parts of the unit.

Chapter 14, "Teaching Literature: The Affective Response," focuses on those classroom processes and activities that are likely to result in positive responses to the reading of literature. The classroom need not be dominated by the teacher. The materials for instruction must not always be verbal. Students should participate in a wide variety of activities, from leading discussions themselves to role-playing and acting, from viewing and discussing movies to making a movie or slide-tape collage. A unit, "Courage," developed in detail demonstrates how the various methods and materials suggested in the chapter can be utilized in a single unit of instruction.

Chapter 15, "Curricula in Literature," examines various considerations and models for developing curricula in literature. It presents a sample scope and sequence outline for grades seven through twelve plus a more detailed outline of units at one grade level and an outline of related units from seventh to twelfth grades. In addition, the chapter examines a model for an elective high school English program. A unit on "The Literature of Black Protest" demonstrates how varied curricula can be developed to meet special needs.

Finally, Chapter 16 takes up the special difficulties and techniques of helping students who have rather serious reading problems. Obviously, this book

cannot deal with all aspects of reading retardation. The chapter offers practical suggestions for dealing with students who cannot read successfully at the literal level.

7 Traditions in the Teaching of Literature

Neither English nor American literature has existed as a subject in the schools for very long, yet there has been time for two rather distinct traditions to develop: a conservative approach that has its roots in the humanistic tradition of Western civilization and the teaching of Latin and Greek literature, and a progressive approach that has been traced to the philosophy of John Dewey and the distortions of some of his disciples.[1] Various elements of these traditions may be observed in the practice of teachers in almost any school, although many teachers are unaware of their origins. Some teachers combine aspects of the two traditions in their teaching, but most are either primarily conservative or primarily progressive. It seems only fair to students for a teacher to be cognizant of some of the traditions that affect his teaching.

The goals of the two approaches are superficially similar in that both view the study of literature as a means of understanding one's self and the relationship of the self to others and to the universe. But the differences between the two in procedures and in emphasis are tantamount to a difference in purpose. Whereas the conservative avoids didacticism, the progressive attempts to use the literature didactically to help individuals adjust to society. Literature, he believes, is a tool to inculcate moral and spiritual values, to bring about an understanding of one's self and others, and to promote mental hygiene and wholesome attitudes. This major difference in belief about the use of literature is responsible for six other points of cleavage between the two schools.

First, the conservative focuses attention on the work itself. The progressive, on the other hand, is concerned primarily with the emotional effect the work has on his students or with the extent to which the work can help solve extraliterary problems. The conservative's class will be expected to concentrate mainly on the meaning, structure, and artistic merit of the literary work. Ordinarily, however, the conservative tends to ignore the background

of his students in his selection of works and problems for discussion. For instance, he may decide to discuss the epic characteristics of *Beowulf*. But because his students know nothing at all about epic poetry, the "discussion" becomes a lecture, which the students view as dull and irrelevant. Thus, while the conservative conducts a close reading of the work, the progressive avoids close reading for fear the students will lose interest and become frustrated with careful analysis, what the progressive is likely to call "tearing the work to pieces." He tends to believe that whatever meaning a student takes from the work is valid, no matter how distorted his interpretation may be. "After all," the progressive would argue, "what we really want to do is establish healthy attitudes."

Second, because the conservative recommends intensive reading of a few works by all students, the works read are usually of relatively high literary merit. He ignores the obvious problems that arise when all students in a particular class are not equally capable of reading the same works. The progressive curriculum, on the other hand, features extensive reading organized rather loosely into expansive units with the result that emphasis is placed on the quantity of material rather than the quality. "Literature" recommended in progressive curricula frequently includes nonliterary materials and material of low literary quality. Much would not pass the conservative test as literature at all.

A third difference is that the conservative advocates a common curriculum for all students, whereas the progressive emphasizes the individual differences among students and attempts to vary curricular offerings accordingly. The conservative hopes that a common background in literature can thwart the centrifugal influence of a culture in which *change* may be the dominating force. Paradoxically, he hopes that the students will maintain their individualism despite his attempt to ignore differences in offering the same curriculum for all and in demanding the same response from all. The progressives compound this paradox, for although they express concern about individual differences, they use the school and its curriculum to "socialize" the students, to make them sensitive to, and directed by, those around them, thereby reducing, if not eliminating, individualism. This result of progressive educational policy has been widely criticized by Riesman, Friedenberg, and others.[2]

Fourth, the conservative views literature as a distinct subject matter, but to the progressive, literature is a distinctly subordinate part of an experience in problem solving. In the progressive curriculum, subject-matter lines disappear, and literature is integrated with social studies or other subject matters. The conservative, however, arranges work by author, type, or chronology, arrangements that have little intrinsic relationship to the abilities of the students and have little power to increase their literary competence. As a matter of fact, his arrangements are based on only a very superficial analysis of what learning to read literature involves. Because his students read and explicate a number of short stories, the conservative is willing to assume that they have learned

how to read short stories. Unfortunately, understanding the meaning of one or several short stories after class discussion is not in any way the same as being able to interpret a short story independently of the teacher. The progressive espouses units or projects such as those in the 1935 *An Experience Curriculum in English,*[3] which suggests several "Experience Strands," such as "Enjoying Action," "Exploring the Physical World," and "Exploring the Social World." In units such as these, the emphasis is on the informational content of the work rather than on the work as literature.

Fifth, the conservative selects and assigns nearly all the material that the students read, whereas the progressive commonly believes in student-teacher cooperative planning, which frequently means little or no planning at all. This, of course, has been one of the major misinterpretations of Dewey's philosophy, which held that the teacher should not abdicate his responsibility as a mature individual to plan carefully for the learning experiences of his students. Despite Dewey's emphasis on careful planning, the progressive classroom frequently displays a criminal waste of time. One teacher reports that after five weeks of discussion, his English class decided that its only real concern was in getting grades necessary to leave the school. The class then embarked on a study of the "Great American Grade System."[4]

On the other hand, although the planning of the conservative appears to be detailed, it is frequently shallow and perfunctory. The conservative teacher plans only in the sense that he decides in advance which pages in the text will be read on particular days, when to introduce background material, and how to proceed with discussion. But the selection and arrangement of materials is likely to be arbitrary. All students, regardless of differences in ability, are likely to read the same materials. He assumes that reading and discussing a series of works will have the desired effect on the students' ability to read literature. But he seldom, if ever, attempts to test his assumption.

The sixth difference between conservative and progressive lies in the area of evaluation. The conservative bases his evaluation on the student's knowledge of content. His literature tests frequently do not involve more than recall, from the level of simple stated fact to the levels of interpretation and evaluation. That is, the answers to the various questions he asks have been presented either in the text or in classroom discussions. The student need only be possessed of a good memory to answer them. There is some justification, of course, in requiring students to know what has been said in class. But if all testing is of the content variety, the teacher has no right to assume that the ability of the students to read literature has been enhanced by the instruction.

The progressive, however, would not evaluate on the basis of content since he regards the content of his instruction, insofar as there is any at all, as instrumental to reaching other goals. His objectives deal with establishing healthy attitudes. Ordinarily the objectives are phrased in such loose and ambiguous language that any evaluation at all is virtually impossible. The objectives of the unit from "Exploring the Social World," for instance, are stated

in procedural terms, for example, "To discuss social forces." They describe what the teacher and students will do during the course of instruction. Therefore, the evaluation can be, and frequently is, made only in terms of the number and diversity of activities, the number of students taking part, and the amount of material they read.

Although the evaluation procedures of conservatives and progressives differ widely, they are alike in one negative respect. Neither makes any objective attempt to determine the effect of instruction on the students' ability to read literature. Both are content simply to assume that the activities and materials have some effect.

These two traditions continue to influence the teaching of literature in the secondary schools. Both are frequently evident in the practice of a given teacher, so that the approaches they engender cannot be rigidly separated. The three groups of approaches that we will consider have been selected, not because of the traditions behind them, but because of their frequency. The first, the guidance approaches, displays a sort of traditional influence (but not a reputable one), on the one hand, and a progressive philosophy, on the other. The second, the social studies approaches, represents a decidedly progressive point of view. The various appreciation approaches display the influence of both schools.

The Guidance Approaches

There are two guidance approaches, one that is very old and another that is of relatively recent vintage. The first is in the tradition of the *McGuffey Readers,*[5] whose purpose was not only to teach the child to read but to shape his mind and morals. This tradition dates much further back than that, however. In the Renaissance, Sir Philip Sidney, building on a classical critical tradition, declared that the function of literature was to "teach and delight." But the moral purpose of literature as it is suggested by Sidney's "The Defense of Poesie" is far different from the straightforward didactic morality of the *McGuffey Readers.* Sidney believed with Aristotle that literature was a *mimesis,* an imitation of life, or as he puts it, "a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth: to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture. . . ."[6] Although Sidney insists that the end of all knowledge, including literature, is "virtuous action," he points out that the most important aspect of knowledge stands in "the knowledge of a man's self, in the ethic and politic consideration."[7] To Sidney, literature more than philosophy or history produces "This purifying of wit, this enriching of memory, enabling of judgment and enlarging of conceit, which we commonly call knowledge."[8] It is knowledge in this sense that leads to "virtuous action." The McGuffey tradition is much more narrow. Here a poem is "used" to illustrate a precept or moral truth. For Sidney, the presentation of precepts lay in the realm of philosophy, not of

literature. The moralistic teacher in the McGuffey tradition, on the other hand, sees literature as a useful tool for shaping the conduct of his students to conformity with preconceived standards. For Sidney and the humanist critics who followed him, the problem was not that simple. For them, the knowledge imparted by literature helps man attain an ethical position that helps to guide his actions.

The modern critic, of course, avoids the use of a phrase such as "virtuous action" altogether. For him literature is not and should not become a didactic instrument of morality. We read literature partly for the aesthetic experience that a work of art offers and partly for the insight we gain into the nature of man's existence in the universe. Obviously, though, some works do have a didactic intent. The medieval allegories *Everyman* and *Piers Plowman* are certainly didactic. Their intent is to teach men the attitudes and conduct that will enable them to attain heaven. But after the Middle Ages, literature became less and less didactic in the narrow sense. The bulk of English and American literature is didactic only in the sense that it helps man to understand himself, but certainly not in the sense that it presents specific instructions for behavior.

Literary works do present generalizations about moral problems, but the great power of such works usually lies in their examination of the complexities underlying those generalizations. But if we select and teach works to emphasize a moral, then we give answers without raising the appropriate questions. We put a stop to what ought to be healthy discussion and inquiry before it has had an opportunity to get started. We ignore one of the most powerful insights that literature offers: an examination of the complexity of human existence. And we deprive our students of that insight in two ways. First, we force him to generalize and, therefore, to oversimplify the theme of a work. Second, when we focus on the "moral" of a work we deprive the student of an opportunity to learn *how* to deal with the complexities of the work and to learn *how* to get at its full meaning. The study of literature has always been a "liberal art." If the teacher attempts to use literature as a tool for moral indoctrination, literature ceases to be liberal, and it ceases to be art.

The second "guidance theory" has come into the public schools within the last thirty or forty years. This theory views literature as an appendage to the school's guidance program. The proponents of the theory view a literary work as a jumping-off point for a group therapy session. The students read the work, identify the problem with which the work deals, and then suggest similar problems in their own lives. The discussion proceeds to the attitudes and behavior of the students in such problems and moves further and further from the work that fostered it.

Obviously, there is motivational value in a brisk discussion of the problems that students encounter in their own experience and that the work at hand examines. Students frequently turn from a discussion of such problems to an enthusiastic reexamination of the literary work. Furthermore—and this is

obvious too—evaluation of a work cannot take place in a vacuum. The best readers and critics bring their full experience to bear on a work and evaluate both the aesthetic aspects and content of the work in terms of their experience. The guidance approach, however, ignores both of these values. Its proponents use the work to motivate discussion; they do not use the discussion to motivate an examination or reexamination of the work. And for their purposes, evaluation of the work per se is irrelevant. In short, this theory does not embody an approach to literature. It is an approach to group guidance. The English teacher *must* make the distinction.

The Social Studies Approaches

The 1935 *An Experience Curriculum in English,* which was mentioned earlier, provides a clear example of the social studies approach to teaching literature. The curriculum is made up of what it calls strands, one of which is called "Exploring the Social World." The fifth unit in this strand offers the following objectives.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

To observe man's industrial expansion.

ENABLING OBJECTIVE

To compare industry as it was before our time with our own industrial age; to participate vicariously with men and women who worked and are working under conditions both good and bad; to analyze our present economic system, and to compare it with systems of other days.[9]

The unit includes *Silas Marner* and *David Copperfield* as means of achieving these objectives. Obviously, although both books contain some economic information, neither of them was written for the purposes suggested by the objectives. There might be merit in studying economic systems to enable students to read certain pieces of literature more intelligently. But nowhere does *An Experience Curriculum in English* attempt anything of that sort. Literature is clearly regarded only as a means of fulfilling other purposes.

More than thirty years after the publication of *An Experience Curriculum in English,* this progressive philosophy is still the basis for many literature texts, especially for seventh through tenth grades. A recent eighth-grade text includes units about pioneer life, the founders of our country, America the melting pot, getting along with others, and so on. Two common "social studies" approaches to literature appear frequently in the schools: the "literature is history" approach and the "other lands and people" approach.

The teacher who adheres to the "literature is history" approach asks his students to read a novel like *Johnny Tremain* for an understanding of life during the period of the American Revolution, the works of Washington

Irving for an understanding of the Dutch settlements in New York, and *The Scarlet Letter* for background on Puritan New England. Similarly, the teacher who operates under the "other lands and people" theory brings literature to bear on the geography lesson: Kipling for life and customs in India and Homer for attitudes, religion, customs, and even architecture among the Greeks.

Let us assume that the goals set by the proponents of these theories are important and worthwhile. Our question now is whether the study of literature is the best method for attaining those goals. For example, if a teacher wants his students to learn about the conditions of slavery in the South before the Civil War, should he assign *Uncle Tom's Cabin?* Probably not. Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a piece of propaganda to influence Northerners against the institution of slavery and to gain sympathy for the slaves. Thus, what the student will have after reading the book is a rather biased view of the conditions. Pretend for a moment that Harriet Beecher Stowe had written an unbiased novel. Would the study of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* then be an efficient method of learning about the conditions of slavery? Would the hours spent in reading the novel yield a quantity of information sufficient to justify the expenditure of that time? The information-time ratio would be much more favorable if the student spent his time on original documents and appropriate secondary sources. In short, reading *Uncle Tom's Cabin* for the picture of slavery that it offers is about as impractical as reading spy stories in order to become a spy. What the adherents of these theories do not realize is that the informational content of a literary work is ordinarily secondary to the main purpose of the work and necessarily limited by that purpose.

As teachers of English, however, we are not really concerned about the inefficiency of the study of literature for historical, geographical, or sociological information. We are concerned about the damaging effect that such an approach has on the student's attitude toward literature. The student is very likely to view literature only as a means to some more or less irrelevant end, such as historical or geographical knowledge. And chances are if he accepts this view, he will tend to reject any work without informational content that can be "used" for some similar utilitarian end. This view excludes most fiction, most poetry, and most grammar. The danger that the "social studies" theories build false expectations is too great to be ignored. If the student expects to find immediate practical values in literature, he is almost bound to be disillusioned, and rejection of literature follows almost of necessity.

On the other hand, if we succeed in convincing students to read literature for utilitarian purposes, our literature will suffer too. For years scholars riveted their attention on *Beowulf* as a cultural artifact. They probed the poem for what it could reveal about the language, philosophy, social organization, dynastic lines, armor, mores, eating habits, and architecture of the Anglo-Saxons. Undergraduates are constantly amazed that a single poem of 3,182 lines could

contain the material for so many articles and books. Yet even with all this attention, the poem suffered. The critics neglected to examine its integrity as a work of art. Its monsters were deplored as "unreal" or "juvenile." Its allusions were attacked as irrelevant. Its structure was condemned as merely episodic and disunified. Some of these attitudes spilled over into twelfth-grade treatments of the poem. Finally, J. R. R. Tolkien's article "The Monsters and the Critics"[10] rescued the poem. Tolkien argued that the poem was not merely a cultural artifact, a storehouse of historical and anthropological information. He argued for its artistic integrity and won. Since the appearance of that article, *Beowulf* criticism has taken a new shape and the poem has gathered new stature as a work of art. Perhaps a handful of high school teachers teaching mediocre students cannot detract from great literature. Perhaps only critics can do that. But who wants to test the destructive power of even a handful of English teachers?

Surely the skillful teacher of literature will instigate whatever discussions and learning situations bring his students to a greater understanding of the text at hand, but he will just as surely bring the fruit of the discussion to bear on the text. A discussion of Puritan morality in New England can inform a student's reading of *The Scarlet Letter,* just as a discussion of communist theory and practice can inform a reading of *Animal Farm.* For the English teacher, the error lies in using *Animal Farm* as a vehicle for teaching Russian history or communist doctrine. If he does that, he is no longer teaching literature. In short, he must make the distinction between using other subject areas to illuminate literature and using literature to illuminate other subject areas. The former can be both valid and valuable, but the latter is necessarily misleading and inefficient.

The Appreciation Approaches

Nearly every English teacher hopes that his students will enjoy the literature he assigns, and as a result nearly every English teacher teaches partly or exclusively on the basis of one of the "appreciation theories." There can be no doubt that their goal is an important one, and therefore the approaches are worth a careful examination. Though the goals are the same, the methods that supposedly lead to appreciation are rather diverse in nature. It is possible to divide the "appreciation theories" into two main groups: the "traditional" approaches and the "progressive" approaches. For the purpose of analysis, we will subdivide these two main groups of approaches into alternative approaches to appreciation. However, it is common to use some combination of the approaches. The combination is arbitrary rather than organic. That is, the use of one approach to a work does not influence the use of a second or a third approach.

LITERARY APPROACHES

There are three literary approaches to appreciation: the emotive approach, the famous authors approach, and the approach through analysis of technique. The first of these is widely used and has been subject to more ridicule than all of the others put together. But it is tenacious. It can be used at any point in a lesson and in combination with any one of the other approaches. The theory underlying it is that enthusiasm for or appreciation of a literary work can be communicated from teacher to student by word of mouth. Knowing that the student *should* like the work, the teacher assumes that the most efficient method of bringing him to a sense of appreciation is either to explain its emotional and aesthetic qualities or to dramatize his personal response. The questions for our consideration, of course, are whether or not the student is influenced by the emotive language of the teacher and whether the influence is positive or negative.

There are some few individuals who can convey their own emotional responses to a class. Such teachers are actors who can achieve a direct empathic response from their students, whom they hold enthralled lecture after lecture. Their students achieve an emotional response not only to the teacher but to the work; and that response may be genuine, even though their involvement with the work comes as a secondary effect of their involvement with the teacher. Such teachers capture their audience by reading aloud or by lecturing in a dramatic way that is irresistible to the students.

A less dramatically talented teacher resorts to pronouncing value judgments directly to his students. He tells them how great the work is and may even work himself into a state resembling certain forms of hysteria in his zeal. These teachers want to spellbind their students, just as their less numerous but more talented counterparts do. More frequently, their effect is just the opposite: to drive students away from any appreciation of the work at hand.

For the time being, let us assume that the approach is generally effective, that is, that students will accept their teachers' judgments about the beauty of a poem or the intricacy and artistry of a story. Is the students' acceptance of the teacher's evaluations desirable? The danger of accepting the teacher's evaluation if it is "wrong" is obvious. But if his evaluation is "right," there is still a danger. First, the students may develop standardized responses to literary works. If the teacher enjoys certain poems, certain styles, certain authors, or certain genres, the student too will respond favorably to those, and perhaps only to those. Second, if the students accept their teacher's emotional response and evaluation, they are clearly deprived of an opportunity to respond emotionally and aesthetically as individuals. If they are to become mature readers of literature, they must respond independently to both aspects of literature.

Fortunately, however, the student will more often feel free to reject his teacher's opinion before, after, or during his reading of the work in question.

If he rejects it before he reads the work, then there was little point in the teacher's giving it in the first place. If he rejects the teacher's evaluation during or after his reading of the work, it won't be long before complete disillusionment sets in. Thus, the teacher praises a work; the student reads it but finds nothing praiseworthy in it. His expectations have been raised only to be disappointed. After a few experiences of this sort, the student will be conditioned to expect incomprehensibility when the teacher promises beauty, dullness when the teacher mentions artistry, and general frustration and boredom when the teacher pleads enjoyment.

Every effective teacher of literature attempts to involve students in what they read, but he does it in subtle ways both by his personal responses and by his pedagogical approach. He reveals his enthusiasm for literature by the respect he pays it as something worthy of close attention, but his enthusiasm is neither boisterous nor intimidating. He encourages and propagates emotional and aesthetic responses in his students, not by emoting and declaiming, but by organizing his instruction in such a way that his students become more and more sophisticated as readers capable of emotional and aesthetic responses of their own.

A second approach to literary appreciation is through a study of famous authors and their works. Many teachers assume that, to a certain degree, appreciation is synonymous with knowledge of authors and their works. They feel that in order to appreciate literature students must be familiar with "great" literature—usually its content and the lives of its authors. They assume that such knowledge will make students more discerning and appreciative readers. The curriculum is devised by making a list of famous works and/or authors organized randomly in seventh through tenth grades and chronologically in eleventh and twelfth.

The supposed advantages of the chronological organization of works and authors are that students will learn more of their literary heritage and that the study of a literary period will illuminate the works read. Both arguments are vacuous. High school literature surveys are notoriously shallow affairs that do little more than alienate most students who have to sit through them. And even if students do learn a list of authors and works and can recite the content of some of the works, what good is it? The "investigation" of any literary period in a high school course is so perfunctory that it can give no special insight into any work read. Worst of all, the arrangement of works has nothing at all to do with either student interest or ability. The most complex material comes early in the year (*Beowulf, Paradise Lost,* poems by John Donne) whereas the easier materials are scheduled last (a play by Galsworthy, stories by Maugham and others). The problems of interpretation in any one work are likely to be entirely different from the problems that students encounter in the works assigned before or after it. In such courses teachers ordinarily do not even think of organizing the materials so that students accumulate higher level interpretive skills in a systematic way. Their attention

is riveted to the explication of individual works. As a result, although the students may learn the content of individual works—and many do not even do that—very few become more competent in dealing with a text independently.

The method of evaluation is to test the student's knowledge of facts about an author's life and times and the content of his works. If a student can pass the test, then the approach is deemed successful. Apparently no one ever attempts to determine whether or not the students have become more discerning or more appreciative readers. As a matter of fact, there has probably been no attempt to determine what those phrases mean. If the student had become more appreciative or more discerning, how would the teacher know?

Of course, it is possible to prepare a productive instructional unit based on the writings of a single author. But such a unit would have to last for a few weeks, and the author would have to be chosen with care, since there are not many whose work will sustain the interest of high school students over a relatively long period of time. But good units could be developed on such authors as Poe, Mark Twain, Hemingway, and Stephen Crane, whose works include a fair variety of material in terms of difficulty and type. The purpose of such a unit would be to learn how to approach the body of works of a given author. A unit on Poe, for instance, could include examples of his tales of horror, mood, and ratiocination, his poetry, criticism, and biography. Students could examine special influences on Poe's writing, including the writer's personal life and critical theories. It would not be a simple unit, but neither would it be superficial.

A third approach to literary appreciation is through analysis of technique and/or genre as that word is used to refer to "the short story," "the novel," "poetry," and so on. The assumption is that if the student is aware of an author's artistry, he will appreciate the "author's craft" and thereby enjoy the literary work in question. If the assumption were warranted, one would expect the curriculum in literature to be built around a sequence of investigations into technique—a sequence in which each succeeding lesson builds upon the preceding lesson and contributes to the following one. This is almost never the case. On the contrary, the techniques examined at a given point in the curriculum depend on the work being read, and the works are not ordinarily selected to teach increasingly complex problems in technique. The result is that the approach to technique is haphazard. One week ninth-grade students may read Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart" and examine the rhythm of the prose and the nature of Poe's vocabulary. Next they may read a Sherlock Holmes story in which they examine the development of suspense and plot structure in terms of introduction, development, complication, crisis, and denouement. They may even learn to make plot diagrams at this point. Next, they may turn to poetry and learn how to scan lines and identify rhyme schemes. Perhaps the next reading will be a novel by Dickens in which the students will examine the art of caricature. Thus, their work is fragmented. There is little

or no attempt to apply what is learned from the reading of one story to the reading of another. The teacher may point out the rhythmic patterns in Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart," but the students are not likely to hear about rhythmic prose for the rest of the semester. If they have learned anything at all about rhythmic prose from reading Poe's story, they have no opportunity to make use of it and are likely to forget it very quickly.

A second, perhaps even more serious, charge against this approach is that individual lessons such as those mentioned above are likely to be superficial and are likely to appear so to the students. For instance, once the students have taken note of Poe's imitation of heartbeat rhythm in the story, they are likely to ask "So what?" And this question (it is more likely to be a statement) is justifiable. The teacher has directed their attention to prose rhythm in one limited part of one story. The students have not examined prose rhythm in other parts of the story, nor are they likely to examine rhythmic prose in other stories by Poe, nor will they have an opportunity to view this particular phenomenon against Poe's aesthetics. Isolated as it is, it hardly has a chance to be more than superficial.

Let us examine one of the most common approaches to technique: metrical analysis of poetry. Ordinarily, the teacher proceeds to teach metrical analysis by teaching first the differences between iambic, trochaic, anapestic, dactylic, and perhaps some of the less common feet (metrical units) such as the spondee, the amphibrach, or the amphimacer. Once the differences have been taught, the student proceeds to the scanning of poetry, that is, the marking of metrical units in various lines of poetry. Many teachers will be satisfied when their students can scan accurately—or at least with some degree of accuracy. But we cannot really blame the students for saying, "So what?"

Some teachers of course, attempt to go beyond simple scansion. They have been influenced by a tradition expressed in Pope's line in his "Essay on Criticism": "The sound must seem an echo to the sense." Of course, the relationship of sound to sense is much more obvious in some poems than it is in others. Ordinarily, teachers choose the obvious examples for beginning such a study. This is as it should be. However, most teachers who teach their students to scan poetry, seem to assume that such a relationship always exists, even in poems where a particular metrical unit is clearly traditional or arbitrary. The result is that interpretations are frequently forced.

As Pope says earlier in his "Essay on Criticism," "A little learning is a dangerous thing." The teacher of scansion frequently becomes so absorbed with the idea that the sound should reinforce the sense that he fails to realize that it is often the other way around: as Samuel Johnson pointed out, frequently the *sense* leads us to attribute certain characteristics to the sound. Pope himself unwittingly illustrates this problem. At one point in the "Essay on Criticism," he condemns the Alexandrine, a line composed of six iambic feet:

A needless Alexandrine ends the song
That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.
(11. 356–357)

What is it that makes the second line sound long and slow? Is it the fact that it has six feet? Or is its languishly slow appearance the result of the image of the wounded snake coupled with the words "drags," "slow," "length," and the somewhat redundant use of "along" to fill out the line? Sixteen lines later Pope, apparently unwittingly, uses an Alexandrine again—this time to illustrate a method of conveying a sense of swiftness:

Flies o'er the unbending corn, and skims along the main.
(1. 373)

This line has the same number of feet, and only the second foot is not iambic.

Failure to realize the influence that sense has over apparent sound can result in some fairly peculiar assignments. One ninth-grade text, for instance, includes Browning's poem "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix." The students are told, "The poem sounds like a galloping horse." After reading the poem they are asked to "compare the sound of the first stanza with that of the last. How does the sound fit the sense?"[11] In the first stanza the ride to Aix is just beginning. In the last, Roland—the only horse to arrive at Aix—is on the ground dying. The meter of the two stanzas is almost exactly the same. Here are the stanzas; decide for yourself about the wisdom of the question:

I sprang to the stirrup, and Joris, and he;
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three;
"Good speed!" cried the watch as the gate bolts undrew;
"Speed!" echoed the wall to us galloping through;
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

. . .

And all I remember is—friends flocking round
As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on the ground;
And no voice but was praising this Roland of mine,
As I poured down his throat our last measure of wine,
Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
Was no more than his due who brought good news from Ghent.

Not only are such analytical approaches frequently inadequate in themselves, they also take the life out of literature. The student begins to feel that reading poetry is a matter of finding figures of speech or scanning metrical lines, and that short stories are intended as exercises in plot diagrams. Of course, figures of speech and elements of structure cannot be avoided because both help to provide meaning, which might escape the student if he cannot, for instance, interpret a metaphor. But it is much more meaningful for students to talk about the "turning points" (and there are several possibilities) of Jack London's story "To Build a Fire" than to diagram the story. It is more interesting and rewarding to spend a few days learning and discussing two or three figures of speech and using them in the Japanese poems called haiku than to spend two or three weeks learning and identifying all figures of speech, some metrical patterns, onomatopoeia, and the like, in poem after poem. Students can be interested in a poem for itself and in the devices, say contrast, imagery, or symbol, that contribute to its meaning. But to study many devices in a few days is to divorce them from meaning. If a student learns what metaphors are and how to interpret them, he needs time to see them working, to discuss their meanings, to use them in his own writing. The all-at-once approach might lead to identification, but it leads to little else except boredom.

THE "ENJOYMENT FIRST" APPROACHES

There are a group of theories that hold that the most promising method of teaching literature lies in ensuring that students enjoy what they read and that the principle of enjoyment should not be violated at any cost. Classroom activities and the literature read should be geared to what students normally enjoy. No one will deny that the enjoyment of literature is extremely important if reading is to be established as a habit. The problems arise over what we mean by enjoyment and over the methods of helping the student enjoy the reading of literature. The teacher who adheres to the approaches under consideration here tends to equate enjoyment with entertainment and to put his classroom in competition with television, the movies, parties, athletics, and so forth. "After all," he says, "these are the things students enjoy. If we want them to read, we've got to make them like it." Such approaches fall into two major divisions: the "fun and games" approach and the "interests" approach.

The teacher who uses the "fun and games" approach will organize classroom activities before, after, or during the reading of particular works in order to attract the interest of the students. Miss Soma's approach to *Treasure Island* and myth is common (see pp. 4–5.) For instance, a few years ago a teacher from a large city system reported a method of interesting a class of bright ninth-grade students in mythology. The students read stories of the Greek gods and heroes and stories of Arthur and his knights, whose number, according to her, included Beowulf. They collected advertisements using the gods and emblems of Greek mythology (Ajax, Pegasus, etc.) to see how Greek myth is "relevant to life today." They made posters and displays showing Greek and Arthurian heroes in action and held contests to learn the pronunciation of the Greek names. The whole business was topped off with an "Olympian party" to which the students came dressed as gods and heroes.

Perhaps both these examples are extreme. But they illustrate a phenomenon

that takes place in many English classes with varying degrees of elaboration. Our problem is whether or not such activities are really worthwhile. Do they bring the students first to enjoyment, then to understanding, and finally to appreciation? In the "fun and games" approach to mythology, what did they learn of the significance of myth? How did myths come about? Why did people continue to tell the stories? How did succeeding ages use the materials of myth? Why do we find similar myths in disparate cultures? Why is there so much interest in myth in the twentieth century? Are not these questions, or at least some of them, interesting in themselves? The teacher who uses the "fun and games" approach seems to deny that the material itself is interesting, and students are quick to catch the implications. "The stuff is pretty dull," they say, "but the teacher tries to make it interesting."

Certainly, students enjoy games. They are pleasant breaks from the tedium of school and can be used discreetly to increase interest and learning; but the teacher must always test them against the question of their worth in conveying subject-matter concepts and skills. If they teach neither concepts nor skills, if they attract attention only to themselves, then they have no place in the English program. As long as our classroom activities deny that literature is interesting in itself, as long as we focus student attention on more or less irrelevant activities, we are short-changing our students and the literature we teach. If we were science teachers and wanted our students to learn about microscopes, we might ask them to build one, or use one, or take one apart. We would not ask them to come to school dressed as lab technicians or to draw pictures of famous scientists. If the science teacher and his students can deal directly with an area of inquiry, why can't we?

The second of the "enjoyment" approaches is the approach through the students' interests, and perhaps this is the most valuable or potentially useful of all those mentioned so far. In general the approach is predicated on three related assumptions: (1) students at a given age have normal and natural interests for that age group, (2) those interests change as the students grow older, and (3) the students will learn to like literature if the teacher simply follows their interest patterns.[12] If these assumptions are true, the procedures requisite to success should be obvious. First, discover the interests of students. Second, select materials as indicated by those interests. Third, let nature take its course.

There are several methods of discovering student interests. The first and, in some ways, most reliable method is simply to keep a record of books that students withdraw from a library. The titles are then classified—biography, adventure, love stories, and so on—to determine what kind of books they prefer to read. Another method is to ask students to list books they have enjoyed reading. Some interest inventories offer brief synopses of plots of various types, and students are asked to select among them. Others simply ask direct questions such as the following: "What do young persons like you

want most to read? What kind of book or article would you choose to read above all others?"

Most of these studies yield similar results. In general very young children prefer stories about animals, other children, and fantasy or fairy tales. Beyond the primary grades, sex differences begin to appear, with boys showing interest in adventure and science and girls in material about home and school life. A study by Ruth Strang in 1946 reported that the favorite reading among seventh graders included animal stories and stories of adventure and mystery.[13] In later grades the animal stories lose prominence, and the "big three" take over for several years: adventure, mystery, and romance. Boys show preference for adventure, mystery, science, sports, and outdoor life. Girls continue to prefer stories of romance, problems of home, school and adolescent life. In the upper grades (the studies seem to hedge here) students show more interest in reflective works, historical novels, current events, travel, and best sellers.

Strang reports asking students the following questions as well: "Suppose you were going to write a book or article that persons your age would all want to read, what would be its title?" The answers, of course, indicate interest in romance, adventure, and mystery as well as in material concerning problems of the age group: parent problems, adolescent problems, school and teacher problems, and so forth.

The Strang study also asked students why they disliked books and why they liked books. The responses to the two questions were correlatives of each other. They liked simple books and disliked difficult ones. Strang reports statements such as the following as typical of the reasons students give for liking books: "Written in simple words that everyone can understand. A person can hardly enjoy something if he doesn't understand it." There should be "as little description as possible," and the author should not "beat around the bush" to get at the point. A good book "tells a story in a straightforward manner; presents the idea and lets you judge for yourself." When students did not like books, they objected to "books I can't understand," "too much description," "too much detail about surroundings," "idle conversation," "not enough action," "slow plodding plot," and so on. Strang summarizes, "In brief they wanted accurate facts, stated quite directly and clearly. They did not want to wade through irrelevancies."[14]

Armed witn the results of interest surveys, many teachers and textbook writers set about building an interest-centered curriculum with a view to making the students like literature. Unfortunately, such texts have failed. The great majority of students have not learned to like literature.

There seem to be several difficulties involved. First, any teacher or anthology that emphasizes vicarious excitement and adventure as the major reward of reading tends to equate literature with the popular media of mass culture and to ignore the aesthetic and intellectual values of literature. Those

teachers apparently think that literature competes for student attention in the same way that movies and TV dramas do. Literature demands more and offers more. But even if it did compete in the same way, most students, including college students, would much rather watch TV than read a story for adventure, mystery, and romance.

Second, most of the interest studies appear to assume that the interests they discover are somehow inherent in the sex and age of the child. Should we assume that these are natural or inherent interests? Isn't it more likely that they are conditioned interests, conditioned by teachers, parents, and the culture? Ninth-grade boys may like sports stories because their experiences in our culture dictate that boys be interested in sports. The emphasis that the mass media gives sports implies a lack of masculinity in those who are not interested. Twelfth graders may begin to be interested in literature about social problems because high school courses have introduced them for the first time to such problems. A few researchers argue that reading interests are not instinctive or inherent, but the result of various kinds of conditioning.[15] This seems much more reasonable. Our experience tells us that it is possible to create or motivate new interests. If this is true, there is no real need to center all classroom work in the areas indicated by the reading interest surveys. If we do make the surveys our guide to building curriculum, we may actually hinder a student's acquisition of reading skills and inhibit his interests. If we ask students to read mystery, adventure, romance, and adolescent problem tales, and if we reward them for doing so, can we really expect them to become interested in something else?

Third, it is a physical impossibility for a single anthology to appeal to the interest of all or even most of the students in a given class—let alone in a given school or city. Some of the interest studies make this point very clear. One study of the voluntary reading of eighth-grade students concludes that "the voluntary reading of an individual [is] complex, dynamic, and unique."[16] If this is true and if a teacher wishes to appeal to the interest of his students, he must make the appeal through a program of voluntary, *individualized* reading—not through a text that strives to meet the interests of thousands of students in the confines of a few hundred pages.

Finally, anthologies developed from interest surveys are frequently based on the assumption that interest is the key to the teaching of reading. The books seem to suggest that if we just give a student materials he is interested in, he will automatically become a better reader as he grows older. Unfortunately, the assumption is simply not true. A boy might begin reading mystery stories when he is in junior high school and read them until he reaches old age, but he won't ever be able to read more sophisticated literature as a result of having read them alone.

Reading is a complex process of getting meaning from a printed page. If students don't get that meaning, if they don't understand the words, if they

can't follow a complicated plot or see the relevancy of details, if they can't make inferences about imagery, symbols, or subtle relationships, we can't expect them to find such material interesting. A tenth-grade student once condemned Orwell's *Animal Farm* as "a silly kid's book about animals." The boy condemned the book, not because he wasn't interested in social problems, but because it had no significance for him. Lack of interest or active dislike is often a direct result of an inability to comprehend. Obviously, if interest is strong enough, it will help a student overcome an edge of frustration in the reading he undertakes. But even strong interest cannot do everything.

There is value in determining the interests of individual students, especially of reluctant readers, and the research suggests some methods for discovering those interests. The immediate interests of students can be a jumping-off point for expanding old interests, creating new ones, and for increasing comprehension skills. The research also suggests the value of assessing student response to the literature studied in the curriculum, and it provides techniques for making that assessment. We do want students to enjoy literature, and if they indicate they don't like what they read, we need to change either our teaching method or the materials or both. In short, any literature program must provide for an assessment of student responses to the material, but a program based on interest alone is not likely to do the job.

In one respect, the method of instruction suggested in what follows is conservative. It holds that literature is a distinct way of knowing and should be treated as a distinctive subject matter, just as philosophy and the sciences are treated as distinctive subject matters. Instruction should be directed toward learning to read literature. Literature should be neither an appendage to other subject matters nor an instrument for social control.

In another way, however, the units of instruction suggested here are progressive. They require tailoring instruction to the abilities and needs of the students in a particular classroom. The common curriculum advocated by the conservative is patently absurd, and its absurdity should be apparent to even the most casual observer. It is simply not possible for each student in a given grade level to read the same material in the same way. Some students, even in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades cannot read at all, and others can barely read. If a teacher ignores those students, he is not fulfilling the terms of his contract. If, on the other hand—and this is more often the case—he selects materials suitable for his average and slower students, he cheats the students who are above average. In other words, sound instruction must help the slow student and challenge the bright student. There must be provision for varying materials, goals, and methods according to the abilities of the students in particular classes.

In the matter of purpose, however, the instruction presented here is in firm agreement with the statements of both conservative and progressive. A statement from a 1955 bulletin issued by Kenyon College displays a typical

conservative point of view. The bulletin states explicitly that "power" to read literature should be the student's primary goal.[17] John Dewey uses the word "power" also, though not explicitly in relation to literary study: "The planning must be flexible enough to permit free play for individuality of experience and yet firm enough to give direction towards *continuous development of power* [italics added]."[18] Power is a key word, but to develop power in reading literature, it is necessary to depart from both the conservative and progressive approaches to teaching literature.

NOTES

1. Dorothy E. Moulton, *The Teaching of Literature in the Senior High School: An Historical and Critical Study of Recent Trends, 1911–1955* (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1959). Dr. Moulton's work has been invaluable in preparing the summary comparison of the conservative and progressive approaches.
2. See especially Edgar Z. Friedenberg, *Coming of Age in America* (New York: Random House, 1965).
3. The Curriculum Commission of the National Council of Teachers of English, W. Wilbur Hatfield, Chairman, *An Experience Curriculum in English* (New York: Appleton-Century, 1935).
4. Holland D. Roberts, Walter V. Kaulfers, and Grayson N. Kefauver, *English for Social Living* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1943), pp. 237–238.
5. See for example *McGuffey's Fifth Eclectic Reader: 1896 Edition* (New York: New American Library, 1962).
6. Sir Philip Sidney, "The Defence of Poesie," *Tudor Prose and Poetry*, ed. J. William Hebel, *et al.* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1952), p. 806.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 808.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 808.
9. The Curriculum Commission of the National Council of Teachers of English, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
10. J. R. R. Tolkien, "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics," *Proceedings of the British Academy*, XXII (1936), 245–295.
11. William Eller, Betty Yvonne Welch, Edward J. Gordon, *Introduction to Literature* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1964), pp. 463–465.
12. For a recent, and sounder approach in this tradition, see G. Robert Carlsen, *Books and the Teen-Age Reader* (New York: Bantam Books, 1967).
13. Ruth Strang, "Reading Interests, 1946," *English Journal*, 35 (November 1946), pp. 477–482.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 481.
15. Evan R. Keislar, "Learning Sets in a Stimulus-Response View of Classroom Motivation," Paper read at AERA meeting, Atlantic City, 1960, reported by George D. Spache, *Toward Better Reading* (Champaign: Garrard, 1963), pp. 170–171.

16. Mary H. B. Wollner, *Children's Voluntary Reading as an Expression of Individuality* (New York: Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1949), p. 80.
17. Moulton, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
18. John Dewey, *Education and Experience* (New York: Macmillan, 1950), p. 65.

8 Toward a Philosophy of Literature for Teachers

The readers of this book will probably meet a good many people on their faculties, in their classrooms, on boards of education who are skeptical of the values of literature. "Why bother to read literature?" they ask. It is an irritating question, which we are tempted to answer with the response Louis Armstrong gave to someone who asked him what jazz was. He said, "Man, if you have to ask, you'll never know." But the question of value in literature has been raised by responsible thinkers since, and probably before, Plato decided to banish poets from his perfect state. It cannot be dismissed by teachers who are theoretically and legally responsible to the public they serve. Louis Armstrong justifies his existence every time he gives a concert or sells a record. We neither receive applause nor sell records, but we must justify our existence. Our intuition tells us that literature is unique; it is one of the highest and most valuable activities of man. However, in the face of responsible skepticism, declarations of faith will not be sufficient. But if teachers never encounter anyone bold enough to ask the question, they still need an answer. They need an answer to give direction in building a curriculum and in developing a theory of instruction.

This chapter will raise two major questions: (1) What is literature? (2) Why read it or why teach it? We will attempt answers and explore their ramifications. It would be foolish to pretend that our answers are either complete or final, but they do provide a beginning toward the development of a philosophy of literature for English teachers.

What Is Literature?

For our purposes, the term "literature" does not refer to everything that is in print. If it did, we might find ourselves responsible for teaching students to read scientific writing and math problems, as many of our colleagues believe we should. Not that the kind of reading we teach

does not overlap in some significant ways the kinds of reading taught by a history teacher, a math teacher, or a science teacher. It does, and many points of overlap might be exploited to the advantage of both teacher and student. But, essentially, the reading taught by the English teacher should be the reading of literature. The word "literature" therefore requires at least a working definition. Traditionally, in the schools, it has meant poetry, fiction, drama, biography, myth, folk tale, essay, and whatever else the anthologist wished to include. This is not a very sophisticated definition—if it is a definition at all—and the word "essay" opens the door to all kinds of writing. Still, it is useful in delineating our subject matter. If we require a definition that tells us something of the nature of that subject matter, the most useful approach is probably to examine the language of literature. How does that language differ from everyday language or from language whose purpose is primarily utilitarian? If we confine our concept of literature, for the time being, to poetry, fiction, drama, and some essays, we can make some useful distinctions.

An explanation of molecular weights, a philosophical work such as Spinoza's *Ethics,* a recipe for apple pie, and a history of World War I all have something in common that imaginative literature does not share: The referents are outside the work. The function of such works is to direct our attention to objects, processes, systems, events, and so on, that exist apart from the work in a world that we like to think has an empirical, objective reality. The ideal of pragmatic or scientific language is a complete absence of ambiguity: one term, one referent. Such language is purely denotative and receives praise for accuracy. The recipe for apple pie must direct the cook's attention to the flour, shortening, sugar, and apples in the proper order and in the proper quantities. We judge the recipe on the basis of whether or not it produces a good pie. The language of the recipe is the kind of language that René Wellek and Austin Warren call "transparent";[1] it calls little or no attention to itself. The language of imaginative literature (poetry, fiction, drama), on the other hand, calls attention to, and stresses the importance of, the language. The poet wants his reader to be acutely aware of his words as words. His language has an expressive and connotative side that pragmatic language minimizes as much as possible.

Furthermore, the reference or denotation of literary language is within the world created in a given work. There is no necessity for the characters of a short story to exist in the real world. They exist in the world of the story. Northrop Frye's discussion of this problem is useful:

> . . . verbal structures may be classified according to whether the *final* direction of meaning is outward or inward. In descriptive or assertive writing the final direction is outward. Here the verbal structure is intended to represent things external to it, and it is valued in terms of the accuracy with which it does represent them. Correspondence between phenomenon and verbal sign is truth; lack of it is falsehood; failure to connect is tautology, a purely verbal structure that cannot come out of itself.

> In all literary verbal structures the final direction of meaning is inward. In literature the standards of outward meaning are secondary, for literary works do not pretend to describe or assert, and hence are not true, not false, and yet not tautological either, or at least not in the sense in which such a statement as "the good is better than the bad" is tautological. Literary meaning may best be described, perhaps, as hypothetical, and a hypothetical or assumed relation to the external world is part of what is usually meant by the word "imaginative." . . . In literature, questions of fact or truth are subordinated to the primary literary aim of producing a structure of words for its own sake, and the sign-values of symbols are subordinated to their importance as a structure of inter-connected motifs. Wherever we have an autonomous verbal structure of this kind, we have literature.[2]

The way in which we can test reading comprehension points up the difference between nonliterature and literature. The cook's ability to comprehend a recipe can be tested in terms of what she produces: the apple pie. An auto mechanic's comprehension of a book on carburetors can be tested by his ability to repair or modify a carburetor. A chemist's comprehension of an article on the corrosion of steel can be tested on the basis of how he makes use of the information. But we cannot expect to test comprehension of literature in that way. Reading literature will influence our attitudes, heighten our perception, and create an emotional state in us, but reading *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* will not teach us how to civilize Huck. We cannot test a student's comprehension of Kipling's "Rikki-Tikki-Tavi" by his ability to raise a mongoose. Nor can we test his comprehension of Poe's "The Pit and the Pendulum" by the student's ability to survive the horrors that Poe depicts. We do not even think of testing the comprehension of literature in that way. The particular denotations, the referents, of a literary work are important as they exist in the literary work; whether or not the characters and events of a work may have existed in the real world is a matter of relatively little consequence.

The definition requires three qualifications. First, certain types of works usually considered at least peripheral to literature do have specific referents in the real world: biography, true adventure, and personal essays, for instance. To the extent that these works project an internal world of their own, they are literary. To put it another way, although the language of such works is about real people, events, conditions, and so on, they are also literary insofar as the language creates a self-contained reality, apart from the external reality that it represents. Thus, a biographical sketch in *Who's Who* is nonliterary because it directs attention *only* to external facts about its subject, whereas Carl Sandburg's biography of Lincoln is literary because it creates its own internal world while concomitantly representing the real world. Similarly, a newspaper account of Thor Heyerdahl's voyage across the Pacific is nonliterary, directing the reader's attention *only* to the external truth, but Heyerdahl's *Kon-Tiki* is literary insofar as it attempts to create an internal world of its own. Again, although the events and emotions of Orwell's "Shooting an Elephant" may have occurred in the real world, their use is literary because, for the purpose of the essay, their force is centripetal, directing attention inward to the central theme of the essay rather than outward to specific external events. This suggests two bases for evaluating such material: (1) the degree of accuracy in reporting real events, and (2) the extent to which the language of the work presents a self-sufficient, consistent internal reality.

Second, although the referents of a literary work (characters, events, setting, and so on) exist primarily within the boundaries of the work, the words that make up the work have agreed-upon meanings apart from it. The word "fox," for instance, has a meaning that most English speaking people accept. The use of that word conjures up the image of an animal with reddish brown fur, extended canine teeth, and a bushy tail. These animals do indeed exist in reality. But the particular fox in Aesop's fable (who spies grapes on an arbor, attempts to reach them, and fails) exists only within the bounds of that fable.

Third, the idea that the referents of the work exist within the work *does not* suggest that the interpretation of literature need be or should be entirely subjective. Because no two readers are alike, elements of subjectivity in the interpretation and evaluation of literature are unavoidable. The New Criticism, which placed so much emphasis on careful reading of the *text,* may inadvertently have given rise to irresponsible reading in the classroom. The reader is encouraged to interpret what is there, but, unfortunately, he can interpret only what he *thinks* is there. The result is that time and again students base interpretations on private, irrelevant associations, false analogies, misreadings of words, and the like. In professional criticism we see twentieth-century meanings forced on fifteenth-century words, images, and symbols. It is no easy matter to read Chaucer without a twentieth-century bias. But if we accept the definition above, we must consider both *text* and *context.* Our interpretations of a given work must be based on careful examination of the text and whatever outside sources illuminate its meaning. In short, the definition does not validate the "anything goes" philosophy of interpretation.

This definition of the nature of literature, which seems to be nearly axiomatic in contemporary criticism, carries with it at least two corollaries of which literature teachers ought to be aware. They concern reading difficulty and the problem of reality or truth in literature.

Ordinarily, teachers of junior high and high school literature fail to make any distinctions among the works in a given anthology on the basis of difficulty —at least, they make no distinction in practice. At most, they are vaguely aware that students have more difficulty with a poem by Wordsworth than with a short story by Edgar Allan Poe and more difficulty with an essay by Emerson than with the poem by Wordsworth. In general, among most teachers, reading difficulty is a very vague concept. The foregoing distinction between literary and nonliterary works gives us some clues to the problem. The purpose of what Northrop Frye has called descriptive or assertive writing (comparable to what is called information-oriented writing in the section of

this book on composition) is to convey information. The author of such a piece of writing ordinarily attempts to be as clear as possible. For the most part, he defines his terms when necessary, avoids ambiguity, and makes the implications of his argument explicit when he is aware of them. Except for occasional stylistic effects, he leaves as little as possible to the inference-making capacity of his audience. The literary artist, on the other hand, uses words and images because of their ambiguity, that is, their multiple meanings. He requires that his reader make inferences at many different levels about the actions of characters, about relationships between them, about images, about the structure of the work as a whole. The major "meanings" of a literary work are usually implied and emerge through the texture of the whole work. In short, the artist relies heavily upon the inference-making capacity of his reader.

This is not to say that inference making is unnecessary in reading information-oriented material. Information-oriented writing requires application, extrapolation, and evaluation just as literary works do. But in understanding *what* it has to say, inference making is ordinarily minimal—by the very nature of the material. In comprehending literary material, on the other hand, inference making is maximal. The difficulty of understanding what information-oriented material has to say ordinarily resides in the vocabulary, the syntax, the relative familiarity of the concepts that a writer uses, and in the level of abstraction of those concepts. Nearly any beginning student of statistics will agree that his text material is difficult. The vocabulary is technical and unusual, and the concepts are highly abstract. Technical research in astrophysics would be difficult reading for anyone who is not a physicist, and it may be difficult for physicists who are not specialists in astrophysics.

Of course, literary works can present similar difficulties in vocabulary and syntax. Teachers complain that students are not interested in *Ivanhoe*. Is it any wonder? Sir Walter Scott was fond of using the Norman-French terms for pieces of armor, fighting gear, and general attire. He wrote one hundred and fifty years ago, time enough for some of his words to go out of general circulation. In addition he tended to use a high proportion of relatively unusual words and very long sentences. Yet this is the most obvious kind of difficulty, and frequently the only kind that teachers help their students overcome. Although such difficulties cannot be ignored, the real problems in reading literature lie beyond the level of vocabulary and syntax in the nature of literary art as we have defined it. They lie in what the writer does not say, in what he implies. Before we can decide how to teach literature, we will have to determine as precisely as possible what problems readers encounter or, to state it positively, what levels of meaning readers must comprehend to come to a full understanding of a work. Chapters 9 and 10 will discuss this problem in detail.

A second corollary of the definition of literature has to do with the nature of truth or reality in literature. We have already commented on this problem

in the previous chapter during the discussion of the social studies approaches to literature. To recapitulate in part, the study of literature as history and geography is inefficient because the literary artist chooses details and incidents, not because they are true in fact, but because they help to accomplish his central purpose. If we studied Shakespeare's history plays in order to learn about English history, we would have a highly inaccurate view of what actually happened before and during the Wars of the Roses. Shakespeare felt no necessity to make a play conform to the facts of English history. He was primarily concerned with the production of a work of art, as are all literary artists.

If literature is not restricted to actual fact, it is also not limited to the probable or even the possible, although writers frequently pretend to restrict themselves in such a way. Witness Orwell's *Animal Farm,* Shakespeare's *Tempest,* and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels.*

Although the mature reader knows that pigs cannot walk and talk and read and write, he accepts these unreal elements of *Animal Farm* to let Orwell tell his story in the way he wishes. The mature reader does not expect factual reality. The truth that he expects in literature is not the truth of empirical knowledge. Although he may not be able to state the definition of literature that Northrop Frye gives us, the ideal mature reader ordinarily recognizes that the reference of a work does not move outward to the real world, but inward to the microcosmic world produced by the artist. In more ordinary terms, he accepts the conventions of the literary work for its duration. He indulges himself in what Coleridge called "the willing suspension of disbelief." Thus, the characters of a fictional work need not have existed in reality. The events need never have occurred.

Still, literature involves a kind of truth that mature readers demand. First, a good literary work is true to itself on its own terms. When an author creates a work of fiction, he makes a series of postulations. He says given this character and these conditions, certain results will be forthcoming. The work has internal consistency. Aristotle makes this point in regard to character in the *Poetics.* If a character is going to be inconsistent, he must be "consistently inconsistent."[3]

The second kind of truth is what critics from Aristotle to Sidney to the moderns have called truth to life. This is the truth that Archibald MacLeish seems to refer to in "Ars Poetica" when he says a poem is "equal to: not true."[4] The problem is that this notion of truth to life gives rise to many misconceptions about literature—for instance, to the social studies approaches to literature discussed in the previous chapter. If literature is "true to life," people say, then it must be a valid approach to history, geography, economics, psychotherapy, and so on. However, the people who consciously or unconsciously believe that forget that an author wrote the particular work—an author who may or may not have been an historian or psychiatrist, but who, at any rate, is attempting to create a work of art and not an historical document or a treatise on psychiatry. The work is dominated by an aesthetic

purpose. Still, critics insist that the poet must be "true to life." There must be essential truth and internal consistency in the illusions he creates. The reader must leave the work saying, "Yes, I see how this is true. I understand this view of life. The vision of this artist whether it corresponds with mine or not is comprehensible and meaningful. It reflects essential truth through its internal consistency."

Such truth resides in the function of the work as metaphor or symbol. In her essay, "The Art Symbol and the Symbol in Art," Susanne K. Langer discusses the work of art as a symbol.[5] A literary work is not simply a construct of verbal symbols. It is itself, taken as a whole, a symbol. The truth it has may be expressed as the soundness of the comparison it establishes to life. Remember MacLeish's words: a poem is "equal to: not true." We can evaluate literary truth as we evaluate a metaphor. Look for a moment at the first four lines of Shakespeare's Sonnet 73:

> That time of year thou mayst in me behold
> When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
> Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
> Bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang.

Old age is compared to a season of the year, and the metaphor is appropriate in all its details. Shakespeare has established a relationship that goes beyond the simple terms of the metaphor's comparison in indefinable ways. It is true and useful. Similarly, a whole work has truth if its reflection of life is valid. The concrete referents of a scientific work lie outside the work, and the truth of the work is judged according to how accurately its symbols correspond to the outside objective reality. The concrete symbols of a literary work have their referents only in the work, not in outside reality. But the abstractions of the literary work—the quality of the experience represented in concrete terms, the judgment and interpretation of that experience, the ultimately indefinable aspects of life—all these have referents outside the particular work. And here lies the symbolic truth of literature.

As every English teacher knows, the nature of truth in literature presents problems in the English class. On the one hand, some students accept everything they read as gospel. On the other, some students reject anything that is not what they consider "true to life." Ordinarily, the latter are the most irritating to the teacher. They are the young skeptics who grow into adults who reject *Hamlet* because they do not believe in ghosts. Strangely enough, the same students who never are willing to accept literary conventions will sit enthralled for hours over comic books or TV cartoons without ever raising a suspicious eyebrow about the "reality" of the material. For this very reason, however, the problem is not altogether impossible. A unit on fantasy and reality in literature, through the use of cartoons and fantasies

such as *Alice in Wonderland* and various works of science fiction as well as "realistic" works, can demonstrate the uses of literary conventions and the difference between fantasy and realism in art.

Our definition of literature and its two corollaries can give some direction in planning the content of the literature phase of the English curriculum. In the first place, the selection of reading material should be primarily the material of literature as we have defined it—poetry, fiction, drama, biography, and some essays. Essays on heredity, computer systems, hot-rod building, and homemaking should not receive the primary emphasis in our English classes. Their referents are outside the work and belong more properly in the science, mathematics, industrial arts, and homemaking curricula. For decades reading experts have been saying, "Every teacher should be a teacher of reading." They have been saying it for so long that it has become a cliché. Still, there is a good deal of truth in it. Reading is an extremely important method of increasing knowledge in every area of endeavor. Students who can't read are likely to flunk math, science, and history as well as English. But this fact does not make the English teacher responsible for teaching the reading skills appropriate to other subjects. Confining reading instruction to the English class gives students the mistaken impression that English is the only place in the curriculum where reading matters. Including essays on scientific discoveries and hair styling in the English curriculum allows the teachers of other areas to continue in their misconception of English as a *general* reading course. Actually, we cheat our students by allowing those teachers to abdicate their responsibilities as teachers of reading. A second objection is the disservice we do ourselves and our profession. The random inclusion of such materials tends to destroy the integrity of what we profess to teach.

However, there is no need to exclude rigorously all nonliterature from the English curriculum. In general, we will want to include a good deal of nonliterature in the content of classes devoted to corrective reading. Students in such classes (reading two years or more below grade level) still need to learn the reading skills common to both literature and nonliterature. They still have difficulty with unusual words, with complicated syntax, in locating key ideas and important details, and in drawing simple inferences. Seventh graders who are reading at grade level will need continued instruction in these areas, but they can begin to be concerned primarily with learning the skills and accumulating the background necessary to read literature intelligently. In a curriculum for functional and fluent students, nonliterary materials should be included when there is an explicit purpose for using them. There are two general reasons for their inclusion: to convey information relevant to some aspect of the English curriculum, such as an essay on language, or to serve as the subject for analysis of style, problems in meaning, form and the like. Naturally, the interests of the students should be considered when the teacher

selects an essay, but to include it *simply* because of its potential interest to students or because the science teacher or principal wants such material in the curriculum is an insidious kind of prostitution.

Why Read Literature?

When anyone asks the question, "Why read literature?" he is really asking about the function of literature, and the answers attempted here will be in terms of that function. When we are building a curriculum, we must first ask what the function of education is and then determine which subjects of study are most likely to fulfill that function. In this country we believe that the major function of public education is to prepare the individual for successful participation in society. But there are other important functions, too—to advance the frontiers of knowledge, to improve social conditions, and so on. Some of the most persistent problems in American education have arisen out of attempts to formulate and then interpret statements such as those above.

Despite the hazards, it is necessary to attempt an interpretation of the phrase "to prepare the individual for successful participation in society." The most obvious sorts of preparation are those that are strictly utilitarian in nature. For successful integration within our society, some skill in reading and arithmetic are absolutely essential. Illiterates ordinarily, and almost literally, "have a hard row to hoe." But the ability to read road signs, receipts, directions, application forms and bank statements and the ability to add and subtract are subsistence level skills. The concept of "successful participation" goes beyond them.

Apparently we believe that "successful participation" involves knowledge of man and his estate. Students study history, aspects of anthropology, geography, biology, and the natural and physical sciences. Although these studies have fairly obvious utilitarian values, they imply our belief that the "proper study of mankind is man"—though Pope might object to our taking his line out of context. What does the study of man involve? Can we justify the study of literature as part of that study?

Man's Need To Symbolize

Susanne K. Langer in *Philosophy in a New Key* argues that while man is an animal, he is different from other animals in both degree and kind. The difference is due not simply to his ability to exert pressure against the palm of his hand with his thumb. Nor is it simply due to his use of language. This difference is due, she argues, to

> . . . a primary need in man which other creatures probably do not have, and which actuates all his apparently unzoological aims, his wistful fancies, his consciousness of value, his utterly impractical enthusiasms, and his awareness of a "Beyond" filled with holiness. Despite the fact that this need gives rise to almost everything that we commonly assign to the "higher" life, it is not itself a "higher" form of some "lower" need; it is quite essential, imperious, and general, and may be called "high" only in the sense that it belongs exclusively (I think) to a very complex and perhaps recent genus. It may be satisfied in crude, primitive ways or in conscious and refined ways, so it has its own hierarchy of "higher" and "lower," elementary and derivative forms.
>
> This basic need, which certainly is obvious only in man, is the *need of symbolization*. The symbol-making function is one of man's primary activities, like eating, looking, or moving about. It is the fundamental process of his mind, and goes on all the time. Sometimes we are aware of it, sometimes we merely find its results, and realize that certain experiences have passed through our brains and have been digested there.
>
> * * *
>
> The fact that the human brain is constantly carrying on a process of symbolic transformation of the experimental data that come to it causes it to be a veritable fountain of more or less spontaneous ideas. As all registered experience tends to terminate in action, it is only natural that a typically human function should require a typically human form of overt activity; and that is just what we find *in the sheer expression of ideas*. This is the activity of which beasts appear to have no need. And it accounts for just those traits in man which he does not hold in common with the other animals—ritual, art, laughter, weeping, speech, superstition, and scientific genius.[6]

If Dr. Langer is right, then literature is one of our most sophisticated methods of fulfilling a basic need, just as architecture, medicine, and agricultural science have become highly sophisticated methods of fulfilling basic needs. But there is more to it than that. As a part of man's need for symbolization, literature embodies a distinct method of knowing that neither philosophy nor the empirical sciences can provide. Perhaps this is its most important function. Literature makes the quality of experience concrete for us and allows us to examine and evaluate it within an aesthetic frame. It heightens our perceptions, takes us momentarily out of our own necessarily restricted sphere, and permits us to see with the eyes of another. It breaks down the physiological and spiritual barriers among individuals and gives us some understanding of how it feels to be another person. But it is not anthropology, or history, or geography, or psychology, each of which embodies an approach to knowledge different from that of literature.

Literature As a Distinct Way of Knowing

Literature is a *distinct* way of knowing on the basis of our definition alone: A literary work is a verbal construct whose referents exist within the confines of the work, which may be regarded as a symbolic transformation of experience. But it is distinct also because of the nature of the interaction

between an audience and a given work. There are at least three dimensions to the interaction: the cognitive, the affective, and the aesthetic. The cognitive dimension includes the decipherment of the explicit and implicit meanings arising out of the author's rhetorical stance and his deployment of words, images, characters, events, and so on in a given work. The affective dimension involves the arousing and/or soothing of "passion" or emotion by a given work—its cathartic effects. The aesthetic dimension of our interaction with a work is the pleasure we feel in the art and artifice of the work; it involves the appropriateness of words, images, characters, and the like, the internal consistency of the work as a whole, and intellectual honesty and freshness. Although each dimension of the reader's interaction with a work is discernible, no one of the three can be totally isolated from the others. It is the inseparability of these three dimensions that makes literature a distinct way of knowing.*

COGNITIVE RESPONSE

Teachers of literature must be concerned with all three dimensions. The cognitive is important for several reasons. First, if the cognitive response to a work is inadequate, the affective response may be inappropriate. At a rather simple level, for instance, students reading the word "Brother" in the name "Brother Timothy" as a statement of kinship rather than as a clerical title can easily misinterpret James Hanley's story "The Butterfly."[7] One student who read the word in this way made a series of inadequate intellectual responses based on her misinterpretation of that single word. Her emotional response to the characters was, as a result, completely inappropriate.

More complex cognitive failures bring about inappropriate emotional responses as well. For example, in Stephen Crane's story "An Ominous Baby," which we will examine in detail later, the narrator quite obviously sets out to build and sustain sympathy for the tattered child who is the main character of the story. Towards the end of the story when the tattered child steals a toy fire engine from a rich child, the sympathy is maintained in what are, at least for the mature reader, rather obvious ways. But some readers—even at the college level—side with the rich child, condemn the tattered child as a "dirty thief," and believe that Crane also condemns the child. In part, this inadequate emotional response is the result of a cognitive failure to understand the author's attitude. Sometimes, negative affective responses (those that move counter to the sympathies of the work) are the result of a marked difference between the reader's values and those of the work.

The second reason for emphasizing the cognitive response is to help guard against the students' accepting everything they read or hear on the basis of emotional appeal. Many teachers place primary emphasis on the emotional

* Empiricist and logical positivist traditions in Western philosophy and science attempt to exclude emotion rigorously. Religion involves both cognitive and emotional dimensions, whereas the aesthetic dimension is important only indirectly; however, religion permits an additional avenue to knowledge—special revelation.

response to literature and above all else want their students to have rewarding emotional experiences with the work. To such teachers, the phrase "rewarding emotional experiences" means experiences that are in accord with the teacher's experiences. A study by Walter Loban, however, indicates that some students enjoy reading sadistic stories.[8] That is, they seek out and have "rewarding [for them] emotional experiences" with books emphasizing cruelty. Ordinarily, teachers neither encourage nor approve this sort of "rewarding emotional experience." In encouraging emotional response, even if only to stories and poems that they approve of, teachers frequently neglect intellectual examination of the emotional response. Consequently, students might very well learn to accept everything they read on an emotional basis. But students must learn to examine, evaluate, accept what is good, and reject what is not.

Since teachers trust and approve their own emotional reactions, they see no danger in encouraging the emotional reactions of their students, often to the total neglect of intellectual analysis. They tend to forget that a student may encounter works that cannot be accepted without careful examination and evaluation: propaganda of types ranging from ads to short stories, for instance. The writer of propaganda neither expects nor wants a careful evaluation of his material but hopes to program a set of values into his readers. People living in an electronically oriented culture are bombarded with materials that require evaluation.

Some writers deny the efficacy of rational evaluation. As evidence that "conceptual" awareness is not "useful," one writer quotes a young student, after her class had devised criteria to evaluate newspapers, as saying, ". . . that paper we get at home is rubbish, and we've proved it—but I feel sure I'll go on reading it."[9] The change in behavior that this writer wishes requires an affective response at a very high level (see Chapter 14)—developing a value system. He does not realize, apparently, that affective responses have already taken place in the student. At the lowest level, the student is aware of the problem. Beyond that, the student has already made a value judgment about the paper—which she apparently believes. Although she may, and probably should, go on reading the paper, she will never read it in the same way again. If the instructional goal, as this writer implies, were really for the girl to stop reading the newspaper, and if rational evaluation is ineffective in producing that effect, then the alternative procedure involves tinkering with the child's emotions and values—a procedure closely akin to propagandizing, whether it appears as the "hard sell" or the "soft sell."

AFFECTIVE RESPONSE

Although the cognitive response has importance as a base for affective response and as a means of evaluating the affective, the affective itself should not be ignored by the English teacher. On the contrary, talk in the classroom must encourage students to tell how they "feel" about characters, events, images, and so on. But talk cannot remain for long at that level, for as soon as it

becomes an explanation of *why* students feel as they do, it becomes cognitive. The two types of responses are so closely related, leading one to the other and back again, that they cannot be treated exclusively. Any teacher who tries to do so distorts literature, making it something other than it is.

Further, ignoring one or the other types of response to particular literary works frequently results in a negative reaction to reading literature. If, at the one extreme, a teacher focuses on analysis of literary devices and forms, students are likely to find literary study dull and meaningless, to regard it as they do grammar. If, at the other extreme, the teacher encourages only statements of affective responses, the students are likely to regard literature as superficial. They are quick to see that if the teacher's concern is only with what they feel, there is no real need for discussion ("Isn't everyone entitled to his own opinion?") or reading ("What difference does it make?"). If literature study is to be meaningful, a good part of the discussion in class must turn on the meaning of a work as it relates to the experience of the students.

For instance, a discussion of Browning's "My Last Duchess" might begin with a question about the ways in which some people dominate others, ignoring their personal aspirations, interests, and feelings. Then, what happens to people who are dominated in that way? What are the possible reactions? The class might then proceed to read the poem and discuss such questions as the following:

1. What kind of person was the Duchess?
2. How did the Duke treat her?
3. Did she deserve that treatment? Why?
4. What kind of person is the Duke?
5. What are the things he really cares about?

Each of these questions involves considerable talk by the students.* There are many lines to reread and speculate over, actions and attitudes of both Duke and Duchess to evaluate. This sort of talk provides a base for a discussion of the technique of the monologue, the irony, the frame imposed by the first line and the final three, or various other formal aspects of the poem, if the students are ready to move in one of these directions. But there is no necessity for exhaustive analysis of the poem. With some students the teacher should not use the poem at all; with others the first set of questions will suffice; still others can move from the formal problems to aesthetic evaluations (for example, are the last three lines of the poem necessary or useful? Why?).

* Although the questions appear to be relatively simple, their answers will be obscure to many students because of the irony of the poem. Many will take the Duke's critical statements at face value, for example, "She had/A heart—how shall I say?—too soon made glad,/Too easily impressed . . ." Thus, the teacher should probably not introduce the poem unless he is reasonably sure that his students are capable of responding to, though not necessarily identifying, the irony.

But whatever the group of students, the teacher must encourage examination (or validation) of the insights offered by the work in terms of the students' experience.*

AESTHETIC RESPONSE

The aesthetic response derives from what appears to be a combination of both the cognitive and emotional aspects of literary experience. That is, we seem to appreciate what a writer has done with language as we respond to his work with understanding and feeling. An aesthetic response demands a certain distance. The reader must stand back to view the work as a whole. If his energies are wholly absorbed in attempting to understand what a work states and implies, or if he is totally involved with a work emotionally, he is too close to it to understand, let alone evaluate, how an author achieves his effects.

Thus, prerequisite to a reader's aesthetic response is a degree of sophistication on his part in relation to the work. Although many young readers can respond aesthetically to Steinbeck's *The Pearl* or Richter's *Light in the Forest* or Anne Frank's *Diary of a Young Girl,* only a few would be likely to respond similarly to Thackeray's *Vanity Fair.* When a reader understands the content of a work and reacts emotionally to the imagery, events, or characters, he can examine the effects the author is attempting to achieve, how he selects and organizes the parts of his work to achieve them, and how effective this arrangement has been in controlling his own response. This process is evaluative, but the evaluation is personal rather than absolute.

There was a time when aesthetics was dominated by the search for universal laws of beauty and harmony. Presumably, if the laws could be established, the judicial response to art would be a relatively simple matter, and art could be judged in absolute terms. Either the work displayed the laws or it didn't. Neoclassic criticism reveals the fallacy in such thinking. The universal laws turn out to be no more than a description of the taste of an age. Hence the neoclassic critics considered Shakespeare's plays to be flawed because they did not observe the unities.

The modern study of aesthetics is concerned with the effects of a work on a viewer, reader, or listener and how those effects are achieved. This concern is evaluative even though there is no attempt to rank works in order of artistic merit. The judicial function is perhaps best reserved for the book reviewers, who are paid to make such distinctions; for as most reviewers would admit, their judgments of art are personal, not absolute, even though their tastes may be catholic and their experiences broad.

Although a wise teacher refrains from forcing his personal tastes and

* The discussion of affective response in this chapter has been in terms of response to individual works rather than to reading literature as an activity. Both are important. The latter is treated in Chapters 12 and 14.

evaluations on his students, a still wiser one recognizes that his reaction to a work and his treatment of it in class will inevitably influence his students' responses. The wiser teacher does what he can to insure positive evaluations of truly great literature. He presents it only when the students are sophisticated enough to understand it and respond to it, and he helps them reach that level of sophistication. He does not require them to interpret material that he has not prepared them for. He teaches a work in such a way that the students understand and appreciate the work through their own insights. What goes on in a classroom can have a profound influence on a student's aesthetic response not only to individual works but to literature in general.

The chapters that follow suggest procedures for helping students attain not only full access to literature as a distinct way of knowing in its cognitive, emotional, and aesthetic aspects but a positive attitude toward it as well. The answers to the questions raised in this chapter are intended primarily as a basis for the approach to teaching literature that follows. But they are intended also as a defense of literature against the skeptics.

NOTES

1. René Wellek and Austin Warren, *Theory of Literature* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1956), p. 11.
2. Northrop Frye, *The Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 74.
3. Aristotle, *De Poetica* in *The Works of Aristotle Translated into English,* ed. W. D. Ross (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924), XI, 1454a.
4. Archibald MacLeish, "Ars Poetica," *A Pocket Book of Modern Verse,* ed. Oscar Williams (New York: Washington Square Press, 1963), pp. 373–374.
5. Susanne K. Langer, *Problems of Art* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), pp. 124–139.
6. ———, *Philosophy in a New Key* (New York: New American Library, 1959), pp. 45 and 47.
7. James Hanley, "The Butterfly," *Seventy Five Short Masterpieces,* ed. Roger Goodman (New York: Bantam Books, 1961), pp. 116–120.
8. Walter Loban, "A Study of Social Sensitivity Among Adolescents," *Journal of Educational Psychology, 44* (February 1953), pp. 102–112.
9. John Dixon, *Growth Through English* (Reading, England: National Association for the Teaching of English, 1967), pp. 73–74.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

1. CHARLES KAPLAN, ed. *Criticism: Twenty Major Statements,* San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company (n.d.). Includes Plato, Aristotle, Horace, Sidney, Dryden, Poe, T. S. Eliot, etc.
2. SUSANNE K. LANGER, *Mind: An Essay on Human Feeling.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1967. A discussion of art as a symbolic projection of feeling.

9 The Reading Situation

An important question for a teacher of literature to ask is this: What is involved in understanding a literary work? Unfortunately, there is no way to answer this question empirically. The best we can do is to observe two kinds of phenomena that are related to the process of reading but essentially outside it.

First, we can observe the elements in a reading situation and their relationships. Second, we can examine stated responses to literary works. The results of these observations together with our impressions of our own reading experiences give us some understanding of the process.

In exploring the reading process, we must examine these elements: the general environment, the specific reading situation, the reader, and the text. Finally as teachers of literature we should determine the extent to which we can or should make use of or influence each of these elements. They are shown in Figure 9.1.

The General Environment

Any reading situation will be influenced by various aspects of the general environment which prompt reading and condition responses. For instance, the cultural and social values of a reader may prevent his establishing empathy with a literary character whose values are different from his. Readers with certain sets of values will reject some literature completely. Note the negative responses of some individuals in some communities when their young people are assigned *1984* or *The Catcher in the Rye*. Topical interests and publicity for movies and books will prompt reading. Some environments, on the other hand, will completely discourage it. In short, the individual's cumulative experience with selected aspects of his environment will condition his attitude toward reading as an activity as well as his attitude toward specific reading experiences.

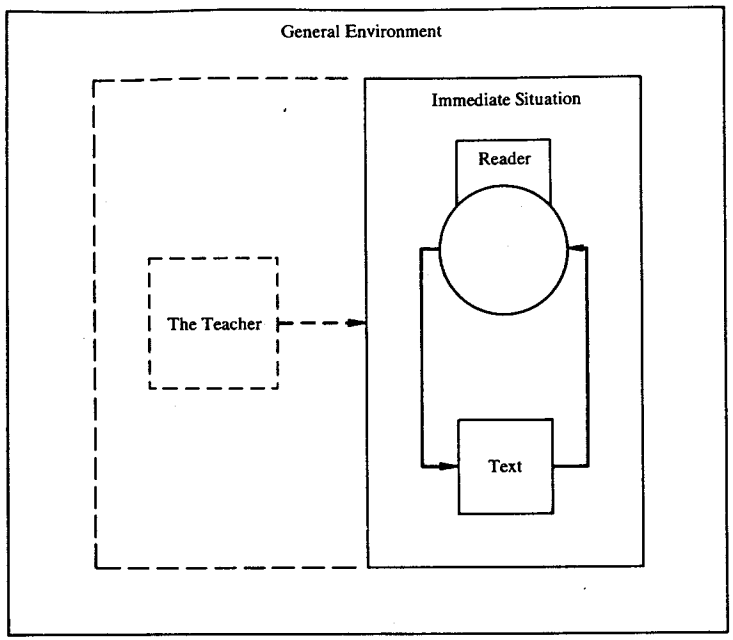

FIGURE 9.1 General Elements of the Reading Situation, 1

The Specific Reading Situation

Any act of reading takes place under some set of specific circumstances. Sequences of such situations comprise the reader's background, his literary experience. The reading may be prompted by internal stimuli. For example, a person may read because he simply wants to escape reality for a while with a detective story, he may have a problem that he wishes to solve, or he may wish to enjoy the full intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic experience that some readers seek in great literature. If he reads for escape, he may either choose something that is easy for him to read or choose something difficult but ignore the dimensions of the work that make it difficult for him. Proficient readers, of course, find a kind of escape in the full reading of a work; as they read, they solve the literary problems that the work presents, and the work becomes more than a means of escape.

Unfortunately, in educational settings the stimulus to read is likely to be consistently external to the student. A teacher *assigns* the work for reasons that frequently appear arbitrary to the student and then uses a grade to force

him to complete his work and report or be tested on it. It is not a situation conducive to positive attitudes.

The Reader

The reader's first approach to any text is primarily physiological and intellectual. He must perceive the symbols on the page, translate them into the sounds for which they stand, and then supply the semantic content of the symbols. Problems for the reader can appear at any point in this process. He may not be able to see the printed symbols adequately. As a matter of fact, undetected vision problems are responsible for the failure of many students to learn to read. Even if he can see the letters, he may not be able to discriminate among them, to tell *m* from *n* or *p* from *q*, for example. If the student is able to perceive the symbols, he may not be able to translate them into sounds, and if he can translate them into sounds, he may not know their meanings. How many readers of this book know the denotations of such words as "anacrusis," "amphibrach," or "picaroon"?

Although a reader's first approach to a text may be simply physiological, it is more likely to be complicated by his past literary and nonliterary experience. For instance, if reading has been a distasteful experience in the past, the reader is likely to approach any new work with some misgivings. On the other hand, if he has read several seventeenth-century poems, he is likely to approach a poem by John Donne with certain expectations about the imagery and may expect to find it intriguing.

Aside from any negative or positive attitude toward reading as an activity, the reader's initial responses contribute to more complex cognitive responses and to affective and aesthetic responses. But the cognitive responses at all levels remain basic to the emotional and aesthetic responses. Beyond the initial intellectual translation of printed symbols to meaning, it is impossible to determine any absolute order of response. The various responses contribute to one another in so subtle and complex a fashion for the proficient reader, that they must ultimately be viewed as concomitant. Still, it is possible to discuss the meanings of a text as they have been interpreted by a reader, and it is possible to describe the emotional and aesthetic experiences that derive from reading. It is also possible to determine to some degree what cognitive responses must precede others if a student is to have a full understanding of a text. Thus, he must discriminate letters before he can translate them to sounds; he must supply literal meanings of words before he can deal with implications of incidents; he must understand the implications of words, details and imagery before he can understand literary symbols. By understanding a student's responses in these areas, it becomes possible to determine some of the reasons why students fail to interpret a text appropriately.

In the late 1920s I. A. Richards confronted the problem of inappropriate

cognitive, affective, and aesthetic responses to poetry. Even though his subjects were of "advanced educational standing," he found that they misread poetry rather consistently and that their emotional and aesthetic responses to the poems were governed by those misreadings. Richards notes four types of meaning in a poem (for that matter, they exist in any literary work, perhaps in any piece of writing, to some extent): (1) *sense,* by which he means the "plain sense" of what is said; (2) *feeling,* the "personal colouring of feeling" of the writer toward his subject; (3) *tone,* the attitude of the writer toward his audience; (4) *intention,* the aim, conscious or unconscious, that the writer is attempting to promote.[1] All these aspects of meaning are interdependent, and a misunderstanding of any one can result in serious distortion of the others.

In addition to faulty apprehension of any one of these aspects of meaning, a reader's comprehension can be blocked by what Richards calls irrelevant associations and stock responses. A reader may encounter a poetic image that has a very personal, subjective connotation for him. If he allows his personal response to the image to interfere with the *sense, feeling, tone,* or *intention,* the poem is lost upon him. He converts it to something that it is not. Obviously, since every reader approaches a text from the context of his own experience, a personal response to a poetic image is natural, but the more sophisticated reader winnows out the chaff of his response and retains the kernel that is relevant to the context of the work. Nor is the work any less a personal experience as a result of the winnowing process. The reader's response is still conditioned by his own experience, or should be, and not by the responses of others. And yet, the more literary experience a reader has, the more likely it is that his interpretation will have large areas of agreement with the responses of other experienced readers.

The stock response is another block to comprehension. If a reader fastens on certain elements of a work as relating to particular stock situations or stereotypes, his understanding of the work is likely to be cut off before it reaches culmination. He is likely to ignore other elements of the work that deny the validity of his stock response. For instance, in a recent study of adolescents' responses while reading short stories, James R. Squire found that students tended to blame a mother for the criminal tendencies of her son. They were responding to the cliché in pop culture which says that juvenile delinquency is caused by parental delinquency. This premature judgment about the story led the students to ignore completely the author's sympathy for the mother and condemnation of the son.[2] Both the irrelevant association and the stock response represent failures to respond adequately to the text, as well as an unwarranted response to a kind of static from the outside. The sophisticated reader ignores the static so that the sound and sense of the work come through to him.

No one can deny that even the most sophisticated critics may disagree as to the *sense, feeling, tone,* and *intention* of a work. But there are large

areas of agreement. Some literary works are so complex that critics continually discover new aspects of meaning and structure in them, but, ordinarily, they agree as to the primary or basic meanings. When divergent interpretations arise, they are usually the result either of variant manipulations and emphases of textual evidence on the basis of internally or externally established assumptions or of special philosophical or aesthetic evaluations of one or more aspects of the text. For instance, John Dover Wilson's particular interpretation of *Hamlet* in *What Happens in Hamlet?*[3] comes as a result of a careful exegesis of the text, supported by external historical data. Ernest Jones' Freudian treatment of *Hamlet* brings assumptions from an external discipline to bear on the evidence of the text. Jones' diagnosis of Hamlet is based on his isolation of the symptoms that his work in Freudian psychology preconditions him to seek.[4] T. S. Eliot's reading of the play results from two primarily evaluative ideas: first, the assumption that the *objective correlative* is necessary to effective drama; second, the judgment that there is no objective correlative to warrant Hamlet's behavior. His aesthetic decision that the play is defective is based on external criteria that may or may not be relevant.[5]

Variant responses are inescapable. The responsibility of the English teacher is not to insure similar responses but rather to teach so that his students respond to the structured data of a text in all its aspects of meaning: intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic. If a student is to read successfully, he must see and feel the result of the author's strategies and accept and follow the rules of the language game that the author is playing—at least until he has comprehended the *full meaning* of the work. Then he may reject it all. But as he enters the work and progresses through it, he should be able to say, "Yes, I recognize this. I see what is going on here."

In other words, although nonliterary experience is important to reading, literary experience is at least as important. A long, eventful life does not necessarily produce a sensitive reader. It is impossible, after all, for us to experience all that life has to offer. And in a sense literature makes it unnecessary to do so, for we can have a fairly complete understanding of various experiences through literature. We need not have had the specific experiences to understand them when they appear in literature. Not many of us have killed our fathers and married our mothers, but we can understand Oedipus and emphathize with him in his plight. Our empathy is based partly on our culturally ingrained horror of patricide and incest and partly on the fact that we have all, at one time or another, felt completely trapped by our own irreversible actions and their inescapable results. Even relatively young students have had such experiences.

But if our literary experience is limited and we do not know the story of Oedipus, or understand the function of the chorus, if we misconstrue the personality of Oedipus or fail to grasp the implications of his lines that reveal his fear and courage in discovering his identity, in short, if we fail to grasp the tremendous irony expressed in the language and structure of the play,

exegesis - an explanation or critical interpretation of a text

the full force of a great tragedy is lost upon us. The fault is not in our lack of life experience, but in the barrenness of our literary experience.

The Text

In order for the teacher to determine the sorts of literary experience that will engage his students, he must know how a text reveals meaning to a reader. He must also ask in what order the understanding of some meanings precedes the understanding of others. Readers' responses to literary works, together with what we know of our own experience, provide insight into the problem. The student responses to the following short story by Stephen Crane illustrate, at least in part, the levels of comprehension involved in understanding literature.

AN OMINOUS BABY by Stephen Crane

A baby was wandering in a strange country. He was a tattered child with a frowsled wealth of yellow hair. His dress, of a checked stuff, was soiled and showed the marks of many conflicts like the chain shirt of a warrior. His sun-tanned knees shone above wrinkled stockings which he pulled up occasionally with an impatient movement when they entangled his feet. From a gaping shoe there appeared an array of tiny toes.

He was toddling along an avenue between rows of stolid, brown houses. He went slowly, with a look of absorbed interest on his small, flushed face. His blue eyes stared curiously. Carriages went with a musical rumble over the smooth asphalt. A man with a chrysanthemum was going up steps. Two nursery-maids chatted as they walked slowly, while their charges hob-nobbed amiably between perambulators. A truck wagon roared thunderously in the distance.

The child from the poor district made way along the brown street filled with dull gray shadows. High up, near the roofs, glancing sun-rays changed cornices to blazing gold and silvered the fronts of windows. The wandering baby stopped and stared at the two children laughing and playing in their carriages among the heaps of rugs and cushions. He braced his legs apart in an attitude of earnest attention. His lower jaw fell and disclosed his small, even teeth. As they moved on, he followed the carriages with awe in his face as if contemplating a pageant. Once one of the babies, with twittering laughter, shook a gorgeous rattle at him. He smiled jovially in return.

Finally a nursery-maid ceased conversation and, turning, made a gesture of annoyance. "Go 'way, little boy," she said to him. "Go 'way. You're all dirty."

He gazed at her with infant tranquillity for a moment and then went

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slowly off, dragging behind him a bit of rope he had acquired in another street. He continued to investigate the new scenes. The people and houses struck him with interest as would flowers and trees. Passengers had to avoid the small, absorbed figure in the middle of the sidewalk. They glanced at the intent baby face covered with scratches and dust as with scars and with powder smoke.

After a time, the wanderer discovered upon the pavement, a pretty child in fine clothes playing with a toy. It was a tiny fire engine painted brilliantly in crimson and gold. The wheels rattled as its small owner dragged it uproariously about by means of a string. The babe with his bit of rope trailing behind him paused and regarded the child and the toy. For a long while he remained motionless, save for his eyes, which followed all movements of the glittering thing. The owner paid no attention to the spectator but continued his joyous imitations of phases of the career of a fire engine. His gleeful baby laugh rang against the calm fronts of the houses. After a little, the wandering baby began quietly to sidle nearer. His bit of rope, now forgotten, dropped at his feet. He removed his eyes from the toy and glanced expectantly at the other child.

"Say," he breathed, softly.

The owner of the toy was running down the walk at top speed. His tongue was clanging like a bell and his legs were galloping. An iron post on the corner was all ablaze. He did not look around at the coaxing call from the small, tattered figure on the curb.

The wandering baby approached still nearer and, presently, spoke again. "Say," he murmured, "le' me play wif it?"

The other child interrupted some shrill tootings. He bended his head and spoke disdainfully over his shoulder.

"No," he said.

The wanderer retreated to the curb. He failed to notice the bit of rope, once treasured. His eyes followed as before the winding course of the engine, and his tender mouth twitched.

"Say," he ventured at last, "is dat yours?"

"Yes," said the other, tilting his round chin. He drew his property suddenly behind him as if it were menaced. "Yes," he repeated, "it's mine."

"Well, le' me play wif it?" said the wandering baby, with a trembling note of desire in his voice.

"No," cried the pretty child with determined lips. "It's mine! My ma-ma buyed it."

"Well, tan't I play wif it?" His voice was a sob. He stretched forth little, covetous hands.

"No," the pretty child continued to repeat. "No, it's mine."

"Well, I want to play wif it," wailed the other. A sudden, fierce frown mantled his baby face. He clenched his thin hands and advanced with a formidable gesture. He looked some wee battler in a war.

"It's mine! It's mine," cried the pretty child, his voice in the treble of outraged rights.

"I want it," roared the wanderer.

"It's mine! It's mine!"

"I want it."
"It's mine!"

The pretty child retreated to the fence, and there paused at bay. He protected his property with outstretched arms. The small vandal made a charge. There was a short scuffle at the fence. Each grasped the string to the toy and tugged. Their faces were wrinkled with baby rage, the verge tears. Finally, the child in tatters gave a supreme tug and wrenched the string from the other's hands. He set off rapidly down the street, bearing the toy in his arms. He was weeping with the air of a wronged one who has at last succeeded in achieving his rights. The other baby was squalling lustily. He seemed quite helpless. He wrung his chubby hands and railed.

After the small barbarian had got some distance away, he paused and regarded his booty. His little form curved with pride. A soft, gleeful smile loomed through the storm of tears. With great care, he prepared the toy for travelling. He stopped a moment on a corner and gazed at the pretty child whose small figure was quivering with sobs. As the latter began to show signs of beginning pursuit, the little vandal turned and vanished down a dark side street as into a swallowing cavern.

The following responses to "An Ominous Baby" are selected from a large number of responses collected from eighth graders and high school seniors in suburban schools and from college sophomores. Significantly, the range of eighth-grade responses was very similar to the range of responses from high school and college students. All students who responded had fifty minutes to read the story and write an essay "explaining the meaning of the story." The students had never seen the story before or at least did not remember it. The student essays are printed without corrections.

Response 1.1 (Twelfth-Grader)

The story begin when a young child is walk down the street the child is dirty and pull a peice of string he find.

As he walk he saw baby carriage with little children in them.

One of the children started to laughter and want to play with him but his nursery maid chase him away. Later he found a another child play with his fire engine and pull it down the street. The baby went after he until he caught up with him.

When baby met him he ask if he can play but the another child said no with out even looking then the child look up and see him and the rope. Then baby ask again if he can with it the other boy said yes and started to hand him the toy and started for the rope the baby have.

The baby saw what he wanted and hold on the rope tighter until there was a fight for it.

Then the baby got the toy and run down the street but later find he miss a booty and wrong he did he went back for the booty and started to play with the toy.

The little boy then came running after him with a little fighting power to get it back.

When the baby saw this he run leaving the toy behind.

Response 1.2 (Eighth-Grader)

In the story "An Ominous Baby" the two main characters are children. One is dirty with scratches and ragged clothes. The other is pretty, dressed in fine clothes and playing peacefully with a toy.

The ragged child is turned down by everyone. He has only a piece of old rope as a toy or something to play with. The other child has a tiny fire engine painted brilliantly in crimson and gold.

When the ragged child sees this he forgets his little piece of rope and runs as quickly as he can to ask the pretty child if he might *just* pull the fire engine for a while. When he gets there the pretty child says no, and both children get in a scuffle.They tugged and tattered trying to gain control of the string from which the fire engine was pulled by. Finally the ragged child got the string and ran away with the toy.

At the end both children were crying, The ragged child was weeping because he had seen that he had done wrong in getting what he wanted. The pretty child was squalling because he seemed helpless now that the ragged child has his toy.

As a whole, this story tells about people in different classes and how they react to certain situations.

Both writers are primarily concerned with the literal level of the story, that is, with the events that took place. The twelfth grader clearly has a writing problem, the omission of word endings, which is *not* due to her natural dialect. However, while this student can comprehend the literal meaning reasonably well, the essay displays a few serious misreadings. The student apparently confuses "booty," which means loot in the context of the story, with baby booty. She has also apparently confused the string on the toy with the bit of rope which the tattered child carried. The eighth grader's writing is more sophisticated than that of the high school senior, but his comprehension of the story is at about the same level. His response displays some misreadings, but they are not so serious as those of the high school senior. The eighth grader does not attempt an interpretation of the story as a whole until the final line, and as an interpretation that line is rather vague. With all their shortcomings, these two responses represent an important level of comprehension, for without an understanding of the literal level of a work, the inferences drawn are likely to be irrelevant and erroneous.

Response 2.1 (Eighth-Grader)

"An Ominous Baby" is an illustrious account of why a child might turn delinquent. If a small child from the lower class is walking in the upper class district it is pretty obvious that he will be shunned. To be allowed to be there is a sign that his parents don't really care too much about him.

When a child is deprived of the things he wants such as the fire engine, he might steal to get that thing.

The child begins to feel hurt and unwanted when the nursery maid tells him, "Go 'way. You're all dirty." He carried the rope with him to try to gain security. When he saw the upper class child playing with the fire engine the child from the "other side of the tracks" began to feel inferior and to want that fire engine. He wanted the fire engine enough so that he dropped his "security" rope and begged the other child to let him play with the toy. When he is told firmly many times, "It's mine!" by the other child the wanderer decides to advance and take the toy away. The boys had a short fight and each was so mad he was ready to cry. When the lower class boy finally got the fire engine and started to run away he was "weeping with the air of a wronged one who has at last succeeded in achieving his rights." The wanderer was proud of himself for stealing the toy and when the other boy began to chase him the wanderer ran down a dark street and disappeared.

The dirty child wanted the fire engine enough to steal it and with this accomplished he was proud of himself. This will probably begin his life as a delinquent because now he thinks it is all right to steal.

The eighth grader who wrote response 2.1 is concerned with theme: "why a child might turn delinquent." However, the statement of this theme is derived as much from stock response as it is from analysis of motives: "When a child is deprived of the things he wants . . . he might steal to get that thing. . . . This will probably begin his life as a delinquent because he now thinks it is all right to steal." Many respondents at both the eighth-grade and college levels interpreted the story as a portrayal of incipient delinquency. Apparently, they were reacting to certain details of the story that identify what they regard as the archetypal causes of delinquency: no parents mentioned, economic deprivation, rejection by others, and so on. The writer of 2.1 has gone beyond the literal level of the story to a concern with why the child took the fire engine, and he attempts to support his interpretation by reference to the text. However, the stock response—the quick identification of the delinquency pattern—has cut off his thinking at that level with the result that he interprets details in terms of his first reaction. For instance, he infers that the child "begins to feel hurt and unwanted" at the rebuff of the nursemaid. Although 2.1 quotes one of the most significant lines of the story (". . . weeping with the air of a wronged one who had at last succeeded in achieving his rights."), he does nothing with it. Even though he refers to the tattered child as "the lower class boy," he does not see the broader social implications of the story.

Response 2.2 (College Sophomore)

The baby represents a person or possibly even a country that is rugged and yet gives the outward appearance of being wronged. He will search around innocently looking for someone he can overpower. Those that he can not overpower, after observing them to be sure, he will quietly and innocently leave be.

This is shown in this story by the baby's wandering. And while he wandered he observed things carefully, the carriages, man going up a step, a truck wagon roaring in the distance. He observed things until he came upon something that interested him, two children in their carriages. He could not take advantage of these two weaklings because they were protected by their nursery maid much like weak people are that can afford to or can gain the favor of the strong. After being closed off he quietly continued his innocent search until he came upon a weakling that was unprotected. Following his usual path he tried peacefully to overcome the toy owner but when this failed he resorted to force tactics. After having succeeded he showed no emotion. He ran to be sure he would get away, looked back and then continued on into a dark place to remain unseen for awhile.

This baby or person has to better himself at the expense of others. He carried his greatest prize, a rope, with him until he found something better and then he forgot about the rope. He did nothing to earn the rope and he did nothing legal to earn the toy.

Response 2.2, by a college sophomore, attempts to deal with theme and the motivation of the crime. The reader sees the motivation as somehow inherent in the personality of the tattered child, who "represents a person or even a country that is rugged and yet gives the outward appearance of being wronged. He will search around innocently looking for someone he can overpower." The remainder of the interpretation, which is concerned with the implications of various incidents in the story, is predicated on this basic assumption. How did such an erroneous assumption come about? Simply by ignoring what Richards called *feeling,* the attitude of the writer toward his subject. Writer 2.2 completely ignores all the words and images that convey the author's sympathy for the tattered child: "frowsled wealth of yellow hair," "suntanned knees," "tiny toes," "toddling," "smiled jovially in return," and so on. These are not words that describe an object of contempt. The reader has not realized the effect of the individual words. Such a reader needs training in observing the connotations of individual words and images and their effect on the work as a whole. He needs to observe how apparently slight changes in the choice

of words can change entirely the emotional impact of the passage. Change "frowsled wealth of yellow hair" to "twisted mass" of yellow hair, "suntanned knees" to "grimy knees," "tiny toes" to "dirty toes," and sympathy toward the child diminishes considerably.

This reader's response is a vivid example of how cognitive understandings influence the affective response. Of course, it is his prerogative to reject the social implications of the story; but as a reader, his first obligation is to interpret the story adequately.

Response 3 (Twelfth-Grader)

The poor child in this story has been mistreated, so he thinks a child of fate and misfortune. This child seems to be lost in a world he can't even begin to understand or cope with. He wanders around the streets and looks for excitement. He seems to have no one to care for or look after him. He seems to think that the whole world is against him and nobody cares. He is looked down upon by older people. He is shabby and dirty and no one wants him around. Not even children of his own will have anything to do with him. Perhaps under his dirty clothes and scratched soiled face there is a clean neat little boy who can look just the same as any other little boy. Act like any other little boy. But no one has given him a chance to compete with the others. He has no friends and not even adults will try to help him. At his tender age he cannot even begin to understand why he has been treated as an outcast. He can see no difference between himself and the little boy who is clean and has nice clothes and most of all a shinney fire engine. He can't understand why he shouldn't be able to play with the fire engine. At first the other little boy just ignored him. The little boy made it a point to make himself known, but this did no good. The pretty child flatly refused him and made it clear to the poor dirty little boy that it belonged to him and he was the only one who would use it. The poor boy made it a point to start an arguement once the pretty child protected his property against anything who might bring harm to it. At this point in the story both children were very upset and just about on the verge of tears. All at once the poor little boy grabed the truck from the other child's steady grip and began to run. At last he had achieved what he believed to be his rights. He had at last got what he thought should be his. The hurt which he had held inward for so long was finally released. All the feeling of this small confused child seemed to rush out all at one time. A feeling of achieventt (*sic*) swept over him. He had rebelled against being discriminated against. He was in a sense like a "Negro" who had fought and gave of himself to attain a goal. The boy had at the moment he grabbed the truck taken all he could from the cold cruel world. He was going to show the owner of the truck as well as the world that he had taken enough, and that he was now a different person. No more feeling sorry for himself and no more of being an underdog. He was just as good as any boy. He wase equal to

the little boy with the clean face and pretty clothes. This was the turning point in this boys life. He could now grow into a man, a man equal to any other man regurdless of his wealth. He knew what it was to be poor and to never have anyone to care for him. Perhaps he would do his best to make sure that he always cared for any children that he might have and to make sure that all his children were taught not to judge a person by the clothes he wears nor by the amount of money he has. I think that this little boy learned the hard way. A lesson he will never forget.

The writer of response 3, in contrast to the writer of 2.2, is very sympathetic toward the tattered child. In fact, while she clearly understands the literal elements of the story, her interpretation is directed at explaining the tattered baby's feelings about his environment and his motives in stealing the toy. Some of her inferences are unjustified or irrelevant, for instance, the comments explaining how the tattered child will care for his own children. She makes some tentative movements toward explaining the story's theme, but does not, as she fails to deal with the symbolic significance of the two children. Still, this is the most sophisticated response so far and its inferences about feelings and motives represent an important level of comprehension.

Response 4.1 (Eighth-Grader)

The baby represents anyone with no meaning, someone always on the loser's end. Society won't give him a chance to get what he wants and so he becomes a menace to that society.

The baby is wonderous at the new things it sees. The comfort and luxuries present, that were never introduced to him. When a nurse tells him to "Go 'way, little boy. Go 'way. You're all dirty," it was being told they wouldn't let him have the "good" things in life.

Finally he meets with someone who has just what he wants. But he can't get it by persuasion. So he uses force, symbolically against Society, and takes what he wants.

Overall, I think, this means that the baby was rejected by Society personally when the nurse adminished him to "Go 'way . . ." Then he rebelled against the boundaries of Society and threatened it with his violence. Forcefully takes his 'reinbursement' from Society, in the form of a little fire truck, and tactfully, disappears.

Symbolically this is the rejection of and rebellion against Society of any socially ostrasized peoples, lower classes, Negroes, sometimes Jews, etc.

The writer of response 4.1 has approached the story with considerable sophistication. Not only does he understand the literal level and infer the implications of key incidents and imagery but he comprehends the basic symbolism of the story. Clearly, there are other elements of the story that are

worthy of comment and undoubtedly influenced the response. But in its handling of the major symbolism of the story, this response is more sophisticated than many of those from high school and college students.

The main concern here, however, is the aspects of a text to which a reader at any level must respond to come to a full understanding of literary work. First, he must comprehend the work at its literal level. If he does not, any inferences he draws from the work may be inappropriate. Second, he must recognize the implications of the language, imagery, details, and incidents of the work. Third, he must make appropriate inferences about the rhetoric and structure of the work. Fourth, when necessary, he must view the work against various contexts. His affective responses come as the result of his understanding of any or all of these levels. Finally, when he has arrived at an adequate understanding, the reader evaluates the work as a whole. The accomplished reader approaches all these levels of significance more or less concomitantly. But even he must come to terms with the literal level of a work before making inferences, and he must attempt to suspend his judgments of the work until he has sifted the evidence. His reading raises questions at each level of significance about the total meaning of the work. He moves with comparative ease from one level to another and back again to answer those questions.

Response 4.2 (Twelfth-Grader)

"An Ominous Baby" by Stephen Crane is an ingenious attempt by the author to express in the guise of infants what is perhaps a basic part of human nature. It concerns itself with the human impulse to gain at all costs what one has been denied, with that thing being at the same time what one most desperately needs.

In the wandering baby is perhaps represented the "vagabond" (if one wishes to call him that) who has been deprived of what may be termed "essentials." In the case of the child, it is pretty clothes, cleanliness, a toy. But in deeper perspective, the child is those of this earth who are deprived not so much of food, or clothing, but of their very humanity—the security of a toy or happiness—the security of being a person in the sense of not being hooplessly turned away—by people, by others of his own kind. (This happens a no. of times—ie. the nursemaid, the other child).

And, when the child strikes out at the other child, the story may have an overtone of war. (ie: "He clenched his fat hands and advanced with a formidable gesture. He looked like some wee battler in a war).

In this, however, is represented the human tendency to strike out, reach for, grasp for, that which one needs, which one must have in order to be —whether it be a toy as in the case of the story, or security, or love or whatever it may be. The story says: One does not resign oneself to hopelessness; one fights it.

And there is an indication that the author does not feel this is completely understood, that we treat it obliviously, without regard or attempt to understand it (ie. we know that it happens but don't really care why): "the little vandal turned and vanished down a *dark side street as into a cavern*" [italics added].

This dark cavern is the realm of human misunderstanding of the fact that men must be men (ie. in the philosophical conception of the word) and if not allowed to be so, they will not resign themselves to that fate. And this is a basic insight into war or conflict: that we must have what we must have, whether it be a toy or a land to call our own, or our dignity as men and that we will do anything to attain it.

Response 4.2 is somewhat more sophisticated than 4.1, dealing with the symbolism and the theme but reaching beyond social conflict to suggest why Crane chose babies as characters to represent what is essential to man's nature. Perhaps the chief difference between this response and 4.1 is in the more explicit, better organized treatment which the high school senior gives her interpretation of the story's theme.

It is significant that, while very few students in several hundred wrote responses of this caliber, the difference, in terms of literary understanding, between one of the strongest eighth-grade responses and one of the strongest twelfth-grade responses is not very great. At the very least it reveals that the traditional methods of determining course content by grade level is foolish. The teacher may have eighth graders who read and write more effectively than most seniors, or he may have twelfth graders who read and write at the level of eighth graders or below. The teacher must examine the abilities of the students in his own classes.

For the immature reader, however, the various levels are more nearly hierarchical. A few students cannot understand the literal level of the simplest story. Some cannot draw even simple inferences about character and incidents. Clearly, they must learn to solve these problems before proceeding to the more complex aspects of literary interpretation. At the same time, each level has its own range of difficulty. For instance, evaluation of simple works, such as fables, may be a less demanding task than understanding the literal level of a work like *Paradise Lost*.

The Teacher

Although the teacher is present only in specific reading situations in educational settings, his presence should be of vital importance. At least, he has a great deal of power in influencing the students. The danger of direct attempts to influence student attitudes toward particular works was examined closely in Chapter 7. Declaiming to students about the virtues of a particular work or reading as an activity is likely to do far more damage than

good. Nor can the teacher transfer his own ability to read directly to his students.

What can the teacher do then? First, he can make use of various aspects of the general environment. Second, he can create a series of specific reading situations through which his students can become more and more sophisticated as readers.

THE TEACHER AND THE GENERAL ENVIRONMENT

Although the teacher cannot (and would not want to) control the total environment, he can take its influences on his students into consideration when he teaches. If he finds, for example, that his students have strong negative values toward reading as an activity, he should find unit ideas and materials that relate directly to strong positive interests and values. If he finds that his students reject characters whose value systems are different from theirs, he may wish to develop a unit through which the students learn why different groups have different values.

Beyond that, the teacher can make use of specific elements of the total environment in his teaching. He might select news stories, cartoons, movies, or television programs to prepare students for reading a particular text. The strength of this technique is obvious; it not only prepares the student for reading but also helps make the relevancy of the text apparent. The student can see the connection between literature and other aspects of his environment. Methods and materials for capitalizing on the general environment of the students are enumerated in Chapter 14.

THE TEACHER AND THE SPECIFIC READING SITUATION

The teacher's role in developing instructional units and in selecting texts is complex. He must know what reading literature involves; he must learn to what extent his students can cope with a text; and he must design immediate reading situations that are based upon his and his students' knowledge of literature.

His instruction must move students from what they can already do to the easiest tasks they cannot already do. For instance, if they can barely comprehend what is directly stated in relatively simple material, the unit of instruction should present questions that focus on what happened when and to whom. The inference questions relating to the text should be fairly simple. Class discussion, however, relating what is read to student experience has immense value for weak readers and might involve rather complex inferences. Once the students can deal adequately with the literal level, the teacher's units of instruction can begin to focus on making more complex inferences from the text. First, then, the teacher must determine what his students observe and what inferences they can make. Systematic inventories (discussed in Chapter 11) will give him a fairly clear idea of what reading experiences his students need. His next problem is to design a unit of instruction that will help his students become more sophisticated readers.

Obviously, sophistication as a reader does not pertain simply to cognitive understanding of a text. It has a great deal to do with affective responses, which to a large extent are dependent upon intellectual understandings. But while the teacher strives to improve the students' ability to understand a text cognitively, he must be acutely aware of affective responses. There is no point, for instance, in using material that students reject or are neutral toward affectively—even if that material helps to improve cognitive understandings. The teacher must select materials and activities that will excite the students' interest and response. At the same time, the materials and activities must help to improve the cognitive aspects of reading. The task, which is discussed explicitly in Chapter 14, is not particularly easy.

Figure 9.2 summarizes the various aspects of a reading situation. First, the reader's general environment, the cumulative effects of all his experiences both in and out of school, not only gives rise to specific reading interests but may significantly influence his understanding of what he reads. For instance, a great many responses to Crane's "An Ominous Baby" associated the conflict in the story with racial conflicts. Some, apparently ignoring the tattered child's "frowsled wealth of yellow hair," stated that he "represented" the blacks. While it is clear that no element of the story specifically represents racial conflicts, there are some clear analogies between racial conflict and various aspects of the story's meaning. And seeing how literature reflects real life is an important part of literary experience. Thus, a teacher can make effective use of various elements of the environment to increase reading interest and skill with all students, but especially with slow or reluctant readers.

Second, any act of reading takes place in some particular, immediate situation, which may have given rise to the reading. The reader's response to the text in that situation will be influenced by various aspects of the situation itself, such as the reader's purpose, whether it be to learn how to fix an automobile or to understand and enjoy a poem. Other apparently superficial elements, such as lighting, noise level, and physical comfort are also important.

The reader's response to the text will be affected by his physiological functions (his vision and control over eye movements, for instance) and by his literary and nonliterary experience. His cognitive, affective, and aesthetic responses are all closely interdependent and, at the same time, depend upon his past experience, his physiological functions, various influences in the immediate situation, and selected aspects of the general environment.

Dotted lines are used to represent the teacher as an optional element. He may influence the immediate situation in a number of ways, by his general demeanor in the classroom, by the kinds of pre- and post-reading activities he generates, by the types and appropriateness of the instructional units he develops, and so forth. He often has a decisive influence over all texts that

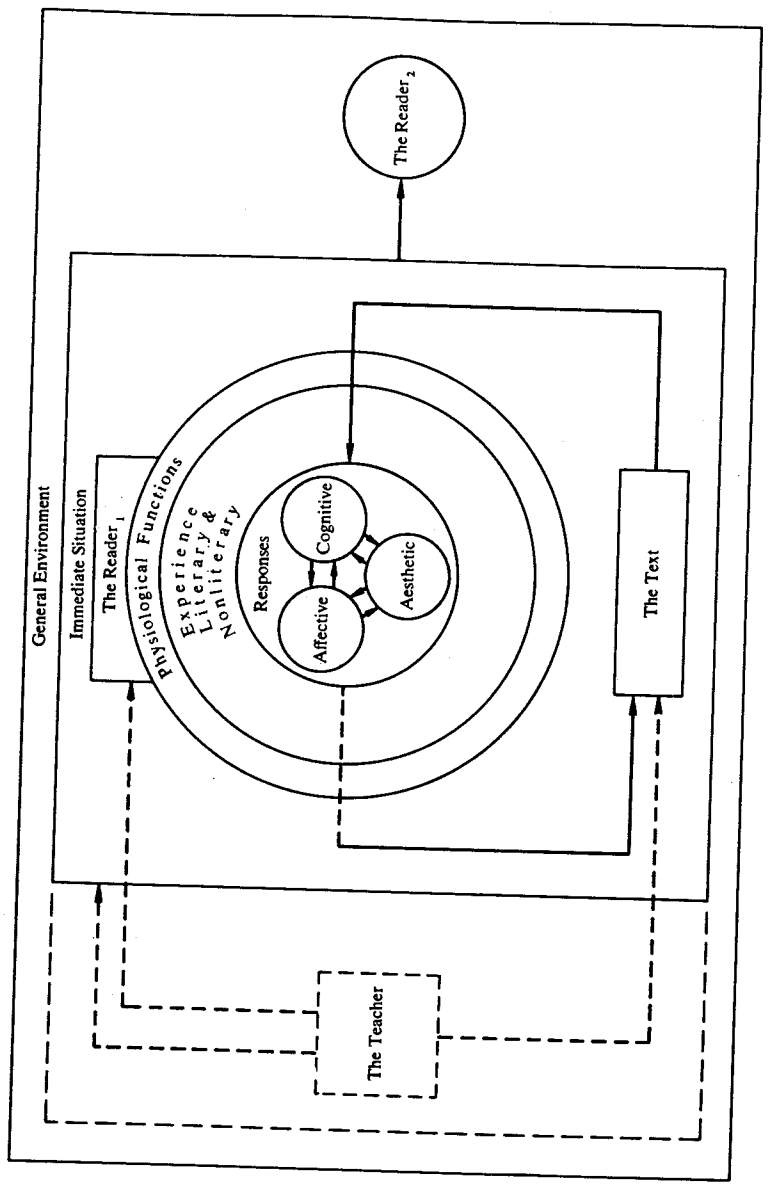

FIGURE 9.2 General Elements of the Reading Situation, 2

a student reads in class; too often that influence is negative because the texts are inappropriate for the students. Finally, he may attempt to influence the reader's attitudes, purposes, and even cognitive understandings directly in authoritarian ways. While such influence may be appropriate for some students, for many more it is only destructive, resulting in negative attitudes toward both particular texts and reading as an activity. The teacher has his most positive influence over the situation in which the reading takes place and over the selection of appropriate materials.

Each reader emerges from every reading experience as an essentially new reader (indicated as Reader$_2$ in Figure 9.2). Often the change is so slight that it is barely noticeable. But when a reader encounters a series of reading situations in which he treats similar reading problems with increasing independence, he gradually gains proficiency in that particular respect. Thus, when a first or second grader encounters a word such as "locomotive" for the first time, he may have to sound it out syllable by syllable. After he has worked through the word several times, however, he will know it at a glance. In a similar way, tenth graders, given appropriate reading experiences and discussions in literary symbolism (see Chapters 4 and 5), become more and more adept at interpreting symbolism. In such a sequence of reading experiences the teacher maintains indirect influence over the situations, rather than direct control over the students themselves.

Figure 9.2 suggests four areas that demand careful exploration before instruction proceeds: (1) the elements of the text to which a reader must respond, (2) the reader's literary experience as reflected in his ability to deal with a text, (3) the construction of individual units that will improve reading, and (4) a sequence of instructional units that will produce readers capable of responding as intelligently and sympathetically to a text as their abilities permit. These areas will be examined in the chapters that follow.

A teacher planning a specific unit of instruction such as "The Outcast," which follows, should be concerned with all the elements of the reading situation. He decides upon the unit topic because of his analysis of his students' literary experience and their concerns with their own environment, and also because he knows it is appropriate to the study of literature. His reading inventories and classroom observations have revealed that although most of his students read reasonably well at the literal level and handle simple inferences fairly well, they have difficulty with implied relationships and the interpretation of character. He has also noticed that tenth graders are concerned about belonging to a group; they are afraid of being ostracized. He realizes that the unit on "The Outcast" will give them considerable experience in dealing with implied relationships and character. At the same time the unit should have strong interest for them because it deals with a topic that concerns adolescents in their total environment. In planning the unit, he finds materials that will be suitable to the various ability levels of his students and that have high interest potential and permit strong affective responses. He

plans to help students relate the unit and the literature to their own lives (their environment) by making use of their personal experience, TV shows, films, newspaper and magazine articles, and so on, wherever possible. He organizes the unit so that the students begin with a discussion of a high-interest story in terms of what they already know of ostracism and increases the difficulty of materials and problems gradually, giving sufficient practice to enable the students to handle the unit problems independently. This procedure encourages affective response while developing increasingly complex intellectual (cognitive) understandings. Finally, to determine whether or not the students can actually make the inferences about character and implied relationships that are stressed in the unit, the test will be over material that the students read and interpret independently—full length works selected from a bibliography.

THE OUTCAST*

Teaching the Unit

Great writers have often studied the outcast and the group from which he is ostracized in their works; Shakespeare's Hamlet, Ibsen's Dr. Stockman, O'Neill's Yank are all examples of the outcast. Although every student could not handle the intricate and delicate situations in such works, all students can benefit from an awareness of the outcast, the scapegoat, and the group and its prejudices as used in literature. Treatment of the outcast theme in easier works will lead to the student's eventual understanding of the alienations of a Hamlet and awareness of the social implications in O'Neill's treatment of Yank.

The unit is introduced with an obvious physically grotesque outcast in "Born of Man and Woman" and an obvious ethnic outcast in "The Charivari," so that the student can recognize and begin to develop the concepts of how being different and not being in accord with group standards affects the individual. The unit then moves into the study of short stories that involve various reasons for ostracism—religious, ethnic, racial, social, and physical—some obviously and some subtly.

In this unit, it is particularly essential that some work be done with vocabulary that is related to the unit, as much of it will be unfamiliar to the student; scapegoat, ostracize, prejudice, social, ethnic, religious and racial are all terms that should be analyzed and discussed in terms of student experience with references to actual or fictional incidents.

* This unit was first developed by the authors and Mrs. Betty Lou Miller for use in the Euclid (Ohio) Public Schools. It was later printed and distributed for the Project English Demonstration Center at the Euclid Public School and Western Reserve University through the support of the United States Office of Education. It has been revised for inclusion here.

The student can apply "outcasting" to the present-day and real life situations through newspaper reading and writing. The students can bring into class examples from newspapers of present day "outcasting," which are discussed in class. The student is then asked to write an editorial, a feature story, or a news story from some experience that he has had or witnessed involving some form of ostracism. Some techniques of newspaper writing are taught along with this lesson.

For individual analysis, longer short stories whose themes are more fully developed allow the student to explore the detailed ramifications of the unit problems and concepts. "The Snow Goose" is read individually by all students and then discussed in class. For those students able now to work independently, "The Blue Hotel" is assigned. Students who have not fully grasped the concepts might read another long, but simple, short story to clarify concepts. When a majority of the class has become aware of the concepts, they are ready to examine poems, which give fewer clues to meaning than the other forms of literature. The teacher may use a variety of poetry and divide the class into homogeneous groups with the "most clue" poems going to the slowest and the "least clue" poems to the fastest students. The entire class then hears the reports of each group so that the class may share in the interpretation of all poems.

For this particular unit, *To Kill a Mockingbird* is appropriate reading for most functional readers. Students enjoy the book and are able to apply unit concepts to the novel. Every student will not obtain the same level of understanding, but each will come to valid conclusions at his own level. When the students complete the novel, the class is divided into homogeneous groups, and each group chooses a discussion topic upon which the group will write a paper to be presented to the class.

The final step and culminating point of the unit is the student's selection of a novel from a bibliography and his application of all the concepts to his selection. An individual conference with each student helps him to choose a topic relating the concepts learned in the unit to his book. The topic is then developed and used as the basis of the student's essay.

These various steps lead the student to an awareness of the conflict between individual and group standards and the effects of the group upon the individual in life and literature and the effect of the individual on the group. More than this, however, the unit offers both background and practice that will engender understanding in the student's later reading of literature.

TIME REQUIRED

Approximately seven weeks.

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES

To write an analysis of a novel, identifying and explaining the relationships between individual characters and the groups that ostracize them. The analysis

must include a discussion of the causes and effects of the ostracism as they relate to the individual and the group. (See objective for Lesson 9.)

To write a newspaper story (feature story, editorial, or news story) whose subject is a real or imaginary experience concerning the ostracism of an individual or a group.

MATERIALS

Teacher Source

Frazer, J. G., *The New Golden Bough,* abridged and edited by T. H. Gaster, New York: Criterion Books (1959).

Poetry:

Field, Edward, "Tulips and Addresses," *The New Yorker,* April 27, 1963.

Hughes, Langston, "Brass Spittoons," in Louis Untermeyer (ed.), *Modern American Poetry,* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World (1950).

Robinson, E. A., "Mr. Flood's Party," *Modern American Poetry.*

Rosenberg, Isaac, "The Jew," in Louis Untermeyer (ed.), *Modern British Poetry,* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World (1950).

Sassoon, Siegfried, "Does It Matter?" *Modern British Poetry.*

Thomas, Dylan, "The Hunchback in the Park," *Modern British Poetry.*

Short Stories:

Crane, Stephen, "The Blue Hotel," in *Twenty Short Stories,* New York: Knopf (1940).

Gail, Zona, "The Charivari," in *Yellow, Gentian, and Blue,* New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts (n.d.).

Gallico, Paul, *The Snow Goose,* New York: Alfred A. Knopf (1941).

Gorky, Maxim, "Her Lover," in Roger B. Goodman (ed.), *75 Short Masterpieces,* New York: Bantam Books (1961).

Harte, Bret, "The Outcasts of Poker Flat," in Matilda Bailey and Ullin W. Leavell (eds.), *Worlds to Explore,* New York: American Book (1956).

Matheson, Richard, "Born of Man and Woman," *75 Short Masterpieces.*

Parker, Dorothy, "Clothe the Naked," in Ernestine Taggard (ed.), *Twenty Grand Short Stories,* New York: Bantam Books (1961).

Peretz, I. L., "The Outcast," in *The Book of Fire,* Joseph Leftwich (tr.), New York: Thomas Yoseloff (n.d.).

Peretz, I. L., "The Seventh Candle," *The Book of Fire.*

Novel:

Lee, Harper, *To Kill a Mockingbird,* New York: Popular Library (1960).

Duplicated Materials:

Study guides for "The Charivari," "The Seventh Candle," "Clothe the Naked," "Her Lover," "The Outcasts of Poker Flat," "The Outcast," "The Snow Goose," "The Blue Hotel," and *To Kill a Mockingbird.* (Only sample guides are included here.)

Bibliography for individual reading.

Selected cartoons from "Peanuts" with Charlie Brown as the "scapegoat." (Not included here.)

STUDENT LOAD

1. Reading and discussion of eight short stories, six poems, and two novels.
2. Writing of compositions:
   a. Newspaper story.
   b. Analysis of one short story.
   c. Analysis of one aspect of *To Kill a Mockingbird.*
   d. Analysis of outside reading selection.
3. Preparation of one part of class discussion of a poem.

Lesson 1

OBJECTIVES

To identify some causes of ostracism.

MATERIALS

"Born of Man and Woman"
"Charivari"

PROCEDURES

1. Distribute the story "Born of Man and Woman" and have the students read it in class before any discussion takes place.
2. Check on reading accuracy by finding out through questions such as the following the major details of the story on the literal level:
   a. Who is the speaker?
   b. Where and how does he live?
   c. Is there anything unusual about the speaker?
   d. Who are the "little mothers" and "little fathers"?
3. Develop inferences about the story and the concept of outcast by asking such questions as:
   a. Why did the character call children "little mothers" and "little fathers"?
   b. Why do you think the speaker was forced to live in the cellar?
4. The students will recognize this story as an exaggeration of the way a deformed person might be treated. Lead them to relate the concept to personal knowledge by telling them a story from personal experience in which you have known or heard of an outcast. Ask them to mention situations they've heard about.
   a. Do you know of other situations like this? (Children locked in attics by their parents, children kept under sedation by parents, and so on.)

b. Why do people treat other people in this way? (Fear, shame, ignorance.)

5. Assign "The Charivari" and the study guide questions. To explore the causes of prejudice, discuss the study questions in class.
6. After reading and discussion of the stories, introduce the word "ostracism" and its related forms.

Study Guide "The Chariviari" by Zona Gail

VOCABULARY

hypocritical mementos wit charivari

1. How did the people treat Obald, and how did they think about him before Edward Muir entered his house? How much did they really know about him?
2. Why did Muir go inside Obald's house?
3. Describe the interior.
   a. What things in particular interested Edward?
   b. What was Obald's reaction to Edward's interest?
4. Whom did Edward tell about his visit?
5. After they found out about the chest, what did various people say about Obald? How did they act toward him?
6. Why did they react as they did?
7. What was Obald's reaction to the townspeople? Did this help or hurt his acceptance by the group?
8. What is a charivari? Considering the end of the story, why was it ironic that the boys gave Obald a charivari?
9. What effect does the ending have on the reader?
10. What are the causes of prejudice in this story?
11. How do the same forces cause prejudice in real life situations?

Lesson 2

OBJECTIVES

To identify the reactions of the outcast to his situation.
To identify the causes of ostracism.

MATERIALS

"The Seventh Candle"
"Clothe the Naked"
"Her Lover"
"The Outcasts of Poker Flat"
"The Outcast"

Selected cartoons from "Peanuts"
(Study guides are not included below.)

PROCEDURES

1. Introduce the concept of the scapegoat by having the class examine selected cartoons from "Peanuts" in which Charlie Brown is the scapegoat for his ball team. The discussion deals with why the others blame Charlie Brown, how he feels, and so forth.
2. Direct the students in the recognition of concepts by assigning each story the day before class discussion and giving the students the study questions to use as a check on understanding. This work is to be done individually.
3. Using the study questions as a basis for discussion, analyze each story with the class, objectifying the concepts that each one exemplifies. At the discretion of the teacher, some stories can be discussed in small groups.
   a. "The Seventh Candle"—ostracizing a member of a group for religious differences
   b. "Clothe the Naked":
      (1) Scapegoating in the aggression of the boys against Raymond.
      (2) Prejudice in the treatment of Lannie by her employers and in the attitude of whites toward Negroes.
      (3) Reactions of the outcasts:
      Big Lannie—acceptance of fate.
      Raymond—bewilderment and fear.
      (4) Ostracism for reasons of physical deformity, for difference in dress, and for reasons of race.
   c. "Her Lover":
      (1) Reaction of outcasts by creation of a fantasy world.
      (2) Change in attitude of group (represented by student after familiarity and understanding is achieved.
      (3) Outcast for reasons of physical appearance and social status.
   d. "The Outcasts of Poker Flat":
      (1) Several individuals as scapegoats for a town.
      (2) Variety of social outcasts: prostitute, gambler, drunkard, and the like.
      (3) Reaction of the outcasts to their situation: fear, aggression, courage, and so on.
   e. "The Outcast":
      (1) A character outcast from more than one group.
      (2) Ostracism of an individual by nature of the individual's inability to function in a role assigned him by the group.

Lesson 3

OBJECTIVES

To define the vocabulary of the unit.
To identify unit concepts in literature and personal experience.

PROCEDURES

1. Give examples of scapegoating from *The New Golden Bough,* "Scapegoats." Then discuss with the class their personal and literary experiences with scapegoating.
   a. How does scapegoating go on today?
   b. What examples of scapegoating were there in the stories we have read?
   c. What is a definition for modern scapegoating? Refer to the theoretical sources to guide the students in formulating their definition.
2. Examine related vocabulary by putting the term "prejudice" on the board. Ask the class to identify its base forms (judge).
   a. What does "pre" mean?
   b. What does "judge" mean?
   c. When you are prejudiced toward something, what have you done?
   d. What might be a good definition for "prejudice"?
3. Brainstorm with the class for reasons *why* people prejudge. Refer them them to the stories they have read. Suggest reasons that the students fail to develop.
4. Introduce the concept of group standards by asking the students to think of incidents in their lives in or outside of school in which someone has been cast out of a group. If student responses are weak, ask about causes.
   a. What can cause a person to be ostracized?
      (1) Standards of dress.
      (2) Standards of physical appearance.
      (3) Standards of home background.
      (4) Standards of speech.
      (5) Standards of ability (academic, sports, mechanical).
   b. Why was the person outcast in the examples suggested? (Violated idea of group standards.)
5. Help the students to think of these causes by listing five qualities that might cause isolation from a group and discuss their distinctions:
   a. physical
   b. social
   c. ethnic
   d. religious
   e. racial

6. Relate these ideas to literature even further by asking the class the following questions about "Born of Man and Woman":
   a. What standards of our society did the speaker fall below?
   b. What evidence is there of "scapegoating" in the story?
   c. What type of outcast was the speaker?

   Continue the discussion with other stories until the class has objectified and synthesized the concepts.

Lesson 4

OBJECTIVES

To write an editorial, news story, or feature story whose subject matter is real or imaginary experience concerning the ostracism of an individual or group.

MATERIALS

Newspaper and/or magazine articles

PROCEDURES

1. Ask the students to obtain newspaper and/or magazine articles in which a person or group is outcast. This assignment should be made *a week in advance* of the lesson. In class, let some students read their articles and lead discussions of them. They should emphasize various reasons for outcasting, such as social differences, ethnic differences, religious differences, racial differences, and physical handicaps. (It is helpful to collect articles ahead of time so as to have one example of each cause.)
2. Divide the class into heterogeneous groups, and have the groups discuss their newspaper articles in the terms of the unit. To show the students that outcast situations apply not only to others but to themselves as well, lead the groups, while circulating among them, from these life situations to individual situations where they have been an outcast or have a friend who was an outcast.
   a. Have you ever known any one who was outcast by his parents?
   b. Outcast from friends or peer group?
   c. Outcast from groups by reason of race, religion, or physical difference?
3. Prepare for the written assignment by distributing an editorial, a feature, and a news story dittoed from the articles the students have brought in.
   a. Read these articles carefully to see how they differ.
   b. What are the differences among the three articles?

   The students may apply many of the concepts learned in other units in this type of analysis. List the students' comments on the board in three columns and conclude the discussion by heading the columns with the appropriate word.

(1) Feature writing:
   (a) Human interest stories, not necessarily "newsworthy" or "front-page material."
   (b) Appeals to a certain audience, for example, teenager, businessman, housewife.
   (c) First paragraph attention-getting devices: questions, exclamations, quotations.
   (d) Use of clever, highly connotative language.

(2) News story:
   (a) Who, what, when, where, why usually in first paragraph.
   (b) Use of denotative language.
   (c) Newsworthy material.

(3) Editorial:
   (a) Article commenting on a subject; opinions.
   (b) Should be backed up with facts and logic as well as opinion.
   (c) Used either to inform the public, influence opinion of others, or entertain.
   (d) Use of slanted language, connotative words.
   (e) May be accompanied by letters to the editor or cartoons.

4. Make the assignment: Write about a personal experience with ostracism similar to those discussed in class. Use the form of a newspaper editorial, feature story, or news story.
5. To further prepare for the writing assignment, have each student write an outline of what he wants to say, and then help him decide which form would be best to present his topic. For slower students the straight news story might be best.

Lesson 5

OBJECTIVES

To analyze both the reasons for outcasting and the reaction of the outcast. To write an analysis about one aspect of the story.

MATERIALS

"The Snow Goose" by Paul Gallico

PROCEDURES

1. Prepare for reading by distributing the study guide and previewing the vocabulary of the story:

hamlet	oblivion	apparition	girl
bulwark	barnacle	plummeted	derelict
inarticulate	unerringly	askance	extant
tendrils	buffeted	pinioned	meandering
ogre	breached	ply	estuaries

2. After the students have read the story individually, divide them into heterogeneous groups and have them discuss the study guide questions in their groups. (Answers to the questions may be written if the teacher feels this is necessary to keep the groups moving. If the discussions seem to be progressing adequately, written answers are unnecessary.)
3. To prepare students for group writing, bring the class together for a discussion to review the concepts of the unit briefly.
4. Group the students homogeneously and suggest topics according to ability, for example:
   a. Low ability—Rhayader, as an outcast from society, builds his life around Fritha and the world of nature.
   b. Middle ability—The parallel characterizations of Rhayader and the snow goose.
   c. High ability—The symbolic meaning of the snow goose.

Study Guide "The Snow Goose" by Paul Gallico

1. Describe the setting of the story. How does it fit the main character and create the mood?
2. Describe Philip Rhayader. Where does he choose to live? Why?
3. Who is the narrator? How does he know the story?
4. How did the people react to Philip? Why was he outcast?
5. What kind of personality did Philip have? How did he react to people who rejected him?
6. To what did Philip turn to replace human companionship? Explain his life in the lighthouse.
7. Describe Fritha. What brings her to Rhayader?
8. What is Fritha's attitude toward Rhayader when she first meets him? What changes her attitude?
9. What is the background of the snow goose? How does the bird become attached to Rhayader?
10. Describe the relationship built up between Rhayader and Fritha. What is the function of the bird in this relationship?
11. During what period in history does the story take place?
12. What does Rhayader plan to do with his boat? Why is this particularly important to Rhayader? How does he carry out his plan?
13. What techniques does Gallico use to describe the heroic efforts of Rhayader?
14. What does the snow bird symbolize? Use as guidelines the snow bird's connection with Fritha, its role in the relationship between Fritha and Rhayader (and the nature of that relationship), its actions during the rescue, and Fritha's thoughts at the end of the story.

Lesson 6

(An optional lesson to be used in place of Lesson 5 with fluent readers.)

OBJECTIVES

To write an analysis of "The Blue Hotel" in terms of the unit concepts.

MATERIALS

"The Blue Hotel" by Stephen Crane (Study guide not included below.)

PROCEDURES

1. Distribute the study questions and assign the reading of "The Blue Hotel."
2. Have the students discuss the study guide questions in their groups. Have each group develop several questions that could be discussed in a report on the story.
3. Help the group make a final selection of a suitable topic for a report.
   a. How does Crane use the setting to develop the story's theme?
   b. What are the causes of the Swede's isolation from the group and of his death?
   c. What are the attitudes of the other characters toward the Swede?
   d. Who is the scapegoat in "The Blue Hotel"? What evidence supports your opinion?
4. After group discussions, ask each student to choose a particular topic and begin work on his composition. Help students as necessary. Some analyses might be presented orally to the class.
5. Close the lesson by discussing the story with the entire group.
   a. Explain the significance and meaning of the second paragraph in Section VIII. How does the vain man separate himself from the rest of the world? What does the blizzard symbolize? How does Crane feel about taking refuge from life?
   b. What is the significance of "blue" in the story?
   c. What is the effect of Section IX on the story? Would the story be stronger or weaker without it? Why?
   d. Compare the Swede to Robinson's Richard Cory.
   e. Crane frequently writes about an "outcast." He never tries to protect the outcast from the natural forces that surround him; he usually tries to explain the outcast and what forces made him an outcast. How has he done it in this story?

Lesson 7

OBJECTIVES

To apply the concepts to poetry.
To organize and present oral reports.

MATERIALS

"Tulips and Addresses"
"The Jew"
"Does It Matter?"
"The Hunchback in the Park"
"Brass Spittoons"
"Mr. Flood's Party"

PROCEDURES

1. Familiarize each student with all the poems in this lesson, dividing the class into homogeneous groups and having them read the poems. Then have each group select one poem that they as a group will study and report on to the rest of the class.
2. Increase independence and develop some understanding of an author's attitude by having each group study its poem looking primarily for the concepts learned in the unit:
   a. The type of outcast.
   b. The reason for outcasting.
   c. The reaction of the outcast.
   d. The attitude of the author toward the outcast and toward the group that casts him out.
   e. The relationship between the speaker and the outcast.
3. Develop skill in oral activities by having each group present its poem and its interpretation to the class. The group presentation might go this way:
   a. One person reads poem.
   b. One person discusses type of outcast.
   c. One person discusses reason for outcasting.
   d. One person discusses the author's attitude.
   e. One person discusses the reactions of the outcast.

Lesson 8

OBJECTIVES

To identify and interpret the causes and results of prejudice and ostracism as they affect the characters of *To Kill a Mockingbird.*

MATERIALS

To Kill a Mockingbird (Study guide not included below.)

PROCEDURES

1. Distribute the novel and, before reading begins, discuss the book in general terms to arouse interest. Ask the students to develop major problem questions (based on unit concepts) that they may be able to answer in their reading. (Type of outcasts; reactions of characters; characteristics of groups from which individuals are outcasts; reasons for aggression by certain individuals against others.)

Allow time in class the first day for reading. For further reading, assign a reading schedule according to the ability of the class.

2. Approach the study of the book through whole-class discussions, small-group discussions, and individual reading time in class. Use the study guide questions as the basis for discussions.
3. Check the reading progress of the students by having them write out some of the study guide questions in a quiz situation. (In the study guide there are many inference and comprehension questions that may be used in teacher-directed discussion.)
4. After the novel has been read begin structuring the group writing assignment by reviewing the outcasts in the novel: Scout, Tom Robinson, Boo Radley, Mayella Ewell, and Delphas Raymond.
   Discuss the elements of prejudice in the novel.
   Discuss the social structure of the town and its effect on scapegoating and prejudice.
5. Develop analytic skill by using the above discussion as the basis for helping the students develop such theme topics as:
   a. Scout Finch was an outcast because of her age.
   b. Boo Radley was a victim of scapegoating and prejudice.
   c. If Tom Robinson had been a white man he would have gone free.
   d. The Negro population of Maycomb was the victim of prejudice.
   e. The old saying about killing a mockingbird adds meaning to the theme of the novel.

   Have each student develop at least one discussion topic.
6. Divide the class into homogeneous groups, and ask each group to choose a topic and prepare to lead a class discussion of it, citing passages in the story that will help develop the topic in a paper. A composition may then be written by each student or by the group with each student developing and writing one phase. If the composition is a group project, make sure each group has developed a specific, equitable plan for dividing the work. Perhaps all students may help in writing the introduction and conclusion, whereas various parts of the body of the composition may be developed by individual students but revised and fitted to the whole by the group.

Lesson 9

OBJECTIVES

To write an analysis of the relationships between individual characters and groups from which they are ostracized.

Criterion statements:

1. The student must select the book and read it independently.
2. He must identify the outcast(s) and the ostracizing group(s).

3. He must identify and explain the causes and effects of the ostracism in terms of the unit concepts.

MATERIALS

Bibliography

PROCEDURES

1. Distribute the bibliography to the students. Review the titles, providing information about the difficulty and content of the books wherever possible. Remind the students to read the cover blurb to help them choose a book. Take the class to the library to select books and provide reading time in class for two to three days. Allow students to choose books not on the bibliography if they are appropriate to the unit content.
2. Assign a deadline day on which the book should be *near* completion, and allow two days after deadline for finishing of books in class.
3. Arrange an individual conference with each student during the reading time to discuss his novel and the topics for his paper. Also provide one or two days in class after completion of the reading to work on outlines and the beginning of compositions with teacher assistance.
4. Note: The bibliography following includes books at a wide variety of reading levels. The teacher should help students to find books appropriate to their reading levels.

The Outcast A Bibliography for Individual Reading

Aleichem, Sholem	*Mottel, the Cantor's Son*
Allen, Merritt	*The White Feather*
Arnold, Elliott	*Blood Brother*
Arnow, Harriet	*The Dollmaker*
Baldwin, James	*Go Tell It On the Mountain*
Baruch, Dorothy	*Glass House of Prejudice*
Bell, Margaret	*The Totem Casts a Shadow*
———	*Daughter of Wolf House*
Bonham, Frank	*Durango Street*
Bontemps, Arna	*Chariot in the Sky*
Brecht, Bertolt	*Galileo*
Conrad, Joseph	*Lord Jim*
Crane, Stephen	*Red Badge of Courage*
DeHartog, Jan	*The Inspector*
Dickens, Charles	*David Copperfield*
———	*Great Expectations*
Doss, Hellen	*The Family Nobody Wanted*
Douglass, Frederick	*Narrative of the Life of an American Slave*

Dumas, Alexander	*The Count of Monte Cristo*
Edmonds, Walter	*Two Logs Crossing*
Eliot, George	*Silas Marner*
Ellison, Ralph	*The Invisible Man*
Faulkner, William	*Intruder in the Dust*
———	*The Unvanquished*
———	*The Old Man*
Field, Rachel	*Hepatica Hawks*
Fuller, Iola	*The Shining Trail*
Gibson, Althea	*I Always Wanted To Be Somebody*
Gould, Jean	*That Dunbar Boy*
Gregory, Dick	*nigger*
Hansberry, Lorraine	*A Raisin in the Sun*
Hawthorne, Nathaniel	*The Scarlet Letter*
Hersey, John	*The Wall*
Holt, Rackham	*George Washington Carver*
Hugo, Victor	*The Hunchback of Notre Dame*
Jackson, Jesse	*Anchor Man*
Kroeber, Theodora	*Ishi, Last of His Tribe*
LaFarge, Oliver	*Laughing Boy*
Lewiton, Mina	*A Cup of Courage*
Little, Jean	*Mine for Keeps*
Lowery, Bruce	*Scarred*
Malcolm X	*The Autobiography of Malcolm X*
Martin, Betty	*Miracle at Carville*
Means, Florence	*Great Day in the Morning*
———	*The Moved Outers*
O'Flaherty, Liam	*The Informer*
Paton, Alan	*Cry, the Beloved Country*
Petry, Ann	*The Street*
———	*Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railway*
Piersall, Jim and Al Hirschberg	*Fear Strikes Out*
Plato	*The Apology* and *The Phaedo*
Rostand, Edmond	*Cyrano de Bergerac*
Rosten, Leo	*Capt. Newman, M.D.*
Sackler, H.	*The Great White Hope*
Sams, J. B.	*White Mother*
Schoor, Gene	*Willie Mays, Modest Champion*
———	*Roy Campanella, Man of Courage*
Sinclair, Upton	*The Cup of Fury*
———	*Dragon's Teeth*
Smith, Betty	*A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*
Steinbeck, John	*Grapes of Wrath*

———	*Of Mice and Men*
Stevenson, R. L.	*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*
Stolz, Mary	*The Day and the Way We Met*
———	*Pray, Love, Remember*
———	*The Sea Gulls Woke Me*
Stuart, Jesse	*The Thread That Runs So True*
Tarry, Ellen	*The Third Door*
———	*Young Jim: The Early Years of James Weldon Johnson*
Tunis, John	*The Keystone Kids*
Twain, Mark	*Pudd'n'Head Wilson*
Vance, Marguerite	*The Jacksons of Tennessee*
Viscardi, Henry, Jr.	*A Man's Stature*
Walden, Amelia	*A Girl Called Hank*
Walker, Mildred	*The Quarry*
Wier, Ester	*The Loner*
Wouk, Herman	*The Caine Mutiny*
Wren, Percival	*Beau Geste*
Wright, Richard	*Black Boy*
Yates, Elizabeth	*Patterns on the Wall*
Young, Jefferson	*A Good Man*

NOTES

1. I. A. Richards, *Practical Criticism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., n.d.), pp. 175–176. For types of misunderstanding see pp. 12–15. For analysis of these see pp. 173–287.
2. James R. Squire, *The Responses of Adolescents While Reading Four Short Stories* (Champaign: National Council of Teachers of English, 1964).
3. John Dover Wilson, *What Happens in Hamlet* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1951).
4. Ernest Jones, *Hamlet and Oedipus* (New York: Anchor Books, 1955).
5. T. S. Eliot, "Hamlet and His Problems," *The Sacred Wood* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1950).

10 The Text and the Reader: Levels of Meaning and Response*

A careful analysis of what the intelligent reading of literature involves can provide a basis for sequencing instruction in literature. Once the teacher has determined what abilities his students already have, he can design units that begin at that point and help them to become more sophisticated readers. The model in Figure 10.1 summarizes the various responses. It indicates the three major types of response, the cognitive, affective, and aesthetic, that were examined in Chapter 8. The model indicates the dependency of emotional and aesthetic responses on the cognitive. Within the general category of cognitive response, it indicates various levels of response, from literal meanings to structure and thematic meanings. In addition, more sophisticated readers will approach particular texts through a variety of contexts such as that of genre, a particular historical period, and so on. This chapter will examine the types of response and approaches to literature indicated in the model.

Cognitive Responses

Literal Meanings

At the literal level the reader is concerned with what is directly stated by an author. The teacher needs to ask, "Can my students understand most of the words? Can they follow unusual syntactic patterns in which the verb is separated from its subject or object by a series of modifiers?" The difficulty of a work's literal level is a function of the complexity of both sentence structure and vocabu-

* Parts of this chapter appeared in an article by George Hillocks, Jr., in the *English Journal*, September 1964, entitled "Approaches to Literature: A Basis for a Literature Curriculum." They are reprinted here by permission of the National Council of Teachers of English.

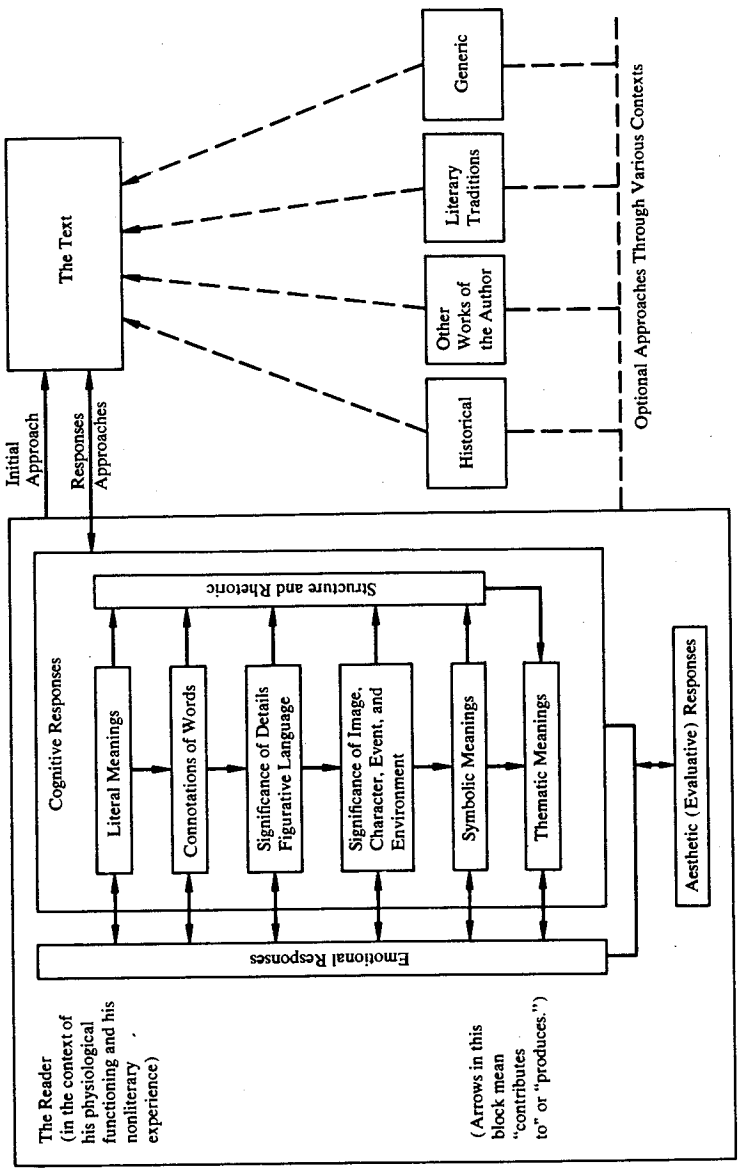

FIGURE 10.1 The Reader's Responses to a Text

lary. A number of formulas have been developed to measure relative literal difficulty.[1] One for adult materials was developed by Rudolf Flesch in *The Art of Readable Writing.*[2]

The Flesch formula requires counting out samples of about one hundred words at regular intervals throughout a work, stopping with the sentence that ends nearest the hundredth word, and then counting the number of syllables and sentences in each sample. The next step is to compute the average sentence length for all samples. An average sentence length of over twenty words will indicate fairly difficult reading. The average sentence length for *Ivanhoe* is 27.8; for *Billy Budd* it is 24.7. The next step is the computation of the average number of syllables per hundred words. Since the majority of words in fiction have only one syllable, an average of 130 syllables per hundred words will indicate a fairly difficult vocabulary. The average number of syllables for *Ivanhoe* is 141; for *Billy Budd* it is 155.

From this information Flesch computes what he calls a readability score through various procedures. The process of counting, dividing, and multiplying is a tedious one, but it does have some advantages. It provides a relative measure of the *literal difficulty* of various works. Fiction naturally has a higher readability score than other prose, if only because it contains conversation. This is one reason, by the way, why plays are appropriate for use with retarded readers. The sentences are short, the vocabulary is relatively common, and the interest level can be very high if the plays are selected carefully.

Unfortunately, scores based on various formulas give us insight only into the level of difficulty that is the result of complex sentence structure and unusual vocabulary. They tell us little of the difficulty that results from abstractness of ideas and nothing of the difficulty involved with the implied meanings of the work. Comprehension of "An Ominous Baby" at the literal level is reflected by an ability to answer such questions as the following:

1. Where was the tattered baby wandering?
2. What did the nursemaid say to him?
3. How did he feel after stealing the fire engine?

Although many students may need work at this level, all literal questions are relatively easy. The implications that lie within the answers to each of them are considerably more difficult and, in most great literature, more important.

Inferential Meanings

In the model shown in Figure 10.1, all cognitive responses, other than those to literal meanings, require inference on the part of the reader. If a reader cannot comprehend the implied meanings of a work, the significance of that work will be lost to him. A misunderstanding of even part of the implied meaning may distort the rest. At this level, the reader must respond to what

an author implies by his choice and arrangement of words and imagery in his development of scenes, incidents, characters, and symbols. Stephen Crane's "An Ominous Baby" affords a clear example of how all these work together. Each child in the story is symbolic, just as their quarrel is. The imagery that Crane uses to develop the children and their battle for the toy contributes directly to their meaning as symbols. The words that he uses contribute to the significance of the images. All these help produce the meaning of the whole.

Most students must learn to interpret such implications. In a total curriculum it is useful to introduce each level of implication in a simple, objective fashion so that students can examine how each contributes to the total meaning of a linguistic structure.

A. CONNOTATIONS OF WORDS

Even very young students can understand that different words tend to have different meanings for different people and that various words that have similar denotative meanings may have entirely different connotative meanings. The teacher can make this point clear simply by putting a list of words such as the following on the board: policeman, teacher, unintelligent, home, and so on. Students can then make new lists of words that "mean the same thing but sound better or worse." After an exercise of this sort, the teacher can introduce the words "connotation" and "denotation" if he wishes because the students will have concrete examples to which they can tie those words. Additional exercises might include the examination of advertising copy, which notoriously uses words primarily for their connotative meanings. Again, students can write two or three descriptions of places, people, or events in which they vary the point of view by choosing sets of words with differing connotative values. For instance, they might write about what they study in English from the point of view of an interested student, an uninterested student, and an English teacher. After a systematic introduction to the nature of connotation and how it reflects the point of view of a writer or speaker to his subject and audience, the teacher (and the curriculum) should continue to make use of the students' knowledge in ensuing instruction. Knowledge of connotation is extremely important to the student as both writer and reader and should receive careful and continued emphasis.

B. SIGNIFICANCE OF DETAILS AND FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Although it is ordinarily much easier for a reader to comprehend a simple detail than a figure of speech, the two have been classed together because both contribute to the meanings of images, characters, scenes, and events, and because the significance of both is influenced by the connotations of the individual words that convey them.

Students should discuss the significance of details from the time they begin reading, or perhaps from the time they begin to hear stories read aloud. In

almost any intelligently organized unit of study, there is a necessity to focus on the meaningful details of a literary work, especially those that are keys to the meaning of imagery and to the interpretation of character and events.

In approaching an individual work, say *Treasure Island,* one of the primary questions for consideration might be, "What details of Long John Silver's appearance, conversation, and actions signal the kind of man he is? Which details, if any, contradict others?" At another level, the student can examine the problem of apparently contradictory or paradoxical features in a single character. In a thematic unit on "Survival," a recurring question might be, "What details of a character's appearance, conversation, or actions predict his ability or inability to survive a given type of crisis?" Similarly, questions can be raised about how details effect a reader's response to a setting, image, or incident.

Certain effects of details may need separate treatment, however, especially when they indicate the writer's attitude toward his subject and his attitude toward his audience. This is especially true for poetry, satire, and propaganda and, in reality, hardly less true for fiction, drama, and biography. Young readers must learn to observe the details a poet has selected to promote a certain tone or feeling or to note the effects of a satirist's use of detail as a devastating weapon. They need to observe how a propagandist can bias an issue simply by focusing on some detail and ignoring others.

Metaphor or figurative language is ordinarily an integral part of the whole work. Its function is more than simply to make an image more vivid to the reader. It adds a layer of meaning to whatever was there before and, in many instances, becomes part of a configuration of details and metaphors that reinforces, complements, or even produces the full meaning of a work. Take Crane's first simile in "An Ominous Baby" for instance: "like the chain shirt of a warrior." The simplest function of this simile is to make clearer Crane's description of the child's clothing. He also wishes to show that this child, awed as he is by the splendid surroundings, has something of the calm courage of a warrior about him. But more than that, Crane suggests by the simile that the child is a tough, experienced fighter. In addition, the use of the specific words "chain shirt" and "warrior" lend an aura of nobility to the tattered child. This simile is the first of a whole series of allusions to battle: "covered with scraches and dust as with scar and powder smoke"; "he looked some wee battler in a war"; "he clenched his fat hands and advanced"; "the pretty child retreated"; "the small vandal made a charge"; and so forth. There is something absurd and pathetic in applying these allusions to babies: absurd because they are children, but pathetic because they are so like grown men at so young an age. The pattern is a clear sign of why and in what respect the baby is ominous.

The most common way to introduce figurative language to students is through a textbook unit on poetry. For "enrichment" the teacher provides a list of figures (metaphor, simile, hyperbole, personification are the most

common) with a definition and examples of each. The students then "pick them out" of various poems. The approach is not only deadly, but it may be the reason students think that figurative language is superficially decorative. By using this approach, the teacher tells his students that figurative language actually is something to be "picked out of poetry."

A more reasonable approach is first to examine what effect figurative language has in poems and short stories. Most anthologies supply appropriate materials for such an examination. The teacher can then ask questions such as these:

1. What effect does the comparison have on the reader?
2. What effect does it have in addition to making the meaning clearer or the description more vivid?
3. Why did the author choose this particular comparison?
4. In what way is the comparison appropriate or inappropriate?
5. Is the comparison part of a pattern of details? That is, does it have anything in common with any other comparisons or details in the work? (It may be necessary to help students locate related details.)
6. If there is a pattern, what meaning does it suggest for the work?

When possible, it is useful to examine figurative language in the students' own writing or in the writing of other students. If the school has a literary magazine, it is usually possible to find two or three poems in back issues that are worthy of examination. Using student materials has the double advantage of making figurative language appear less esoteric and encouraging students to use it in their own writing.

Once the students have examined the effects of figurative language, it will seem sensible to name the different kinds of figures and discriminate among them. The discriminations can be taught inductively by comparing, for example, a group of metaphors to a group of similes. This instruction can be followed by the haiku lesson described in Chapter 5.

C. SIGNIFICANCE OF IMAGERY, CHARACTER, EVENT, AND ENVIRONMENT

Up to this point the concern has been with literal meanings and the implications of individual words, details, and figurative language because these aspects of a work contribute heavily to the significance of the larger elements: imagery,* character, events, environment, and setting.

* The term "imagery" raises a number of problems. Characters are images. Figurative language evokes images. Details are sometimes images. What an image is and how it operates psychologically is a problem this book cannot even pretend to investigate, let alone resolve. We should like, however, to impose an arbitrary definition by example. For the purpose of this chapter, an image is an elaborated and/or recurrent sensory entity, animate or inanimate: for example, the albatross, the sun, the moon,

Nearly any unit of instruction should deal with the way the implications of individual words, details, and metaphors contribute to the significance of imagery, character, and setting. Certain thematic units are especially appropriate for work with character. In a unit on "Courage," for instance, students should attempt to determine whether or in what ways certain characters are courageous on the basis of their actions and speech and on the basis of details. It is useful for a student to begin a serious examination of character with an analysis of the stereotypes he encounters in his daily TV fare: the heroic guy, the bad guy, the well-meaning bumbler, the sidekick, and so forth. Students enjoy establishing the stereotype patterns and identifying characters who belong to them. The procedure involves an examination of the details, action, and speech used to create and support the stereotype. A comparison of the stereotypes with the characters of more serious fiction can promote insight into both the stereotype and the more original characters. The students will see that a writer relies on his audience to respond to a few rather common details that create the conventional image of the detective, Western-gunslinger-turned-good, and so on. The writer who creates the more original character does not rely on the conventions to so great an extent and asks his audience to respond to the character he presents rather than to some standard, prefabricated character.

Thematic units built around such themes as courage, justice, and survival are useful in helping students observe the relationships between character and event, between image and character, and so on. One of the central problems for such units is: What do the actions of the character reveal about his personality (courage, justice, moral values, and the like)?

The relationship of a character to his environment presents a particular kind of difficulty to the reader. This general problem of man and his environment can be separated into three focal areas: the physical, the social, and the cultural environments. In reality, of course, these three form a matrix of influences that operate dynamically in influencing the personality, desires, and aspirations of man. Since the author's task involves a commentary on man, his work necessarily involves the relationship of man to his environment —a relationship that may be seen lying somewhere in the continuum extending from the character as controller of his environment, as in the case of the mythic protagonist such as Prometheus, to man as subject of his environment, as in the case of many modern protagonists such as Willy Loman in *Death of a Salesman*. No character in any work can be abstracted from his setting, for even the values of the mythical hero who is basically in command of his environment are influenced by it.

An arbitrary separation of the areas that constitute the environment

the skeleton ship in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"; the snake, the gates of Hell, the Tree in *Paradise Lost;* the blood imagery in *Macbeth;* the animal imagery in *Volpone;* the fire engine in "An Ominous Baby."

simplifies analysis, promotes understanding, and facilitates teaching. At the same time, however, it is essential to realize the inseparability of the physical aspects of environment from the cultural and social aspects.

1. THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT A teaching unit that focuses on the physical environment might examine a series of such problems as the following: (*a*) How does man react and adjust to his physical surroundings? (*b*) What abilities, physical and psychological, enable man to adapt to conditions of privation and to conditions imposed by location—jungle, desert, mountain, sea, farm, and city? (*c*) What psychological effects do isolation and physical torment have on man? (*d*) Why do the effects of similar experiences vary from one individual to another? (*e*) How does exposure to various physical conditions influence the growth of character or personality? More complex problems arise when the focus changes to that part of the physical world that is man's own creation. It is this part of the physical environment that is so frequently the subject of the literature of protest: slum conditions, intolerable working conditions, economic oppression.

In addition, man's concept of nature also requires examination because it is frequently a matter of primary concern in literature. Primitive men see nature as a force upon whose good will they are dependent. Modern man sees nature as a challenge and as a refuge where the rights of the individual are unmolested and where the soul can reconstitute itself for renewed contact with the world of men and affairs.

2. SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT No attempt to understand the human element in literature can ignore the fact that man is a social animal. Knowledge of the bases of social organization is fundamental to the full comprehension of some works and helpful in the comprehension of others. For instance, some knowledge of class stratification, mobility from class to class, and the effects of status and power in social situations will greatly faciliate the understanding of such novels as Galsworthy's *The Man of Property* and the novels of Louis Auchincloss. Not that the terminology or concepts need be objectified for the mature reader, but the word "mature" implies the ability to comprehend and be sensitive to the distinctions of status, power, and wealth that shape the lives of people as well as literary characters. The "mature" reader has had enough experience to enable him to understand. The problem is that, for many people, even experience fails to be useful in reading or observing. Why? We do not know, but we do know that professors of English find it necessary to explain the meanings of novels like *The Great Gatsby* and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* to their students.

A unit on "Man and Modern Society" might open with a story such as Aldous Huxley's "Fard," which portrays two characters, Sophie, an overworked maid, and Madam, her pampered mistress who has no conception that Sophie might have feelings and desires of her own. Students could proceed

to a discussion of class structure and the factors that support it: wealth, power, status. They should examine how the possession or lack of wealth, power, status permits or denies certain kinds of life patterns, gives rise to varying sets of values, and so forth. In the course of the unit students should discuss how and why people attempt to change from one social class to another, what happens when they do, how their values are affected, and why some have no mobility. Students can apply such insights to plays ranging from James M. Barrie's *The Admirable Crichton* to Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire;* to novels from Dickens' *Great Expectations* and Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* to Claude Brown's *Manchild in the Promised Land* and Richard Wright's *Native Son;* and to nonfiction from Oscar Lewis' *The Children of Sanchez* to Dick Gregory's *From the Back of the Bus.* Clearly, the range of material available would permit teaching such a unit to students from the tenth to twelfth grades, depending on the unit requirements and the abilities of the students.

3. CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT Man's cultural milieu may be distinguished from the social as the composite of all the forces that cut across social boundaries to delimit the behavior of an individual and to organize patterns of behavior for the whole society. For a given society the class system is operative within the boundaries of the various cultural forces that influence it. Much of the behavior of an individual is determined by the culture into which he is born. Superficial cultural patterns, such as habits of eating and dress, are obvious; but cultural patterns that are the basis for modes of thought are, to the outsider, neither obvious nor acceptable. The idea of progress, for instance, which pervades Western civilization, is not accepted in many Far Eastern cultures.

Cultural conditioning is reflected in all literary works, but especially in those dealing with cultural change or cultural conflict, for example, Pearl Buck's *The Good Earth,* Conrad Richter's *The Light in the Forest,* E. M. Forster's *Passage to India,* Alan Paton's *Too Late the Phalarope* and *Cry, the Beloved Country.* Whatever the institutions existing in a given culture, an individual born into that culture is influenced by them and in turn influences them. His adherence to the ideals of the culture is rewarded; his digressions from its standards are punished. When an individual moves from one culture to another, he will be caught in a conflict of customs and values, as is Trueson in *The Light in the Forest.* Here a white child, indoctrinated into an American Indian culture, is transplanted into the white culture. Since his customs and values are not the same as those of the other whites, he is unable to adjust. When a culture changes, even minutely, new customs and mores must be learned, and this is often difficult for older people, as it is for Wang Lung in *The Good Earth.* Most individuals adhere to the standards of the various institutions in which they are involved; but when they depart from

them or when they are in conflict with them, they will be punished by official or unofficial social disapproval.

A knowledge of culture as a factor that influences and differentiates the behavior and thought of individuals supplies a background from which the reader is able to infer the cultural forces active in a literary work and tends to create a sympathy for cultural values different from his own.

At a more sophisticated level, the reader should learn to be aware of the cultural and social values that operate on the author. Frequently these can be inferred from a careful examination of the work. When a piece of writing is not contemporary, however, such an inference sometimes requires considerable research into the period—the examination of a work in its historical context.

D. SYMBOLIC MEANINGS

Although the difference between an image and a symbol is not theoretically clear among critics, most would agree that symbols are images, but not all images are symbolic. This is the distinction used here. A symbol is an image that takes on meanings other than its content. It represents something external to it. Aesop's animals, for example, are not simply animals. Spenser's knights and monsters represent abstract, complex concepts. Symbolic meanings, when they exist in a work, arise directly from the literal content of the text and its implications. To understand symbolic meanings, the reader must first understand the text in all of its simpler dimensions. If he misconstrues the literal level, the connotations of words, the implications of events, and so on, his reading of the symbolism is likely to be inadequate. This is true whether he is dealing with concrete allegorical symbols or highly abstract archetypal symbols.

To introduce students to the problem of symbolism it is easiest to begin with what the student already knows. Even the average seventh grader can tell how to respond to signs in the streets, various religious signs and symbols, national and military insignia, and various other conventional signs. A discussion of how these work leads to a working definition of "symbol." From their work with connotation and with metaphoric language, students will know how the qualities of one thing, a rose for instance, became associated with another, a girl. As a part of general cultural knowledge, they know what animals are associated with certain characteristics and vice versa. From here it is an easy step to the examination of fables.

The fable, of course, uses the simplest kind of symbol—the allegorical symbol, the meaning of which is usually rigid and easily grasped by the reader. For instance, in a medieval morality play, gluttony might be represented by a fat man riding a hog across the stage holding a bottle of wine in one hand and a side of bacon in the other. Generally in this kind of allegory,

in addition to the rigidity of the symbol, there is what can be called a one-to-one relationship between symbol and referent. The man on the hog represents a single concept. This does not exclude the possibility of two or more levels of allegory existing side by side, as in Spenser's *Faerie Queene,* where Gloriana represents both the Virgin Mother at the religious level and Queen Elizabeth at the historical level. At each level the one-to-one relationship still exists. Furthermore, in medieval allegory there is a tendency for each event, object, and agent to be symbolic and for each symbol to be related to each other symbol in a direct and clear manner.

In contrast to the allegorical symbol, the symbols in such works as *Moby Dick, The Scarlet Letter,* and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* tend to be less rigid and to represent a syndrome of meaning. They may or may not be related to other symbols in the same work, and every event, object, and agent in the work is not necessarily symbolic. Such symbols ordinarily do not depend upon public acceptance of conventional symbolic values; rather the symbol is developed throughout the context of the work as the author suggests symbolic meaning through the interplay of various elements in his work.

The value of the archetype or universal symbol depends neither upon local convention nor upon the author's manipulation of his material; rather, its meaning is dependent upon its universal recurrence in the life patterns of mankind. Such symbols seem to arise out of the basic needs, desires, and experiences common to all men of all cultures. The most famous archetype, that of death and rebirth, which Maud Bodkin[3] tells us is present in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and which other critics have seen in other works, is central to all of the great and many of the minor religions. Many archetypes figure prominently in myth: the birth of the hero; the pattern of his journey, task, and return; the crone who refurbishes the powers of the hero; and the mother goddess.

Although it is obvious that symbols convey a heavy burden of meaning in literary works, the particular meaning suggested by them in any one work is not always obvious. To the unpracticed reader even an obvious allegory may be obscure in the details of its implications; the same reader, while reading for plot, will be completely unaware of more subtle symbolic content, and he will reject a work as incomprehensible when its meaning is the function of complex symbols. If a student is to approach a symbolic work successfully, then he must have a program that will make him aware of the existence of symbols, help him to explore the ways in which they function, and give him practice in interpretation. See the lessons on symbolism described in Chapters 4 and 5.

E. RHETORIC AND STRUCTURE

As the model "A Reader's Responses to a Text" on page 209 suggests, the rhetorical and structural aspects of a work control, emphasize, or reinforce

the meaning at each of the levels described so far. The rhetoric of a work refers to the voice of the author and the stance that he adopts. Structure refers to the arrangement of the parts of the work.

The rhetoric that an author adopts for a given work has a direct bearing on the meaning of the work as the audience responds to it.[4] For an adequate response to the work, the reader must understand who is speaking, why the author has adopted that particular persona, and what the attitudes of the persona are toward both subject and audience. The persona who speaks of himself helps carry the major impact of the work; in Browning's "My Last Duchess," Burns' "Holy Willie's Prayer," Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye,* in *Huckleberry Finn,* and in many of Poe's short stories, what the narrator reveals about himself carries the intellectual and emotional weight of the work.

Fielding, Dickens, Dostoevsky, and many other writers assume stances that allow them to intrude into the narrative to direct the reader's attention and control his responses. Conrad, Swift, and others invent persona who tell the story of others but are themselves important to the works. Authors who seem to withdraw from the narrative retain control over the reader's reactions by the use of carefully selected details and vocabulary.

The analysis of point of view most common in the secondary schools is too oversimplified to be useful. The teacher merely asks whether the narration is in the first person or the omniscient or limited third person. The problem is much more complex than that and might be introduced to the student through a series of comparisons. For example, *Huckleberry Finn* and *Great Expectations* are both first-person narratives. But a simple recognition of this fact tells us nothing of their differences and nothing of the uniqueness of each. Why does Mark Twain make Huck his narrator? Huck is an outsider, an "uncivilized" boy whom society would dearly love to "civilize." But since Huck is inherently good, he cannot and will not adopt the hypocritical stance of the society he sees everywhere. His "lack of sophistication" in the mores of his society enables him to think for himself. Even while he believes himself to be wrong and society to be right, he must defy society and accept punishment in hell rather than turn Jim in. Huck's point of view may be simple and naïve, but it knifes past the double standards of society. The great irony lies in the fact that Huck never knows that he is right and society is wrong. He only knows that he can't understand civilization and must "light out for the territory." Only the reader knows. Dickens, on the other hand, uses a first-person narrator who is wise and mature and who can understand his experiences from a more or less detached point of view. The older, wiser narrator can recount experience, interpret it, and interpose himself between the experience and us to prevent it and us from becoming maudlin. A horrifying, heartbreaking experience comes to the reader through the filter of Pip's mature sense of humor, which creates an aesthetic distance.

Although the sophisticated reader can understand the effects of an author's

rhetorical stance partly as a result of his wide experience in reading, readers who lack experience are less likely to comprehend these effects.

The teacher must help them to develop a frame of reference. Comparing and contrasting the effects of point of view in some of Poe's stories, in the opening chapters of *Huckleberry Finn* and *Great Expectations,* and in various short stories and poems can develop the concepts rather quickly and in depth. What is the effect of Watson's narration of the Sherlock Holmes stories? Why does Shirley Jackson narrate from the point of view of a child's mother in some of her stories? Why does Richard Matheson narrate "Born of Man and Woman" from the point of view of a monstrous child? Any number of works in most common anthologies make use of narrational techniques that illustrate the concept.

The structure of a work contributes to or controls its meaning in special ways. First, and probably most important for high school readers, is the problem of form as it applies to individual works—the way in which the arrangement of the parts of a work contribute to and reinforce its meaning. Second, knowledge of form from the point of view of mode of presentation (fiction, lyric, drama, and oral epic) helps the reader to understand and accept the conventions derived from the limitations and advantages of a particular mode of presentation.

1. ARRANGEMENT OF PARTS The arrangement of the parts of a work influences the meaning and impact of the work at all levels, from the choice of words and their syntactic arrangement to the arrangement of incidents, images, and symbols.

The effects of word choice and syntax in one passage are likely to be most clear to students when they see them in contrast to another. For example, the passage that describes Kino's awakening at the beginning of Steinbeck's *The Pearl* provides an interesting contrast to the passage in *Great Expectations* that tells of Pip's awakening as he gathers food to take to Magwitch in the swamps. From *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck:

> Kino awakened in the near dark. The stars still shone and the day had drawn only a pale wash of light in the lower sky to the east. The roosters had been crowing for some time, and the early pigs were already beginning their ceaseless turning of twigs and bits of wood to see whether anything to eat had been overlooked. Outside the brush house in the tuna clump, a covey of little birds chittered and flurried with their wings.
>
> Kino's eyes opened, and he looked first at the lightening squares which was the door and then he looked at the hanging box where Coyotito slept. And last he turned his head to Juana, his wife, who lay beside him on the mat, her blue head shawl over her nose and over her breasts and around the small of her back. Juana's eyes were open too. Kino could never remember seeing them closed when he awakened. Her dark eyes made little reflected stars. She was looking at him as she was always looking at him when he awakened.[5]

From *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens:

> As soon as the great black velvet pall outside my little window was shot with gray, I got up and went downstairs; every board upon the way, and every crack in every board, calling after me, "Stop thief!" and "Get up, Mrs. Joe!" In the pantry, which was far more abundantly supplied than usual, owing to the season, I was very much alarmed by a hare hanging up by the heels, whom I rather thought I caught, when my back was half-turned, winking. I had no time for verification, no time for selection, no time for anything, for I had no time to spare. I stole some bread, some rind of cheese, about half a jar of mincemeat (which I tied up in my pocket handkerchief with my last night's slice), some brandy from a stone bottle (which I decanted into a glass bottle I had secretly used for making that intoxicating fluid, Spanish liquorice-water, up in my room; diluting the stone bottle from a jug in the kitchen cupboard), a meat bone with very little on it, and a beautiful round compact porkpie. I was nearly going away without the pie, but I was tempted to mount upon a shelf, to look what it was that was put away so carefully in a covered earthenware dish in a corner, and I found it was the pie and I took it, in the hope that it was not intended for early use, and would not be missed for some time.
>
> There was a door in the kitchen communicating with the forge; I unlocked and unbolted that door, and got a file from among Joe's tools. Then I put the fastenings as I had found them, opened the door at which I had entered when I ran home last night, shut it, and ran for the misty marshes.[6]

The semantic differences between the two passages are obvious. But even young readers can detect differences in the functioning and tone of the syntax and in the choice of vocabulary. The teacher might begin by asking how the passages differ in tone and what makes the difference. He might ask next what syntactic differences the students can detect. They may be able to enumerate a number of differences. If not, the teacher might ask about differences in the length of the sentences. Clearly, Dickens' sentences are much longer. Questions such as these might follow:

a. How many words are there in the first sentence from Dickens? (Over forty.)
b. How many main clauses (basic sentence patterns) are there in that sentence? (One.)
c. How many main clauses are there in the first forty words from Steinbeck? (Four, and a fifth one has begun.)
d. How many main clauses are there in the first forty words of the second paragraph from Steinbeck? (Four.)
e. How often does Steinbeck use the word "and" to connect his clauses in these two forty-word passages? (Five times.)
f. How does Dickens' syntax differ from Steinbeck's? (It is more complicated. It uses more modifiers.)

When the quantitative differences in the syntax are clear, the teacher should begin to ask about the qualitative effects of the differences. The students should come to see how the simple syntax of Steinbeck promotes the peaceful, fable-like quality that his semantic content provides, whereas Dickens' complex syntax allows the humor of the older Pip who is recalling the episode to interpose itself between the fear of the child and the audience. The subordinated remarks, both in and out of parentheses, in Dickens' lines hold the veil of humor. At the same time this complex syntax can convey a note of urgency through its relatively short parallel structures: "no time for verification, no time for selection . . ." and "I stole some bread, some rind of cheese . . ." Steinbeck's syntax on the other hand moves slowly, peacefully, and with utter simplicity.

In *The Pearl,* of course, Steinbeck's syntax never becomes very complex, but when the trackers are searching for Kino and his family later in the story the tempo increases considerably, partially through syntactic devices that any student can detect:

> Kino was not breathing, but his back arched a little and the muscles of his arms and legs stood out with tension and a line of sweat formed on his upper lip. For a long moment the trackers bent over the road, and then they moved on slowly, studying the ground ahead of them, and the horseman moved after them. The trackers scuttled along, stopping, looking, and hurrying on. They would be back, Kino knew. They would be circling and searching, peeping, stooping, and they would come back sooner or later to his covered track.[7]

In addition to examining the syntax in such passages, the students can also examine the selection and arrangement of detail. Why does Steinbeck mention the roosters, the pigs, and the birds? What do these details reveal about the immediate scene? about Kino's total environment before the events beginning with the discovery of the pearl? Why does Dickens select the particular details he uses? What effects do they have? An exercise that will illuminate the use and arrangement of detail is the comparison of the first few paragraphs of the third chapter of *Great Expectations,* in which Pip goes to the marsh with food for Magwitch, with the opening paragraphs of Poe's "Fall of the House of Usher." Although the details of the physical description of the terrain have certain qualities in common, the two authors use them in entirely different ways. Or students may compare the way in which Stevenson treats the one or two awakenings of Jim Hawkins in *Treasure Island* with Kino's and Pip's. There are few details in *Treasure Island.* Jim simply awakes and moves into action. But one does not miss the detail. The sequence of events is succinct, direct, and clean.

The arrangement of images, scenes, and characters is also of vital importance. Shelley's "Ozymandias" is an obvious case in point. It is the juxtaposition of images in the final six lines of the poem, not either image by itself, that conveys the essential meaning.

> And on the pedestal these words appear:
> "My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings:
> Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
> Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
> Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
> The lone and level sands stretch far away.

The contrast between the words on the pedestal and the reality not only reveals the emptiness of Ozymandias' boast but gives *despair* a double meaning: After the lapse of centuries, the words of Ozymandias are no longer a boast but a cry of warning and lamentation. It is a double-edged irony.

The reader must think about, and respond to the arrangement and function of scenes, characters, and events. What is the function of the Grangerford sequence in *Huckleberry Finn?* The function of the last eleven chapters of the book, in which Tom helps Huck "steal a nigger" he knows to be free, is still debated by critics. But that is no reason why the question can't be put to students.

The reader will miss much of the richness of a book if he does not recognize modulation of character and the use of such techniques as the double or doppelganger. In Conrad's "The Secret Sharer," for example, the narrator comes to view Leggatt as an embodiment of the primal urges that lay hidden deep within himself. In Dickens' *Great Expectations* a similar technique helps define the moral universe with a set of characters who reflect the urges in Pip's own personality. There is a polarity of inherent goodness in Joe and inherent evil in Orlick, and Pip fluctuates between the two. This modulation of character is repeated in various sets of characters: Miss Havisham's treatment of Estella has much in common with, but is different from, Magwitch's treatment of Pip; Estella's social consciousness is contrasted to Biddy's sincerity and humility; the theme of commitment is amplified through the comparison of Pip's guardians—Jaggers and Joe—and in Wemmick, who has one set of values for the office and another set for the "castle"; and Pip himself has his counterpoint in Herbert.

The reader must also ask about the shape of the work as a whole. What holds it together? How do the parts relate to each other? The compact structure of *Oedipus Rex,* for example, has the effect of driving the attention to the immediate, central problems of the play: man's role in creating his own destiny, his struggle against it, and his submission to it. The whole impact of these problems is conveyed through the figure of Oedipus, the other characters being only the machinery, as it were, for staging the events of the play and the emotions of the man. Oedipus is the focal point of the play's meaning, the purveyor of emotion and theme. More specifically, the steps of the plot by which Oedipus seeks and learns the truth about himself thrust home the ineluctable nature of his fate.

Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* is closely structured, but in a different

way, and this difference in structure helps to achieve different effects. The central plot line moves directly from consideration of the crime through commission, suffering, and punishment. The major themes and interest center in Raskolnikov and the workings of his morbidly introspective and philosophical mind. The themes of crime and its casuistry, or moral responsibility, and of human depravity and dignity find their primary expression in Raskolnikov. But in contrast to the dramatis personae of *Oedipus Rex,* the characters of *Crime and Punishment* are important in themselves as well as in the development and variation of the major themes of the book. A number of characters commit "crimes," but some are depraved and some are not. Through the secondary characters Dostoevsky explores a number of related themes, including the causes and effects of "crimes" committed out of helplessness, necessity, egotism, and depravity. Thus the moral questions raised in the book exceed those raised in *Oedipus Rex* not only in number but in precision. *Oedipus Rex* raises large questions. *Crime and Punishment* raises large questions and proceeds to refine them by raising smaller, related questions.

2. MODE OF PRESENTATION[8] *How* a work is to be presented to an audience has a considerable influence over both the form and content of the work. The writer of fiction has his audience at his disposal for a period of several hours, whereas the dramatist has his audience for only two or three hours at most. This rather obvious fact has several important consequences. First, the novelist can explore not only those questions that are a major concern to him but a multitude of less important, related questions as Dostoevsky does in *Crime and Punishment.* The dramatist has time to explore only the major questions. The time factor allows the novelist to present a much more complex character analysis than the dramatist. Moreover, the characters of a novel can appear in an unlimited number of situations, each of which can increase their complexity.

The fictional mode allows an author to explore the mind of a character as he encounters various situations, other characters, and himself. The dramatist is far more limited in this respect. The same advantage allows the writer of fiction to intrude into the narrative in various ways: to explain the significance of what has happened, to persuade the reader in a direct way to accept the values on which the work may be based, and to invest the setting with significance. The dramatist can never talk to an audience as a novelist does to his reader, except by means of a chorus, and even that is a far less direct method than that available to the novelist. On the other hand, the dramatist has the advantage that his characters become incarnate on the stage. He is not nearly so dependent on the reader's imagination to put the dry bones together so that they may walk around. Establishing empathy is not entirely his responsibility; in part, at least, it falls to the director and the actors and to the audience, who respond directly and immediately.

Both lyric and oral epic also have their restrictions and advantages. In

fiction the author is partly concealed from his audience but can speak directly through the characters and the narrative voice he adopts. In drama the author disappears behind the voices of the actors. With the oral epic, however, the artist confronts his audience directly. The convention of telling and listening is always present. The singer of epic was not simply a vehicle for carrying a previously composed tale to his audience. On the contrary, he composed as he sang and as he watched the reactions of his audience. Thus, depending on his mood or the mood of the audience, he could shorten or lengthen the poem by hundreds of lines. His composition moved very rapidly. Rather than memorizing a piece several thousands of lines long, the singer had at his command scores of what have been called "oral formulaic patterns," stock phrases that could be added or deleted and rearranged internally as the singer proceeded. Thus, certain phrases were commonly used to describe battles, horses, armor, and the like. A talented singer could use the formulas to elaborate or digress at length. The exigencies of the oral method of composition are obvious, and when students read *The Iliad, The Odyssey,* or *Beowulf,* an understanding of the oral technique involved can be very useful.[9]

If oral epic speaks directly to an audience, the lyric pretends to allow the reader to eavesdrop on the private thoughts of its author, and the effect is to produce a somewhat precise emotion in the reader through a process of association. The compact, rapidly developed imagery ordinarily demands far more inference of the reader than any other mode of presentation. The writer of a lyric presents the concrete material of experience, and the reader must respond maximally to a minimum of clues. In contrast, even a story as short as "An Ominous Baby" provides enough clues so that a reader can remain impervious to many and still respond adequately. A novel presents even more. The reader of a lyric must do without explanations from authors and characters. He cannot skip words, phrases, or chapters. He must read carefully, listen to the sound and sense of what he hears, and allow himself to come under the spell of the poem, at least momentarily.

An intelligent understanding of these modes of presentation can be achieved by even young students. They can see that a narrator's voice emerges frequently in fiction, never in drama, indirectly in the lyric (so that it might appear that the author does not care that no one understands him), but that it is always present in the oral epic. Even this idea, as a bare minimum, can lead to more intelligent reading. But the teacher must allow students to explore the differences themselves when they are ready. *Lectures will not do.*

F. THEMATIC MEANINGS

Understanding the "theme" of the work involves responding to the work as a whole, to the total of literal and inferential meanings that the work conveys. The theme of a work becomes apparent to the reader when he answers two questions: (1) What is the meaning of the work? and (2) How is that meaning produced? Answers to both are important. If a reader answers

only the first, he is likely to oversimplify; but if he attempts answers to both, he must bear most of the evidence in mind in his attempt to derive the central significance of the work. The theme, or central significance, is the product of the organization of the whole work.[10] In order to get at this significance, the reader must respond to the elements discussed above. Further, he must evaluate his perceptions of theme against the evidence of the text. Most sophisticated readers do this as they read. They make inferences about central meanings and alter those inferences as they continue to read. A young, less experienced reader is less likely to alter his concept of the work as he encounters new evidence. If someone offers an alternative interpretation, he is likely to reject it in favor of his own. For this reason and others, it is wiser to guide the students' examination of aspects of a text in a discussion than to simply present the student with an interpretation in a lecture.

The carefully constructed instructional unit will help to do just that. It will provide the student with a basis for the examination of a series of texts. At first, the examination will be under the direction of the teacher, but finally it will be the student himself who conducts the examination. One argument against unit teaching has been that it tends to distort the meaning of individual works by emphasizing certain aspects while neglecting others. When that happens, the unit is at fault. The works have not been carefully selected, the student has not had careful preparation for reading them, or the teacher does not understand them himself. A unit should be so designed that it enables the students to get at the central significance and the organizational principles of the works it contains.

For example, Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* might be used as a major reading in a unit dealing with point of view. If the students are concerned only with that problem, the central significance of the book is almost bound to be overlooked. They will have to understand a good many other aspects of the text as well as the point of view. On the other hand, the same novel appears in a unit called "The Outcast" in Chapter 9. One of the major concerns of this unit is the relationships among various sets of characters and their attitudes toward one another. Obviously, point of view is one aspect of the problem. But the concept that is central to the unit is also central to the book, so that the unit helps the student to arrive at an understanding of the book.

In another sense, however, the objection to unit teaching is somewhat ridiculous. It implies that a reader should always get everything possible from what he reads. To do that he would have to understand everything about reading before he read anything. The idea also results in practical failure. When a teacher attempts to squeeze every bit out of a work, the work and the students die a slow and agonizing death. The teaching unit, however, is designed to prepare students for handling particular problems in meaning, so that when they do arise, they can be dealt with by the students themselves. Each unit of instruction in literature should help the student acquire additional

skills and concepts to use in his reading. Eventually, he will be able to approach a text and understand its theme and its principle of organization without the support of an instructional unit or teacher.

Contexts of the Text

Sometimes it is useful, if not necessary, to examine a work from the point of view of one of the several contexts in which it exists.

1. HISTORICAL For most texts written before the twentieth century, certain kinds of historical information are necessary to more complete understanding. Unfortunately, the kinds of historical information provided in surveys of English and American literature are only indirectly relevant to the works studied. What a student usually needs is historical information that is directly applicable to the texts he will read—and not simply publication dates. He needs to know the iconography and philosophy of the age, or at least those aspects of it that are reflected in the works he will read. If he reads *Richard III,* he needs to know that the Elizabethans regarded Richard as a villian immediately upon his first appearance on the stage. His deformities were the signs of villainy much as the moustache, high hat, and black cloak were the signs of villainy in nineteenth-century melodrama. If they read Augustan satire, then they need to know the political situations that gave rise to the satire. If they read "The Nuns' Priest's Tale," then they need background on medieval medical theory and the conflicts between certain religious orders. Students can read the texts without the background, of course, but their reading will be more complete with it.

Either the teacher or the text may provide such information, but in either case the student should not be swamped with irrelevancies. It is easy to read or recite long lectures from college notes, and it is even easier to bore the students by doing that. Probably the best method is to present historical information briefly and concretely in the form of a problem that the students attempt to solve in their reading and discussion of the work. If Shakespeare introduces Richard as a sort of melodramatic villain, to what degree does he remain so throughout the play? What internal evidence attests to Richard's villainy? What aspects of the play might cause an audience to empathize with Richard despite his villainy?

In addition to presenting historical information relevant to individual works, the teacher of advanced school students might wish to teach his students how to examine the literature of an age—or one type of literature during a given age. High school survey courses pretend to do this, but most do not. If an historical approach of some sort is imperative, it would be more productive to give up the impossible task of the survey and prepare two or three units on such topics as Elizabethan tragedy or comedy, the Elizabethan lyric, the Metaphysical poets, Augustan satire, and man and nature in the Romantic move-

ment. Such units could focus on the impetus, ideology, techniques, content, and results of a particular literary movement. By the end of one or two such units, students would know something rather specific about a particular historical phase of literature and good deal about the nature of literature in general.

2. GENERIC A more important context for most students is that of genre, in the sense that Aristotle used the term to refer to tragedy, comedy, and epic. A study of genre in this sense introduces the student to the problem of form and provides a matrix of experience against which he can examine a particular work. Gilbert Highet has pointed this out: "One of the best ways to study the problem of form in literature is the method used by Aristotle. This is induction. First, collect as many examples of a given phenomenon as possible. Then, by observing resemblances and differences and contrasts and alliances, extract from these particulars a few general descriptive principles."[11] Nearly any secondary school student can make worthwhile generalizations about the nature of blues, fables, detective stories, and science fiction. From these relatively simple genres, the student, having learned the techniques of comparison and contrast, can advance to more complex Aristotelian genres of tragedy, comedy, epic, and satire. Sooner or later, he will begin making comparisons and contrasts by himself.

The principles that he detects in specific genres are frequently widely applicable to literature in general. For instance, any work of science fiction is based on extrapolations from known scientific principles to the unknown. These extrapolations are the hypotheses on which the story is based. The author of science fiction says, "If . . ., then . . . If . . ., then . . ." Science fiction can serve as a clear-cut, concrete introduction to an examination of the idea that each literary work poses its own world, which is extrapolated from the real world. Thus, the principles that a student learns from the study of science fiction should become operative in his reading of all fiction.

Affective Responses

As the reader encounters the literal level of a text, as he draws inferences from the parts individually and as they relate to one another, he is likely to respond emotionally to the work or some part of it. Empathy or emotionl response arises, not from the main action of a drama or novel, but from the details of character and event. If Crane had written that a dirty child wandered in a strange neighborhood, encountered another child with a toy, and stole the toy, our sympathy would not necessarily be with either child. If there were any sympathy at all, it would most likely be a superficial sympathy with the child who lost the toy. The implications of language, details,

and events, however, give rise to immediate and continued involvement with the tattered child. It is possible, however, for the implications to go unrecognized and for the reader to remain impervious to the emotional effects of the story. Similarly, a summary of the main action of *Macbeth* would be likely to result in utter condemnation of Macbeth. Shakespeare's language, details, and imagery, create empathy with the character. Unfortunately a reader cannot respond with emotional sympathy to words he does not comprehend, connotations he does not recognize, or implications he does not grasp.

Any empathic response, whether it is reflected in tears, laughter, verbalization, or in some other manner, must result from at least a momentary acceptance of the value structure of the work, resulting in turn from at least a partial understanding of the text. If we detest murders without qualification or for some reason fail to respond to the value structure of *Crime and Punishment,* we can have no empathy with Raskolnikov. Similarly, if we do not share Mark Twain's fondness for the tricks and irreverent escapades of a little boy and do not respond to his text, we can have little use for *Tom Sawyer.* In short, a good deal of any text is directed to the creation or reinforcement of certain attitudes in the reader toward the values expressed or implied in the text. But the reader cannot respond with the desired attitude if he does not comprehend the text.

Paradoxically, although a reader can easily reject any text he does not understand, there are some that he may not reject *unless* he fully comprehends them. Successful propaganda is a case in point. Trite newspaper doggerel is another. If a reader succumbs to the words and images, trite or otherwise, that are intended to provoke particular emotions, he will become little more than a mechanical instrument. Strike the keys (mother, home, old age, sickness, death) and the response comes forth.

Obviously, a teacher cannot talk his students into giving what he (the teacher) considers appropriate responses to *Macbeth,* although many teachers try. If students do not respond as he hoped they would, the teacher must determine why, back away from the particular work at hand, and teach a sequence of materials, perhaps over a period of several months or years, that will prepare the students to comprehend a text intellectually, emotionally, and aesthetically.

Many teachers are fond of arguing that some works are beyond the experience and emotional capacity of the students. They resolve to present only those works that the students can automatically "appreciate" and to save the others until later. But the students get older, and many still detest the works that they could not "appreciate" earlier. A majority of adults, if they could be convinced to read in the first place, would be bored silly with Shakespeare, Dante, Dostoevsky, Hawthorne, Melville, and even Mark Twain. Surely their boredom is not the result of inexperience in the world. It is very likely the result of inexperience in literature. They do not know how to read, how to interpret the complex implications of language, imagery, character, and

event. And because they cannot comprehend those implications, no empathy is possible and the work is boring to them.

It is too simple, too easy, to say that a student cannot comprehend a text or have empathy with it because he has had too little experience in his short life. The argument implies a lack of responsibility for teaching anything, as though birthdays were an index to the collection of appropriate experience. In hundreds of American schools, students are not regarded as ready for anything very "mature" at age fifteen. But at age sixteen they suddenly and miraculously come of age. They read *The Scarlet Letter,* or more accurately, their teachers assign it. If teaching literature were that simple, there would be no need for English teachers. The students could simply pick up a reading list at the beginning of the seventh grade and read the appropriate texts on their appropriate birthdays.

In reality, of course, most students who read *The Scarlet Letter* at age sixteen find it dull and irrelevant, and not because they have never been adulteresses. Although the school cannot promote experience in such matters, it can provide carefully planned experiences with literature that lead to the skills and concepts necessary to the full comprehension of great literary works, among them *The Scarlet Letter.*

Aesthetic Responses: Evaluation

Perhaps the most effective way to encourage aesthetic response is through the processes of evaluation. If literary evaluation is to be more than a statement of prejudice or preference, then evaluation is the most complex task that a teacher can require of his students. Evaluating a work subsumes all the skills that this chapter has attempted to describe. No wonder, then, that teachers are continually frustrated by book reports that state only that the reader has liked or disliked the book. Such statements, while valid as statements of preference, are not really evaluations. An evaluation must use criteria, or at least pretend to use them, as a basis for evaluation.

Sometimes, aesthetic judgments are made on the basis of preconceptions. The folly of such judgments is apparent from the results of neoclassical dramatic theory. Shakespeare's plays suffered major revisions at the hands of critics and directors who preferred that a play conform to the classical unities. Similarly, if critics were to accept Poe's theory of the short story as a basis for the judgment of non-Poe stories, a great many stories would be condemned. If a critic claims that a writer's irony is heavy-handed, the critic has some preconceived notion of what irony should be and condemns a writer whose notion of appropriate irony is not the same as his. It is like saying Turner's colors are too bright or Rembrandt's shadows are too heavy. Such decisions are matters of personal taste and difficult to defend or attack but frequently easy enough to rationalize.

Teachers are on safer grounds if they direct the attention of their students to evaluations on the basis of other criteria. Two approaches warrant concern: (1) the validity of literary statement, and (2) the artistic design of the work.

1. The validity of literary statement is the degree to which the concrete evidence of the text, whether realistic or fantastic, reveals or generates truth about the real world. For example, the language, characters, events, and design of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* work together very efficiently in depicting the deterioration, even perversion, of certain political and social ideals. And although the world of *Animal Farm* is a fantasy world in which animals think and talk like humans, it reflects considerable truth about the real world. The text corresponds hypothetically to the real world. If animals were endowed with rational abilities and if they should attempt to develop a socialistic farm, then the events that follow in Orwell's book would ensue in reality. Many popular songs, on the other hand, frequently rely on single lines for their emotional effects while the remaining words simply fill up the space. Consequently, most people can remember only a line or two of most popular lyrics. Neither the concrete text nor the derived generalizations have much correspondence to the real world. Their correspondence is usually to some imagined emotional state. The same is true of inferior poetry. It does not take a heap of living in a house to make it home, as Edgar Guest would have us believe. There are many houses in which marriage, childbearing, and death take place without their ever becoming very satisfactory homes. Edgar Guest's poem says, Wouldn't it be nice if . . .? His emotional content does not derive from concrete imagery but from standard connotative words that he can rely upon to arouse certain emotions. The patter of children's feet, the laughter of childish voices, the death of a beloved one—all these, in the popular imagination and Edgar Guest's, make a home. But to anyone who stops to think, to anyone who does not simply submerge himself in a Norman Rockwell vision of "home" at the instance of a word or two, the language does not create a concrete world within the poem that, in turn, generates truth about the real world. On the contrary, the language presents ready-made generalizations that bear little or no relationship to the real world.

The process of determining the degree of relationship between the hypothetical world of a literary work and the real world, then, is primarily an evaluative task. This kind of evaluation must be preceded by another task that the textbooks and reading experts sometimes call "application," a task that most sophisticated readers perform almost automatically and that teachers can impose to check comprehension: application of the work's theme to other situations. When teachers ask their students such questions as the following, they require application: "Can you think of any situations in real life like the one in this story? Have you ever seen people behave like this in real life?" Questions such as these are frequently an important aid to understanding. Their danger lies in the fact that they lead away from the text rather than to

it, and classes may spend a disproportionate amount of time in recounting experiences that are only broadly similar. But as long as the experiences recounted are examined in light of the text, and as long as application leads back to evaluation of the text, the exercise is essentially literary.

2. The artistic design of the work involves the consistency, appropriateness, and efficiency of its various parts in accomplishing what the work set out to do. Therefore, an evaluation of artistic merit is inseparable from a rather careful analysis of the whole work. This is an important point for the teacher to bear in mind. As students evaluate a work, they must return again and again to the text for verification.

The task of evaluating the consistency, appropriateness, and efficiency of the parts or aspects of a work as they combine to accomplish its apparent purposes is not so abstruse as it sounds at first. Elementary school students can discuss intelligently the appropriateness or inappropriateness of Aesop's use of animals in particular fables. At a more advanced level, students can attempt to answer such questions as the following in relation to a story such as "An Ominous Baby": (1) To what degree is Crane's choice of words in the first paragraph effective in producing a favorable disposition on the part of the reader toward the tattered child? (2) To what extent is the eruption of a fight between the two children convincing—that is, has Crane prepared the reader adequately? Defend your answer. (3) In what way is the final line of the story (in particular the phrase "into a cavern") appropriate or inappropriate to the rest of the story? Questions 1 and 2 are much simpler to answer than the final question, simply because the last requires a rather thorough understanding of the story as a whole. The teacher must attempt to discriminate the easy questions from the difficult ones and design evaluation questions appropriate to the abilities of his students. If there is a wide range of abilities in a class, then the brightest students can deal with the most difficult problems. As the students become more and more able readers, they should become increasingly competent as evaluators of what they read.

Even if evaluation questions are carefully incorporated into every lesson, however, students may respond only in a superficial way. Many students, even those who are not very bright, can detect a teacher's attitude toward an assigned work. Many will assume that the teacher would not assign it if it were not good. Therefore, they voice an evaluation that they expect to be in agreement with the teacher's, or they make no comment at all. Any teacher who really wants his students to evaluate and not simply parrot back the teacher's ideas must remember two cardinal rules: (1) Never grimace at any negative evaluation from a student. (2) Never smile approvingly at positive evaluations when they are unaccompanied by a defense or explanation. Either reaction gives away the teacher's position. The teacher has already evaluated the work; it is only fair to give the students a chance. There is a third rule as well. When a student does make an attempt at an intelligent evaluation, accept it. Once when a group of seventh graders were deciding whether

Aesop used appropriate animals in his fables, a young man raised his hand, a somewhat wicked grin on his face. "Well," he said, "he used a fox in that fable, and, man, everybody knows that foxes don't eat grapes."

"That's a good point," his teacher said. "What should he have done instead?" The young man considered a moment.

"Well, he could'a used a different animal, maybe a bear, or he could'a used somethin' instead of grapes."

There are a number of ways to prevent evaluation from becoming a mechanical, superficial procedure. Among them are the following:

1. As a means of establishing criteria for evaluation, present two poems or stories involving similar content or theme but of fairly disparate literary value. No author's name should be revealed. Ask students to decide which is better and to explain why. An immature reader will tend to rate the more difficult work lower. Therefore, the works should be of approximately equal difficulty and within the comprehension of the students. Ninth, tenth, or eleventh graders will benefit from a comparative study and evaluation of works by the same author: Poe's "The Cask of Amontillado" and "The Premature Burial," for instance. Both stories deal with someone's being entombed alive. The first allows only a line or two for introduction before entering on the main action of the story, which presents all the horror one could wish for. The second begins with an extremely long passage in which Poe explains over and over the horror of premature burial, as though attempting to convince his reader. By the time the main action begins, the reader is bored. The difference between the two stories is glaring, but students beginning their careers as literary critics learn more from glaring differences that they can objectify than from subtle ones they cannot detect.

2. Every now and then bring a work of inferior quality into a unit. Most school anthologies can supply at least two or three. Let the students tear them up. They need to be convinced that at least sometimes a teacher will listen to their evaluations.

3. Ask the students to find stories to include in a unit of instruction. After the unit is under way, let them search through anthologies for stories and poems to use in a lesson of their planning. Require them to find several possibilities, to select two or three, and to defend their selections in terms of quality as well as appropriateness to the unit. For below-average groups it is best to suggest the possibilities and allow the students to make the selections. If the students actually teach the selections, their motivation will be that much higher.

4. Prepare with the students a unit dealing with fiction they enjoyed in the past. They will suggest such materials as the Hardy boys, *Hot Rod, Seventeen,* and *Sue Barton,* and many of the students will be able to bring such books to class. Let them study the books with a view to comparing

them, not to Shakespeare or Conrad, but to each other: the Hardy boys adventures series against *Hot Rod* and *Street Rod; Seventeen* against the Nancy Drew mysteries; or any of the lot against *The Light in the Forest, The Catcher in the Rye,* or some other relatively easy book of high quality. Although the comparison might begin with the expression of preferences, the teacher should use the preferences to establish criteria. Why do you prefer this book over that? Is it personal taste? (You don't like westerns, period.) Or is it the quality of the book? After studying the plot patterns, characterization, and style of their old favorites, students will enjoy writing parodies of them, and stories like the Hardy boys adventure series are relatively easy and certainly amusing to parody.

If a teacher allows, encourages, and approves evaluation, his students have a chance of learning how to evaluate. But a single year will not bring much sophistication. Evaluation must begin when readers are young. If they can understand what they read, they can evaluate it. The question about the appropriateness of the fox in Aesop's fable may not seem very sophisticated, but critics still argue the appropriateness of the final eleven chapters of *Huckleberry Finn.* The difference is only one of degree.

Throughout this chapter the problem of inference making has been prominent. And so it should be. But the English teacher must do more than teach his students how to make inferences. He must teach so that the student, through interaction with the curriculum, begins to understand the nature of literature. He must teach in a cumulative way so that the student becomes increasingly aware of what to expect of literature and what to look for. It is, after all, the knowledge of what to look for that provides the most pleasure to the reader and produces the best reader. Edgar Allen Poe once said of the good whist player what is also true of the good reader: "He makes, in silence, a host of observations and inferences. . . . the extent of the information obtained, lies not so much in the validity of the inference as in the quality of the observation. The necessary knowledge is that of *what* to observe."[12]

NOTES

1. Jeanne S. Chall, "Readability: An Appraisal of Research and Application," *Bureau of Educational Research Monographs,* No. 54. (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1958).
2. Rudolf Flesch, *The Art of Readable Writing* (New York: Harper, 1949).
3. For a discussion of some archetpyes, see Maud Bodkin, *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry* (New York: Vintage Books, 1958) and C. G. Jung, *Psyche and Symbol,* ed. Violet S. de Laszlo (New York: Anchor Books, 1958).
4. The problems of the author's voice and control of his material has been brilliantly discussed by Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961).
5. John Steinbeck, *The Pearl* (New York: Bantam Books, 1956), pp. 1–2.

6. Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1962), pp. 12–13.
7. Steinbeck, *op. cit.,* pp. 97–98.
8. For a more detailed analysis of this problem, see Northrop Frye, "Rhetorical Criticism: Theory of Genres" in *The Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957).
9. For a complete discussion of the oral technique and oral formulaic patterns, see Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960).
10. For a further commentary on this idea of *theme,* see Northrop Frye, "Literary Criticism," in *The Aims and Methods of Scholarship in Modern Languages and Literature,* ed. James Thorpe (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1963).
11. Gilbert Highet, *The Anatomy of Satire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), p. 13.
12. Edgar Allan Poe, *Great Tales and Poems of* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1960), p. 104.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

1. EDMUND REISS, *Elements of Literary Analysis.* New York: World Publishing Company, 1967.
2. I. A. RICHARDS, *Practical Criticism.* New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1929.
3. NORTHROP FRYE, *The Well-Tempered Critic.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1963.
4. RENÉ WELLEK AND AUSTIN WARREN, *Theory of Literature.* New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1942.
5. ALAN C. PURVES, *The Elements of Writing about Reading: Research Report #9.* Champaign: National Council of Teachers of English, 1968.

11 The Reading Comprehension Inventory

Once the teacher understands what the reading of literature involves, he is ready to plan an instructional unit for a specific group of students. His first step in planning is to determine, through the use of a reading comprehension inventory, the literary experience of his students as reflected in their responses to a text that is new to them. He needs to know the sorts of meanings they can and cannot deal with. The reading comprehension inventory is simply a short story, essay, poem, or drama with a series of questions, each of which illustrates one aspect of reading comprehension.

The unsophisticated person tends to regard reading in holistic terms: A person simply picks up some reading matter and reads it. This is far from the best instructional thinking, however. Various kinds of reading require various kinds of skills. Our attention in the reading inventories centers on study-type reading rather than leisure reading. The reading *matter* under consideration is the shorter prose piece, such as short stories and essays. The short-story will be discussed in this chapter.

The main considerations in developing reading inventories are the components of reading difficulty. There are four components to consider: (1) the readability of the selection, (2) its length, (3) the instructional context in which the reading is done, and (4) the purpose(s) of the reader in reading.

It is intuitively obvious that some reading matter is "easier" than other material. A popular mystery novel, for example, is less challenging than *Paradise Lost.* The preceding chapter dealt in detail with the elements of reading that make one text more difficult than another, elements that range from vocabulary and syntax to the interpretation of a text in the light of its various contexts.

All other things being equal, simple length is a measure of reading difficulty, for it is easier to read ten pages than it is to read one hundred. The principle reasons for the difference are the inherent fatigue associated with the

longer task and the difficulty in grasping the greater number of interrelationships it presents.

The third consideration is the general instructional context. For example, only one element in this context is the background of the student. Consider two undergraduate students doing outside reading in an advanced course in philosophy, one an English major, the other a philosophy major. The philosophy student handles the reading in a routine way, whereas the poor English student plods through with copious note-taking and rereading. Obviously, the general background, previous course work, interests, previous reading, buzz sessions with his peers, and the like, are of great advantage to the philosophy student, although both students may possess equivalent "native" ability at reading. The general instructional context in which one student finds himself cannot be equated with that of the other. Many elements are present in any instructional context—in addition to individuals' backgrounds.

The final consideration is that of purpose. For example, suppose a teacher in the primary grades is trying to decide which of two trade books is the more appropriate for second grade supplementary reading and which is the more appropriate for third grade. Obviously, measured readability presents no difficulty to her own reading of the two books; and if they are of about the same length, this consideration will not impede her. But think of the highly complex nature of the inferences she will be drawing about things like measured readability, vocabulary load, life experiences of the intended readers, sequential appropriateness, the relation of these books to others the children will read, and the like. Because of her purpose in reading, this college graduate literally spends hours reading and rereading little, second-grade books.

Let us now consider the role of each of these aspects of difficulty in developing the inventory, which is based on four short stories chosen from one of the anthologies used in class. The selections are as nearly similar in length as possible, and they contain some common thematic element or elements.

1. MEASURED READABILITY If there is a choice of anthologies available for use in class, select the easiest one from which to develop the inventory. If only one anthology is available, select the easiest stories in it. The emphasis is on materials of easy readability for rather negative reasons. If the inventory uses difficult stories and pupils show weak performance, the teacher gains no real insight because difficult materials predict weak performance. Additionally, the general structure of curriculum content logically moves from easy to difficult in any experiential sequence. The new teacher can ask reading specialists, librarians, or teachers experienced in using the materials about their difficulty. If these sources are unavailable or seem unreliable, the teacher has recourse to the reading formulas. Probably, a concert of these authorities will prove most reliable in selecting stories.

Many contemporary anthologies group their contents thematically into

units. But beware of one pitfall in selecting stories: It is often the case that the anthology editor will not have considered the relative difficulty of the stories in terms of readability in sequencing the materials. Because a story appears early in a book is no guarantee that it is easier than (or as easy as) one appearing later. In fact, because a story appears in a seventh-grade anthology, it cannot be assumed that the story is easier reading than one in a "later" anthology. (Case in point: *Split Cherry Tree* by Jesse Stuart appears in different anthologies intended for seventh, ninth, and eleventh graders.)

2. LENGTH OF SELECTIONS In choosing shorter selections, the most pertinent referent for the "length" consideration is the amount of time the students will need to read it. Ordinarily, one finds a variety of reading rates in a given class. But a safe, general, rule-of-thumb estimate for secondary school readers is 300 words per minute (not a high rate, to be sure).

Most teachers (and many schools), as a matter of policy, assume a certain time period as "reasonable" for outside, homework assignments—about thirty minutes per course, per student. Again, most teachers assign reading on the basis of some "complete" unit of work, such as one story for overnight reading. Unfortunately, few teachers check to see if the students can actually read a fifteen-page short story within the "reasonable" amount of time. Having the students read a "typical" story drawn from the anthology *in class* under the teacher's supervision is a check on how well the reading rates of the students working on his materials match his notion of the amount of time needed.

3. INSTRUCTIONAL CONTEXT Often, the learnings derived from a reading assignment are not gained from the reading experience *alone*. Preparations and discussions of various kinds occur in addition to the reading; and it is from the total of these experiences that the learnings develop. Let us postulate four different general patterns of reading lessons: the unsupported reading assignment; the reading assignment with specific preparation; reading with preparation, followed by a teacher-led discussion; and reading with preparation followed by small-group discussion and a summary, teacher-led discussion. This sequence is designed to move from a context in which maximum responsibility rests on the student to a context in which maximum support is provided. In addition to the supports that are manifest in the contexts described, there is the latent support of the thematic relatedness of the stories: Sequential experiences with thematically similar material should tend to support one another.

4. READING PURPOSES Reading purposes can be rather closely specified in terms of the kinds of questions about the reading that students are expected to answer when they have completed an assignment (assignment here meaning the reading in its complete instructional context).

The questions on the inventory should be in an order ranging from easy to

difficult (as they should on any evaluation instrument). The reasons for this scheduling relate to the student's attitudes toward the test. If he encounters a difficult question early in the sequence, the difficulties he has with it are likely to color his responses on easier items that he encounters later, thus biasing the results and tending to invalidate the instrument. For example, he may use too much time on an early item and not have ample time for later ones. He may "get stuck" on an early item and not answer later (and easier) ones at all. He may, because he experiences difficulty, lose confidence in himself and become otherwise "rattled," lowering his general performance. Scheduling items from easy to hard helps to diminish the probability of this kind of blocking and to provide some support. In addition, such structuring simplifies the interpretation of results.

What is the general rationale for developing questions in terms of difficulty? Generally, those that require responses based on specific statements contained in the reading material are easier than questions involving inferences. The further an inference is from the literal content, the more difficult is the question involving the inference. Thus, a question about the author's presumed purpose (not directly expressed in the reading) is more difficult than one about the probable reasons for a character's behavior (implied in the behavior); and this kind of question is more difficult than one requesting information on some physical characteristic of the character (as specifically described in the reading).

The questions in the inventory that follows are based on Jack London's story "To Build a Fire." They are scheduled from easy to difficult.

1. What is the setting of this story?
2. What kind of matches did the man use?
3. What made the springs dangerous to the man?
4. How did he know it was colder than fifty below zero?
5. When he stopped for lunch, what part of his journey lay before him, if his start were at the beginning of the story?
6. Why was he glad to feel pain in his fingers when he struck them?
7. What is the turning point of the story? Support your answer.
8. Jack London suggests that both men and animals have certain characteristics and capabilities that help them deal with unfriendly elements in the universe. Give evidence that he believes one of these (name which one) is superior in this respect.
9. Name another piece of literature in which a person or group is brought into conflict with his physical environment. What is the *significance* of the outcome of the conflict in the other story as compared with "To Build a Fire"?
10. In the first parts of the story, the man makes some assumptions about self-sufficiency that are in opposition to the evidence of the experience of others. Show how what befell the man in this respect is consistent

(or inconsistent) with the true-life experience of someone known to you (including yourself).

Analysis of the Questions

1. "What is the setting of this story?" *Basic Stated Information:* A question getting at basic information in a story is one whose answer the teacher feels is so absolutely apparent and obvious that no one could possibly miss it. Ordinarily, in constructing evaluation instruments, many teachers would not even consider including questions of this kind ("They're *too* easy!"). Consider, then, the implications involved if a pupil misses this kind of question (see *Interpretation,* below). Another question of the same type might be: "What was the weather like that day?"
2. "What kind of matches did the man use?" *Key Detail:* Many teachers in constructing evaluation instruments use a preponderance of questions that require recall of details. Unfortunately, in many instances, their questions request information about relatively unimportant details. The importance of the information requested in this question resides in the fact that because of the fumes given off by the *sulphur matches,* the man cannot light a match with his teeth, thus apparently sealing his doom. Compare this *key* detail with another related one: "How many matches were in the bundle he dropped?" The answer (seventy-five) is irrelevant to the action, and thus is not worth eliciting. One supposes that the reason for the inclusion of questions requiring knowledge of inconsequential details on many teacher-made tests is explained by the desire to find questions with high discriminatory power. Since unimportant details *are* unimportant, they are readily overlooked or forgotten by readers; hence, questions involving them do tend to discriminate. Surely, there are better ways to develop questions of discriminating power.

   Another question of the same type might be, "What kind of weapon did the man carry?"
3. "What made the springs dangerous to the man?" *Expressed Relationships:* This type of question is intended to get at the relationships (particularly as found among the details) expressed in the reading. The previous question (2, above) gets at details *independently perceived.* There are many kinds of relationships open to questioning: time, spatial, size, family, cause/effect, sequential, and so on. Often, relationship questions are cued by words such as "when," "where," "how many," "how often." Care must be taken, at this point, that the answer to the question is explicitly stated in the reading. (See 5, below.) This question deals with the relationship between the man and a specific aspect of his environment. The springs represent a danger because they are covered by "ice skin" and snow and because they can cause the man to get wet (as they do). Getting wet in such extreme cold results in freezing. Since all this can be regarded as part of the answer, the teacher must decide in advance how much constitutes a "complete" answer. Part of the discussion following the inventory should attempt to establish answer patterns so that students learn how much to include. Note, however, that no inference is necessary to produce any part of the answer. It is all stated explicitly in the text.
4. "How did he know it was colder than fifty below zero?" *Expressed Inference:* An expressed inference is one made by a character (or by the voice of the author) that is explicitly explained to the reader. The process involves noting details (as in question 2), understanding the relationships involved in these (as in 3), and drawing conclusions based on these understandings. (Sherlock Holmes often illuminates this process for Dr. Watson in the stories of Conan Doyle.) Again, care must be exercised so that the question elicits a response that is explicit in the reading. It is possible that a character may make an erroneous inference. The correctness of the inference has no bearing on the fact that the process *is* inference. For example, toward the end of the story the man infers that he can run along the trail and make it to camp or restore his circulation, or both. This proves to be incorrect; but it *is* an inference. "Why" is often a cue to inference questions. Almost always, the response to such a question includes two parts: the premise(s) and the conclusion(s). Thus, the answer to this question will be something like (premises), "The spittle froze in the air. At fifty below spittle freezes on the ground." (conclusion) "So it must be colder than fifty below for the spittle to freeze in the air." Another question of the same type might be, "Why couldn't the man kill the dog, once he had caught him?"
5. "When he stopped for lunch, what part of his journey lay before him, if his start were at the beginning of the story?" *Implied Relationships:* The background for this question is essentially the same as in question 3 above, except that the relationships have *not* been made explicit by the author. The relationships are implicit in the information in the reading. Doubtless, inferential thinking is required of the responder, but premises are spelled out for him, and his job is to relate them adequately. Some such answer as "two-thirds" is appropriate. The answer is short, but the mechanism required in arriving at it makes for the difficulty. Another question of the same type might be, "How did the man's attitude toward the dog change during the course of the story?" or "The man's attitude toward the old timer's advice changes at least three times in the story. Explain the reasons for one of the changes."

6. "Why was he glad to feel pain in his fingers when he struck them?" *Reader Inference:* The general background for this question is essentially the same as in question 4 above, except that the inference pattern has not been explicated by the author. Sometimes the reader will have to refer to experiences outside the story (such as his direct life experiences) in order to complete the inference procedures. The answer to this question should be something like this: "When his fingers were without feeling, he knew they were freezing. When he felt pain, he felt *something,* so the freezing was stopping, so he was glad." Another question of the same kind is, "Why didn't the man cast a shadow at noon under a cloudless sky?"
7. "What is the turning point of the story? Support your answer." *Structural Generalization:* This question requires a response to the reading as a whole rather than to discrete elements within it. Although question 1, above, does the same, the kind of response required in that instance is not nearly so sophisticated. "Basic stated information" is hammered at the reader over and over throughout the story. A question requiring a structural generalization requires a pattern analysis of the work that depends on perception of story patterns in general. Such a response usually requires experience with other works of the same type.

   It may also imply experience with a certain kind of instruction. Since this inventory is not intended as a survey of previous instructional experience (such as is the case with the content inventory), care must be taken in wording the question so that its terms do not block responses. For example, had this question been phrased, "What is the *climax* of the story?" the student would have to understand the technical term "climax" in order to respond. On the basis of intuitive power combined with critical analysis, he might be able to specify the climax in this plot without having the conventional term for it in his vocabulary. Such power is what this type of question is designed to assess. Even the term "turning point" may need some explanation by the teacher, especially in lower grades; but this term has the advantage (in this instance it *is* an advantage) that it is not technical.

   Many times conventional critical concepts do not apply to a particular work of art in a way that is so ideally specific as to obviate alternative discussions. Such is true in this case. Does the turning point of this story occur when the protagonist decides to travel alone (that action taking place even before the story begins); when he decides to follow the creek bed; when he falls through the ice; when he builds the fire beneath the tree; when the fire is blotted out; or at some other point? Hence, the response requires not only the naming of "the point" but also some support for selecting that point.

   Another question of the same kind is: "The author prepares the reader in a number of ways for what happens at the end of the story. Name one comment or event at the beginning of the story and explain how it prepares for the ending."

8. "Jack London suggests that both men and animals have certain characteristics and capabilities that help them to deal with unfriendly elements in the universe. Give evidence that he believes one of these (name which one) is superior in this respect." *Author's Generalizations:* This question looks at a philosophical generalization of some kind made by the author. A worthwhile work of literature will be, in one aspect, an exemplification of one or more philosophical generalizations made by the author. The reader may or may not agree with the generalization, but he will have to be aware of it and aware that it represents the view of the author (rather than of a character) before he can objectify his agreement or disagreement. Accordingly, this question is intended to get at the author through his work.

   One weakness in the question presented here is that the particular philosophical generalization is presented to the student. However, a question asking the student to *form* such a generalization himself is likely to result in a statement so ambiguous that it cannot be evaluated readily ("Life can be hard at times," for example). This wider type of question might prove valuable, however, in the case of advanced students in advanced grades if the teacher knows for certain that they have had the appropriate instructional experience previously.

   The question as it is phrased presents enough difficulties, however. The student must decide which of the two indicated views is the one entertained by London. Then he must ascertain which elements in the story have led him to his decision.

   Another question of the same type, which is somewhat more difficult because of its symbolic nature, is "What, if anything, does London's referral to the central figure as 'the man' and to the dog as 'the dog' (not naming either) indicate about London's use of these figures to represent all mankind and all animals? Support your answer."
9. "Name another piece of literature in which a person or group is brought into conflict with the natural environment. What is the *significance* of the outcome of the conflict in the other story as compared with 'To Build a Fire'?" *Relating Reading to Other Reading Experiences:* This is the first question that requires the reader to go completely outside his experience with the story in question. He is asked to make the same kinds of formulations as in question 8 with respect to another, thematically similar work in his previous literary experience and then compare this analysis to that of "To Build a Fire." His response can break down anywhere along the line.

   The key word for the teacher in evaluating the response here is *significance.* The student is likely simply to compare outcomes. Of principal concern, however, is what generalizations the authors are

implying rather than how the action mechanically works itself out. The teacher must be sure that the students focus on the appropriate aspect of the question. It will probably be necessary to comment to the class on the question. Such comment does not invalidate the question since explaining the focus gives very little assistance in performing the mental operations required in the response.

Another question of the same kind: Name another piece of literature in which the central figure succeeds in overcoming environmental obstacles. What are the basic elements that are different in the situation of that story and "To Build a Fire"?

10. "In the first parts of the story, the man makes some assumptions about self-sufficiency that are in opposition to the evidence of the experience of others: For example, the old timer from Sulphur Creek tells him that it is dangerous to travel alone in extreme cold. Yet the man assumes that he can. Show how what befell the man in this respect is consistent (or inconsistent) with the true-life experience of someone known to you (including yourself)." *Application to Life Experiences:* The kind of thinking required to answer this type of question is somewhat similar to that required to answer question 9, in that direct life experience is substituted for the vicarious experience of reading. A major difference is that the reader must make a judgment concerning the consistency of the story material with real life. The most profound block to responding will relate to the relative inexperience of the student or his lack of sophistication in analyzing his experiences, or both. One intent of the question is to illuminate a potential value of reading—that of gaining insight into one's own life. In addition, as explained in the previous chapter under "Aesthetic Responses: Evaluation," this type of question is the first step in evaluating the validity of literary statement.

Frequently, teachers, in attempting to construct questions of this kind, neglect the evaluative aspects of the question and develop questions of a superficial nature. "Have you ever been in serious difficulty like this man? What did you do?" The failure of the question results *not* from any lack of importance of the life experience of the responder, but rather from the failure to suggest a suitable analogous case in literature together with the pertinent generalization. The example above might just as well read: "What did you do in some situation that was very serious?" Thus, the response requires no reference to reading experience of any kind.

As in question 8, an inherent weakness in the formulation of question 10 is that of cuing the generalization. The same qualifying remarks apply here.

Another question of the same type: "Later in the story the man makes assumptions about what his danger would be if he had human

companionship. Cite some comparable life situation known to you in which what happened to *groups* of people supports (or refutes) the man's assumptions."

Many teachers intuitively regard questions of the type exemplified by questions 8, 9, and 10 as "thought" questions. In planning and scoring their routine tests, they are prepared to give full credit to *any* reasonable answer and are chagrined when students write no response whatever, thus depriving themselves of "free" credit. Hopefully, the analysis suggested for these inventory items sheds some light on this apparently cavalier behavior of students.

The Items in Summary

The items on this reading comprehension inventory are very easy at the beginning and much more difficult at the end, the question's relative difficulty being determined by its reference to explicit statements in the reading, whether the reader responds to a part of the reading or the piece as a whole, the structure of the response, the kind of thinking that leads to making the response, and the character of the reader's previous experiences. The question types can be generalized following Figure 11.1.

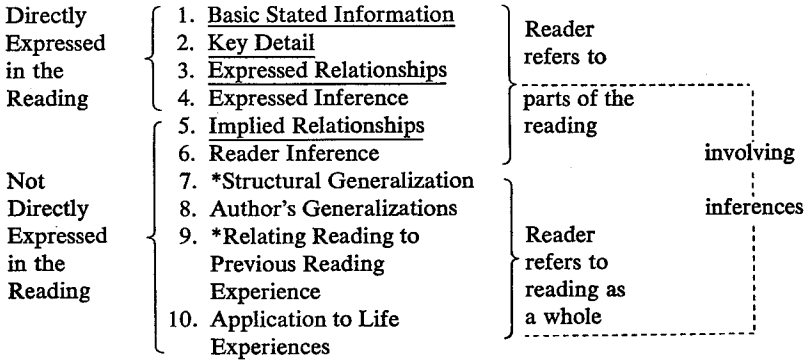

FIGURE 11.1

Underlined items mean the answer has one part (other items usually require answers of more than one part).

Starred items mean the answering requires certain kinds of experience previous to reading (other items can be handled with reference to this experience alone).

This inventory structure is intended for use in a relatively heterogeneous class, and it supposes that the teacher is interested in a general survey of reading comprehension. There are no questions testing the reader's ability

to deal with connotative language, metaphor, imagery, symbolism, and the like. Such items might require a different reading passage; "An Ominous Baby" discussed in Chapter 9 is highly susceptible to questions of this type. Moreover, no question requires the student to evaluate the internal consistency of the story or to rate it against other literary works.* (Questions dealing with some aspects of evaluation were, however, suggested in the preceding chapter.) Nor are there questions testing the ability to handle vocabulary. Changes must be made if the principal interest in a given class is not prose fiction but some other form, say, critical essays or poetry. Individual teachers may note deficiencies of other kinds in thinking of their particular informational needs. However, the general principle enunciated in developing items of relative difficulty (directly expressed information vs. implied information, and so on) and, in general, structuring from easy to more difficult items is useful.

Scoring the Responses

As opposed to the procedures of most standardized tests, it behooves the teacher to treat responses in terms of degree of correctness rather than in an absolute way—that is, either all right or all wrong. For example, consider three hypothetical responses to question 4 ("How did he know it was colder than fifty below?")

a. The spittle froze in the air. At fifty below spittle freezes on the ground. So it must be colder than fifty below for the spittle to freeze in the air.
b. At fifty below spittle freezes on the ground.
c. No answer.

Answer *a* can be considered complete since the inference chain is adequately reported. Answer *c* is left blank and, consequently, is wrong. Answer *b* presents a part of the inference chain, suggesting that the responder in this case has a better comprehension of the reading than responder *c* but probably not so good a comprehension as responder *a*. This interpretation of the difference between *a* and *b* may be in error, since *b* may simply be respond-

* Questions asking students to rate literature are generally more difficult than any on this model. Rating requires the reader not only to go outside a particular piece of writing for purposes of comparison but also to develop a systematic rating system of some kind based upon his experiences and to place the work in question on that rating scale. As Northrop Frye and others have pointed out, such criticism, even among responsible critics, is usually dependent upon the prevailing tastes of the age. Frequently, questions that require attempts to rate literature are irrelevant and inconsequential. Is Pope's "Rape of the Lock" a better poem than Milton's *Paradise Lost*? The question is irrelevant because the poems do entirely different things. When an item involving comparative merit is relevant, the task is extremely complex: For example, consider *Macbeth* and *Othello* in terms of poetic language and explain which is the stronger.

ing inadequately and may have understood the reading completely. (Hence, the inventory involves experiences with more than one story, allowing the teacher, in the interim between reading experiences, to discuss response patterns. See "Inventory Procedures," below.) In scoring responses, however, the teacher must score the response given and not infer the responder's probable knowledge that led to only a partially adequate answer.

Let us now consider a fourth hypothetical response:

d. The dog was trying to tell him that it was too cold to be out, and if he paid better attention to the dog's behavior, he would know that it was colder than fifty below, a "safe" temperature.

In terms of the question "How did the man know?" this response is inadequate. The responder is answering a question not asked, although the general pattern of his response is acceptable. He may, however, be coming closer to the mark than is *c* who could not answer at all. Since one of the controlling aspects of reading difficulty is purpose, and since in this inventory purpose is controlled by question type, let us consider the "wrong" responses, *c* and *d*, in terms of the probable psychology governing the responses.

Either something in the phrasing of Item 4, or the reading purpose itself, or the readability of the story (or perhaps the readability of the item, though this seems unlikely) has completely blocked *c*. The block is so profound that he cannot offer any answer. On the other hand *d*, although blocked, is not so completely blocked as *c*, since he is able to respond in some way.

Therefore, the four types of response may be ranked:

a = correct
b = partially correct
d = incorrect
c = no answer

In scoring the responses, therefore, a marking system that accounts for this kind of variation in responding (and the teacher's interpretation of the responses) is employed:

correct = +
partially correct = √
incorrect = −
no answer = 0

To an extent, the scoring will rest on the subjective judgments of the teacher. But the judgments used in scoring the inventory should reflect the judgments that the teacher will use in his marking throughout the year and thus have a high degree of validity to him, although perhaps other teachers might score the results somewhat differently. The teacher who develops and scores the inventory will be thinking of the kinds of things he will be doing and not

doing in his class as suggested by the inventory results and his interpretation of the results.

Needless to say, the scoring procedure is complex. Therefore, a practice that many teachers follow in dealing with tests is categorically *ruled out:* that of having students correct one another's papers. In other situations this practice can be considered useful, in every way quite legitimate, even indicated as being generally beneficial to learning. But in this case, the scoring is so delicate and of such great import that the teacher must do it all.

Inventory Procedures

The inventory is administered in four stages. A story is read in class as the central activity in each stage. As noted above, all four stories should approximate each other in terms of measured readability and length. The length should be such that students can finish the reading within a single class period, reading at a rate of about 300 words a minute.

STAGE 1 Explain the purpose of the inventory, and then assign the reading of the first story. While the class is reading, circulate among the students and notice gross indications of frustration such as lip movements (mouthing of words), finger pointing, extreme lag (some readers getting pages behind), distractions from the reading (gazing about the room, out the window, and so on). Note these symptoms on the seating plan (or some convenient place —remember you will not know students' names early in the year) by making check marks (or some convenient symbols). After the predetermined number of minutes has elapsed (calculated by dividing the approximate number of words by 300), ask how many have finished. If a number have not finished, extend the reading period. After that, have class close books. Administer first set of questions. The questions may be administered orally or in duplicated form, but for general efficiency the latter practice is recommended, although this intensifies the general difficulty of the entire reading experience. The first question, however, *is* asked orally: "Did you finish?" The students write "yes" or "no." If they question the items and the difficulty appears to lie in an unintended ambiguity in the expression of the question, clear the matter up. When the students have finished, collect the papers. It is a good idea to have supplementary reading available for fast workers. Leisure reading in the anthology will suffice for this purpose, provided the class is warned off other stories that will be used in the inventory.

If time permits, lead a discussion based on the inventory questions. If not, have the discussion at the beginning of the next meeting. In addition to the obvious pedagogical reasons for going over the questions in this way, it will help to discharge the anxiety and hostility that are involved in any testing situation. During the discussion, get into the problem of appropriate patterns in responses (as discussed in connection with Item 4 and others above in this text).

STAGE 2 Before in-class reading begins, supply students with inventory questions for the day's story, which more clearly specify their purpose in reading. Go over the questions to clear up unintended ambiguities. Review the discussion on response patterns. Then proceed as in Stage 1.

STAGE 3 Initial procedures are followed as in Stage 2. When the class has finished reading, have them leave the books open for reference. Conduct a teacher-led discussion using the inventory questions. When the discussion is completed, the books are closed, and the class writes the responses, as in Stage 1. The same procedures are used in completing the activity.

STAGE 4 Initial procedures are followed as in Stage 2. When the class has finished the reading, divide it into small groups for discussion (see Chapter 3 on "Grouping for Instruction"). The groups will base their discussions on the questions in the inventory. When group discussions are completed, return to a teacher-led discussion with the whole class, summarizing the small-group discussions. When the teacher-led discussion is finished, proceed as in Stage 1, completing all activities.

Score the papers from each stage as they are returned.

Interpreting the Inventory Results

As indicated earlier, some teacher interpretation is involved in the scoring procedure itself. Beyond this, a more systematic and thoroughgoing interpretation is mandatory. The teacher will want to know how each pupil responds to each type of question and how the response is conditioned by the instructional context. In addition, he will want an overview of class performance in these respects. A two-dimensional charting device on which class results are recorded is useful in developing these interpretations and others. A page in the gradebook can be devoted to such a chart (as well as other inventory data), which should look like the one shown in Figure 11.2. Reference to the chart provides a quick, graphic way of assessing individual and class performance.

RATE A low rate was used in the original timing for the reading, and easy reading material was chosen. Therefore, pupils who consistently do not finish the reading have a reading rate that is below normal for their age group. There are many reasons for slow reading rates. The immediate things to check are symptomatic evidence of frustration and the character of responses on the

Names	Symptoms	Item 1				Item 2				Item 3				Item etc.		Item 10				Totals				Notes
		phases				phases				phases						phases								
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4			1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
Adams, J.		+	+	+	+	✓	+	+	+	✓	✓	+	+							7	8	9	9	
Brown, C.		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+							9	10	10	10	leader?
Deleone, P.		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	✓	✓	✓	+							7	7	8	8	
Kauffman, B.	✓	-	-	+	+	0	0	+	+	0	-	-	✓							1	2	5	5	check records now
Etc.																								

FIGURE 11.2

Beginning at the left, and reading from left to right, the chart is constructed and utilized as follows:

first column: Students' names.
second column: Observations of gross symptoms of reading frustration.
next ten columns: Record of responses to items; each of these ten columns is subdivided into four columns, one for each phase of the inventory; scores (+, ✓, -, 0) indicate type of response in appropriate phase.
next to last column: Subdivided into four columns for approximate "total score."
last column: For any notes.

early items in the inventory. If weak performance is noted here, the slow rate is part of a complex of behaviors indicating that this reading is too difficult for the reader. If no gross evidence of frustration is noted and the responses are good, the readability of the material is probably not beyond the power of the student. Probably he should be involved in a program designed to increase his rate in a mechanical way. If this is the case, the teacher should seek consultation with a reading specialist for help in developing the program.

Interpreting Responses to Specific Items

ITEMS 1 AND 2 These questions should be answered correctly and completely—at the very least from Stage 2 throughout. If this is not the case, the reading is unquestionably too difficult for the reader. Consequently, the year's work for such pupils will have to be done with materials of easier readability, at least until such time as the pupils demonstrate enough improvement in power to handle the regular class work. Very likely, the teacher will have checked these names as evincing gross symptoms of reading frustration. If possible, he should consult with a reading specialist for techniques to use in working with these pupils. In the abence of a reading specialist, advice may be sought from elementary school principals or skilled teachers in the elementary schools.

ITEMS 3 AND 4 Pupils whose scores show check marks and worse on these questions (while showing plus marks on questions 1 and 2) as a consistent pattern should be regarded as weak normal readers at best and perhaps in need of remediation. Look for evidence of gross symptoms of frustration, and seek consultation with the reading specialist or other appropriate personnel. It is conceivable that these students are simply intellectually incapable of going beyond reading for main ideas and details but have no actual mechanical difficulty with reading. It is also possible that they can learn the more sophisticated reading tasks. Only the teacher's carefully evaluated subsequent experience with these pupils can indicate which of these possibilities is realizable.

ITEMS 5 AND 6 For most students, questions 5 and 6, will be the ones on on which plus marks disappear, at least in Stages 1 and 2. Normal readers should achieve at least partial answers to these questions in Stages 3 and 4 (after discussion).

ITEMS 7 THROUGH 10 To a great extent, success on these items in Stages 1 and 2 will be determined by previous instructional experiences. If pupils are accustomed to handling reading in the manner suggested by the questions, blocking should be minimized. Students who fail these items in the early stages of the inventory and show some success in later stages are displaying

readiness for the kind of instruction implied in the items. If no improvement is evident in later stages, written responses to literature should be limited to the kind of classroom experiences indicated by earlier items on the inventory.

Generally, plus marks should characterize early questions. These should fade to check marks in the middle items. Minus signs and zeros will probably appear in later items. If the general response pattern supports this prediction, the teacher should feel quite comfortable with his inventory in terms of validity. Should some particular question elicit a surprising general response in either direction (responses that seem relatively too strong or too weak), it should probably be revised before it is used in another year.

From stage to stage, class responses should improve. In the final stage they should be markedly better than in Stage 1. Should responses for the class be very strong (nearly all plus or check) in an early stage, there is no need to go through all of the inventory. Furthermore, such response patterns will indicate that group discussion and teacher-led discussion during the year should deal with something other than review of reading for the purpose of strengthening comprehension.

Should a particular student (or group) show strong responses in an early phase, his papers in the later phase need receive only perfunctory attention in scoring, thus effecting some saving of time and energy.

Implications for Planning Instruction

Characteristic responses will change from one type of item to another. The area in which checks begin to predominate indicates the kinds of questions that should be used as study guide questions for reading assignments. Wherever minus signs and zeros begin to predominate, the indication is that teacher instruction and class discussions should focus here. Areas characterized by nothing but minus signs and zeros suggest that involvement in this kind of reading problem is best delayed until the less difficult skills are more nearly mastered.

In addition, the results of the general reading comprehension inventory suggest the kind and focus of instructional units that will be most beneficial to the class as a whole. For instance, a class whose responses are weak on Items 2, 3, and 4 should probably work on a unit that focuses on the literal level of the materials but involves some simpler inferences as well. A unit suggested by the central conflict of "To Build a Fire" might be appropriate: "Man Against Nature." Such a unit would involve materials whose meanings were primarily literal. At the same time, however, the teacher-led discussions and the small-group discussions might well deal with questions aimed at implied relationships, reader inferences, simple structural generalizations, and generalizations made by the author (question types 5, 6, 7, and 8). The kind of unit proposed in the chapters that follow will involve a comparison

of literary materials (question type 9) as well as the application of reading experiences to life (type 10). Such questions, however, should remain simple for weaker students, and the teacher should be careful not to lose sight of the text at hand in discussing previous reading or life experiences.

If the students do well on the first four types of questions and reasonably well on types 5 and 6, they can probably do considerable work involving inference and should deal with units of work, materials, and questions that require inferences involving connotation, figurative language, structure, the relationship of structure and theme, and other aspects of literary meaning discussed in the previous chapter.

The reading comprehension inventory, then, is an extremely important device for beginning the year's work. It will give the students immediate practice in some of the activities important to that work; and it will offer relatively successful experience in the later stages. Most important, however, it will provide a sound estimate of the general literary experience and skill of the class as a whole and will identify students who need special correctional help as well as those who read fluently. In short, it provides a basis for planning the year's work in literature.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

1. BENJAMIN S. BLOOM, ed. *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive Domain* (New York: David McKay Co., 1956).
2. NORRIS M. SANDERS, *Classroom Questions: What Kinds?* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966).

12 Designing the Literature Unit: I. Preliminary Planning

One of the most important things that any literature unit can do is to provide a conceptual matrix against which the student can examine each new work he reads. Insights into any given work are partly the result of experience in reading others because concepts grow by comparison and contrast. In defining even simple objects, knowing what the object is *not* is as important as knowing what it *is*. A rubber mallet is like a claw hammer in some ways but unlike it in others. When a child begins to learn what an apple is, he sees it as a red, more or less spherical piece of fruit. If he should see an orange or a tomato, he is very likely to call it an apple. On the other hand, if he should see a yellow or green apple, he may not call it an apple. But as he comes into contact with more and more apples, oranges, and tomatoes, he will become increasingly adept at discriminating among them, regardless of variations in color, size, or shape.

A similar process takes place in reading literature. If a student is confronted with a series of related literary situations that require similar (but not the same) inferences, he will learn what to observe and how to make the necessary inferences. If he reads only one satiric work, however, he has no basis for comparison and contrast, with the result that his concept of satire will be severely limited. Like the child who has seen only one apple, he will probably not be able to interpret another satire adequately, if at all. If he reads several, he learns what to expect, what to look for, and how to make the inferences. Similarly, if the student has practice in observing the actions and in inferring the traits of a spectrum of characters from the courageous to the foolhardy, he will make such inferences more completely afterward.

The province of the unit, then, is to arrange materials and the examination of them in such a way that the student accumulates the background necessary for knowing what and how to observe and for making appropriate inferences. If the unit is to develop the student's power to

read literature, planning must be very careful. First, a unit's content depends upon the teacher's analysis of both the literature and the abilities of the students. In regard to the unit on satire, which will be used as an example throughout this chapter, the teacher must know what satire is and how it works. At the same time, he must determine what the abilities of his students are and plan the unit content in terms of those abilities. The arbitrary, conservative arrangement of materials by type, chronology, or author will not suffice because it ignores both the student and the skills and knowledge required to read literature. Nor is the broad topical unit of the progressive school designed to teach literature. As we have seen, it uses literature to teach something else.

Second, the teacher must set down the objectives and criteria for student performance so that he knows as precisely as possible what he expects his students to do and know at a minimum by the end of the unit. If he does not work out his goals in advance, he runs a risk, in the first place, of teaching nothing and, in the second place, of being unable to evaluate it if he does teach something.

Third, the materials should be so arranged that the reading of each one contributes in specific ways to the reading of the next. Since the objectives will describe some specific problem in the reading of literature, the materials should illustrate the problem and be so arranged that the student learns to cope with the problem at an appropriate level of sophistication by the end of instruction.

Fourth, evaluation should be an attempt to determine whether or not the student has learned to do the tasks described by the objectives, to read something new, for instance, something that he has not seen before. Further, evaluation should determine how well students respond to the unit affectively.

Analysis of Unit Content

Obviously, the teacher must first analyze the unit topic before deciding that it is appropriate to the abilities of the students. Intuitive decisions about appropriateness are often completely inadequate. For instance, teachers who refuse to teach satire because they did not study it until college may have no qualms about offering a complex play like *Macbeth* (only a few Shakespearean plays are more complex) to all twelfth graders.

A second important reason for researching and analyzing the unit topic is to prevent superficiality in the unit. A teacher should explore a topic as far as he can before designing his unit. For instance, the teachers who planned "The Outcast" unit at the end of Chapter 9 read about ostracism and scapegoating in books on psychology, sociology, and myth and ritual in addition to reading many literary works. The unit on "Courage" at the end of Chapter 14 was planned only after reading commentaries on courage by philosophers

such as Aristotle and Marcus Aurelius. *The Syntopicon,* which comprises the first two volumes of the *Great Books* series published by Encyclopaedia Britannica is a very useful source in approaching some fifty themes such as war, love, and courage. The more the teacher knows about the unit topic, the better. He may not be able to use the product of all his researches directly in his planning, but it will prepare him to help develop discussion of ideas that students raise in class and to explore the dimensions of the unit problem as far as his students' interests permit. Unfortunately, most college curricula offer only period or major figure oriented courses, which provide information and models of instruction inappropriate to the vast majority of secondary school students. Thus, *the teacher must do the necessary learning on his own.*

Once the teacher has examined the unit concepts thoroughly he will know intuitively which aspects of his initial idea, if any, might be useful with his own students. A cursory understanding of satire that suggests only works by Pope and Swift should automatically preclude satire as a topic for study for most students. But a more complete understanding of satire reveals that satire might be taught at many levels of sophistication. Similarly, a perfunctory knowledge of the structure and style of adolescent literature of the Hardy boys or hot rod variety precludes such materials as too unsophisticated. But a teacher who has considered such material carefully might note that it is prime stuff for the analysis of structure and style to be followed by the writing of parodies. It is surprising how much students can learn from the analysis of such simplistic material!

The teacher must analyze the unit topic for another reason: to determine whether it is appropriate to the study of literature. Although it is relatively easy to justify the teaching of satire because it illustrates how literature examines values and behavior, other unit topics are not so easily justified. The teacher must be sure that the unit's content is literature and not social studies, geography, or history. As we have seen, however, even an unlikely topic such as "animal stories" can illustrate key literary concepts. (See Chapter 4.)

Carefully planned units can contribute a great deal to the students' understanding of literature. To begin with, the teacher should choose a theme that appears in literature rather frequently, the problem of conflicting social and cultural values, for instance. Then he must decide whether there is material available that is not too difficult for his students. He may have to begin with material that presents conflict in cultural values in a rather straightforward manner, perhaps a story like Ernest Haycox's "A Question of Blood,"[1] which tells of a white settler in the West who marries a Crow girl before civilization creeps to the frontier. He is later caught amid the disapproval of the new white community, his moral responsibility toward the girl, and his inability to understand her customs or her language. The reading of a story like this might be preceded by a discussion of how the groups to which an individual belongs influence his system of values in rather subtle ways—ways that are frequently not apparent to adults, let alone adolescents. The students can

examine their own experiences in the groups to which they belong, the sanctions that those groups exercise over them, and the conflicts that arise because they have different roles to play in different groups and because those groups have different sets of values. Most students have experienced tension or anxiety because their roles as students conflict with their roles as members of adolescent groups. Students know that the school expects a certain set of behaviors and the adolescent group expects, perhaps demands, a different set. This sort of discussion extended to cultures other than the students' will prepare the way for understanding the problems of a character caught between conflicting sets of values or the problems of characters who cannot understand or accept the values of others. Although the students may not be able to understand the complex cultural conflicts in E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India,* they will better understand the problem of Trueson in Conrad Richter's *The Light in the Forest,* and eventually they will be able to approach more difficult material.

Assume, then, that the teacher decides that a unit on satire might be appropriate for his classes. His first step will be to find out as much as he can about it for himself. The most common definition of satire is in terms of its purpose: to ridicule and so correct the follies and vices of mankind. The aim of a social satirist such as Fielding was to laugh men out of their follies and vices. But not all satire provokes outright laughter or even amusement. On the contrary, some of the best satire involves the bitterest humor. Alvin B. Kernan has called the satirist's muse "cankered."[2] Swift's description of the Yahoos is funny only briefly—before it turns to gall. Though it may be gentle, the humor of satire is never sweet. It burns as it cuts, and its wounds can be inflicted with the refinement and delicacy of the rapier or with the spine-splitting blows of the two-handed broadsword.

In Roman literature satire was, at first, a genre in the same sense that epic or tragedy were genres. It could be defined by its structural characteristics and its purpose, and, as a result, has been called formal verse satire or diatribe. Such satire was usually an abusive monologue in verse that made no attempt at subtlety. The speaker was always direct and emphatic in denouncing the objects of his criticism, using whatever weapons came to hand to make others scoff with him. He ranted and barked his scorn; he used imagery intended to disgust his audience. He barbed his criticism with vituperative humor. The foremost exponents of formal verse satire in Roman times were Juvenal, whose satires exemplify the most brutal methods, and Horace, whose satires are considerably more gentle.

Another sort of satire developed in which the criticism emanates indirectly from a story rather than directly from a harangue delivered by the satirist. The audience has to infer the satire from the nature of the characters, plot, and setting. Although the implications are not necessarily difficult to detect, only occasionally does the author make explicit satiric comments in his own voice; instead, the satire, for the most part, is implicit. This sort of satire,

which became known as Menippean satire, after a Roman satirist who supposedly invented the form, is the type most widely used in English literature. Pope's "The Rape of the Lock," Dickens' *Nicholas Nickleby,* Mark Twain's *The Mysterious Stranger,* H. G. Wells' *Tono-Bungay,* and Orwell's *Animal Farm* are all examples of Menippean satire, insofar as they are satire.

Since the criticism emerging from Menippean satire is largely implied, it is more difficult for unsophisticated readers to understand than formal verse satire. Frequently, though, many Menippean works are short and fairly easy to read: fables, short poems, and some novels. The satiric techniques used in some Menippean satire are rather obvious. For instance, Dickens' satire of Squeers in *Nicholas Nickleby* is blunt in its exaggeration of the schoolmaster's ignorance and vice, and it presents a number of explicit condemnations from the voice of the omniscient author.[3]

The Unit Pretest

If the teacher believes that his unit idea might be workable, his next step is to plan a pretest for his unit. The reading inventory given at the beginning of the year will obviate certain choices, of course. For instance, if inventory responses on early items are minimal even in the later stages (see Chapter 11) there will be no point in planning a unit on satire in which students will have to deal largely with inferences—unless the teacher intends to use materials that involve very little or no reading, such as films, TV programs, cartoons, and so forth. (If this is indeed the teacher's intention, his pretest should use the same sort of materials.) On the other hand, if students do very well in response to the reading comprehension inventory, the pretest is still necessary, for it will give a clearer indication of the level at which a unit can begin. Teachers sometimes give themselves credit for having taught a great deal when in reality their students had already learned and were capable of doing with ease most of what the teachers thought they were teaching. A unit pretest helps to eliminate such errors. In addition, because it reflects the type of learning involved in the unit, it will serve as a base for the evaluation of instruction. In conjunction with final unit evaluations it will provide some notion of how effective the teacher's instruction has been. Without a pretest, he will have no way of knowing whether the students' achievements can be attributed to his efforts or to their prior learning.

A unit pretest should attempt to examine both extremes of a teacher's expectations for his class. That is, it should present materials and questions that the teacher feels will be very simple as well as those which he thinks will be difficult for his students. As in the reading comprehension inventory the items should be arranged from easy to difficult. The following items for a unit pretest on satire include a far greater range than necessary for most classes. An eighth grade teacher need use only the first two or three selections, while a twelfth grade teacher might use only the last three, or, depending on the results of the reading inventory and other observations he has made of his students, he too might use the first three selections. Obviously, the difficulty of the pretest can be modulated by varying both the selections used and the questions following them.

The following items were designed to answer some fairly specific questions: (1) What level of familiarity do the students have with the term "satire"? (2) Can they identify the target of ridicule in fairly obvious satire? (3) How adequately can they explain why the author believes the target deserves ridicule? (4) To what degree do they recognize the extension of the satire beyond the context of the specific work? (5) To what extent can they understand how the effects of the satire are achieved?

Unit Pretest: Satire

A. Read the following fable and answer the questions:

THE FOX AND THE CROW

A crow was sitting on a branch of a tree with a piece of cheese in her beak when a fox observed her and set his wits to work to discover some way of getting the cheese. Coming and standing under the tree he looked up and said, "What a noble bird I see above me! Her beauty is without equal, the hue of her plumage exquisite. If only her voice is as sweet as her looks are fair, she ought without doubt to be Queen of the Birds." The crow was hugely flattered by this, and just to show the fox that she could sing she gave a loud caw. Down came the cheese, of course, and the fox, snatching it up, said, "You have a voice, madam, I see: what you want is wits."[4]

1. What did the foolish animal do that revealed its foolishness?
2. Explain *why* the foolish animal did what it did.

B. The following passage is from a novel by Charles Dickens. The scene is a nineteenth-century private boarding school for boys. Mr. Squeers, the headmaster (principal) and owner of the school, is showing Nicholas Nickleby how he runs the school. Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

"This is the first class in English spelling and philosophy, Nickleby," said Squeers, beckoning Nicholas to stand beside him. "We'll get up a Latin one, and hand that over to you. Now, then, where's the first boy?"

"Please, sir, he's cleaning the back parlour window," said the temporary head of the philosophical class.

"So he is, to be sure," rejoined Squeers. "We go upon the practical mode of teaching, Nickleby; the regular education system. C-l-e-a-n, clean, verb active, to make bright, to make bright, to scour. W-i-n, win, d-e-r, der, winder a casement. When the boy knows this out of the book, he goes and does it. It's just the same principle as the use of the globes. Where's the second boy?"

"Please, sir, he's weeding the garden," replied a small voice.

"To be sure," said Squeers, by no means disconcerted. "So he is. B-o-t, bot, t-i-n, tin, n-e-y, ney, bottinney, noun substantive, a knowledge of plants. When he has learned that bottinney means a knowledge of plants, he goes and knows 'em. That's our system, Nickleby; what do you think of it?"

"It's a very useful one, at any rate," answered Nicholas.

"I believe you," rejoined Squeers, not remarking the emphasis of his usher. "Third boy, what's a horse?"

"A beast, sir," replied the boy.

"So it is," said Squeers, "Ain't it, Nickleby?"

"I believe there is no doubt of that, sir," answered Nicholas.

"Of course there isn't," said Squeers. "A horse is a quadruped, and quadruped's Latin for beast, as everybody that's gone through the grammar knows, or else where's the use of having grammars at all?"

"Where, indeed!" said Nicholas abstractedly.

"As you're perfect in that," resumed Squeers, turning to the boy, "go and look after *my* horse, and rub him down well, or I'll rub you down. The rest of the class go and draw water up, till somebody tells you to leave off, for it's washing-day tomorrow, and they want the coppers filled."[5]

1. At one point in the passage, the following conversation takes place:

Squeers: "Third boy, what's a horse?"
"A beast, sir," replied the boy.
"So it is," said Squeers, "Ain't it, Nickleby?"
"I believe there is no doubt of that, sir," answered Nicholas.

What does this conversation indicate about Squeers' ability as a schoolteacher? Explain your reaction.
What other parts of the passage support your judgment of his ability as a schoolteacher? Find two examples and explain how each supports your judgment.

2. How does Squeers probably treat the boys in and out of class?
3. Explain Dickens' attitude toward schools such as the one run by Squeers. What parts of the passage help you to explain what his attitude was?
4. What technique or method does Dickens use to convey his attitude toward schools such as the one run by Squeers?

C. The following passage is from Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. During his third voyage Gulliver visits the Grand Academy at Lagado where he watches scientists at work.

The first man I saw was of a meagre aspect, with sooty hands and face, his hair and beard long, ragged, and singed in several places. His clothes, shirt, and skin were all of the same colour. He had been eight years upon a project for extracting sunbeams out of cucumbers, which were to be put into vials hermetically sealed, and let out to warm the air in raw, inclement summers. He told me he did not doubt in eight years more he should be able to supply the Governor's gardens with sunshine at a reasonable rate; but he complained that his stock was low, and entreated me to give him something as an encouragement to ingenuity, especially since this had been a very dear season for cucumbers. I made him a small present, for my lord had furnished me with money on purpose, because he knew their practice of begging from all who go to see them.

I went into another chamber, but was ready to hasten back, being almost overcome with a horrible stink. My conductor pressed me forward, conjuring me, in a whisper, to give no offence, which would be highly resented, and therefore I dare not so much as stop my nose. The projector of this cell was the most ancient student of the Academy. His face and beard were of a pale yellow; his hands and clothes daubed over with filth. When I was presented to him, he gave me a very close embrace (a compliment I could well have excused). His employment, from his first coming into the Academy, was an operation to reduce human excrement to its orginial food by separating the several parts, removing the tincture which it receives from the gall, making the odour exhale, and scumming off the saliva. He had a weekly allowance from the society of a vessel filled with human ordure about the bigness of a Bristol barrel.

I saw another at work to calcine ice into gunpowder, who likewise showed me a treatise he had written concerning the malleability of fire, which he intended to publish.

There was a man born blind, who had several apprentices in his own condition. Their employment was to mix colours for painters, which their master taught them to distinguish by feeling and smelling. It was, indeed, my misfortune to find them at that time not very perfect in their lessons, and the professor himself happened to be generally mistaken. This artist is much encouraged and esteemed by the whole fraternity.

In other apartment I was highly pleased with a projector who had found a device for ploughing the ground with hogs, to save the charges of ploughs, cattle, and labour. The method is this: In an acre of ground you bury at six inches distant and eight deep a quantity of acorns, dates, chestnuts, and other mast or vegetables whereof these animals are fondest; then you drive six hundred or more of them into the field, where in a few days they will root up the whole ground in search of their food and make it fit for sowing, at the same time manuring it with their dung. It is true upon experiment they found the charge and trouble very great, and they had little or no crop. However, it is not doubted that this invention may be capable of great improvement.[6]

1. *Gulliver's Travels* was first published in 1726. What was the basis for Swift's attitude toward the scientific research of his day? Explain your answer by specific references to the passage.

2. To what extent are his ideas applicable to scientific research in the twentieth century? Defend your conclusions.
3. What devices does Swift use to convey his feelings about that research?

D. Arthur Hugh Clough

THE LATEST DECALOGUE

Thou shalt have one God only; who
Would be at the expense of two?
No graven images may be
Worshipped, except the currency:
Swear not at all, for, for thy curse
Thine enemy is none the worse:
At church on Sunday to attend
Will serve to keep the world thy friend:
Honour thy parents; that is, all
From whom advancement may befall;
Thou shalt not kill; but need'st not strive
Officiously to keep alive:
Do not adultery commit;
Advantage rarely comes of it:
Thou shalt not steal; an empty feat,
When it's so lucrative to cheat:
Bear not false witness; let the lie
Have time on its own wings to fly:
Thou shalt not covet, but tradition
Approves all forms of competition.[7]

1. What is the target of Clough's ridicule in "The Latest Decalogue"? Explain both the target of the ridicule and the reasons for it.
2. How does Clough organize the poem to convey the ridicule?
3. To what extent does your own experience or the experience of another support the poet's ideas? Name a particular experience and explain how it supports or denies the poet's contentions.

E. John Donne

SONG

Goe, and catche a falling starre,
  Get with child a mandrake roote,
Tell me, where all past yeares are,
  Or who cleft the Divels foot,
Teach me to heare Mermaides singing,
  Or to keep off envies stinging,
    And finde
    What winde
Serves to advance an honest minde.

If thou beest borne to strange sights,
  Things invisible to see,
Ride ten thousand daies and nights,
  Till age snow white haires on thee,
Thou, when thou retorn'st, wilt tell mee
All strange wonders that befell thee,
    And sweare
    No where
Lives a woman true, and faire.

If thou findst one, let mee know,
  Such a Pilgrimage were sweet;
Yet doe not, I would not goe,
  Though at next doore wee might meet,
Though shee were true, when you met her,
And last, till you write your letter,
    Yet shee
    Will bee
False, ere I come, to two, or three.[8]

1. What do the images of the first stanza have in common?
2. Explain how the first stanza established the tone of the speaker's comments for the poem as a whole.
3. How does the paradox in the line "Things invisible to see" continue the tone of the opening stanza and intensify the central ridicule of the poem?
4. To what extent is the imagery of the final stanza appropriate as a climax to the first two stanzas? Explain your evaluation.

F. The selections you have read on this test are satires. From your previous knowledge of satire and from your reading of these selections write as clear a definition of satire as you can.

The fable and the passage from Nicholas Nickleby are both relatively simple and straightforward examples of satire. Still, some students at all grade levels will have difficulty with the later questions, especially with A4 and B4.

Although the selection from *Gulliver's Travels* is funny, the object of the satire will be obscure to many. Many have a very high regard for modern scientific research and will not see the passage as applicable in any way to modern research. In answer to the first question following this selection many readers are likely to write that Swift thought scientists dealt with silly problems. While such an answer displays some insight, a much stronger response would explain why he thought so. In discussing the devices that Swift uses, a good answer will deal with exaggeration in relation to the sort of problem the researchers work on as well as their personal condition.

Unsophisticated high school readers may take Clough's poems literally; that

is, they may understand it as a set of real recommendations. Some may even see it as an attack on the Ten Commandments. The difficulty lies in recognizing that Clough is suggesting, through irony, that the old commandments are followed only perfunctorily out of self-interest and hypocrisy. The poem by John Donne is by far the most difficult of all the items, because of its language, syntax, and its somewhat complex imagery. Most high school seniors will have difficulty with the questions listed. Many will not understand the poem at all.

A number of contemporary poems which are widely anthologized can be used in place of some of the selections above: Cummings' "pity this busy monster, manunkind," "(of Ever-Ever Land i speak," or "the Cambridge ladies who live in furnished souls"; W. H. Auden's "The Unknown Citizen"; T. S. Elliot's "The Hippopotamus"; and so forth.

In preparing the pretest, the teacher must strive to include a range of selections and questions. His selections and questions should provide insight into how well his students already comprehend aspects of the unit topic. The use of only difficult materials and questions predicts weak responses. The use of only very easy materials and questions predicts strong student responses. Neither approach reveals the entire range of student abilities.

Levels of Interpretation

English teachers tend to assume that if a student has reached the tenth grade, he is ready for *Julius Caesar,* and if he has reached the twelfth grade, he has sufficient preparation for whatever snippets of English literature the anthology has to offer. This highly generalized view of prerequisite training may be at the heart of our failure in English. If we intend our students to be able to read and appreciate certain works by the end of their training in English, we must determine what skills and concepts are prerequisite, when they can be introduced, and how they can be best developed—a task that is much easier in other academic areas than it is in English. Even the worst algebra teacher does not try to teach the solution of quadratic equations before students can solve for x. A first-grade teacher, similarly, does not give written spelling tests before her students have learned to form the letters. But English teachers frequently assign *Macbeth* to students who cannot read much beyond the fifth- or sixth-grade level. They try to teach the irony of *Huckleberry Finn* and the symbolism of *The Scarlet Letter* before their students are capable of interpreting either irony or symbolism, for themselves, in even the most obvious forms.

For the most part, however, English teachers do not decide consciously to ignore prerequisite knowledge and skill in teaching specific works. The problem simply does not occur to them—for three major reasons. First, they think of prerequisite knowledge and skill only in a very general way. For

example, tenth-grade learnings (whatever they are) must take place before eleventh-grade learnings (whatever they are). Individual teachers cannot be blamed for that, perhaps. The problem of sequencing skills and knowledge for teaching students to read literature has only recently been confronted by a few of the U.S.O.E.-sponsored English projects. Chapter 10 of this book is an attempt to define some of the skills and knowledge necessary to the successful reading of literature. The definition of these skills and their appropriate scheduling into a spiral-like curriculum that is susceptible to change by virtue of changes in the students is a task that should confront the profession for some years to come.

Second, English teachers tend to think that the stories and poems appearing in anthologies have been placed there because of some inherent appropriateness. They believe that a poem in a ninth-grade anthology is there not because the anthologist could think of nothing else, but because that poem is *right* for ninth graders. Teaching literature becomes a matter of "covering" the material in the anthology. This attitude is reinforced by a teacher's very broad statements of objectives: to inculcate an appreciation of literature, to increase competency in reading short stories, and so on. The objectives are so broadly stated that the teacher has no real means of evaluating them. Since he believes, for the most part, that the anthology represents "literature" for a given grade level, he assesses his performance on the basis of the amount of material he covers.

Third, the traditional orientation of English teachers is primarily to the content—aesthetic, intellectual, and emotional—of individual works and secondarily to the historical context in which the individual work occurs. And so it should be—in part. Unfortunately, this orientation *alone* is not very useful pedagogically. The concern for the meaning of individual works often results in the teacher's explaining those works to his students. But a teacher's explanations, no matter how thorough and precise, will not enable most students to become successful, independent readers.

Without relinquishing the values he sees in individual works, the English teacher, for instructional purposes, must begin to think of a series of works, similar in the kinds of critical or interpretative problems they present but graduated in complexity. But he must also begin to think in terms of where the student *is* as reader and what he can learn next. A literary skill, concept, or theme can be introduced in a simple, though not superficial way to very young students and reinforced and developed at succeeding grade levels. Thus, it is possible and necessary for students to deal with a problem like satire from several increasingly sophisticated points of view. The following set of statements about Aesop's "The Fox and the Grapes" suggests a paradigm of increasingly sophisticated interpretation.

1. The fox is funny (possibly grade 2 or 3).
2. The fox is funny because he changes his mind about the grapes.

3. The fox is funny because he is really only making an excuse for himself when he says the grapes are sour.
4. Aesop is making fun of the fox because the fox makes an excuse for his own incompetence.
5. Aesop ridicules people who, like the fox, etc.
6. Aesop uses symbolism and irony to satirize people who, like the fox, etc.
7. Aesop's use of symbolism and irony to satirize people who make excuses in order to ignore their failures is gemlike in its compactness and precision (possibly college).

Obviously, it is a long way from the first to the seventh statement, but each is true and none is essentially superficial. Presumably, one goal of our literature curriculum is to help each student attain the highest level of interpretation he can. Each unit of instruction, then, must begin with what the student can do and help him move as far as possible. If the teacher finds that his students cannot report what the fox does and says, he would be foolish to demand that they make statements like 5, 6, or 7. But if they can report the plot of the fable adequately, perhaps he can help them learn to interpret other fables at levels 2, 3, or even 4.

Similarly, a literary concept may be introduced in a relatively simple way and developed in an increasingly sophisticated fashion. Table 12.1 illustrates the principle.

Level I on the table, satire as humorous criticism, can be easily taught to students at the fifth- or sixth-grade level. But they need only to understand satire as *humorous criticism.* Later on, if the curriculum is articulated, they can learn to objectify the moral purpose of satire, to distinguish the two basic types of satire, and to interpret satire which uses more and more complex devices. Note, however, that the levels on the table are cumulative, that the student must know level I before he moves to level II, and so on. Thus, if the students have not had previous training in satire, and if the teacher wants his class to study Augustan satire, he would be wise to ensure that they have the requisite knowledge and skills. The levels suggested on the table can be taught in several units at various grade levels or in one unit at one grade level. (Teaching all of the concepts at one grade level obviously requires rather sophisticated students.) Most students in secondary schools can comprehend those concepts most basic to satire that are illustrated by levels I and II on the table. But even this level of comprehension is dependent on what the students can do when they enter the class.

Setting Objectives

If the students can read only the literal content of the material in the pretest, the teacher probably should not bother with satire. But if many can make some of the inferences adequately, he can probably take

TABLE 12.1. Satire Units for Various Levels of Ability

	Concept	*Objective*	*Materials*	*Contingent Abilities*
I.	Satire as humorous criticism: exaggeration, allegory.	To identify the target of criticism.	Caricatures and fables.	To cope with simple inferences.
II.	Simple ironic satire with both elements of contrast expressed; diatribe.	1. To write a definition of satire. 2. To identify the device used to make the satiric criticism. 3. To identify a satiric work according to the criteria of the definition. 4. To write a satire using one or more of the devices studied.	Selections from Juvenal or Philip Wylie; ironic poems no more difficult than "Ozymandias"; *Animal Farm.*	To cope with inferences about author's purpose, author's generalizations.
III.	Complex ironic satire with only one element of contrast expressed; short parody; two basic types of satire: diatribe and Menippean.	1. To identify diatribe and Menippean satire according to the criteria. 2. To identify and explain the devices through which satire is accomplished. 3. To identify and explain the operation of simple parody.	Satires of Juvenal, Philip Wylie, Horace; ironic monologues; selections from Dickens, Mark Twain; *The Physician in Spite of Himself;* short parodies.	To use previous learnings about satire; to analyze style; to analyze literary structures of irony, paradox, etc.
IV.	The satire of the Augustan Age: burlesque, complex parody, the mock heroic.	1. To identify the interrelationships of satire as genre with other aspects of the Augustan age. 2. To identify and analyze the satiric techniques of various writers of that age. 3. To analyze mock heroic works in terms of the underlying epic pattern.	Satires by Pope, Dryden, Swift, Fielding, Johnson, *et al.*	To use previous learnings about satire; to make and use generalizations about a literary era; knowledgeable in classic epic and some seventeenth century epic theory.

them a reasonable distance. For instance, he can set the following terminal objectives for students who answer the simpler inference questions on the pretest adequately.

1. To identify the specific target of ridicule within the work in each of the following:
   a. a simple example of formal verse satire
   b. a simple story or poem using exaggeration
   c. a simple poem or short story using satiric irony
   d. a simple fable
2. To explain how the satirist uses character and event to ridicule the target.
3. To explain how the ridicule of the target within the work applies to the real world through generalization or application.

Although these objectives are reasonably specific, the teacher should clarify them by deciding more specifically what he means by "simple" in objective 1. To be simple enough for the students concerned here, the works should not require any specialized knowledge of social institutions or customs. They should not involve complex patterns of imagery or abstract ideas. They should deal with common, recognizable follies and vices, for example, greed, stupidity, pride, gullibility. Although many of Aesop's and some of Thurber's fables qualify, *Animal Farm* is not simple in these terms. In addition, the teacher needs to specify the manner in which the student is to display his understanding: choosing the correct answer from multiple-choice questions, writing out brief answers to a series of questions, or writing a paragraph to satisfy all the objectives. The latter is the most difficult. For average eighth-grade students, short-answer questions are probably the most satisfactory.

If the students do rather well on the pretest, the teacher can require written paragraphs and increase the difficulty of the selections upon which the students will be tested. He might also include the following objectives:

4. To name the satiric devices used in the selections and to explain them by allusion to the text.
5. To write a short definition of satire, explaining its function and chief characteristics, illustrated by examples.

If the students are capable ninth graders, the teacher might make the first four objectives more complex by requiring not only that the students interpret and explain satire but that they attempt to discriminate satiric works from those that might appear to be satiric because of similar devices or similar intent. For instance, the objectives and criterion statements for a lesson on satiric irony might read as follows:

1. Given an unfamiliar ironic poem not more difficult than "Ozymandias," to write a composition explaining how the irony works in terms of the ironic contrast.

2. To explain in the composition why that poem should or should not be regarded as satire in terms of the definition of satire previously established in class.

The criterion statements for the first objectives are as follows: The student must

1. Name the parts of the ironic contrast and quote pertinent lines from the poem.
2. Explain the effects of the irony.

For the second objective, the student must

1. Answer each of the following questions:
   a. Does it make a criticism?
   b. Does it use one of the satiric devices?
   c. Does it involve some degree of humor?
2. If the answers to any of the questions are "yes," identify the criticism, the satiric device, the humorous element, or some or all of these.
3. If the answers to any of the questions are "no," explain what the work does that precludes a criticism, a satiric device, humor, or some or all of these.

Parts of these statements need further qualification. The teacher may wish to add criterion statements concerning the form of the composition, but that is the province of another section of this book.

The major emphasis for a lesson with these objectives is the interpretation of irony. Note, however, that a *correct* decision as to whether or not a poem is satiric is not required. A decision supported by appropriate arguments is the major goal.

For these students, the objectives dealing with the interpretation of types of satire are medial rather than terminal. That is, the students must learn to deal with exaggeration, irony, satiric allegory, and diatribe individually, before approaching a longer work that might use all of the devices. Fulfillment of the following terminal objectives is contingent upon them. If the students cannot perform at the level of the medial objectives satisfactorily, there is not much sense in attempting to reach the terminal objectives.

1. To write an essay interpreting the satire of a play, novel, or series of essays or short stories by a single author. (May not use material studied in class.)
   Criterion statements: the student must
   a. Decide on the basis of criteria in a definition whether or not the work is satiric.
   b. Identify the targets of satire and explain why they are satirized.
   c. Explain how plot, character, imagery, and satiric techniques provide the satire.

d. Identify the values that the author regards as good or appropriate in contrast to those he condemns.

2. To write an extended definition of satire.
   Criterion statements: the student must
   a. Explain the purpose of satire.
   b. Discriminate adequately between formal verse satire (diatribe) and Menippean satire.
   c. Explain the devices (those studied in class) used in each kind of satire.
   d. Illustrate each point with examples from material studied in the unit.
3. To write an original satire.
   Criterion statements: the student must
   a. Choose a target to satirize.
   b. Use one or more of the devices studied to implement the satire, which may be either diatribe or Menippean satire.
4. To write an original parody.
   Criterion statements: the student must
   a. Choose a style characteristic of a writer or publication, for example, *Time,* Poe, primers.
   b. Imitate the point of view, syntax, vocabulary, and so on, in retelling a well-known tale.
   c. Satirize the style imitated.

These objectives can be met by fluent ninth graders who can deal with such aspects of literature as implied relationships between characters and their environments, connotation, figurative language, elementary symbolism, and the simpler aspects of structure. The various student compositions in Chapter 13 are from above-average ninth graders with the kind of background suggested. Obviously, the same unit might be taught to very bright eighth graders or to average tenth, eleventh, or twelfth graders. The point is that the adoption of specific terminal objectives for any unit is dependent on the abilities of the students in a given class and on the nature of the literary problem involved.

Throughout the discussion of objectives, there has been an emphasis on *specificity,* an emphasis that some teachers will object to as being narrow and limiting. But when teachers fail to develop specific objectives, their instruction wanders, students become frustrated, then bored because they are confronted with too many unfamiliar tasks at once, and evaluation of teaching is impossible.

A unit of instruction should present only a few clearly defined aspects of literature that are new to the students. If the goal is independent reading, then the unit should be organized so that students learn to respond to those aspects, without the aid of a teacher, by the conclusion of the unit. At the same time, only a foolish teacher allows his objectives to restrict his students. If, once the unit is launched, the teacher discovers that his objectives are inappropriate to the students or the subject, he should revise them. Once formulated, the objectives should not confine the students in terms of interests or responses. If students develop special interests in some aspect of a unit, obviously a teacher should encourage them. And although a unit focuses on particular understanding, as reflected by certain kinds of responses, it will necessarily involve many other kinds of responses as well. For instance, although the unit on humor described in the first chapter of this book focused on various aspects of structure, it is clearly concerned with literal meanings, connotative language, evaluation, and so on. In short, the purpose of specifically stated objectives is to facilitate instruction: to make planning and evaluation easier for the teacher and to make learning less frustrating, more rewarding, and more efficient for the students.

NOTES

1. Ernest Haycox, "A Question of Blood," *Seventy Five Short Masterpieces* (New York: Bantam Books, 1961).
2. Alvin B. Kernan, *The Cankered Muse* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959).
3. For an analysis of satire, see the following: Robert C. Elliott, *The Power of Satire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960). Gilbert Highet, *The Anatomy of Satire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962). Alvin B. Kernan, *op. cit.*

   The materials cited in footnotes 4–8 can be found in many sources; these sources are suggestions:

4. Aesop, *Fables,* trans. V. S. Vernon Jones (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1926), p. 6.
5. Charles Dickens, *Nicholas Nickleby* (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), pp. 90–91.
6. Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1904, rpt. 1948), pp. 216–218.
7. Arthur Hugh Clough, "The Latest Decalogue" in *The Penguin Book of Satiric Verse,* ed. Edward Lucie-Smith (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1967), pp. 242–243.
8. John Donne, "Song" in *The Complete Poetry and Selected Prose of John Donne,* ed. Charles M. Coffin (New York: Random House, 1952), pp. 8–9.

13 Designing the Literature Unit: II. Procedures

After determining the terminal objectives, the next step in unit design is to plan procedures and select materials. In most cases, the task of writing terminal objectives will suggest, if not demand, ideas about both. The materials selected should be appropriate to both the students and the unit concepts. In general, an instructional unit should consist of four types of activity, each with a different purpose: (1) introductory activities to arouse interest and establish confidence; (2) teacher-led instruction to develop unit concepts initially; (3) student-led small-group activities to extend the development of the concepts and, at the same time, to allow the students to work somewhat independently of the teacher; (4) independent activities for the purpose of evaluating instruction. For the most part, the activities should develop in that order. The movement from teacher-led discussion to student-led small-group activities and then to independent work gradually weans the student from the teacher, putting increasingly more responsibility on the student. At the same time, it gives the students adequate practice in performing the tasks described by the terminal objectives. Thus, at the beginning of a unit, when the students are exploring a new province, they receive maximum support from the teacher. By the end of the unit, when approaches to the new territory have become more familiar to the students, they begin to approach similar, but new and more complex, problems without the aid of the teacher.

In some units, such as the one on satire in which several related concepts are developed, the progression from teacher-led activity to individual activity may take place several times as each new aspect of the concept is introduced. The following lesson on satiric irony exemplifies the process. When this lesson takes place, the students have already been introduced to satire, have formulated a simple, working definition of the term, and have examined some rather obvious examples of satire. The lesson is a microcosmic unit from introduction to evaluation. Its objectives were stated in the preceding chapter.

Teacher-Led Activities

Ideally, any unit should begin with an introduction that the students can readily understand. Although irony may seem rather complex, its basic structure is really little different from the blunt sarcastic remark that most ninth graders can deliver deftly and viciously, if not too subtly. The teacher can introduce the lesson by composing several lines that are complimentary when delivered with normal intonation but murderous when delivered with ninth-grade cunning—murderous to another ninth grader at least. Simple lines will do:

Isn't that the most beautiful dress you've ever seen?

In this school he's what's called a good teacher.

After practicing saying the lines for various effects, the class can make up some of their own. Although this activity could go on forever, only a few examples are necessary. As soon as feasible after the students have the idea, the teacher should ask what turns essentially complimentary remarks into insults. Class discussion and analysis should reveal that the important thing is the difference between the words and "how" you say them. The element of contrast is crucial. The teacher then writes "contrast" on the board and distributes copies of the following poem by Sara N. Cleghorn and asks students to read it.

The golf links lie so near the mill
  That almost every day
The laboring children can look out
  And see the men at play.[1]

Teacher: Does anyone know what golf links are?

Student 1: A golf course.

Teacher: Good. What is a mill?

Student 2: That's a place where you get wheat and corn ground up.

Student 3: It can be a factory.

Teacher: What kind of factory?

Student 4: It could be a steel mill.

Student 5: It's probably a textile mill. That's why kids are working in it.

Student 2: Why can't kids work in a steel mill?

Student 6: The poem says children. And they used to use child labor in textile mills because children were cheap.

Teacher: Good. Do you notice any contrast in this poem?

Student 2: Naw.

Others: Yes.

Teacher: What is it?

Student 7: Between the children working and the men playing.

Teacher: Why is that a contrast?

Student 7: It should be the other way around. At least that's what most people think nowadays.

Teacher: Does the poem criticize anything?

Student 5: Yes.

Teacher: What?

Student 5: The whole idea that men are playing while children are working in a mill.

Teacher: How does the poem get that across without stating it directly?

Student 8: (Tentatively) By contrasting the men and the children.

Teacher: Right, at least in part. But the poet also expects something of his reader. What does he expect?

Student 6: To feel that men should be working while children are playing.

Teacher: Good point. Is there anything else?

Student 3: The second line makes it sound as though some days the children are too busy to look out.

Teacher: Good. Is there anything humorous about the poem.

Student 2: Work is never funny. (He finally gets a laugh from the class.)

Teacher: All right. For the most part the poem is serious. Is there any element of humor at all? (Silence . . . finally . . .)

Student 5: In a way. Partly because it's over so fast. The last line really hits you.

Teacher: That's a good point. You don't laugh, do you? You smile, perhaps. Why do you smile? Because the men are playing? (No response.) How would you describe the smile? What is it like?

Student 4: It's the kind you don't really mean.

Student 9: Yeah, like when something happens you don't expect. And you say, I might have known.

Teacher: Good point. I think that describes it nicely. Can anyone add to that?

The teacher-student dialogue will not always go this smoothly. On the other hand, it will not always take so long. The most difficult part of the discussion involves the problem of humor. If the students understand that humor can have a strong admixture of bitterness, the problem disappears. Primarily it is a problem of definition. Students frequently understand and apply the word "humor" in a very narrow sense. Once they see that the word can apply to something other than farce and television situation comedy, the major hurdle is past.

The students should examine at least one additional ironic satire before the teacher introduces the word "irony." Edward Arlington Robinson's "Miniver Cheevy" is useful, in part because its contrasts are clear and its humor more obvious. Note the sixth stanza, for instance:

Miniver cursed the commonplace
And eyed a khaki suit with loathing;

He missed the medieval grace
Of iron clothing.[2]

The absurdity of any kind of grace in iron clothing is apparent to even the most obtuse students, and through the examination of such contrasts, they see the folly of Miniver's longing for the past.

When the students have had sufficient opportunity to see how contrasts work, the teacher can introduce the term "irony," explaining that the contrasts in the poems are called *ironic* contrasts. He writes both words on the board and clarifies the use of each. He then can mention other contrasts between a white card and black card, between a tall student and a short student, between a high game score and a low game score, and so on, and ask how such contrasts are different from those in the poems. The ensuing discussion should develop the idea that when a contrast is arranged to surprise or disrupt our expectations, it is an ironic contrast. When the same contrast makes use of humor and reveals folly or vice, it is called satiric irony.

The teacher can now direct the attention of the students to another poem, perhaps the following one by Siegfried Sassoon:

BASE DETAILS

If I were fierce, and bald, and short of breath,
I'd live with scarlet Majors at the Base,
And speed glum heroes up the line to death.
You'd see me with my puffy petulant face,
Guzzling and gulping in the best hotel,
Reading the Roll of Honour. "Poor young chap,"
I'd say—"I used to know his father well;
Yes, we've lost heavily in this last scrap."
And when the war is done and youth stone dead,
I'd toddle safely home and die—in bed.[3]

The students can begin the discussion by identifying the contrasts existing in the poem, some of which are obvious. Because others are subtle, the teacher may have to direct the attention of the students to particular lines. From the identification of contrasts the discussion will automatically move to the target of criticism: the tendency of war to kill youth while the older men who give the orders lead lives of comparative luxury. The next problem is whether the poem involves humor and is satiric. The teacher should ask key questions and respond to student statements with additional questions:

1 Who is the speaker in the poem?
2. What are the contrasts?
3. Are the contrasts ironic? In what way?
4. What is the target of criticism?
5. What degree of humor is in the poem?

6. What contributes the humor of the poem?
7. Should the poem be considered satiric? Why?
8. To what extent is the criticism of officers justified?

The teacher should take the class through additional poems until they begin to make the analyses very quickly. Sassoon's "They," "Does It Matter?" and Southey's "Battle of Blenheim" serve this purpose nicely. When the students display relative proficiency, the teacher can divide the class into small groups for additional, somewhat more complex work. (See Chapter 3 for procedures on grouping.) Heterogeneous groups are best here since all students will read similar material.

Group Activities

If the teacher wishes to expand the students' understanding of the satiric use of irony to the soliloquy, two poems are particularly useful. "The Admiral's Song" from Gilbert and Sullivan's *H. M. S. Pinafore* is a rather simple ironic soliloquy in which the Admiral reveals his own ineptitude. A more difficult poem that students should understand with relative ease by this point is Browning's "Soliloquy in a Spanish Cloister." These are more difficult because the ironic soliloquy requires the reader to expect certain traits or characteristics of the speakers. We expect an admiral to be intelligent and to have had experience at sea. We expect a friar to be humble and loving. If we do not expect these things, the irony of the poems may be completely lost. At any rate, the students should approach the poems with a set of key questions like those listed for "Base Details." As the students read and discuss the poems, the teacher should move from group to group. He cannot sit at his desk to grade papers. He must be available if students bog down on a problem, and he must evaluate the discussions to determine how well the students can proceed on their own.

Once a unit concept has been clearly established, it may be useful to contrast the idea with related but different ones; courage with foolhardiness, for instance. In this case the students should examine poems that are ironic but not necessarily satiric. This activitiy is important to prevent what is sometimes erroneously called overteaching, which, in this case, might result in the students' thinking that everything ironic is satiric. Actually, it is the result of underteaching. Students must learn when irony is satiric *and* when it is not. Two useful poems are Whitman's "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer" and Edward Arlington Robinson's "Richard Cory." (Other useful materials are stories by Shirley Jackson and O. Henry.) The discussion groups should approach these with a list of key questions:

1. Does the poem contain irony? If so, what?
2. What does the irony accomplish? Does it criticize anything? If so, what? If not, what does it do?

3. Is the poem satiric? If so, explain how it meets the criteria for being considered satiric? If not, explain what it does accomplish.

The key questions are phrased to permit, even encourage, disagreement, and if time permits, the teacher should take full advantage of any disagreement, that arises. If one group's analysis diverges from another's, the teacher might pit one group against the other in debate while the rest of the class serves as judge. When both sides are forced to argue their positions, they have to review everything they have learned about satire and apply it carefully to the poems and in their presentations. The disagreement can serve to reinforce the learning. As indicated before, a "correct answer" is not necessary, perhaps not even desirable. The main requirement is a decision supported by careful analysis of the texts.

Individual Activities—Evaluation

The final activity of the lesson requires the individual students to examine a poem that they have not seen before in the light of what they have learned. Actually, the teacher can require as many individual analyses as he deems useful. If he requires a written statement, he may wish the students to write about several works so that he can teach certain aspects of composition before the final evaluation activity. At any rate, this activity is important as an evaluation of how effective the teacher has been in instructing students to deal with satiric irony. The objectives of the lesson call for the student to interpret irony and to decide, according to certain criteria, whether or not the work is satiric. If the work is not satiric, the student is to decide what the work does do, what effect the irony has. All this is to be done in a brief essay illustrated by quotations from the text. A group of ninth graders were presented with Shelley's "Ozymandias" and the question that follows it below. They had forty minutes to read it and write a brief essay answering the question. Three of their responses with a brief analysis of each follow:

OZYMANDIAS

I met a traveler from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and snear of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped in these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed:
And on the pedestal these words appear:
"My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!"
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay

Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

PROBLEM

Write a brief essay explaining why this poem should or should not be considered a satire. If the poem is not a satire, explain what the poem means and how that meaning is achieved.

Response I

The poem "Ozymandias" is not a satire, but an ironic poem. Through this irony a theme is built. The theme suggests that man cannot attain perfection, and omnipotent power, and when man does attain something close to perfect power he cannot keep it.

The author set up a contrast in the last five lines of the poem. The king's sculpture reads "Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair," but nothing of his empire remains, except in ruins and barren lands. This contrast is also the irony of the poem in the fact that he was Mightiest of kings and that his kingdom lay in a "colossal wreck," also "boundless and bare." This shows further that nobody even the "King of Kings" can hold on to perfect power.

Through the poem the author expresses that no one can have perfect power, control all empires of the world, and hold these things. The author conveys his idea through an irony which contrasts the power of Ozymandias "King of Kings" to the remains of his empire and power.

Ninth-grade boy

The young man who wrote this response handled the irony of the poem well. He quotes or alludes to all the pertinent lines, interprets them in terms of the ironic contrast, and makes a statement about the theme of the poem as a whole. The only requirement he did not fulfill was to explain why the poem should not be considered a satire.

Response II

In the poem "Ozymandias" ironic contrasts are used to bring out the poem's dual targets, those people who think their own culture is the greatest, and the idea that of all the former "eternal" greatness only the sneering face is left. The two targets are interwoven, and occur simultaneously. Irony is used to develop these targets together with some details of Menippean satire.

The ironic contrast is between the former glory of the empire that would cause Ozymandias to say, "My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings: Look on my works, ye Mighty and despair!" and what is now left

of that empire, "a shattered visage . . . frown-wrinkled lip and the sneer of cold command." Even these few remnants are covered by sand and surrounded by "lone and level sands" that "stretch far away." And yet of all the greatness only a "sneer of cold command" remains for the ages to comment on.

"Ozymandias," while not strictly Menippean, does contain some elements of Menippean satire. The poem is abusive, and subjective, with a few traces of a bitter humor. The abuse seems to be directed towards Ozymandias and what he stands for, and stood for. While there is no real plot, the satirist is not speaking directly, but through the traveler. The satire also follows an indirect course, not coming out with a "factual" statement as in Juvenal, but pointing instead in the right direction. Thus the type of satire is unknown currently, but is nearer to Menippean than diatribe.

Ninth-grade girl

The young lady in writing this response dealt quite adequately with the irony of the poem and its central meaning. Her analysis of the poem as satire is less effective. Although she makes clear what the poem criticizes, she leaves her remark about "a few traces of bitter humor" unexplained. She does attempt to make a discrimination between diatribe and Menippean satire, a discrimination that her class was not yet prepared to make. The terms had been introduced only incidentally. Still, she had remembered them and makes reasonably good use of them. Her comment that "the type of satire is unknown currently" was meant to apply to her, of course, not to the world at large.

Response III

"Ozymandias," by Shelley, is satirical because it contains an ironic contrast, a target, and the essence of humor. The ironic contrast is achieved by the words of Ozymandias, "Look on my works, ye mighty and despair." These words applying to the rubble shown in the rest of the poem certainly are contrasted, and also inject a note of humor into the poem. The target of the satire is the artificial greatness of men, that is in time overcome by nature, to slump into oblivion. This is reinforced by the desert that the statue is found in. It is as far from greatness as possible, and is referred to as an "antique" land.

Ninth-grade boy

The third response is certainly the most concise of the three. One wishes that the young man had been a bit less concise, that he had explained the humor that he sees in the poem more carefully, and that he had developed the theme more completely. Still, response III meets the criteria of the terminal

objectives more completely than either of the others, and, in that sense, is the best of them.

Responses such as these help the teacher to gauge the success of the unit instruction. If the remainder of the class responses treat humor in the same way, the teacher may need to spend more time with the students in determining whether, why, and how a line conveys humor. Simply by checking the results of such a test against the terminal objectives of the unit, the teacher can determine aspects of his teaching that require revision.

The Unit As a Whole

The unit as a whole should display this progression from introduction to evaluation. One effective method of introducing the concept of satire is through the use of cartoons. The teacher can collect satiric cartoons dealing with various topics: the President, pollution, political radicals, the schools, and so on. If he can obtain copies of the etchings of Hogarth, Rowlandson, and Daumier, the cartoons of Goya, and some of the paintings of Hieronymus Bosch and Pieter Brueghel, students may be interested in seeing them. In many, the satire will be as clear as the satire of some of the modern cartoons. There are two main advantages in introducing satire through cartoons. First, they attract immediate interest. Second, they can help the student understand not only the major goals and characteristics of satire but some of the specific techniques. (Similarly, the concepts of other units may be introduced through the use of cartoons or other popular media.)

Once students have examined and discussed several cartoons, the teacher can introduce the term "satire." As the results of the pretest indicate, some students may already be familiar with the term. If the teacher explains that the cartoons the class has examined are examples of satire, the students can begin to formulate a working definition of satire that includes a statement about the function of humor. Note that new vocabulary should be introduced after students have experience to which they can attach the terms.

The lessons following the introduction should each deal with a separate unit concept, beginning with those that are easiest to understand. The first lesson following the introduction to satire might be a brief examination of diatribe from Juvenal's *Satires* and from Philip Wylie's *Generation of Vipers*. The students can read selections of each, perhaps sections concerned with the same follies: women's make-up, education, and so on. The discussion that follows should deal with questions such as these:

1. Who is speaking?
2. What is satirized?
3. What techniques does the author use to accomplish the satire?

Ensuing lessons can take up exaggeration and allegory as the lesson described previously takes up irony. In contrast to exaggeration, it might be useful to introduce examples of understatement. Dickens uses both deftly. Aesop, La Fontaine, Thurber, John Gay, and Ivan Krilof are good sources of satiric fables.[4]

By the time the students have read and studied examples of diatribe, exaggeration, irony, and fables, their original definition of satire will have been expanded considerably. They may then learn to discriminate between the two major types of satire: diatribe, the satire of direct attack; and Menippean satire, the satire of indirect attack. The teacher can begin the lesson by asking the students to compare the passages from Juvenal and Philip Wylie to the satires they read later and explain how they differ in the method of attack. The students should be able to list several significant differences. The teacher should accept each suggestion and ask questions that require the class to examine the suggestion against the various works studied. Following the discussions, the students can examine brief examples of each type of satire as a check on their list of differences. There are, for example, a number of short, epigrammatic pieces by Swift, Pope, and others that are essentially the satire of direct attack.

Students Evaluate Works

Although a special lesson can focus on problems of evaluation, to a certain degree each of the lessons beyond the introductory ones should include questions that force the students to evaluate both the validity and the effectiveness of the works being studied. For instance, the following questions would be appropriate in the satire unit: (1) Does the target of the satire deserve the criticism it receives? (2) How effective is the satire? As mentioned before, the lesson dealing with diatribe and exaggeration early in the unit might make use of various selections attacking similar targets such as women's use of make-up. Students are always amazed to see that satirists as widely separated in time, space, and culture as Juvenal, Oliver Goldsmith, and Philip Wylie are concerned with similar problems. Passages in Juvenal's Sixth Satire,[5] Goldsmith's Letter 3 in *Letters from a Citizen of the World*,[6] and in Wylie's *Generation of Vipers*[7] all attack female vanity.

After reading the selections, identifying the targets of the satire, and discussing the techniques involved, the students can turn to evaluative questions: Which satire is the most convincing? What makes them convincing or unconvincing? To what extent do the satirists use techniques effectively? To what extent is the criticism valid? Obviously, if the students are to consider the problems of effectiveness and validity seriously, they must have criteria on which to base their judgments. But the consideration of the questions will lead to the formulation of criteria. The teacher, however, must continually pose

the question Why? Why is the satire effective? Why is it ineffective? Why is it valid or invalid?

The examination of validity must follow a discussion of the work's theme and an application of its ideas to real life. For instance, with Sassoon's "Base Details" students should discuss the following questions: What is the central idea of the poem? What events in real life parallel those in the poem? To what extent, then, is the criticism offered by the poem valid? Questions such as these should give rise to the type of discussion that makes literature meaningful.

Artistic merit does not and should not depend totally upon the validity of the value system. Certainly no one should argue that Buddhist painting has little artistic merit because he does not hold the values that Buddhist painting reflects. The same is true of literature. Most Americans do not desire a monarchical form of government, nor do they believe in the divine right of kings, but none condemns Shakespeare's history plays for that reason. Thus, students must consider validity in two contexts: that of the real world as they see it, and that of the literary work as its own world. Examined in this way, questions of validity become congruent with those of effectiveness and artistic merit. Students can evaluate the artistic merit of a satire, or any literary work, by assessing the appropriateness, consistency, and efficiency of its parts as they work together to produce the total effect.

The teacher must remember how little influence is necessary for the student to make the judgments he thinks the teacher desires. For both types of evaluation the student should have an opportunity to make his own evaluations and defend them. For a further discussion of evaluation in the classroom, see Chapter 10.

The importance of evaluation in any unit, especially in satire, cannot be overemphasized. It is not enough to interpret, to comprehend the meaning. The students will want to debate questions of effectiveness and validity. If the teacher fails to allow time for such discussion, if he fails to promote it, the students are likely to view literature merely as a puzzle that is useless once the meaning is determined. Certainly, a student's evaluations will be subjective, but whose are not? His evaluations, as well as those of the most sophisticated critic, can be supported by textual analysis, personal reaction, and by comparison to the student's value system and to reality as he sees it.

Study of a Major Work

The lessons to this point serve as a preparation for the reading of a major work, perhaps *Huckleberry Finn, Pudd'nhead Wilson,* Leonard Wibberly's *The Mouse That Roared,* Orwell's *Animal Farm,* or Swift's *Gulliver's Travels.* The selection of the major works depends to a certain degree on the ability of the class. The ninth graders whose writing appears in this chapter studied both *Animal Farm* and *Huckleberry Finn.*

The presentation of a longer work offers special problems simply because of length. First, there is a temptation to dwell on every page of a novel as though each page were a separate lyric poem. Second, there is a temptation to assign a set number of pages per night and to discuss that number of pages for a class period whether or not the importance of the pages warrants more or less discussion. The result is that reading and discussion may take many days longer than necessary so that the instruction becomes tedious and boring. Fortunately, such techniques are not necessary.

In the first place, the teacher should probably assign the whole novel at once, suggesting a date by which the students should have completed their reading and intermediate dates as well, by which time they should have completed a certain minimum number of chapters. Since everything in the unit so far has led to the reading of this major text, the students are likely to be interested in the problem that the work presents and knowledgeable in the techniques the writer uses. If they are neither interested nor knowledgeable, then either the instruction up to this point has failed rather miserably or it has been inappropriate as preparation for reading the particular book.

Second, the teacher should decide on the key scenes and episodes in order to focus class discussion on them, rather than proceeding page by page. For instance, if the novel for study is *Huckleberry Finn,* the teacher might divide the novel into the following sections for reading and discussion: Chapters 1 and 2, one day for introduction; Chapters 3 through 15, two days of discussion on the major characters and the river; Chapters 16 through 31, two days on the satire of society; Chapters 2, 6, 15, 16, 23, and 31, one day on Huck's growth as an individual; Chapters 32 through 43, two days on the denouncement and satire of society. An additional two days might be reserved for discussing the novel as a whole or for additional time to treat one or more of the divisions suggested above. This plan holds class time spent on the novel to two weeks.

As mentioned above, the first two chapters introduce the book on the first day. They are short enough for the students to read quickly in class, and they illustrate themes, techniques, and targets of satire that run throughout the novel. By asking appropriate questions about the chapters, the teacher can introduce concepts that are basic to the book's satire: Huck as an outsider viewing the mores of a society he cannot completely comprehend; the hypocrisy of the society illustrated by the widow's taking snuff while refusing to let Huck smoke; the blind obedience to custom and tradition; Miss Watson's religion of fear; and Tom's role in the novel as a foil for Huck. If Huck is to be "civilized," he too must learn hypocrisy, custom, and the religion of fear; he must learn not to question what society has established; he must learn to follow the dictates of tradition as blindly as Tom follows the fictional robbers' code in Chapter 2. Tom, the widow, and Miss Watson have been so thoroughly indoctrinated into the value patterns of their society that they cannot see clearly. Huck, on the other hand, has not been "civilized." He can ex-

amine the values of the society objectively, but when his conclusions are negative, he attributes it to his being "so ignorant, and so kind of low-down and ornery." In short, most of the ideas and targets of satire that are central to the novel are introduced embryonically in the opening two chapters. The following key questions might be used for the introductory discussion of the novel.

1. What are the widow and Miss Watson planning to do to Huck?
2. In what ways do they plan to change Huck?
3. How does Huck feel about the widow's saying grace and taking snuff? Is Huck justified in feeling this way?
4. What is the basis for the beliefs and customs of Miss Watson and the widow?
5. What is the basis for Tom's decisions about the organization and activities of the robber band?
6. What is Tom's greatest concern in directing the activities of the robber band? (Is he more concerned with procedures or with attaining certain goals?)
7. Does Tom regard himself as civilized? Why? Does he regard Huck as civilized? Why?
8. In what way is Tom's behavior with the robber band similar to the behavior of the widow and Miss Watson? (Refer to the answer to question 4 if necessary.)
9. In what way is Huck different from all three in this respect?
10. Is Huck really ignorant? In what sense is he ignorant? In what sense is his ignorance an advantage unavailable to Tom, the widow, or Miss Watson?
11. What are the targets of Twain's satire in these two chapters?

Since most unit activities should have served as a preparation for understanding the special problems of meaning in the novel, a study guide can pose only the central questions and problems. The teacher should, however, have some simpler questions in reserve to use when the students have difficulty dealing with the central problems. These questions should be used to lead to a fuller comprehension of the study guide questions. The position of a work in the unit makes a difference. If it appears early in the unit, while the unit concepts are being developed initially, study guides should proceed from the simplest questions to the most difficult. Note that discussion questions for Chapters 1 and 2 of *Huckleberry Finn* move from literal questions to complex inference questions. The simple ones, whether literal or inferential, should bring the students' attention to those aspects of the work that must be considered in order to answer the more difficult questions. Their function, in short, is to help the student comprehend the details of the central unit problems. The study guides for a work coming late in the unit, after the concepts have been established and developed, can use questions that focus only on the major

problems. For slower students, however, some of the simpler questions may be necessary even then. The following study guide for *Huckleberry Finn* focuses on major problems. Most of the questions lead to an examination of satire in the novel, but some deal with important, related problems such as Huck's growth as an individual.

CHAPTERS 4–15

Huck, Pap, Jim, and the River.

1. What advantage does Mark Twain have in telling the story from Huck's point of view? What advantages does Huck's dialect have over more formal speech patterns?
2. In what ways is Huck like his father? In what ways is he different?
3. In view of Pap's behavior both as a father and a citizen, what does his tirade against the free "nigger" suggest about him? What does the tirade satirize? The "nigger," Pap, or both? What form of satire is it?
4. What is the function of the scene aboard the *Walter Scott?* How does it contribute to Huck's education? What does it satirize?
5. What passages in these chapters best characterize Huck's attitude toward Jim?
6. What are Jim's essential characteristics? Which passages best reveal them?
7. What importance does the river have to Huck? What importance does it have for the novel as a whole? A good deal of the action takes place on the river. With what does Mark Twain contrast the river? For what purpose?

CHAPTERS 16–31

Society.

1. What values, vices, and follies of the society are satirized in the following incidents and episodes?
   a. Huck's stay with the Grangerfords—the interior decoration of the Grangerford home with its mementos of the deceased daughter, the church attendance, Huck's comment on the pigs in church, the feud.
   b. the Sherburn-Boggs incident.
   c. the King and the Duke—the camp meeting and the theatrical performances.
2. At the close of Chapter 24, Huck says, "It was enough to make a body ashamed of the human race." To what does his comment refer? In what sense do Huck's reasons for being ashamed multiply in Chapters 25 and 26?
3. What is the chief characteristic of the crimes perpetrated by the King and the Duke? What do their crimes reveal about their victims?

4. What do the crimes of the King and the Duke have in common with the follies and foolishness revealed in Miss Watson, the widow, the Grangerfords, and Tom? What does Twain satirize in relation to all of them?

CHAPTERS 2, 6, 15, 16, 23 AND 31

The Character of Huckleberry Finn.

1. In Chapter 2 Tom tricks Jim. In Chapter 15 Huck tricks him. Compare Huck's attitude toward the two tricks. What does the difference in attitude reflect about the change in Huck?
2. In Chapter 16 Jim thinks about his approaching freedom and considers stealing his two children from the man who owns them. Huck begins to feel guilty about helping Jim escape and remarks, "Thinks I, this is what comes of my not thinking. Here was this nigger, which I had as good as helped to run away, coming right out flat-footed and saying he would steal his children. . . ." What is the irony of Huck's remark? What does it satirize?
3. In the same chapter Huck considers turning Jim over to the authorities, but he cannot bring himself to do it. Between what two sets of values is Huck caught? How are these sets of values similar to the "two providences" mentioned at the beginning of Chapter 2? What does the simultaneous existence of the two sets of values indicate about the society?
4. In Chapter 23 Huck and Jim discuss the nature of kings. Their discussion is followed immediately by Jim's story of his deaf daughter. What does this story reveal about Jim? What does the juxtaposition of the two suggest about kings? About slaves? In view of this, why is it ironic that Jim is a slave?
5. Toward the end of Chapter 23 Huck remarks that he believes Jim "cared just as much for his people as white folks does for ther'n. It don't seem natural, but I reckon it's so." What changes does this remark reveal in Huck? Why is the remark ironic? What does it suggest about the society?
6. In Chapter 31 Huck fights with his conscience again. What is a conscience? How does it develop? What does Huck's conscience represent? What does his final decision represent? What does Huck's decision reveal about the changes he has undergrone as a person since the beginning of the book? What is the target of Twain's satire in this scene?
7. Trace the development of Huck's personality to the end of Chapter 31 in light of his relationship to Jim and his view of the society.

CHAPTERS 32–43

1. What is Huck's plan to steal Jim? What is Tom's plan? What differences in the two boys do the plans reflect? Which plan is better? Why?
2. In what ways is Tom a representative of society as reflected by his reason for helping Jim escape and by his plan for doing it?

3. What does the fact that Tom knew Jim had been freed before he put his plan into action reveal about Tom's feelings for other people? What was the purpose of his gift of forty dollars to Jim? What does the money reveal about Tom's view of human dignity? What does the incident satirize?
4. What differences between Huck and Tom do the final eleven chapters reveal? In terms of their review of reality, society, and human dignity? How do these differences serve Mark Twain's purposes as a satirist?
5. Could Mark Twain have made Tom the hero of the book? Explain your answer.
6. Some criticis have argued that the final eleven chapters mar the artistic unity of the book because they are farcical and unrelated to the first thirty-one chapters. How would you defend or attack this judgment?

The teacher need not lead the discussion on each of the focal points. He can and should lead the discussion of Chapters 1 and 2, and thereafter he should lead discussions of focal points that illustrate problems arising for the first time. For instance, the first division after the introduction focuses in part on personality: Huck, Tom, Pap, Jim. Thereafter, discussions of character might profitably take place in small-group sessions. The students can discuss the problems of character that arise in Chapter 23 when Huck and Jim discuss royalty and when Jim tells his story of his deaf daughter. However, when the discussion shifts to the structure of the chapter, the problem of why the two conversations are juxtaposed, the teacher might take over or at least lead a class discussion after the student groups have dealt with the problem. Again, the teacher should lead the discussion that focuses on Huck's first feelings of guilt as he reflects on the evils of helping Jim escape in Chapter 16. But students working in small groups can examine the similar scene in Chapter 31 in which Huck makes his decision to help Jim and go to hell. Although the irony of the scene is very complex, the study of irony early in the unit and the earlier discussion of Huck's qualms as they reflect on society should enable the students to handle the scene efficiently. Similarly, if the students discuss the purpose of the final eleven chapters and attempt to evaluate them in terms of the artistic design of the whole book, they should have examined the effects of the juxtaposition of scenes and chapters earlier in the book, probably with the help of the teacher.

In the whole-class discussion following the small-group discussions, two or more groups may find themselves diametrically opposed. Such a situation is invaluable because the teacher or students can then organize a debate, with each of two or more groups presenting its point of view, while the remainder of the class acts as arbiter. Each group should present its conclusions, explain the textual evidence upon which the conclusions are based, and prepare to examine the conclusions and evidence of the other groups. The class should be permitted to ask questions of the groups after their presentations. What is

important is the close examination of the text that will precede and follow the presentation of conclusions.

Finally, the teacher can reserve a group of important scenes for students to examine independently. For example, the Boggs-Sherburn incident, the dramatic productions of the King and the Duke, the events aboard the *Walter Scott,* and Huck's reaction to the tarring and feathering of the King and Duke are all appropriate for comment in a classroom test or outside essay situation. The students should explain the significance of the scene in itself and as it relates to the novel as a whole.

The procedures suggested here are useful in approaching any longer work: careful teacher-led study of the opening scenes; selection and arrangement of focal points throughout the work for discussion; small-group discussion of appropriate problems; individual analyses of scenes, events, images, and so on, after the discussion of similar problems by the class or by small groups. A careful study of the first thirty-two lines of the *Odyssey,* for instance, reveals the essential plight of Odysseus, the main plot of the story, and a good deal about his character. Similarly, the first short chapter of *The Pearl* presents the story's main characters, the event that instigates the action (the scorpion stings Coyotito), and the contrast beween the idyllic countryside and the evil of the city. Richard's opening speech in Shakespeare's *Richard III* and the opening scenes of *Macbeth* present, in microcosm, the major characters and the themes that will be developed later. Each work is divisible into sections that extend and develop the opening section or that introduce additional complications. The teacher can select various focal points for discussion and reserve some for individual analysis. Thus, the study of even a single long work can usefully take the unit shape: (1) introducing and establishing major concepts in a discussion led by the teacher; (2) small-group discussion of certain portions of the work focusing on concepts already developed; and finally (3) individual analysis and interpretation.

Individualized Reading

The final phase of the unit, individualized reading, has two separate functions: first, to allow the students to pursue reading that is of special interest to them and at or near their own level of comprehension; and second, to provide a means of evaluation for the unit as a whole. Near the conclusion of the unit, the teacher should distribute a list of books related to the unit topic. If possible, he should comment briefly on the various titles to note their relative difficulty and to suggest those which might be of particular interest. It is useful to take the class to the school library for this assignment, especially if the librarian will put the books on a special shelf so that the students can look them over and withdraw the ones they prefer on the same day. When the list of books is long, the teacher might wish to comment on the titles on one day and take the class to the library on the next.

The bibliography should provide a fairly wide range of satirical books. The weaker students should be directed to such titles as *The Mouse That Roared, The Mouse on the Moon, Planet of the Apes, The Prince and The Pauper, H.M.S. Pinafore, Fail-Safe,* or *The Decline and Fall of Practically Everybody.* The more advanced students might deal with Austen, Dickens, Swift, or Thackeray. The students should have as much leeway as possible in selecting what they want to read. A student will read a book that is too difficult for him if he is interested enough in it, and in any case, it is not necessary that every student comprehend every aspect of the book he selects. As long as the student can determine the targets of the satire and how the satire works, the teacher need not demand complete explication of every passage. Robert Southey once said, "What blockheads are those wise persons, who think it necessary that a child should understand everything it reads." Obviously, a student reading a book on his own may overlook the significance of certain details, but then even sophisticated adult readers do that. On the other hand, the students should understand the major aspects of the unit topic as they are reflected in the books they have chosen for individual reading and have enough understanding of details to support their interpretations.

Although the more he knows about the books the better, a teacher should not restrict an outside reading list simply because he has not read all the titles personally. He knows the unit and can judge a student's comprehension of a book by his application of the unit concepts to the book. A reading list can be compiled by a group of teachers working together and with the aid of the school librarian, who is frequently a very helpful source of information about books. As a matter of fact, if the teacher explains the concepts and purposes of a unit to the librarian, she can sometimes produce a long list of appropriate titles that are available in the school library. She can also recommend sources of reviews and/or summaries of all sorts of books that can be invaluable in composing the lists. Most teachers have no compunctions about not being familiar with all the books students read for conventional book reports. There is even less reason for concern in this situation because the student cannot use some other student's report on a book, simply because the unit plus the student-teacher conferences provide a special focus through which to view the book.

Student-teacher conferences on outside reading are valuable for three reasons. First, while the teacher confers with individual students, the rest of the class can read their books. Devoting in-class time to outside reading is a solid demonstration that the teacher regards that work as important. Second, by the point in the unit at which the outside reading is beginning, some of the major unit compositions may be in progress. The conference session can provide time for working on compositions in class. Third, the conference itself is important. The teacher ought to know by this time how well each student has progressed in the unit. During the conference, therefore, he can help the student focus on the particular unit problems that are appropriate to his level

of sophistication. The teacher can also determine whether or not the student has chosen a book suitable to his reading skill and interest. Assuming that the teacher knows his students' abilities, each conference need last only five or six minutes and should proceed as follows: The teacher situates himself at a vantage point that ensures both a degree of privacy and a view of the class. As each student comes to speak with the teacher, he brings his book. The teacher checks the title and asks a series of questions:

1. What is the book about?
2. Do you think it is a satire?
3. What does it satirize?
4. What evidence leads you to think the book is satiric?
5. (If the student is hazy in answering 2, 3, and 4) Are there any scenes or incidents that puzzle you?
6. (If there are) Tell me about the scene. (Then examine the scene or incident briefly with the student. Ask a few appropriate questions.)
7. Do you prefer to continue reading this book, or would you rather find another?
8. Do you have any questions about the book?

In view of the answers to these questions, the teacher can evaluate the student's responses to the book and, by asking a few questions, suggest directions for the student to take in his reading.

Even with a class of forty students, the teacher should be able to complete individual conferences in five or six days. If several students are reading the same book, the teacher can confer with two or more of them at a time, thus speeding up the conferences. At any rate, by the time the conferences have been completed, most students will be far along in their reading, and many will have finished.

The report that the student writes on his individual reading not only takes the place of the traditional book report but is usually far more interesting to read. As a result of the unit, the student has a point of view and can observe evidence and draw inferences more intelligently. He also has a stronger base for evaluation because in the course of the unit he has read other works, similar in some ways, against which he can evaluate his individual reading. Most important, the student's essay will provide a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the unit as a whole.

Sometimes, the teacher may wish to use other methods of evaluation. For instance, a less sophisticated unit on satire than the one described here might be evaluated through a test on a group of short selections that are similar to, but more difficult than, those on the pretest. Or the teacher may ask the students to read three or four poems and short stories in preparation for an essay test in class. Occasionally a unit will require a special project such as the investigation and comparison of several works by one author. In each case, however, the students work with material they have not previously studied. In

short, what the students have learned *to do* in the course of a unit becomes an important measure of the unit's success.

Differentiating Assignments

This unit structure allows, and in a sense demands, the differentiation of assignments. We have already described one assignment that allows each student to choose a book from a list distributed by the teacher. Obviously, this technique differentiates assignments. But ordinarily, it may be necessary or useful to differentiate at other points in the unit as well. When the teacher is leading the class activity in order to develop a concept, all students need to read the same material. But after the initial development of concepts when students are working in small groups or individually, it is both useful and desirable to differentiate assignments. For instance, while the teacher begins the lesson on satiric fables with a series of three or four very simple ones, he might select fables of varying degrees of complexity for analysis by small groups and individuals. Aesop's fables are almost uniformly simple, some of Thurber's are more sophisticated, and the eighteenth-century fables by John Gay and Christopher Smart are the most complex, at least in terms of vocabulary and syntax. Very bright students might be assigned to work with a translation of Chaucer's "Nuns' Priest's Tale," the story of Chanticleer and Pertelote. Similarly for purposes of evaluation, the slower students might be asked to interpret the irony of "The Battle of Blenheim" instead of "Ozymandias," provided that it has not been used earlier for instruction.

Additionally, it is frequently necessary to differentiate the assignment of major works. Many students will find *Huckleberry Finn* boring. Students who do not read ordinary language fluently cannot be expected to read unfamiliar dialects fluently. Listen to Jim: "I crope out all a-tremblin', en crope aroun' en open de do' easy en slow, en poke my head in behine de chile, sof' en still, en all uv a sudden I says *pow!*" A great many unusual words there. Besides such problems at the literal level, the irony and structural aspects of the book are complex. Thus, while one group studies *Huckleberry Finn,* it might be useful for others to read an easier novel such as Leonard Wibberly's *The Mouse That Roared.* It is possible for a teacher to guide as many as three or four groups reading different major works, but careful planning is necessary. While one group meets with the teacher for the introductory discussion of the opening portion of its novel (see previous discussion), the other groups of ten or more can read their opening sections or work on composition assignments. Later, discussions with five or six students can take place around the teacher's desk. For the most part, however, the discussions can take place in small groups with only the occasional assistance of the teacher. Naturally, this procedure requires study guides for each group involved. But once the guides for each group are written, the teacher need only revise them as revision proves

useful. When a variety of materials is not available, it is possible to differentiate assignments by assigning various questions to various groups of students as described in Chapter 3.

Selection of Materials

Selections used to introduce concepts should be relatively free of problems that the students have not learned to handle previously. If the teacher can think of no other vehicle for the introduction of imagery than *King Lear,* he should probably abandon the idea of teaching imagery. Fortunately, in most of the conceptual areas of literature there is a wealth of simple material available. Imagery and symbolism can be introduced through the use of fables and simple poetry. Concepts of character, plot, and environment can be introduced through animal stories. The idea of structure can be examined through the study of relatively simple but powerful poetic forms such as haiku and blues. Genre can be studied through the analysis of detective stories and science fiction. Most important literary themes, motifs, and archetypes abound in myth, fairy tales, and in quality literature written expressly for adolescents. For instance, the theme of alienation in Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* also appears in a more obvious form in Paul Gallico's *Snow Goose.* On the other hand, some genres present special difficulty. To study either tragedy or epic, one must read tragedies or epics. But it is possible to prepare students for tragedy and epic. Many of the myths of Greek heroes (for example, Jason, Perseus, Theseus) display the themes, motifs, and to some degree the plot structure that will appear in the great epics from *Gilgamesh* to *The Odyssey* to *Paradise Lost.* Others display the outlines of the tragic plot: the pride of Bellerophon and his fall from Pegasus, and the like.

That the materials exist is important; that they are worth reading in themselves by particular students at a particular time is equally important. If we ask poor readers to fight through *The Return of the Native,* they are likely to have little reward for their efforts despite whatever critical and pedagogical stature it may have. Although *Johnny Tremain* and *The Bronze Bow* are not such great historical fiction as *A Tale of Two Cities* or *Henry Esmond,* they undoubtedly will offer a great deal more to certain students at certain points in their development than will novels by Dickens or Thackeray.

Writing

Any literature unit should contain a wide variety of writing experiences for the student, and each of them can be an integral part of the unit. For example, composition is an important phase of the unit on satire, and each composition lesson or activity arises directly out of the study of

satire. As the objectives indicate, the unit involves four major writing assignments: a definition of satire, an analysis of a satiric work, an original satire, and a parody.

1. DEFINITION The work on definition begins with the first lesson of the unit. After the students have examined and discussed the cartoons, the teacher asks them to compose a working definition. Then, using a chalkboard or an overhead projector, the teacher writes out a working definition based on the contributions of the class. It is extremely useful for the students to have previously studied and written genus-specie definitions. The first attempt at the definition may be clumsy, and it certainly will be incomplete. One ninth-grade class composed the following: "Satire is a form of literature which ridicules something by the use of humor. The humor may be subtle or obvious, gentle or violent." The students who composed this were not aware of how appropriate their use of the word *form* was. They used it as a synonym of *kind,* but as the unit progressed they came to understand *form* in a more technical sense.

After each lesson on an aspect of satire, the students add to and revise the definition in terms of what they have learned in that lesson. Note-taking is important to this process, and the teacher should exercise care to give the students the time to take notes. In inductive teaching, there is a tendency for the teacher to move on to the next lesson as soon as students reach the appropriate conclusions. But he must take the time to review the lesson, consolidate what the students have learned, and provide note-taking time.

One important aspect of the extended definition is the inclusion and discussion of examples for illustrative purposes. Students frequently do not know how to incorporate or refer to examples smoothly. The result is either no example or a clumsy statement: "Irony is used as a satiric device. This is shown in 'Base Details.' " The teacher can use models written by other students to illustrate better techniques.

The major problem for writing the definition of satire, of course, is organization. If the students have already studied patterns of organization, there will be no problem. If they have not, the teacher must introduce appropriate models. A brief class discussion of possibilities for organization is helpful. One group of ninth graders suggested the following pattern:

a. Brief statement about the nature of satire.
b. Distinction of two kinds of satire: diatribe and Menippean satire.
c. Discussion of each type with examples.

The student who wrote the composition below departed from this suggested approach somewhat but met all the criteria stated with the second objective for the unit—to write an extended definition of satire.

Criterion statements: the student must
a. Explain the purpose of satire.

b. Discriminate adequately between formal verse satire (diatribe) and Menippean satire.
c. Explain the devices (those studied in class) used in each kind of satire.
d. Illustrate each point with examples from materials studied in the unit.

THE NATURE OF SATIRE*

The division of literature which, in its essence, ridicules and criticizes man and his works or some other target is known as satire. Satire can be classified into two main groups, Diatribe and Menippean. Both types involve the use of such elements as humor, sarcasm, exaggeration and connotation, but these elements are used in different degrees in the two types.

The attacking of a target by ridicule, irony, or some other form of criticism appears to be the main purpose of satire. However, the opinion of the author as to what is good or right is usually conveyed, and often the author may suggest a solution to the problem. The opinions and suggested solutions may not be very obvious in Menippean satire, but in some diatribe, such as Juvenal's Satire VI, one can easily see the author's opinion, and from this a solution to the problem may be conveyed.

Diatribe is related in the first person, is usually subjective, has no plot, and makes use of specific detail, connotation, humor, sarcasm, exaggeration, harshness and abusiveness. These elements can be observed in Juvenal's Satire VI, which is told in the first person. Although there is no real plot, Juvenal's opinion criticizing women's use of cosmetics is conveyed. He sharply exaggerates with connotative phrases the various uses of make-up and ornamentation.

. . . she rings her neck with emeralds
and hangs to her ears gold links
. . . her face is foul, each contour
Grotesquely puffed by beauty packs,
and she reeks and drips
With thick Poppaean creams . . .

Humor is achieved through the greatly exaggerated passages in the satire. The constant harsh and abusive treatment of women and their use of make-up leads to the final sarcastic statement, "Questionable? What shall we call it—a face or an ulcer?"

Menippean satire makes use of some elements which are found in Diatribe, such as connotation, exaggeration, humor, and detail, but there are some differences. Unlike Diatribe, Menippean satire has a plot and is not told in the first person, but makes use of an omniscient author. Since the satire has a plot and is often in the form of a story, like *Nicholas Nickleby,* the opinion of the author may not be obvious on the literal level. In *Nicholas Nickleby,* Dickens uses exaggeration and connotation to describe the treatment of a group of boys in a boarding school, but the credibility of the situation is not as distorted as in Juvenal's works. Menippean satire may make use of a bitter; or, as in *Nickleby,* a pathetic sort of humor which is directed at Squeers, the man who is in charge of the school.

Another element of Menippean satire is irony. In satires like this, there is an ironic twist at the end of the selection. This is true of *Animal Farm.* In the beginning, the pigs on the farm denounce men, and vow never to act like humans. As the story progresses, the pigs gradually take on more and more human characteristics—wearing clothes, walking on two legs, living in houses, and drinking alcoholic beverages. In the end, it is almost impossible to distinguish the pigs from the men. Irony is achieved in "Ozymandias" in the fact that something great and outstanding is eventually forgotten. It criticizes man's vain attitude that he will never be forgotten, that people will forever remember him and his so-called outstanding accomplishments:

'My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings.
Look upon my words, ye Mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

Another type of Menippean satire is that which is found in fables. These fables use symbolism or allegory with the basic Menippean elements. The fables sometimes make use of irony and often contain a moral. Animals are often used in fables. This is true of *Animal Farm,* where the animals are given human characteristics in order to satirize some human institution.

Doth Diatribe and Menippean satire use the techniques of exaggeration along with specific examples to make their satires effective. Both types use highly connotative and precise words. The main difference in the structure of the two types of satire is the person who is speaking. In Juvenal the satirist speaks for himself, while in *Nicholas Nickleby,* Dickens makes use of an omniscient author whose criticism evolves from the plot and the characters. Satire, while it seems to be only ridiculing a target, can be subjective and suggest solutions to given situations. This is achieved through two main divisions of satire, Diatribe and Menippean. Both have many similar elements, but use them in different ways, creating the two different satirical structures.

Ninth-grade girl

* This and the compositions that follow in this chapter were revised and polished by their authors for inclusion in class or school publications.

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2. ANALYSIS Throughout a given unit students write interpretations of literary works. And although the written analysis of literature is customary in nearly every curriculum, unknowing teachers throw up their hands at the word "analysis." They are afraid of what the word connotes to them. They recall uncomfortable experiences in college when they were asked to write analyses, and not knowing how to do it or what the professor wanted, they

found themselves frustrated, demoralized, and losing interest in the course. Even the most traditional and the most modern teachers require analyses of their students constantly: book reports, responses to poems, short-answer tests, précis writing, and the like. All these require analysis at some level of sophistication.

Analysis need not be a frightening term. One function of any unit is to enable the students to interpret (analyze) literature at a more sophisticated level. If the unit begins with what students can already do, introduces concepts in their simplest form, and gradually increases in complexity, the students will be neither bored nor frustrated by the work. Further, they will know what the teacher expects because the whole unit is directed toward helping the student learn to interpret.

Just as the unit develops from simple to complex concepts, the first writing task is relatively simple whereas the final ones are more complex. Thus, the analyses required early in the unit will be concerned with a short example of diatribe, perhaps a selection from Juvenal or the poem by Swift mentioned earlier. As the lessons deal with more complex concepts, the composition problem becomes more complex. By the end of the unit, the student should be able to write an analysis of a longer work in terms of the criterion statements for the first objective of the unit—to write an essay interpreting the satire of a play, novel, or series of essays or short stories by a single author. (May not use material studied in class.)

Criterion statements: the student must

a. Decide on the basis of criteria in a definition whether or not the work is satiric.
b. Identify the targets of satire and explain why they are satirized.
c. Explain how plot, character, imagery, and satiric techniques provide the satire.
d. Identify the values that the author regards as good or appropriate in contrast to those he condemns.

The composition that follows fulfills all the criterion statements. The young lady decides that the work is a satire, designates the targets of criticism, explains briefly how the satire works, and identifies the values that the author regards as better—all in a smoothly written composition. The only thing that one might ask is that she explain the workings of the satire more fully. But even the way it stands, the composition is more than adequate.

PRIDE AND PREJUDICE: A Review

Jane Austen's novel, *Pride and Prejudice,* written in the eighteenth century, looked at various phases of English upper class society with a satirical eye. The author subtly criticized the life in a small town, with its gossips and marriage minded mothers, the higher society with its pride and snobbish traditions, and the "marriage market" of that era on which young ladies were placed to make sure they had a home and someone to care for them in their later life. In her indirect and simple way, she brought her characters to life and wove them into her story, giving them the same "pride" and the same "prejudices" they would have had, had they been real.

Miss Austen had no qualms about showing ". . . a small town, with its gossips and marriage minded mothers," and plunged right in by wrapping them both up in Mrs. Bennet. She and her sister, Mrs. Phillips, were the town gossips. Nearly every event that happened in town was known to them within the hour. They were the first to know who had rented Netherfield Park and what Mr. Darcy's and Mr. Bingley's yearly incomes were. To Mrs. Bennet, this was extremely necessary because she had ". . . five worthy daughters to get rid of." It was her greatest aim in life to have all five of them settled down with rich husbands, and consequently, she was always on the look-out for this type of man.

"The higher society, with their pride and snobbish traditions" was epitomized in Mr. Darcy, Elizabeth's suitor. His pride, conceit and so-called superiority were woven by Miss Austen into every action and word which he spoke. At the first ball he went to in Meryton, he absolutely refused to dance with any of the women there, because they were too inferior for him and were unable even to carry on a decent conversation. He felt ". . . there is not a woman in the room whom it would not be a punishment to me to stand up with." When he finally proposed to Elizabeth, he told her how he had fought with himself to keep from loving her because ". . . of the inferiority of her connections . . . whose condition in life is so decidedly beneath my own." These traditions which made men marry into their own class were something which Jane Austen found insupportable.

The "marriage market" of that era was a thing that was rather depressing. Property could go only from father to son. If a man wasn't fortunate enough to have a son, his property went to his next of kin. Because the Bennets did not have a son, their five daughters were forced to get married, for in the event of their father's death, they would be put out of their home. For many years, authors like Jane Austen wrote about and satirized this law which made it nearly impossible for a woman to own property. When this law was finally revoked, the marriage market slowly disappeared because women found they no longer had to get married to get along in life.

Pride and Prejudice summed up three of the major defects of English society. Wrapped up in its satire, it was like a sugar coated pill for people to swallow. Even though it may not have done anything to improve conditions, it has proven a good example of satire and will continue to entertain people with its humorous criticism in disguise.

Ninth-grade girl

While this particular terminal objective calls for students to write about material not studied in class, other objectives might call for a student to use material that was used in class without simply regurgitating class and group discussions. There are at least two possibilities. First, the student can select a particular image or scene not discussed in class and examine its meaning in terms of the whole work. Second, he can compare or relate a work studied in class with one studied outside class. In the following composition, a ninth-grade boy compares the philosophy of Machiavelli's *The Prince,* selections of which he had read in the eighth grade, to the view of man underlying Golding's *Lord of the Flies.* For this project he read more extensively in *The Prince* on his own. The *Lord of the Flies* was studied in class.

THE NATURE OF MAN IN *LORD OF THE FLIES* AND *THE PRINCE*

Though they lived four and one-half centuries apart, William Golding and Niccola Machiavelli exhibit many similarities in both theory and in their works *Lord of the Flies* and *The Prince* (respectively). Exemplifying those similarities is the fact that both authors believe that man is innately evil: Machiavelli revealing this directly and Golding indirectly through the plot of his work. In theory Machiavelli and Golding show other similarities, too, as much of Golding's work corresponds directly with the theory related in *The Prince.* Contrasts in the works are also evident, though they are minor in consequence. *Lord of the Flies* is written to be interpreted through its fictional value on the symbolic level, whereas *The Prince* is written and interpreted literally, as Machiavelli supports his theories with fact. Another contrast in the works is that Golding's work is written on a microcosmic scale and Machiavelli's portrays a true-to-life scale. Though these contrasts are clearly defined, they are unimportant to the theory behind the work.

Golding, in *Lord of the Flies,* tells of a group of boys' reversion to savagery after losing physical ties with civilization. By this fact alone Golding infers man's evil nature. He tries to reveal that if man is apart from civilized society for any lengthy duration, he will eventually revert to his inborn savagery and lose all cultural ties. This change is slow, though, as Golding explains it.

After a short period of separation from society "Roger's arm was conditioned (still) by a civilization that knew nothing of him . . ." This explanation of a boy throwing stones at another displays the time involved, as Golding must feel that man's degeneration is a slow process. He believes that the only force holding man in existence is society and that this, too, in time, will degenerate greatly. To Golding, therefore, man's "Golden Age" must have been in the past, as it seems obvious that Golding's theory (and Machiavelli's, too) is in opposition to the Doctrine of

Progress, or that man as an individual is basically good and that he is constantly progressing.

To interpret Golding's theory on man further (if this can be done), the extreme or complete degeneration of man would lead to the extinction of the human race. If mankind were to follow the example set by the boys in *Lord of the Flies,* it would soon lose much of its knowledge (through lack of records) acquired by it and sent down from the "Golden Age." If such a complete reversion occurred, men could be found destroying each other, and soon going into extinction. As denoted in *Lord of the Flies,* in a short period, presumably a year or so, the boys had lost most all ties with civilization and were madly killing one another. "He tried to convey the compulsion to track down and kill that was swallowing him up." In summary, then, Golding obviously feels that society modifies and purifies Man who is basically evil, rather than perverting and corrupting Man who is basically good.

Machiavelli, too, believes that man is innately evil, and in *The Prince* he tries to tell man how to overcome the wickedness of others. Man will always look out for himself before others and will not care about the well-being of others if his personal goal gets in the way. "For it may be said of men in general that they are ungrateful, voluble, dissemblers, anxious to avoid danger and covetous of gain; as long as you benefit them they are entirely yours." As a result Machiavelli might modify the Golden Rule to read: "Do Unto Others Before They Can Do Unto You." Man must not live just by his morals or goodness for "A man who wishes to make a profession of goodness must necessarily come to grief among so many who are not so good." To interpret his statement then, Machiavelli believes that man corrupts society and not vice-versa. Therefore it is reasonable to say that if man were innately good, the boys in *Lord of the Flies* would not have become savage.

Many other Machiavellian theories can be directly compared to Golding's book. Within the book a power struggle occurs between two good leaders, Ralph and Jack. Ralph, the elected leader, was kind, courteous, and democratic in his ways. He sought "to make a profession of goodness." Jack, on the contrary, lived in a completely different world. He was clever, absolute, and military in his doings. His life revolved about his love for fighting and hunting, whereas Ralph stuck to governing. According to Machiavelli, those two types of leaders must conflict. "For one being disdainful (Jack towards Ralph) and the other suspicious (Ralph of Jack's army), it is not possible for them to act well together." As a result the masses (the boys) had to take sides, and Jack becomes a much more successful leader than Ralph. Why? This, too, can be related to Machiavelli. To begin with, Jack made himself both feared and respected by his subordinates. He developed a reputation for his skill in hunting; a reputation is "very profitable" in the eyes of Machiavelli. To develop a fear in the boys, Jack made them believe that if they didn't do as he told them a beast might attack and kill them. Because of this fear they obeyed him. Ralph neither gained respect nor fear from the boys he "governed." He preferred love to fear as shown in his democratic rule. With this gov-

ernment nothing was accomplished, as the boys easily broke their promises to work, for "men have less scruples in offending one who makes himself loved than one who makes himself feared; for love is held by a chain of obligation which, men being selfish, is broken whenever it serves their purpose; but fear is maintained by a dread of punishment which never fails." Jack was successful for another reason. He always kept his boys on guard and ready for Ralph, even though he knew Ralph would never and could never attack. This action united the boys against a common enemy and kept them under his control. "A prince should therefore have no other aim or thought . . . but war and its organization and discipline." Thus, through these three main Machiavellian concepts: 1) a leader should be feared rather than loved, 2) a leader should develop a reputation, and 3) a leader should constantly be thinking of war, its organization and discipline, Golding shows Jack to be a far more successful ruler than Ralph.

Four and one-half centuries. What has happened to man in that long span of time? Has he basically changed at all? According to these authors, no. Alike in this respect, they both feel that men shall ever be "ungrateful, voluble, dissemblers, anxious to avoid danger, and covetous of gain."

Ninth-grade boy

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3. ORIGINAL SATIRE Any unit can be organized to incorporate what is commonly called creative writing. The unit on satire includes the writing of an original satire.

Criterion statements: the student must
a. Choose a target to satirize.
b. Use one or more of the devices studied to implement the satire, which may be either diatribe or Menippean satire.

The assignment writing a satire should come late in the unit, after the students have had an opportunity to read and study a variety of works that use a variety of techniques. The first step is picking something to satirize. It is useful to have a brainstorming session with every person suggesting possible, specific topics as fast as possible. The teacher selects three students to write on the board and then calls on students in rapid succession until everyone has had two or three opportunities to suggest an idea. Every student should suggest something. To get the brainstorming off to a good start, the teacher should give everyone a moment to think and demand that the first student make a suggestion. In ten minutes, the board will be covered with examples. Next, the teacher should let the students work in pairs to discuss and develop the ideas. Is the problem really worthy of satire? What weaknesses should be attacked? How might the satire proceed? The teacher should speak with as many students as possible in the time available, helping them to limit the possible targets of their satire to real weaknesses. Slower students tend to pick rather

broad topics without thinking about them long enough to determine where the weaknesses lie. For instance, the idea that school is like a prison has possibilities and appears to be a favorite with slower students. The teacher rather than rejecting the idea should ask the students to list all the ways in which the school is prison-like: appearance, the bells, rules concerning what not to do, lack of real responsibility, and so on.

Next the students must decide how their satires will proceed—what devices or tactics they will use. One student, for example, decided to have a man from Mars visit the school and comment in a letter to his friend back home. (Interestingly, this student had not read the Goldsmith selection mentioned earlier.) Once these decisions are made, the teacher should allow time for the students to begin their satires in class, so that he will have an opportunity to work with students who may have trouble.

One interesting result of this assignment is that various teachers and administrative practices receive a good many well-wrought and well-aimed satiric barbs: the principal, school dances, guidance counselors, gym teachers. Nothing should be sacrosanct. The following satires take on a variety of targets:

Original Satires

I. Diatribe

THE OMNIPOTENT MALE

There are many different shapes, sizes, and varieties. They vary from the slim to the flabby, from the muscle-bound to the 98-pound weakling, but they still have one basic thing in common—their infallible ego. The male ego is that which is supposedly the most invulnerable thing on the face of this Earth, yet if it is in anyway harmed, a most radical unbalancing takes place in the mind of the male, and he becomes "emotionally disturbed."

When he is undisturbed, he is preoccupied with building up muscle—to show the other guys who's boss—and collecting girls. He follows a rigorous training program and sometimes comes looking like one of those greased mountains of men you have seen on "Guides to Body Building" magazines. In this case, however, he is often all brawn and no brains. His patterns in girl-watching are fairly obvious. He is either a suave, sophisticated Don Juan, a fast talking smoothie who leads you to believe he knows the ropes, or a bumbling dunderhead who falls head-over-heels if a girl says "hello." Most men would like to be considered Don Juans, but usually turn out to be bumbling dunderheads who don't really know the score.

You may have decided that no males you know fall into any of the previously mentioned categories. If not, there is yet another. Here we have the guy who think's he's sharp if he wears pants that fit him like a second skin, boots with ridiculously high heels and hairdos that make him look like the girl next door. At this stage whether he had simply given up, or whether he is just rebelling against the world is the question. These observations lead me to believe that men are becoming more and more feminine. I ask you, where are the days when men shaved themselves with straight razors once a week and didn't bother with all sorts of potions and pomades for their razor burn. Nowadays, men are properly talcum powdered, deodorized, splashed with various after-shaves, pre-shaves, face conditioners, etc. And out of this they emerge smelling like lilies of the valley and fresh as the morning dew. It always was hard to tell the men from the boys but now who's going to be able to tell the boys from the girls?

Ninth-grade girl

II. Menippean Satire

A. FABLE

A MOUSE EYE VIEW

Now, as all this may seem rather strange to you, I will tell you what I did not find out until much later. The farmer had been told that animals, like people, need social activity. This "togetherness atmosphere" would increase work and productivity. So the farmer had decided to let the animals have a party if they would take care of the decorations and clean up afterwards. The farm animals agreed. To make sure that nothing went wrong, the farmer had sent his farm hands to keep an eye on things.

A great deal of noise and general air of festivity pervaded the barn. As the evening wore on, though, I felt that everything was not as it should be. Though there were groups of animals milling around, it certainly seemed as if they were segregated—groups of chickens, groups of ducks, groups of horses—no mixture. Of course, I'm only a mouse, so I might be wrong.

Anyway, these groups struck me as slightly amusing. There were the chickens, standing in a corner, clucking and cackling about some of the other animals. Every once in a while, a couple of them would get together and start scratching in time to the music, but none of the other animals paid any attention to them.

Then there were the geese. They started out in a little group the way the chickens did. Pretty soon, though, they began waddling to one of the stalls. When they got there they would start preening themselves and washing their bills and, later on, they even began powdering their bills with straw dust to keep them from shining. It didn't do them any good. The only people they talked to were themselves.

I think the group that took the cake was the horses. They were lined up against one side of the barn looking as if they were holding up the wall. Each one had on a harness that had been waxed and polished until it shone but looked as if it choked its owner. They had been re-shoed but they fidgeted as the shoes pinched their hooves. On the whole, they looked so uncomfortable that I wished they had been in their stalls asleep.

The farm hands saw all this too, and decided to try to stop it. There was a long trough of food outside for refreshments and they decided to bring it in, in hopes of getting the ball rolling. Those poor, deluded men. If I had been just a little slower I would have been trampled to death. I hadn't seen the hogs, standing in a dark corner, but they saw the food and dashed out so fast that it made my head swim. They pushed and shoved and elbowed everyone else out of their way until they got to the trough where they settled down to enjoy themselves.

Meanwhile, outside, the farmer's hounds had met some desperate-looking wolves and, instead of running them off the property, had joined them to raid the chicken coop. Luckily, one of the roosters had stayed behind and, when he saw the danger coming, had set up an alarm that brought the whole farm. The farmer came running out of the farmhouse with his gun held high and his lantern swinging. He took a pot shot at the fleeting pack but missed them.

His farmhands filled him in on the details of the wolves *and* the party. He finally realized that this "social atmosphere" would not improve work or productivity and this thought made him so mad that he called off all parties then and there.

Ninth-grade girl

B. EXAGGERATION

NEMO'S NEMESIS

Gazing up at the fifty foot neon sign "Super Colossal Super Market," Nemo C. Cow marvelled at this ultra-modern establishment. He entered quickly, but timidly, and stared incredulously at the size of the store. As he looked down at the mat he was standing on, he observed that it resembled a conveyor belt. Gliding along, he suddenly felt cold steel fingers grasp his shoulders and put him in an atomic powered shopping cart, which then careened down a seemingly endless aisle.

Recovering from the shock of this experience, he gazed in wonder at the innumerable varieties of food and other articles. The store contained everything from the simplest food to atomic fired spark plugs. Astonished and over-awed with the beauty of the most attractive packaging and arrangements, he felt compelled to buy many items he saw.

Leaping from his cart, he began heaping items into the conveyance, as though he were hypnotized. There was nothing unusual about his actions in the Super Colossal Super Market, for everyone was stuffing his cart with luxuries, because all the merchandise was so enticing.

Propelling the vehicles down the aisle, he found it crowded with people. To his delight he discovered he was in the "Free Sample" aisle. The featured article of the day was a miniature can of America's newest sensation for the home-owner, Instant Striped Paint. After picking up his free sample of the item no home should be without, he noticed that the line was slowing up. As he moved farther along, he learned the cause of the disturbance. An irate customer had jumped upon a soap-box, and was shouting above the murmur of the crowd that Instant Striped Paint should be taken out of the Super Market and returned to the hardware store where it belonged.

Leaving the free-sample aisle, he wandered aimlessly until he found a rack which featured a road map of the Super Market (for a mere $1.50) without which he could not find his way out of the market.

Forging ahead, Nemo found his way to the aisle which led to the check out counters. While waiting for a traffic light to change, his attention was drawn to a large sign with bright red letters. It announced the beginning of a nation-wide contest, in which the grand prize was fifteen minutes to collect all the merchandise one could gather in the super market. The directions were simple: Just complete in thirty-three words or less "I like Ravishing Rose green, phosphorescent finger-nail polish because ——— ———." Although Nemo was not acquainted with the product, he took an entry blank.

Upon reaching the check-out counter, he realized how much merchandise he had accumulated. The cashier totaled the bill which came to an over-whelming $76.69. Nemo jokingly told the cashier to charge it to the management, but after a menacing look from the cashier, he quickly pulled out his wallet. After paying his bill, Nemo was thrilled to learn that because he had purchased over $69.00 worth of items he was given a coupon worth $5.00 off the final purchase price of a new automobile. Along with this ticket, he was given some Summit Value Stamps. When a book of these stamps was completed, it could be redeemed for valuable premiums.

As Nemo walked home, toting five bags filled with groceries and other items, he recalled his recent experience. The Super Colossal Super Market and all its superfacilities made him proud to be a citizen of his country, great because it developed such fine modern conveniences.

Ninth-grade boys

C. IRONY

JOHNNY (in the style of e. e. cummings)

'and that's the way it happened'
and that's the way it happened
old johnny now marched home
from war

hup
two
three
for what reason i am not quite sure
.it wasn't the american Way of Life
or Aunt Jemima's pancakes
why Johnny
?he was asked po
lite
ly.

why said Johnny,
topreservedemocraticidealswithlibertyandjustice-
forallofcourse
(he didn't even stutter like he
usually did
—before he left)
johnny don't leave us again
stay
warm and safe in your rocK-
ing chair by the fire
stare blankly into it all day
your eyes reflecting the backward images.
we lov (ed)
you johnny
don't go again,

Ninth-grade girl

D. EXAGGERATION AND IRONY

FUN AND GAMES

There was a hurried consultation lasting as usual only a few seconds, after which Alice, our nine-year old and the oldest of the four, turned and announced, "O.K. We've decided to watch my show this time and Billy's tomorrow. So turn on 'Fun and Games' now, Mom."

I sighed. Alice always won over her younger brothers and sisters, and Billy's turn probably would never come. However the program was one of the best on the air, and I was pleased that they wanted to watch it. I heard that it brought history down to the level of the child, and I wanted them to get a firm base in history. History always was my worst subject.

The T.V. flicked on and a clown dressed in a soldier costume appeared and said, "Hello, Kiddies. I'm sure glad that you decided to listen to us today. We have a treat for you today, real live movies of the big one, W.W. II. Won't that be fun? Gather 'round now, cause after this word from our sponsors we'll start showing those fun movies!"

The announcer, a tired man in an equally tired clown suit appeared. "Kids, be the envy of your friends and enemies alike! Get Mom and Dad to give you just ten dollars and send it along with your name and address to Box 111, N.Y. 1, N.Y., and soon you'll receive a dandy, authentic machine gun from our 'War of the Week,' W.W. II! Of course, no ammunition comes with the gun so that it is perfectly safe! There are only a few left so be sure to send your ten dollars now to Box 111, N.Y. 1, N.Y. and hurry!"

That was nice to hear about. I had wondered what in the world to get for Tommy's third birthday. Perfect!

"And now back to Fun and Games!"

"Before we start those great films, kids, just so you can enjoy them more, W.W. II or the Big One was started by a nasty man named Hitler. Whenever the movie mentions Hitler, let's all boo real loud, O.K. kids? Anyway, this Hitler declared war on all our peace-loving imperialistic allies, and pretty soon we were in the war! You probably all know that we won, and we took it out on the skins of those dirty war-mongers! Japan was on the side of Hitler and Germany, but we took care of those war-mongering Japs when we finally dropped the atomic bomb, and all of Hiroshima went up in that big mushroom cloud that we have grown to know and love. And now on with the film! I'll narrate, pointing out all of the nice bloody parts so you don't miss anything. Incidentally those dirty war-mongering Japs have disappeared completely, and the new peace-loving Japs are in power."

As I watched the film I noticed how quiet the kids were. Maybe this would be my salvation since I was trying desperately to finish my housework while the kids were home. I hoped so.

"Notice, kids, how all the soldiers are going into the fight? And notice how none are coming back? That's called the risk involved in battle. Now see how the peace-loving Russians, our allies, are marching all the German prisoners across the land? Look out, one of those dirty Nazis is trying to escape! That's good, hit him again! Oh, too bad, he died."

It was so quiet that I must have gone to sleep for awhile. When I woke up awhile later I heard the clown talking about the atom bomb.

"Well, kids, after this message we'll see previews of the next show with the dropping of the atom bomb! Won't that be nice?"

The same tired announcer appeared, and began his pitch. "Well, kids, we have a special offer. For a limited time now we have ammunition cheaply priced. The ammo will fit any W.W. II weapon, and is on sale for a short time now for only $1 a box! Send your money to Box 222, N.Y. 2, N.Y. Be sure to send now!"

Back to the clown.

"Kids, it's time for us to leave now. Well, kids, it's been a fun show, and be sure to have fun! And Games, of course."

Well, Easter was coming up and the kids would sure get a kick out of real ammunition. And only a dollar! Another shopping problem solved. I decided that this was indeed a worthwhile show.

Ninth-grade girl

E. PARODY

THE FALL OF HUMPTY-DUMPTY (In the Style of Edgar Allan Poe)

I cannot, for my soul, remember when it was that I first met the narrator of this tale. He approached me in one of those many taverns which dot the streets of London, as I was meditating on many dark and ancient subjects. When I inquired as to his business, he related to me the following tale of ancient woe:

"The tyrant had long oppressed the people of the land I was entering. His greed and evil ways had devastated the simple farmers who inhabited the region. The soldiers of this king roamed the countryside, bringing ghastly tortures to all who dared even speak a word of malcontent.

"I was passing through this singularly barren and dismal country on my way to the castle of the king, which was set in a misty mountain region some great distance away. At length, I approached the castle, which rose dark and forbidding from a deep and dank tarn. The castle was remarkably small, being in appearance more of a walled tower than a manor. Its stones were separated by cracks, where the ravages of long ages had washed away the mortar, and filaments of minute fungi criss-crossed the barren, decayed face of the wall. Atop the wall I beheld the awesome figure of the tyrant himself, his great egg-shaped body perched above my head on the very highest wall, gazing out upon the valley. Even as I approached, I was seized unexpectedly by his guards.

"The king feared the approach of an army from a neighboring kingdom, and all my attempts at persuasion could not divert his mind from the fear that I was one of Them.

"I was imprisoned in a minor tower, some distance from the castle, my cold, clammy chamber affording me (within the limitation of my chains) a view of the king's fortress. I was at this window one dark evening, mourning for my vanished freedom, as the red, garish light of the moon illuminated the tarn surrounding the castle.

"All at once, there came a clamor of trumpets and of horses. The King's men swept out of their castle to do battle, and the clash of steel on steel and the anguished shrieks of downed men and horses filled my ears. I stared in transfixed horror as the armies surged back and forth across the causeway to the castle. Sickness swept through me as I saw the blood flow in streams from the bridge over the tarn.

"Suddenly the moon, which had set behind the castle, again lit the landscape with its red light. I stared as the castle walls shook—as the very stones flew to ruin—the king tottered from his height—the castle wall itself was rent asunder—there was a long tumultuous shouting like the voice of a thousand waters, and the deep and dark tarn at my feet closed swiftly and silently over the fragments of the tyrant king, "Humpty-Dumpty."

Ninth-grade boy

The compositions written by the students might well be saved throughout a unit or the year and published inexpensively in dittoed or mimeographed form for the class as those quoted above were. Classroom publications can be quite attractive on minimal budgets. Various color dittos can be used for the cover; P.T.A. mothers or high school business departments sometimes will

do the typing; some illustrations can be included by using dittos or by having drawings burned into stencils.

A publication not only gives its writers considerable pride but can be used effectively with other classes. Obviously, the student writings quoted above can serve as models and incentive for students in other classes; they also present materials for analysis and provide a painless introduction to criticism. Scholars read and respond to criticism written by their peers. Why shouldn't high school students do the same? Within a very short time, an English department can build a fairly extensive file of materials to which students can respond and from which they can take off in new directions. The idea of debating one another's views has a great deal of motivational force for students. When a teacher or a professional critic presents his views, students are too readily awed, and their own thinking stops. But, they regard the views of another student as only the views of another human being, which can be challenged with impunity.

NOTES

1. Sarah N. Cleghorn, "The golf links lie so near the mill," *Portraits and Protests* (New York: Holt and Company, 1917).
2. Edward Arlington Robinson, "Miniver Cheevy," *The Town Down the River* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910).
3. Siegfried Sassoon, "Base Details," *Collected Poems* (London: E. P. Dutton, 1918).
4. Diane di Prima, ed. *Various Fables from Various Places* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1960).
5. Juvenal, *The Satires of Juvenal,* tr. Hubert Creekmore (New York: New American Library, 1963), p. 109.
6. Oliver Goldsmith, "Letter 3," *Letters from a Citizen of the World* in *Oliver Goldsmith: The Vicar of Wakefield and Other Writings,* ed. Frederick W. Hilles (New York: Modern Library, 1955), pp. 87–90.
7. Philip Wylie, *Generation of Vipers* (New York: Pocket Books, 1964), pp. 191–192.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

1. GEORGE HENRY, "The Unit Method: The 'New' Logic Meets the 'Old.'" *English Journal,* 56:3 (March 1967), pp. 401–406.
2. WALTER LOBAN, MARGARET RYAN, JAMES R. SQUIRE, *Teaching Language and Literature, Grades 7–12.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World (1961).
3. JEROME BRUNER, *et al., A Study of Thinking.* New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1956.

Teaching Literature: The Affective Response

14

Most English teachers want their students to enjoy reading literature. Most will agree that positive affective response to individual works and to reading as an activity is extremely important. As we have seen in Chapter 7, many teachers and publishers base their literature programs almost exclusively on student interest.

If we wish students to enjoy reading and to respond to what they read affectively, there are two problems that we must consider. First, what do we mean by interest, enjoyment, or affective response? Second, what can we do to promote enjoyment?

Levels of Affective Response[1]

It is self-evident that there are various levels of enjoyment, satisfaction, or appreciation. Some people enjoy a short story but would not read it again. Others read it many times, discuss it with their friends, write about it, and so on. Whatever these levels are, they must have a cognitive base. At the very least, the reader must be aware of the existence of the story. For his response to be a valid, personal response, he must have read it and be aware of some aspects of its meaning. Some children read *Huckleberry Finn* very early and enjoy it well enough to read it again and again. They enjoy it at the level of a humorous adventure story and may be totally unaware of its irony, its criticism of society, and its symbolic meanings. Even this affective response, however, has a cognitive base because the reader knows what happens in the plot. The cognitive base is thus a prerequisite of any positive affective response, but a reader need not understand all aspects of what he reads to enjoy some aspects of it.

Huck's decision to go to hell in Chapter 31 provides a specific example. If a reader cannot read the words of Huck's decision, "All right, then, I'll *go* to hell," he can have no positive affective response at all. Unless he infers

from these words the fervent loyalty Huck has for Jim, he cannot empathize with Huck on that particular account. Unless he realizes the essential irony of Huck's remark, he will not infer the criticism of the society. He will feel no impatience or disgust with the society and no commiseration with the plight of an outsider who feels unnecessary guilt. Indeed, he will miss the basic comedy of the entire situation.

Of course, there is no guarantee that an adequate cognitive response will bring the appropriate affective response, be it disgust, satisfaction, grief, laughter, or so on. However, every teacher's experience indicates that hostility, rather than appreciation, results when the student cannot handle the cognitive aspects of a work. Even the most skeptical must admit that affective response at basic levels has a strong cognitive component.[2] Still, the teacher must remember that *understanding does not necessarily result in positive affective response.*

The most basic level of affective response is the simple willingness to receive a particular stimulus. The behavior is almost completely passive. The organism does not seek the stimulus, nor does he necessarily receive any satisfaction from it. His reaction may be one of complete indifference. The initial problem in teaching English to many students is getting through the screen they have erected between themselves and the subject.

At a somewhat higher level, the student does not simply receive the stimulus, but he attends to it as a particular stimulus, as differentiated from other stimuli in his immediate situation. With some students the teacher must make a special effort to select materials or activities that have enough intrinsic interest to receive the controlled or selected attention of the students. Those who have been bored by English for a year or two require special persuasion to focus their attention—materials that will strike their attention, focus it, and induce them to the next affective level, that of responding.

Many students will respond if the teacher requires it, but a forced response does not help to involve the student. On the contrary, it frequently has the opposite effect. The student must respond because he wants to. Many students fail to respond because they have not read the material. Some fail to respond because they see no point in it, others because they fear reprimand. Responding requires more than materials; it requires an atmosphere in which the student feels that his own response is not only welcome but worthwhile. A student is responding willingly when he actively contributes relevant information, ideas, and questions to group discussion, when he *voluntarily* seeks material relevant to classroom activities, when he reads and writes independently of teacher assignments, and when he does assigned work willingly and with vigor. With such response, students ordinarily feel some degree of satisfaction.

At a level beyond voluntary response and satisfaction, the student begins to value certain activities. It is possible to designate three levels of value: acceptance, preference, and commitment. The student may believe that reading

literature is a valuable activity (acceptance) without preferring it to other activities, or he may prefer reading to another activity without being committed to it. The student who *accepts* the value of reading literature will respond positively in a consistent manner to what he reads. If he *prefers* it to other activities, he will elect to read when confronted by other activities that he may also value. At the level of *commitment,* however, he will actively seek reading, discuss what he reads, and attempt to convince others that the activity has value.

At still higher affective levels, the individual conceptualizes or objectifies his values and organizes them into a system. The reader of literature identifies the characteristics of what he admires and adopts or develops a theory of criticism. The development of such a value system for literature has been beyond the reach of most schools, although it probably need not be. Teachers are usually satisfied if their students express satisfaction with the individual works they read. Teachers can be pleased with some students if they advance at least one level. To change active hostility to a willingness to read, even though that willingness is characterized by indifference, is a meritorious achievement.

Teaching and Affective Response

Teaching so that students will demonstrate positive affective responses to literature is a complex task that involves the curriculum, the teacher's behavior, the activities and the materials. The teacher, of course, is responsible for all of these.

1. The Role of the Curriculum

The importance of a carefully planned curriculum in attaining positive affective response cannot be overemphasized. The teacher must examine the abilities of his students and plan their work in accordance with what he finds. He must gradually raise their level of sophistication in interpreting literature, for if students are not cognizant of the elements of a text, they cannot respond affectively to them. For example, a student who reads *Lord of the Flies* might enjoy it as an adventure story, but he cannot receive satisfaction from its symbolic meanings unless he recognizes, at least intuitively, the existence of symbols in it. Yet, obviously, he needs to go beyond simple recognition of the symbols.

Teaching this involves analysis or interpretation—but analysis appropriate to the students' level of development as indicated by inventories and pretests. Analysis need not be anathema. When a third grader says that the boy should not have cried wolf, he makes a simple analytical statement, and a generalization to the effect that lying leads to distrust—a more sophisticated analytical

statement—is not very far away. The trick is to help the student move from one level to the next with a minimum of frustration. Analysis is frustrating when too many interpretative tasks are beyond the ken of the students or when the teacher does not prepare them for it. He must help the students to acquire the cognitive base, but he cannot expect them to handle all cognitive tasks at once. Moreover, his curriculum must be flexible enough to permit changes in the direction of simplicity or complexity as the abilities of the students indicate the need.

2. The Role of the Teacher in the Classroom

Various studies have shown that the more direct a teacher is in his influence over students the less his students learn. Thus, the more time he spends in lecturing, in giving directions and commands with which the students must comply, in criticizing them, and in justifying his own authority, the more he restricts their freedom and the less they learn. His time is put to better use in teacher-led discussion than in lecturing. If he asks questions to clarify or develop the ideas of the students and praises and encourages them, he will create an atmosphere that tends to enlarge their freedom to think in the classroom. The more students contribute, the more involved they become, and the more they learn.[3] The inductive or discovery approach to teaching described in Chapter 5 is designed to encourage student contribution and involvement. At each step the teacher must build on what a student has to say. It involves the students in problem-solving situations, which some psychologists believe result in the desired affective response.[4] Besides teacher-led discussion, other activities are important in maintaining and encouraging student involvement. Most of the activities discussed below tend to diminish the authority of the teacher and place the responsibility for learning in the hands of the students.

3. The Role of Activities

a. SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION The importance of small-group discussion in attaining cognitive goals was emphasized in the last chapter, but this type of discussion is equally important in attaining positive affective response. If you observe a classroom discussion, you will notice that relatively few of the students take part and that a very small group tends to dominate the discussion. In an authoritarian classroom, there is likely to be no student talk at all, at least none that is relevant to the subject at hand. Even in a classroom characterized by the discovery method and indirect patterns of influence, a teacher is lucky if more than 50 percent of the students respond. But in small-group discussion (limited to four or five students), when the problem is appropriate, nearly every student participates, and few, if any, remain uninvolved. Procedures for small-group discussion appear in Chapter 3.

b. STUDENT-LED CLASS DISCUSSION Invariably, when small groups of students discuss similar problems or materials, different groups will reach different conclusions. In these situations, the teacher should arrange to have one or more of the groups present their ideas to the class and request that the class direct questions to them. Students who have arrived at conclusions different from those presented will very likely ask discerning questions. Heated discussions should be allowed to develop.

Similarly, when the groups examine different reading materials, each group can teach its material to the class. For example, if the students are studying the lesson on satiric irony outlined in the last chapter, one group might study and present "The Learn'd Astronomer," another "Richard Cory," still another O. Henry's "The Cop and the Anthem." Each group could explore with the class whether or not the work is ironic, whether or not it is satiric, and what the evidence is to support the conclusions.

Other student-led discussions are useful as well. For example, groups of students could prepare reports on special background information relevant to the unit. Students who have read the same outside materials, or materials by the same authors, could make presentations or give panel discussions. There is no need, however, to require every student to give an oral presentation of some sort in every unit. Requiring every student to give a five-minute talk is a marvelous way to kill interest—and five to seven days. Probably, the plan should be used only in extreme emergencies—when the teacher is planning a wedding, and so forth. However, the teacher should meet with those students who do make oral presentations (reports, panels, discussions) to ensure that their presentations will be of maximum benefit to the others in the class.

c. ROLE-PLAYING For some students a straightforward discussion of a text or of some abstract concept during each successive class meeting is not a very satisfactory procedure. Role-playing can help to bring literature alive for such students, and at the same time it provides a more concrete and immediate base for discussion. It can be used in connection with literature or in developing abstract concepts. For example, various students can assume the roles of the Widow Douglas, Tom Sawyer, Pap, and Jim, as they are revealed in the opening chapters of *Huckleberry Finn,* and discuss what ought to be done about Huck. To dramatize the conflicting emotions that Scout feels toward Atticus in *To Kill a Mockingbird,* the students can adopt the points of view of the various characters and improvise other characters to represent their own reactions as readers. The resulting discussion not only illuminates Scout as a character but other problems as well. A similar approach can be readily adapted to *Richard III,* a play that has considerable intrinsic appeal to high school students. Because Richard takes special care to give a variety of impressions of himself to various characters and is himself a superb player of roles, what the other characters think of him and what he thinks of himself at various points during the play offer a compelling role-playing situation.

The technique can be used to examine thematic problems as well. For example, the short story "Born of Man and Woman" by Richard Matheson, used as an opener for the unit on "The Outcast" (see Chapter 9), is written from the point of view of a monstrous child whose parents confine him to the cellar. The physical appearance of the "child" is totally inhuman, but its mind is human in its desire to understand and be understood. The pro and con roles are obvious. Should the child be confined? Should the parents be censored? What is the author's attitude? Similarly, role-playing can help to establish the central ironies of *Animal Farm*. After reading the opening chapter, the students might adopt the roles of various animals, farmers, and outside observers and explore the following questions: Should the animals be allowed to rule themselves? In what ways will their lives be better because of self-rule? The ensuing discussion should establish the idealism with which the animal revolution begins.

Role-playing is extremely useful in developing the concepts of point of view, connotation, and propaganda. It can be extended to the evaluation of specific works, of genres, and of literature as a whole. Students are usually reluctant to verbalize their negative feelings toward what is studied in class, though they often reveal it through their looks and attitudes. Unfortunately, they have learned through experience that it is best to keep silent on such matters. However, if they are assigned the role of attacking a story or poem as weak, satire as ineffectual in promoting change, or literature as useless, they will do it with more gusto than one might hope. Ultimately, verbalizing these negative feelings has positive effects. Perhaps the best way to dissipate hostility is to express it.

d. PRODUCING PLAYS Although every high school has one teacher who is responsible for the production of plays and some schools offer a course or two in drama, these dramatic productions and courses involve only a very small percentage of the students. Dramatizations in class, on the other hand, provide an opportunity for almost every student to walk through a scene or two at least and can be a tremendous means of motivating the students.

The classroom production need not be a chore. Scenery is not necessary—only basic props. (If Shakespeare could do without scenery, so can the high school teacher.) Students can bring in old clothes to improvise costumes. They should have a chance to practice their lines ahead of time, but there is no need to memorize.

Once a year, at least, the teacher should attempt to obtain an audience—a school or grade level assembly, another class, a class in another school, or a group of parents. Here, too, the keynote is simplicity. Abstract settings and basic props will suffice. If students want make-up, keep it simple unless a student in the class is skilled in its application. If the audience has read or is reading the play, the class can present selected scenes. The teacher's time

should be devoted to helping the actors, but he should have the students help with the blocking and directing. The actors should be encouraged to develop their own "business" to achieve the effects they want. Class or group discussions can center on how a character or scene should be presented. Furthermore, the class should identify the problems in characterization or blocking, develop solutions, and plan ways of implementing them. The report of a student teacher who had her ninth graders produce the bumpkins' production of "Pyramus and Thisbe" from Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream* appears at the end of this chapter.

Reading plays aloud in class is useful in covering difficult material, for example, Shakespearean plays. Allow one day for each act, and assign parts the night before so that the students can practice. Although the strongest readers should have the longest parts, every student should have an opportunity to read aloud, if possible. In dealing with these difficult plays, the students should have a set of key plot and character questions to answer for each act, not necessarily to be written out, but to be discussed briefly in class. The reading should proceed as far as possible during class, with pauses for dealing with unfamiliar words, syntax, or special information. Whatever reading of the act is not completed in class can be finished at home. Reading through a play in this way helps students to see it as a whole, and the later discussion, in depth, of particular lines, scenes, and characters is far more meaningful.

As a special complement to producing plays, the teacher might wish to involve the class in writing and producing radio plays of their own. Most schools have tape recorders. Turning a short story into a radio play presents special problems in form from which students learn a great deal. Let them decide how and when to use a narrator, sound effects, and background music. Students can also produce parodies of television shows and their commercials and, in the process, learn a great deal about the uses and effects of language and dramatic clichés. If the school system has portable television equipment (hand cameras, and the like), it is worthwhile to explore the possibility of making videotapes of various dramatic productions. Some companies sell lightweight, relatively inexpensive cameras and complementary equipment that yield fairly high quality tapes. The incentive that such equipment provides for writing and producing dramatic materials is well worth the extra effort by the teacher.

e. STUDENT PLANNING AND EVALUATION It is obviously foolish to believe that students can or should plan or evaluate all aspects of instruction. If they could do it, there would be no need for specialists in English, and a monitor trained in group dynamics would suffice. However, although the students lack the background to do all the planning, they can take part in it at various points during the instruction and can be active in evaluation.

If the teacher does not provide the basic structure within which students plan, they are likely to grope for weeks, blindly attempting to reach a consensus about what to study. Even then, there is no guarantee that they will be any more interested or involved than if the teacher made *all* of the decisions. Nor is there any guarantee that what they decide on will have much relevance to the subject matter of English. On the other hand, if the teacher provides a structure within which the students help to plan, the affective results will be just as positive.

For instance, the teacher may decide on the basis of pretests and his estimate of class interests that satire would be a useful area for study in a particular class. He has a unit outline in mind, has selected the materials, and decided on what compositions the students will write. But not all the planning has been done. For example, after the first lesson involving cartoons, the students can bring various cartoons to class that they believe are satiric. They can examine their cartoons in small groups, select some to show the class, and devise questions for discussing them. In addition, they might examine the cartoons to discover whether they all "work in the same way." With a little guidance from the teacher, the students can discover that some cartoons use exaggeration, some incongruity or irony, some symbols, and so on. The class can then decide the order of study for the ensuing lessons. The teacher simply asks, "If we are going to study satire, what satiric device should we study first?" The teacher can make suggestions and explain what the difficulties will be. Once the students have a working definition of satire, they can begin to look for materials for the class to study. They can begin to outline the goals in composition in a general way, decide what kinds of writing they should do, when it will be due, and so on.

The activities outlined above (small-group discussions and presentations, student-led discussions, role-playing, and producing plays) involve considerable student planning. In each the students must plan what they are going to do and how they are going to do it.

An activity closely allied to student planning is evaluation. Asking the students to make an exam covering the content of a unit is extremely effective in motivating them to review and in reinforcing what they have learned. The student-made exam should not be regarded, however, as a device for alleviating the teacher's work load. On the contrary, it may increase it. Procedures for developing and using student-made exams appear in Chapter 6.

Some teachers fear that student-made tests contribute to cheating, but if they worry about this, they are probably asking the wrong sort of questions. If the student must provide specific bits of information or check true-false or multiple-choice questions, cheating is not only possible but probable. If, on the other hand, he must demonstrate comprehensive knowledge by analyzing, applying, synthesizing, or evaluating what he has learned, then cheating becomes almost irrelevant. As a matter of fact, the student should have a good knowledge of the kind of question to expect because knowing the specific

nature of the questions is valuable in learning. British universities, for example, make a practice of printing and binding end-of-year examinations, which are kept in the library for anyone to see. The student is expected to examine the questions carefully, to practice writing answers to them, and to extrapolate the nature of the exam he will take from those that have been given in the past. He who does not avail himself of old exams stands a better than average chance of flunking.

The value of having students make up their own examination far outweighs any danger of cheating. The students will have less fear of the exam and less hostility toward it because they helped to write it, and they will have a much clearer notion of what to study for. In addition, they will have a more comprehensive, better organized knowledge of the subject, simply because writing an examination forces them to consider all that has been covered, weigh the relative importance of the parts, and determine the relationships existing between them. Besides, it is a cliché that those who set their own goals work harder and more willingly to attain them than those whose goals are set by others.

4. The Role of Materials

The materials of a unit must not only strike a balance between the background of the student and what he must learn if he is to become more sophisticated but must also appeal to him affectively if he is to develop positive values toward the subject matter. At the very least, the student must receive the stimulus—the materials, which means that the materials must compete with other stimuli in the immediate instructional situation. For many teachers the major problem lies in arresting the student's attention even momentarily. Carefully selected introductory materials help a great deal. Beyond that, reading materials should be chosen in view of their relevance to the lives and problems of the students. Many students who are unable to communicate with their more verbal teachers are helped considerably by carefully selected nonwritten materials that help to make ideas clear and to stimulate verbal response.

The Selection of Reading Materials

a. The materials used to introduce a unit should have a very *high interest potential.* The unit entitled "The Outcast" in Chapter 9 begins with a story called "Born of Man and Woman." Many teachers prefer no special introduction. They simply distribute the story and ask the students to read it. Some read a paragraph or two aloud to help the students begin reading. The monster who tells the story drips green on the floor, is chained to the wall in the cellar, and walks on the ceiling. In other ways he is human. The immediate response is one of bewilderment. What is it? What is the green? How can "it"

walk on the ceiling? The questioning is lively. They demand an immediate explanation of physical facts, but the teacher can lead to the more relevant questions of why the author used a monster, how the monster feels, whether or not the parents should treat him as they do. This discussion leads to a general discussion of ostracism, its effects on the individual, its causes, and its effects upon the group. These problems, which are central to the unit, are introduced rapidly and in some depth through a single, short story that appeals powerfully to the students.

b. The materials should be appropriate to the abilities of the students—unless the interest value is *so high* that a student will read on despite factors that would normally frustrate him. If the students are slow readers, the average sentence should be relatively short, and the vocabulary should be relatively familiar. The *implied meanings of the work should be of a kind the students can already handle or of the kind in which the unit has offered instruction.* The exceptions here are those works that can be read meaningfully on several different levels—*Huckleberry Finn* and *Robinson Crusoe,* for example. In such cases, the teacher can decide to ignore certain aspects of the implied meanings in the work if his students have not yet learned to handle them. For instance, he has the option of ignoring the patterns of imagery in *Macbeth* if his students know nothing about imagery, or if he wishes to have his students examine the imagery, he must then teach them how to do it. On the other hand, the teacher cannot ignore the irony of the key situations in *Huckleberry Finn* without distorting the meaning of the book.

c. If the students display negative attitudes toward poetry or literature in general, the teacher must do his best to find material that does not use conventions, especially of language and imagery, that the students do not understand and might regard as foreign or artificial. The best possibility is to use poetry written since 1900—or perhaps since 1950—until the students have learned to understand the conventions.

d. If the students are "reluctant learners" or are from deprived backgrounds, the material should be highly relevant to their life situations. It should deal with the kinds of problems that concern them, although the problem need not be depicted in an environment identical to theirs. For instance, in a ghetto school a unit intended to examine the power and effects of language might profitably begin with a discussion of the language of prejudice and move into reading and analysis of the literature of protest from the points of view of both the right and the left. Students can approach the problems of connotation and imagery in a poem such as Langston Hughes' "Brass Spittoons."[5] Richard Wright's *Native Son* would be a good focal point for the study of connotation, imagery, and character development. Besides, the material has *immediate* relevance because it deals with problems the students care about. Although the same problems might be examined in *Silas Marner, Ivanhoe,* or *Treasure Island,* those books have no intrinsic relevance to the lives of many students.

e. With reluctant readers it is frequently necessary to select materials that are not only relevant to their lives in general but *relevant to specific interests* that those students already have developed. These students frequently display a surprising breadth of interests, from automobile engines to coin collecting, from baseball to billiards. The teacher can obtain this information from the inventories described in Chapter 2.

A teacher in a depressed economic area who discovers that his students apparently have no interests at all, at least none they are prepared to admit, must experiment and observe. What problems do the students face in their lives? Are there literary or semiliterary materials that deal with those problems? Will such materials evoke an interested response from the students? What sort of movies do they enjoy? Is it possible to obtain movies or photographs to use as a jumping-off point into a unit? Have the students ever visited the public museums in the area? Can the museum evoke interest in a problem for the students to examine? These are avenues that the teacher can take to arouse the interests of students, for he must be willing to think beyond the four walls of the conventional classroom. All these keys to selecting materials apply to some degree to all students, but particular care must be exercised in choosing materials for those students who would just as soon not be in school.

Finally, the mere idea of a "selection of reading materials" may appear ludicrous to an English teacher who is hamstrung with a single text. The situation *is* ludicrous. The school system hires a professionally trained person to teach literature and gives him a single tool to work with. It is like giving a surgeon only a scalpel and urging him to operate. Despite his professional training, the surgeon stands a good chance of losing his patient. Just so, the literature teacher with only one text stands a good chance of failing to teach literature. Any English department confined to a single text ought to begin a concerted effort to bring pressure on the board of education to supply funds for additional materials. The initial cost of supplying each student with a literature text is only about three to four dollars per student, and frequently less, and the school system keeps a set of textbooks for at least three years, usually longer. Thus, the average cost per student per year is only about one dollar. Compare that sometime with the annual cost per student in a good science curriculum. Compare it with the cost of outfitting a boy to play football!

Until the board of education provides money for instructional materials in literature, there are ways to supplement the single text.

1. Check the school library for supplementary novels, short stories, poems, and so on, in multiple and single copies. Librarians sometimes are able to borrow extra copies of books from nearby libraries. Ask the librarian to make you a list of the books in the school library that might be of help.

2. Many poems, stories, and essays are in the public domain and may be legally copied for distribution to your class. A cooperative principal may

arrange to have a secretary help with the typing. P.T.A. mothers who can type are usually happy to cut stencils at home or at the school. The P.T.A. is organized for the purpose of helping the schools. Here is a way not only to get materials when money is unavailable but to call the attention of the parents to the need for additional materials.

3. It is possible to build classroom or departmental libraries by asking students and families to donate used books. Those that are not suitable for classroom use might be traded to secondhand book dealers for books that can be used in the classroom.

4. Some teachers report buying sets of paperbacks, which they give to the students during a unit. At the end of the unit they collect the books, allowing the students to purchase them. Because many students buy the books, the teacher is out very little money.

5. Some English departments sponsor book fairs and dances to raise money to purchase supplementary materials.

6. When and if the school system buys a new anthology, save fifty to one hundred copies of the old one.

Obviously, all these are interim measures. No English teacher should have to continue for very long begging, borrowing, or stealing materials. The unit-building suggestions for language, literature, and composition in this book require a variety of materials; some will be available in conventional texts, some can be typed and reproduced for distribution to students, and some are in paperback. The teacher who attempts to acquire new materials for an entire year's program is likely to meet frustration. Although collecting materials takes time, it is certainly possible to collect enough for one or two new units per year and to arrange those already available into a more effective teaching sequence. A curriculum cannot be written or revised overnight, or in a month, or even a year. Curriculum writing is a continuous process. If the curriculum is a good one, parts of it will make other parts outmoded. If the ninth-grade curriculum improves, then the tenth-grade program will have to change—and so on up through college. Under such conditions it is only logical to do a bit at a time.

The Use of Nonwritten Materials and the Mass Media

Teachers frequently overlook the valuable contribution that nonwritten materials and the mass media can make to a literature program. The use of photographs, films, recordings, magazines, and paintings not only make the study of literature more appealing to students but can be very effective in introducing new ideas and clarifying difficult concepts. For instance, the idea of kinds of imagery is not an easy one for students to grasp, but paintings and photographs can help to make the concept clear. Albrecht Dürer's "The Hare," for instance, has an almost photographic realism, but the animals painted by Franz Marc are totally different. Marc's horses are deep blue or

red and are identifiable as horses only by their forms. His interest lies in an arrangement of forms and colors that has little to do with verisimilitude. The animal forms in the paintings of Hieronymus Bosch are used allegorically; they represent greed, lechery, the transitoriness of life, and so on. A surrealistic painter such as Salvador Dali produces dream or nightmare images; his painting, "Civil War," represents a woman on a barren landscape tearing herself apart. The imagery of primitive groups is usually highly stylized and representational; an image appears again and again in the work of the different artists, always with the same general delineation and the same meaning. Examining and discussing a series of paintings or representations by Dürer, Marc, Bosch, Dali, and primitive artists clarifies the differences between types and uses of imagery rather quickly. Afterwards, the students can turn with more insight to an examination of imagery and its uses in a work such as "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner." The discussion of the paintings for their own sake should be informative and stimulating, of course. The students can discuss why the artist uses the kind of imagery he does and evaluate the effects. Since some students tend to be hostile toward modern painters such as Dali, lively discussion is ensured.

MATERIALS FROM POPULAR CULTURE TO BUILD CONCEPTS

Comic book heroes, such as Batman and Superman, make a useful point of departure for a study of the hero. Students will be able to enumerate their moral and physical attributes, the kinds of villains they encounter, and the methods they use to overcome them. They can then discuss additional questions: How do adolescents respond to these heroes? Adults? What special powers do the heroes have that real men do not have? How do people respond to these powers? Why? How can the super hero be compared to heroes in the real world—the astronauts and sports heroes, for example?

Following such a discussion, the students can begin to read Greek myths and the myths and tales from other cultures. Their major concern might be how the mythic hero compares with the modern super hero. Then they should consider why the qualities and attributes of the heroes appeal to ordinary people. From this point a unit dealing with heroes could move in any one of several directions. For instance, a unit that involved popular conceptions of the hero might focus on mythic heroes, folk heroes, and western and detective heroes.

Materials from media other than print are relevant, useful, and interesting in English studies, and many are inexpensive. It is simply up to the English teacher to be aware of the possibilities and integrate them into his units of study.

a. PICTURES AND ADVERTISEMENTS Photographs and reproductions of paintings are useful in many ways. They can supply examples for discussion not only of imagery but of structure and style. Sometimes their content is rele-

vant to a thematic unit. Photographs or paintings of war, of slums, of lonely people, of people interacting with one another can all be useful in developing ideas related to various units and in supplying the content or stimulus for certain composition assignments. They are particularly useful in teaching point of view. The students adopt different persona, for instance, to describe the same pictorial content. Or they can adopt the persona of someone in a picture to describe something else in the picture.

Advertisements from magazines are extremely helpful in studying the concepts of connotation, point of view, propaganda techniques, and audience appeal. In the study of connotation, for instance, the teacher first displays ads that have minimal text. The students discuss the use of the words that appear—"exquisite" in a diamond ad, "unique" in auto and airline ads, "romance" in perfume and lipstick ads. As they become adept at identifying and explaining words used because of their positive affective connotations, the teacher can move to audience appeal, for example, ads for the same car in a woman's magazine and a business magazine. The differences in the texts can be amazing. The students identify the audience to which the appeal is made and examine differences in the selection of words for the various audiences. Eventually, they should examine the basis of the appeal—a task that is not terribly difficult.

There are many sources of inexpensive pictures. Magazines use pictures that are relevant to various thematic organizations of materials. Large art museums such as the Cleveland Museum of Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and the National Gallery in Washington, D.C., will supply catalogs of inexpensive color and black and white reproductions. University Prints[6] carries an inventory of about 5,000 black and white 5½″ by 8″ prints, which are available for pennies each. It is possible to select individual prints from the catalog and have them bound with an inexpensive plastic binding, so that for a nominal cost individual students or small groups can work with a volume of specially selected prints. Each item in the University Prints Catalog is also available as a 2″ by 2″ or 3¼″ by 4″ slide.

Many large school systems have audio-visual departments that have the equipment for making transparencies for use with overhead projectors. Some can make 35-mm. color or black and white slides. In lieu of these, the teacher can use an opaque projector to throw a picture directly on a screen, but the quality is inferior to that of either an overhead or a slide projector. Lacking any of these, the teacher can have students mount the pictures for distribution to small groups for examination.

b. CARTOONS Cartoons can be used profitably in a number of ways. As previously mentioned, they can be used to formulate a working definition of satire, and to introduce important questions concerning the nature of the hero. But cartoons are relevant to many other aspects of English as well, both thematic and structural. For instance, a good many cartoons depend for

their effects on visual exaggeration. Many depend on a visual contrast that results in incongruity. They can be used to objectify and illustrate both. They are especially useful in examining incongruity simply because visual incongruity is easier to sense and, eventually, formulate. Contrast permeates literature and is a rich source of implied meanings. Contrasting words, images, characters, and plots abound within a single work. At the same time, readers frequently overlook such contrasting elements and their significance. A study of appropriate cartoons helps make readers aware of the technique and prepares them to respond to the effects of the contrasts. Some examples: natives sitting in the door of a grass shack, with a medicine man dancing behind them, are reading *National Geographic;* two white explorers come upon a clearing in the jungle in which an otherwise primitive people are building a rocket ship. Examples of this type are easy to find.

Charles M. Schulz's *Peanuts* is an extremely fertile field for materials relevant to English: *Point of view*—Lucy gives Linus a long list of all his "faults." Linus calls them, not faults, but character traits. In another strip, Lucy tells Snoopy that he cannot have any of her ice-cream cone because it would be unsanitary. Snoopy muses to himself that she is right. He would be foolish to take a chance like that. *Connotation*—Lucy tells Charlie Brown that nobody likes his father. He denies it, saying that all sorts of people like his father. What kind, Lucy wants to know. Real people. Down-to-earth people. People people! (A recent *GM* ad states that General Motors is people making products for people.) In another strip, Lucy tells Charlie that she never wants to see him again. Never! Never! she shouts. Charlie Brown asks her to define "never." *Glittering generality*—Linus claims he loves everybody, every living creature. Lucy asks if he loves gila monsters. Linus says he doesn't know what they are, but if he knew, he'd love them.

Cartoons, *Peanuts* especially, can supply a good deal of relevant thematic material as well. In the middle of a ball game, which Charlie Brown's team is losing as usual, the players say that it is good to lose, that suffering is good for the soul; a discussion of suffering begins. It is a useful strip for getting at an important aspect of tragedy. Charlie Brown's bumbling, his refusal to quit, his near despair, his rejection by the group, Lucy's shrewishness and pessimism, Snoopy's refusal to allow his dancing to be deterred by others, Linus' faith in the Great Pumpkin and his need for security—all illustrate aspects of human nature in a simple, comic manner.

c. RECORDINGS Many teachers realize the value of recordings in teaching drama and poetry. For some students, they provide almost indispensable support in reading plays or poetry written in another era. Although a recording is not the same as a live production, the fluent voices of the readers will bring considerable meaning to materials that might otherwise be incomprehensible and lifeless to many students. A great range of drama, poetry, and prose is available on recordings, everything from the Greek cycles to *Every-*

man and the *Second Shepherd's Play* to very contemporary material. The *Schwann Long-Playing Record Catalog,* available at most record dealers, lists much of what is currently available. One section of the catalog is devoted to "Spoken and Miscellaneous." Additional recordings are listed in "Resources for the Teaching of English,"[7] published by the National Council of Teachers of English, and in the catalogs of such commercial educational suppliers as Educational Audio Visual, Inc.[8]

Recordings are especially useful for weak readers. The student can follow his text as he listens to the recording, and this helps him to respond to punctuation and vocabulary items that might block him completely if he were reading independently. The technique has the effect of making reading more enjoyable because it reduces frustration.

There are several recordings that are useful in language study as well. The National Council of Teachers of English publishes *Americans Speaking,* a recording of six American regional dialects. Each speaker reads the same passage in order to illustrate the contrastive features among the dialect areas, and he also discusses a subject of his own choice for a few minutes. A pamphlet that accompanies the recording provides a transcription of the common reading and the free speech of each speaker.

In teaching language history, nothing illustrates changes in pronunciation more readily than a reading from various historical dialects. A number of recordings of poetry in Old and Middle English are available. Those that use the same passage in various historical dialects are particularly useful. For instance, a two-record set prepared by Helge Kokeritz, *A Thousand Years of English Pronunciation,*[9] contains a passage from St. Luke (Chapter 7:2–9) as it appears in the *Anglo-Saxon Gospel,* the Wycliffe-Purvey translation, and the authorized version of 1611. A complete text accompanies the readings.

Such records are conventional for classroom use, but the teacher needs to consider less conventional recordings as well. *Pygmalion,* or its Broadway counterpart, *My Fair Lady,* is useful in gaining insight into the problems arising from snobbery about socially unacceptable dialects. Bill Cosby's recordings of such routines as "Buck Buck"[10] illustrate a number of comic techniques: exaggeration, understatement, situation comedy, and so on. Godfrey Cambridge, with "Blockbusting"[11] and other routines, provides good examples of topical social satire. These, used in conjunction with cartoons, can help to develop a very clear notion of the nature of satire.

George Carlin's recording *Take Offs and Put Ons*[12] includes one routine that makes a hard-hitting introduction to parody. "Wonderful WINO" is a parody of the typical adolescent-oriented station with its fast talking disc jockey, top tune lists, quickie newscasts, dedications, and rock-and-roll music. The parody and its purposes are entirely evident to students, who, no matter where they live in the United States, are familiar with that type of station. A discussion of the recording quickly identifies the characteristics or style of the stations that cater to adolescents, as opposed to those that cater to other audiences. Carlin's main parodic tools, exaggeration and irony, are abundantly clear. The record, then, can be useful as an introduction to the concepts of style and parody and can be used in conjunction with the parody lessons described in Chapter 1 or to stimulate ideas for writing parodies of radio and television shows.

Rock, folk-rock, and folk songs sung by adolescents' favorites can help to develop a feeling for, and even an analysis of, rhythm. The guitar and drum accompaniments objectify rhythmic patterns and in turn help make the student sensitive to the more subtle rhythms of poetry.

The use of popular songs has other advantages. Adolescents are concerned with the lyrics, which have an immediacy for them that poetry tends to lack until they learn to respond to it. In fact, the lyrics of many current favorites make very worthwhile listening. For instance, "An Ode to Billy Joe,"[13] written and sung by Bobbie Gentry, implies a great deal of its meaning. It protests the casualness and callousness with which all but one member of a family receive the news of Billy Joe's suicide. The concern of the mother and father is more with the food on the table. Apple pie, suicide, and bits of farm talk are juxtaposed in patterns that imply the central meanings of the song. Students know the words of such songs and can intuitively grasp their commentary. A discussion of the lyrics and the musical techniques not only flatters the students' taste but objectifies and makes meaningful a recurring pattern in literature: the juxtaposition of contrasting words, images, scenes, and characters. A discussion of "An Ode to Billy Joe" could be followed profitably by the reading and discussion of various modern poems that use a similar contrastive technique: for instance, Robert Francis' "Pitcher," John Updike's "Ex-Basketball Player," Wilfred Owen's "Arms and the Boy," and Theodore Spencer's "The Day."[14] By the way, a useful collection of rock lyrics is Jon Eisen's and Babette Low's *Rock Poetry Anthology* (New York: Random House, 1971).

The lyrics of folk, blues, and pop songs are appropriate to various thematic units. Many, for instance, lend themselves directly to a study of the literature of protest. Some of the old English and Scottish ballads are appropriate in units built around such themes as war, love, courage, alienation, power. "Sir Patrick Spens," for instance, tells of a man who is ordered to his death by a king who is unaware of the danger that his knight will confront. What are the implications for the use of power? The Robin Hood ballads[15] and others are relevant to units dealing with the mythic hero, popular conceptions of the hero, courage, and justice.

A comparison of blues verses to the lyrics of popular songs can give rise to interesting evaluative discussions. In the movie *The Semantics of the Popular Song* S. I. Hayakawa discusses the realism of the blues as opposed to popular lyrics.[16] Another good exercise is a comparison of "Chim-chiminee" from *Mary Poppins*[17] to William Blake's poem "The Chimney Sweep." The popular song sentimentalizes and idealizes the life of a sweep, whereas Blake

deals with the harsh reality that is likely to bring death to a child sweep. In short, recordings have a great many uses in English other than the conventional, but still important, one of listening to the drama, poetry, and prose that the students will read.

d. TV AND MOTION PICTURES Many writers advocate special courses in TV and the "Art of the Film,"[18] but although the courses they recommend may be laudable, they are not the explicit concern of this book. *The concern here is with the study of TV and movies as it supports and parallels goals in the study of literature, composition, and language.* Therefore, certain specialized topics, such as the history of "cinematographic art," are irrelevant here. But the thematic or conceptual content, the techniques, and the language of TV and movies are both relevant and compelling to the English teacher's concerns and to those of his students. They are relevant for obvious reasons. They are compelling because the viewer can allow himself to be captured by the media and carried along with it.

Some motion pictures involve little or no inference. The villain in a black hat and moustache sneers and strikes an old lady. And in case the audience misses the implication, a character in a white hat (no moustache) comments, "What a wicked thing to do!" The same is true of many books. When movies do require complex inferences, unsophisticated students are hostile, just as they are to "difficult" poems and paintings. The viewer or reader must participate, must work out meanings for himself. The problem for teachers is to help students make the necessary inferences. Students are not "turned off" when instruction enables them to work out these meanings for themselves. They are bored or hostile only when the difficulties are overwhelming or when someone hands them predigested interpretations.

Beyond the signal level or basic format, the problems of meaning in written literature are remarkably similar to those of TV and the cinema: plot structure, juxtaposition of scenes, imagery, symbols, and so on. It is precisely for this reason that the study of literature and the study of movies parallel and support each other in that the study of cinematic structure, motif, imagery, and symbols illuminates their literary counterparts for students.

There are other reasons for including movies and TV in the English curriculum. Their immediacy for the students makes the study of similar problems in literature easier, and they produce a positive affective response, at least at the levels of awareness and attention, almost at once.

Movies have been used in the classroom to some extent for a long time. Ordinarily their use has been limited to didactic films, for example, The Encyclopaedia Britannica Films on the Greek theater, or to titles of works students are reading in class.[19] Many films are worth viewing, however, whether or not the students read the original—if there is one. Many are appropriate to various thematic units, such as those described throughout this book. Fine feature films are available for relatively low rental fees: *The Bridge on the River Kwai, All the King's Men, The Caine Mutiny, Death of a Salesman, The Last Hurrah, The Mouse That Roared, On the Waterfront, A Raisin in the Sun, Requiem for a Heavyweight, The Wild One,*[20] and many others. *The Mouse That Roared* makes a fine addition to the unit on satire described in the last chapter. *A Raisin in the Sun* illustrates a number of social problems and would contribute a great deal to a unit dealing with social class and mobility. *On the Waterfront* might be viewed and discussed not only for its thematic content but for its use of camera angles (subjectivity), imagery, and symbolism.

Many fine short films are available at lower cost than the feature films and have the additional advantage that they can be shown in a single class period. Several are described below.[21]

The Eye of the Beholder (black and white, 25 min.) demonstrates how one's point of view distorts truth. The film presents an artist from the points of view of a headwaiter, who sees him watching women, of his mother, who believes he pays no attention to her, of a cab driver, who calls him a "crook," of a landlord, who suspects his sanity, and of a cleaning lady, who screams that he is a murderer. All these points of view are explained when the omniscient camera reconstructs the events at the end. The value of the film is obvious.

Flatland (color, 12 min.) is an animated film whose characters are geometrical figures. The people of the community belonging to different classes and castes are represented by various two dimensional figures. One day a sphere encounters a square and introduces him to the three dimensional world. When the square tries to explain what he has discovered, he is jailed as a heretic. The film should provoke a discussion of symbolism and is also useful in the unit on "The Outcast," which appears in Chapter 9.

The Hand (color, 19 min.) is a fascinating allegory whose two main characters are a puppet and a disembodied hand. The puppet's main pleasure in life centers in a flower for which he makes pots. One day the hand breaks into his peaceful existence, changing the pot on his potter's wheel to a hand. At first the hand, in a white glove, is persuasive in its demands, giving him gifts, luring him. But when the puppet refuses to carry out its commands, it returns, this time in a black glove, and forces the puppet to carve a giant statue of a hand. When the task is complete, the puppet flees to his home and dies tragically. The film is open to many interpretations. At first students might be somewhat hostile to a film with a puppet and hand as main characters, but as it progresses, they will become involved with the puppet. It will be reasonably clear to them that the hand represents controlling force. But the nature and causes of the relationship between the hand and the puppet should provide considerable material for debate. The students will return to the film to support their arguments, and they may wish to see it several times. Each time they return to it, their perceptions will be sharper because they will look for specific details. The discussion can profitably turn to the type of imagery

used in the film, its purpose, and meaning. Viewing and discussing this film will demonstrate to students the need to watch closely. The carry-over to printed literature is obvious.

The String Bean (color and black and white, 17 min.) tells a wordless story of an old woman's cultivation of and devotion to a string bean plant, which is the only green, living thing in her otherwise drab flat. As the bean plant grows, she carries it to a park each day where it can get the sun. Eventually, she plants it in a corner of the park and visits it daily. A gardener, thinking that it is a weed among his flowering plants, pulls it and throws it away, but the old lady walks to the trash can, plucks some beans, and carries them home to plant. The film can stimulate writing from various points of view about the old lady, the gardener, and the bean plant itself. It can also lead to a discussion of at least one recurring pattern in literature, the death-rebirth archetype.

Hangman (color, 12 min.) is an animated film based on a poem of the same title. It concerns a hangman who comes to town and sets up his gallows, which takes the townspeople one by one. The tension of the film reaches a climax when the only person left, the coward who has allowed the others to die, becomes the Hangman's final victim. The film's fast-paced succession of stark images can compel lively discussion among students. Its emphasis on the responsibility of the individual to help maintain a just society makes it highly appropriate for a unit such as one on justice.

The following film distributors will send catalogs on request:

Contemporary Films
267 West 25th Street
New York, New York 10001

International Film Bureau, Inc.
332 South Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Encyclopaedia Britannica Films
425 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611

Films, Incorporated
1150 Wilmette Avenue
Wilmette, Illinois 60091

The Janus Film Library
871 Seventh Avenue
New York, New York 10019

National Film Board of Canada
680 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10019

Standard Film Service
4418 Pearl Road
Cleveland, Ohio 44109

Twyman Films, Inc.
329 Salem Avenue
Dayton, Ohio 45401

TV productions cannot be so readily used in the classroom as can motion pictures. Still, since nearly every student is likely to have access to a TV set, commercial TV programming can be used as an adjunct to various units of instruction. The humor unit outlined in Chapter 1, for instance, calls for watching various TV comedies with an eye to particular kinds of analysis. The alert teacher can also make use of various TV specials and movies. Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" and Menotti's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* make regular appearances near Christmas. Paddy Chayevsky's *Marty,* Faulkner's *The Old Man,* and special TV adaptations of musicals and plays reappear as the phoenix does. Many fine movies have appeared at a time when students can watch: for example, *The Bridge on the River Kwai, Death of a Salesman, Summer and Smoke, The Hustler,* and *Dr. Strangelove.* By asking students to watch TV presentations at home and then discussing them in class, the teacher can establish a bond between the classroom and the world outside. It is one more way of helping the student to see that the two are not entirely separate entities.

Assessing Interest in the Unit As a Whole

The usual technique for determining the likelihood of students' interest in advance is through some sort of interest inventory (see Chapter 7). Obviously, however, if we are planning a unit on satire, the results of ordinary inventories will be of very little help. Students who have never heard of satire can hardly be expected to express an interest in it. But in considering such a unit, there are some things we know even without the aid of inventories. First, we know that students enjoy humorous writing and cartoons, at least those they can understand. Second, whatever materials are selected for a unit on satire are not likely to condescend to students who are pleased to read material that is clearly for adults if they can understand it. Third, the materials would not be limited to the middle class, as so many stories written for adolescents are. Fourth, we know that most junior and senior high school students would find a series of lectures on the nature of satire extremely dull. The same material and concepts are far more interesting if they are arranged in sequence from simple to difficult and presented inductively so that the students can confront and solve increasingly complex problems in reading satire, an approach that promises to reduce frustration to a minimum.

One of the English teacher's greatest responsibilities is to create interest

in literature for his students. Therefore, even when the prognosis for student interest in a unit is excellent, he must make both formal and informal evaluations of student interest during the course of the unit. Informally, he can look for signs of boredom. Do the students groan more than usual? Do only a very few students respond during class discussion? Do small-group discussions meander permanently away from the topic? Do students appear listless in class? Do they begin new assignments reluctantly?

It is wise to use a more formal technique as well. An anonymous questionnaire that calls for student evaluations of a unit and its parts can be very revealing. However, the teacher must exercise extreme care to avoid influencing student responses by his remarks as he distributes the questionnaire or gives directions. The following questionnaire was designed to follow a unit on satire.

A QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE UNIT

Your answers to the following questions will help in revising the satire unit for next year. Please do your best to give complete and honest answers. If you have additional comments that you think might be helpful, please add them on the back of this sheet. *Do not put your name on this questionnaire.*

1. Do you think you are a better reader of satire now than you were at the beginning of the unit?
2. Do you know more about how satire works now than you did at the beginning of the unit?
3. The following scales are for your evaluation of the unit *as a whole.* Put an X at the point on each scale that best indicates your reaction to the unit *as a whole.* Below each scale add a comment to explain your reaction.

a.
Interesting — Boring
5 4 3 2 1

b.
Very useful for the study of literature — Completely useless for the study of literature
5 4 3 2 1

c.
Useful outside the study of literature — Useless outside the study of literature
5 4 3 2 1

4. Which works did you enjoy reading? Why?
5. Which works did you *not* enjoy reading? Why?
6. Which of the works do you think students might enjoy reading in this unit next year?
7. If you were planning this unit for students next year, which works would you leave out?
8. Which activities of the unit outside the reading did you enjoy? Explain your preference.
9. Which activities of the unit outside the reading did you *not* enjoy? Explain why, if you can.
10. If you were planning this unit for another group of students, what changes would you make in the lessons, materials, and related activities?
11. Explain in what way the unit has most affected you—positively or negatively or both.

Since it is best not to rely on the responses to a single question to evaluate the unit, some of the questions here were designed to check on others. For instance, if a majority of the students mark the midpoint—3—on scale *a,* we can use the responses to other questions to obtain a clearer impression of student interest in the unit. If the students list many more works they did *not* enjoy than those they did enjoy in answer to questions 4 and 5, then the rating of 3 on scale *a* can be considered an indication of a lack of interest. The answers to questions 6 and 7 can be used as a check on 4 and 5. For if students say they did not enjoy certain works (question 5) but do not suggest taking those works out of the unit for other students (question 7), they must see certain values in using them. Even when student reactions appear to be positive, it is useful to cross-check the various questions. For instance, students may rate the unit very interesting because they like the teacher. If the same students recommend dropping several works from the unit, their rating of "very interesting" is automatically qualified.

At any rate, the questionnaire, despite its shortcomings, can be a very useful check on a teacher's general impressions of a class's response to a unit. If the students give the unit a middle rating on interest, list only a few works that they enjoy, suggest dropping several works, and recommend major changes in the procedures, it is clearly best to plan revisions. Even if they respond enthusiastically, their comments can be very useful in planning for the next time around.

The informal unit description that follows suggests how the kinds of materials and activities suggested above can be incorporated into the unit structure discussed in the previous chapter. The unit has been designed with average seventh or eighth graders in mind, but changes in the materials would make it thoroughly useful for average eleventh or twelfth graders. With a few minor changes, it could be used with slow high school classes. The quick-

est way to create a negative affective response among students is to choose a unit or materials for a class on some arbitrary or irrelevant basis. The following unit cannot be presented to a group of students simply because they are in the seventh grade. If they are poor readers, they might well lose interest in the reading materials, even though they remain interested in the general concepts and the other materials. The same holds true for each instructional unit described in this book: It must be adapted to the abilities and interests of the students in the particular classroom.

A UNIT ON COURAGE

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES

1. Given an unfamiliar novel or play appropriate to the unit theme, to write an essay explaining in what way or to what degree the characters are courageous.

   Criterion statements:
   a. The analysis must provide evidence in support of the judgment by allusion to or quotation from parts of the text.
   b. The analysis must distinguish between physical and moral courage, and among characters whose actions are truly courageous (the Aristotelian mean), those whose actions are foolhardy (excess), those whose actions are cowardly (defect), and those whose seemingly courageous actions are dictated by something that they fear more (defect).
   c. The analysis must consider the characters' knowledge of the dangers, their motives in performing the action, and their understanding of the possible consequences.
   d. The analysis must evaluate the author's treatment of courage in his presentation of characters, that is, it must determine whether the author has explored the character's reactions to the situations facing him in a realistic way.
2. To take part in a group's production of a one-act play.

   Criterion statements:
   a. The student must read a part, block, prepare sound effects, direct, lead a discussion of the production, and so on.
   b. The production will be a reading or a studio production for the class or some other class or a tape-recorded radio play.
3. To write a short story.

   Criterion statements:
   a. The story must describe a disaster (see model in Lesson 12, pp. 342–343) or some other situation in which a character is under extreme pressure.

   b. The actions and thoughts of the character must display an inner struggle involving courage, cowardice, or rashness—or some combination of these.

   Note: The criterion statements are very loosely framed. The student should be free to develop his story beyond or in a different direction from their requirements. The criteria are intended to help judge whether the student has met a minimal standard.
4. To write an extended definition of courage.

   Criterion statements:
   a. The definition must explain the characteristics of the courageous person or act.
   b. It must contrast courage to cowardice and rashness.
   c. It must distinguish between acts that appear courageous but are either cowardly or rash.
   d. It must illustrate each point by allusion to materials read in or out of class and by allusion to television programs or motion pictures.
5. To write an analysis of the presentation of courage in a television show. (Criteria are the same as for objective 1.)

The Unit Problem

The problem of what courage is and what it is not is relatively complex. Most people believe that an athlete who hides a broken bone from his coach in order to stay in the game is courageous, even though his neglect might ultimately result in permanent deformity. Similarly, a seventh grader is likely to regard as courageous a peer who defies his teacher, even though the defiance might be a method of avoiding the ridicule of his fellows. Here is Aristotle on the relationship of courage to cowardice and rashness:

> What is terrible is not the same for all men; but we say there are things terrible even beyond human strength. These, then, are terrible to every one—at least to every sensible man; but the terrible things that are not beyond human strength differ in magnitude and degree, and so too do the things that inspire confidence. Now the brave man is as dauntless as man may be. Therefore, *while he will fear even the things that are not beyond human strength, he will face them as he ought and as the rule directs, for honour's sake;* for this is the end of virtue. But it is possible to fear these more, or less, and again to fear things that are not terrible as if they were. Of the faults that are committed one consists in fearing what one should not, another in fearing as we should not, another in fearing when we should not, and so on; and so too with respect to the things that inspire confidence. *The man, then, who faces and who fears the right things and from the right motive, in the right way and at the right time, and who feels confidence under the corresponding conditions, is brave;* for the

brave man feels and acts according to the merits of the case and in whatever way the rule directs.

Of those who go to excess he who exceeds in fearlessness has no name (we have said previously that many states of character have not names), *but he would be a sort of madman or insensible person if he feared nothing, neither earthquakes nor the waves,* as they say the Celts do not; while the man who exceeds in confidence about what really is terrible is rash. *The rash man, however, is also thought to be boastful and only a pretender to courage;* at all events, as the brave man is with regard to what is terrible, so the rash man wishes to appear; and so he imitates him in situations where he can. Hence also most of them are a mixture of rashness and cowardice; for, while in these situations they display confidence, they do not hold their ground against what is really terrible. *The man who exceeds in fear is a coward;* for he fears both what he ought not and as he ought not, and all the similar characterizations attach to him. He is lacking also in confidence; but he is more conspicuous for his excess of fear in painful situations. The coward, then, is a despairing sort of person; for he fears everything. The brave man, on the other hand, has the opposite disposition; for confidence is the mark of a hopeful disposition. *The coward, the rash man, and the brave man, then, are concerned with the same objects but are differently disposed towards them;* for the first two exceed and fall short, while the third holds the middle, which is the right, position; and rash men are precipitate, and wish for dangers beforehand but draw back when they are in them, while brave men are keen in the moment of action, but quiet beforehand.

As we have said, then, courage is a mean with respect to things that inspire confidence or fear, in the circumstances that have been stated; and it choses or endures things because it is noble to do so, or because it is base not to do so. *But to die to escape from poverty or love or anything painful is not the mark of a brave man, but rather of a coward;* for it is softness to fly from what is troublesome, and *such a man endures death not because it is noble but to fly from evil.* (Italics added.)[22]

If the students can comprehend these ideas, they can establish criteria for judging courageous action. Reading and discussion would be more meaningful and would lead ultimately to evaluation of a writer's thinking. They could deal with questions such as these:

1. To what extent is the character aware of all aspects of the situation and its possible consequences for him and others?
2. To what extent is the character's goal worthy of the action he undertakes?
3. In undertaking a particular action is the character more concerned with attaining some apparent goal or with avoiding something which he fears? What is his motivation for undertaking the action?
4. What evidence is there that the character is cowardly, rash, or courageous, or has these qualities in some combination?

5. To what extent does the writer present an honest evaluation of the problem? To what extent does he rely on popular beliefs or clichés for his solution? (Is the character treated as courageous when he is really foolish or cowardly? Were there other more sensible actions that the author might have attributed to the character? Does the character display reasonable fear?)

These are fairly abstract and complex questions for students at nearly any level. The problem for the teacher is to introduce them and develop them at a level that will appeal to the students.

Lesson 1 Introduction

The teacher opens the unit by asking students what they think courage is. Their explanations and examples are likely to focus on physical acts of derring-do. He leads the class in constructing a "temporary" definition of courage with examples. This definition* should be duplicated and distributed so that each student has a copy. As the unit progresses, the students will add to it and revise it. After building the first tentative definition, the teacher should capitalize on any disagreements among the students to keep the problem open. If there are no disagreements, they can be asked to validate their ideas by checking other sources: How might you check this definition? Where would you look? They should suggest dictionaries, encyclopedias, teachers, parents, their friends. Their first assignment is to collect ideas that will be used to revise the tentative definition.

Lesson 2 Basic Unit Concepts

After this easy introduction the teacher introduces the Aristotelian ideas. He shows pictures of a bull fighter in action. (Pictures of any other dangerous sport will do. The central figure must jeopardize his life. Close calls are useful. The rewards ought to be questionable.) The pictures can be found in magazines, on airline posters, and so on. The teacher proceeds with questions: Is the matador courageous? Hopefully, there will be disagreements.

Student 1: Yes, it takes a lot of courage to stand that close to the bull's horns.
Student 2: Naw. He's a nut.
Teacher: Why do you think he is foolish?
Student 2: What's it gonna get him besides a horn in the belly?
Student 3: Money.
Teacher: If a man does something for money, is he courageous?

* Obviously, the class should have had training in writing definitions.

Student 5: Yeah, but them guys do it every Sunday. I mean, they're trained for it. It's just like deliverin' milk to them.

Student 6: Yeah, he's no braver than somebody who takes risks everyday—like cops or steeplejacks.

Teacher: Is it possible that he isn't courageous at all? Maybe he only fights the bulls to escape doing other kinds of work?

Student 7: I don't think so. He must know the danger he is in.

Student 8: I don't know. He might have become a matador only because he was afraid not to. Like maybe somebody teased him into it, or his parents expected it.

Obviously, a good class. Most will not develop the basic ideas so rapidly. The teacher will have to provide more questions—perhaps a point of view for the students to argue with. But any class, with the help of the teacher's questions, will eventually develop the ideas with which Aristotle is concerned: courage and its relationship as a mean to the extremes of cowardice and foolhardiness.[23] Once the idea has been developed in class, the students can read the selection from Aristotle if the teacher thinks they will be able to comprehend it.

Whether they read Aristotle or not, their use of the ideas will help them avoid superficial inferences, for they will have to examine the character's motives, his goals, and his awareness of the danger. For instance, if a character undertakes a dangerous action because he fears the alternative more, he is not truly courageous. If he undertakes a dangerous action toward an unnecessary goal, he is, in Aristotle's view, not courageous, but foolhardy. Careful consideration of these questions helps to eliminate stock responses and provide touchstones for discussion.

Lesson 3 Developing Unit Concepts

MATERIALS

Carl Stephenson, "Leiningen Versus the Ants"[24]
Lucille Fletcher, "Sorry, Wrong Number"[25]
Jack London, "To Build a Fire"[26]

The materials for this lesson illustrate the three qualities with which Aristotle is concerned. The teacher assigns the stories and directs discussion. "Leiningen Versus the Ants" displays a classic example of courage in the Aristotelian sense. Leiningen knows the danger, fears it, but acts with confidence to defeat a huge swarm of ants that attack his plantation and nearly take his life. "Sorry, Wrong Number" is a one-act play about a rather disagreeable invalid woman who overhears a conversation about a murder that will be committed. She attempts to contact authorities but is so rattled that no one believes her. When she begins to suspect that she herself is the victim,

she is reduced to complete panic. In addition to discussing the kinds of questions listed under "The Unit Problem," the students might consider the extent to which Mrs. Stevenson's panic contributed to her death. The hero of "To Build a Fire" ignores the warnings of an old-timer and travels alone in the severe cold of the Yukon. He is confident his journey will be successful, but as he travels, his confidence leaves him, and he becomes panicky and freezes to death. All three stories are compelling. "To Build a Fire" is the most difficult but has a high interest level for students. The teacher leads a discussion of each story in terms of the unit problems, and when all the stories have been read, he asks questions to help students compare the three.

Lesson 4 Developing Unit Concepts

MATERIALS

B. J. Chute, "Ski High"[27]
Stewart Alsop and Ralph E. Lapp, "The Strange Death of Louis Slotin"[28]
Homer, *The Odyssey,* Book 9[29]

In this lesson the students attempt to discriminate between courage, rashness, and cowardice in a given character. The class is divided into three groups according to reading ability. The high group reads and discusses Odysseus' adventure with the Cyclops, whose cave he enters out of curiosity but with dire results for his men. The middle group reads "The Strange Death of Louis Slotin," and the low group reads "Ski High." Each story presents a character who may or may not be considered courageous, depending on the circumstances and motives for his acts.

For instance, the "Strange Death of Louis Slotin" tells of a young man who, in the early days of the atomic bomb, was fascinated by an experiment that involved pushing two lumps of fissionable materials together to determine their "critical mass." If they were "critical," a chain reaction would begin. The trick lay in knowing when to stop it. It was an extremely dangerous experiment, but Slotin enjoyed it and rejected the safety devices that were developed for it. He would allow the lumps to stay together for as long as possible before pushing them apart. His final test resulted in his death. In demonstrating the experiment to a visitor, he allowed the materials to stay in juxtaposition for too long and threw himself on them to stop the chain reaction. In doing so, he saved the lives of the visitor and his co-workers but sustained radiation burns that resulted in his death a few weeks later. The authors of the essay call Slotin a brave man but imply that his actions were not altogether rational. The problem for the students is to determine if, when, and why his actions were courageous or foolish.

Following small-group discussion of these selections, each group plans a presentation to the rest of the class, explaining the events and supporting their judgments concerning the courage of the characters.

Lesson 5 Evaluation

MATERIALS

Leo Tolstoy, "The Raid"[30]

The class reads "The Raid," which is based on the Aristotelian concept of courage. The teacher provides a study guide for the reading. Then the students write a brief analysis explaining why each of the three characters is courageous, cowardly, or rash. They should contrast the three characters in their analysis. If the students have not done this kind of written analysis previously, the teacher must include a composition lesson prior to this or allow the students to write out brief answers to particular questions instead of writing a composition.

Lesson 6 Moral Courage

MATERIALS

Transparencies of cartoons
Recording: *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*[31]

The materials up to this point in the unit have emphasized acts of physical courage. This lesson will introduce the idea of courage in situations other than the physical. The lesson uses sequences of cartoons for the purpose. Charlie Brown is a loser, but he continues to try. His kite-flying ends in disaster. His ball team never wins. But a few pages later he is trying again.[32] Is Charlie Brown courageous? Some students will think he is not. Others will argue that he is. The students should be encouraged to debate the matter after collecting evidence to defend their positions. In this connection, they can discuss the title song of *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown.* For example, why do the writers of the song believe that Charlie Brown has a sense of humor? The lesson should result in the realization that many people display courage though they are never subjected to physical danger. The class should define this aspect of courage and add it to their notes for a definition of courage.

Lesson 7 Moral Courage

MATERIALS

Zona Gale, "Bill"[33]
Ernest Hemingway, "A Day's Wait"[34]
Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, "The Revolt of Mother"[35]
Pearl Buck, "Guerrilla Mother"[36]

This lesson has two parts. In the first, the students read "A Day's Wait" and "Bill" and discuss the stories in terms of all the aspects of courage developed in the unit. In the second part, the students working in small, heterogeneous groups read and discuss "Guerrilla Mother" and "The Revolt of Mother." The teacher supplies appropriate study guides for the group discussions.

Following the discussions, which should focus on moral courage and the issues involved, the teacher assigns a composition defining courage. To make the assignment, he calls the attention of the class to their notes toward a definition and asks them what ought to be included in a complete definition. He continues the discussion, asking leading questions when necessary, until the students have listed all the criteria for writing a definition of courage. (They are listed at the beginning of the unit.) If necessary, the teacher provides the appropriate composition models and instruction.

Lesson 8 Synthesis of Unit Concepts

MATERIALS

Movie, *Captains Courageous*[37] (black and white, 116 min.)

After viewing *Captains Courageous,* the students make use of all aspects of the unit concepts in their discussion of the movie, examining the courage or lack of courage displayed by the various characters at various times. To support this discussion, they also discuss why and in what ways specific scenes and actions of characters were convincing or not convincing. The problem is good preparation for producing one-act plays, which follow.

Lesson 9 Producing a Play

MATERIALS

Lucille Fletcher, "Sorry, Wrong Number"[38]
Holworthy Hall and Robert Middlemass, "The Valiant"[39]
Pearl Buck, "The Rock"[40]

A number of one-act plays are appropriate for this unit. Two that might be used as alternatives to those above are Lady Gregory's "The Rising of the Moon"[41] and Eugene O'Neill's "In the Zone."[42] "Sorry, Wrong Number" is repeated here on the assumption that it be assigned to slower students in the class. Of the three plays, "The Valiant" is the most difficult and should therefore be assigned to the better readers.

The groups assigned to each play first read and discuss the play with the help of a study guide supplied by the teacher. Then they plan and execute a production of the play. They may choose to make a radio play—especially good for the group working with "Sorry, Wrong Number." Or they may decide to do either a reading or a studio production. They elect a director and an assistant and begin to discuss how each character should be presented,

what the special production problems are, and so on. For instance, if "Sorry, Wrong Number" becomes a radio play, how will the various phone calls be handled? What special sounds are necessary? Once the various problems have been identified, the director can assign the parts on the basis of tryouts and assign specific jobs such as sound effects or blocking to some of the students. While the actors are practicing their parts, other students can work out their special problems. At first, all this activity can take place in the classroom, but eventually the teacher will have to find spots for rehearsal—a vacant classroom, the auditorium lobby, the hall outside the English class itself. If some students want to rehearse after school, the teacher should welcome the enthusiasm. If all students cannot be involved in the production of a play, a few members of each group can be responsible for leading a discussion of their group's play after its production. The teacher must visit groups regularly and check with his directors on progress.

If the teacher does not plan procedures carefully, chaos may result. If, on the other hand, they are carefully planned, the teacher will find himself free to confer with students over the rough drafts of the compositions assigned in Lesson 7.

Lesson 10 Evaluating a Work and Television Productions

MATERIALS

Rudyard Kipling, "Gunga Din"[43]
Recording: "Gunga Din"[44]

Students listen to the recording of "Gunga Din" while they follow a mimeographed text. They discuss first whether the speaker's judgment of Gunga Din's courage is justified. Does the poem present enough evidence to make a judgment? To what extent is Kipling concerned with the motives for Gunga Din's courage? What is there to indicate that Gunga Din fears what ought to be feared and acts courageously in spite of that? Questions such as these lead to the second major point of the discussion, an evaluation of Kipling's treatment of Gunga Din's courage. The opening question is: With what aspects of courage is Kipling concerned? Although the students may not use such words as "romantic," "idealistic," "popular," or "superficial," they are likely to arrive at similar judgments. The discussion should then turn to television treatments of courage and proceed in a similar manner. The teacher requests that the students watch a particular television production that night. The next day, the students can discuss the show in small groups, asking the same questions about the show that they asked about "Gunga Din."

The teacher then asks the students to decide which and how many television programs they might watch in order to write a critical paper, analyzing the treatment of courage on television. The student may draw examples from one show, a series, several shows from different series, and so on. Fluent writers are encouraged to work on papers comparing one show or series to another or a book or story to a television show, and so on.

Lesson 11 Outside Reading

MATERIALS

Bibliography of books suggested for outside reading.

The teacher distributes a list of books for outside reading. The students may either choose a book from the list or select some other book with the teacher's approval. The teacher makes an appointment to take his class to the library, asking the librarian to place the books on the unit bibliography together on a table so that the students may browse through them. Although the teacher may suggest appropriate titles for slow, functional, and fluent readers, the final choice is the student's own. When the choice is made, he registers the title with the teacher, and if he decides to change books, he keeps the teacher informed. The teacher encourages the students to change when and if they wish because there are always some who make inappropriate choices.

Following the trip to the library, it is wise to devote a session or two to reading in class. During these reading periods the teacher may confer with students on their written definitions of courage, which will be due shortly, or the critical papers described in the preceding lesson. The trip to the library and the days following signal the formal end of the unit activities in class. While the teacher begins the next unit, the students can complete their outside reading and write their "book reports." The reports will not be book reports in the usual sense, however. They will make use of the main unit concepts as described in objective 1 and its criterion statements.

Lesson 12 Writing a Short Story

MATERIALS

"Death of a City," student model.

This lesson can appear at various points in the sequence after Lesson 4 and may very likely be taught in two parts, separated by another lesson. The students develop their short stories in two installments. They first read the model and analyze its parts. They identify the two major sections of the essay, its descriptions of the same characters in each section, its use of highly specific details, and so on. Following the analysis, the students suggest similar situations that may effect entire communities—for example, flood or fire—or individuals—snake bite, drowning. Each student then writes a composition in which he describes a scene before and after the coming of some sudden, frightening event. He must include specific details about two or three people in particular. In the second stage, he selects one character for special de-

velopment. The first part of his story, the peaceful scene, should give some clues as to how the character will react when disaster strikes. Some of the materials read in class provide good examples, "To Build a Fire," for instance. The story should let the reader see not only the actions of the character but what goes on in his mind—an inner struggle involving courage, cowardice, or rashness, or some combination of them.

The model for the first stage follows:

DEATH OF A CITY

May 8, 1902, dawned magnificently in the small West Indian port, St. Pierre. The sun shot shafts of gold and pink across the azure Caribbean and touched the top of Pelie, the long-restless volcano towering above the village, and edged its floating banner of vapor with gold.

The plump padre of the white-washed church on the plaza gazed up at it in wonder. "A most fortunate omen for the day to come," he muttered, and turned back into his sanctuary for morning prayers. Lolling back in a wickerwork chair on a magnolia-shaded veranda, a French planter absorbed the beauty of the sunrise along with a glass or two of port. On the bridge of a small sloop riding at anchor in the bay a ship captain leaned against a mast and let the soft sea breeze caress his face. A half-drunken carter staggered from his shack in the slums and strode unsteadily toward his cart.

Morning grew old and flowed into early afternoon, and the town began to awake from its mid-day rest. Stretching wearily, the carter rose from his nap in the shade of his cart. The French planter stepped out of a shop on the plaza and strode easily down the square. A small boy sprawled idly in the dust nearby, making formations of rudely carved wooden soldiers. A feeling like that of a man newly awakened from sleep ran through the town, and people prepared to take up again what they had left undone that morning.

It began so slightly as to be almost unnoticeable, a slight trembling of the earth that set the palm-fronds dancing and the boy's soldiers sprawling in the dust. It grew, and rocked walls and sent people stumbling. And with it grew a sound, at first a mere sigh, a small mutter, that swelled to a roar that drowned everything else in its vastness. The earth itself seemed to cry aloud in agony as groan after groan was wrenched from its very heart.

An explosion shook the sky, and a flaming cloud boiled upward from Pelie's mouth, then settled and flowed down the mountain like a great flood bursting from a broken dike. Billowing and eddying like an angry river, it swept all before its raging flood.

The priest fled from his church, and stumbled toward the shelter of a crumbling wall. The carter hauled frantically at his burro, but the fear-stricken beast refused to move. He turned and fled toward the church. Tripping against a curb, the French planter fell, and lay where he struck, holding his head as if to shut out the roar of the volcano. Crying for

mother, the small boy cringed in the shadow of a shrub. Searing all before it into oblivion, flames flowed through the doomed city and rolled into the sea. Where it passed, the waters of the bay spouted and boiled, and the ships it touched exploded into flames. Those that had time fled for their lives. The cloud pushed a scorching wind before it, and the fleeting ships were assisted in their flight by the very death they were attempting to escape. City, ships, men, all were lost for one infinite moment in one glowing cloud of fire blotting out all things within it.

And then it was over. Where once a city had lived only dead ashes remained. Yet down in the deepest dungeon of the city jail a prisoner pounded his cell door and shouted for a jailer who could not come. Of all the thronging multitudes that had been living but a moment before, only the most wretched, despised of them all remained.

Ninth-grade girl

In building and teaching this or any other unit, the teacher must be concerned with both the affective and cognitive responses of his students. Although the cognitive may be primary, no one doubts that students learn more in the cognitive realm if they enjoy what they are doing. The teacher must do a great deal to ensure positive affective results. He must adapt particular units of instruction to the abilities of the students; he must teach inductively, so that the students can become involved in learning processes; he must find a variety of instructional materials and devise a variety of activities for his students. Above all, he must order the learnings so that the students progress from the simple to the more complex and from the teacher-supported activity to the independent one. All this demands considerably more of the teacher than lecturing on or discussing one story after another in a single text. But the extra effort accomplishes far more.

The following report by a student teacher describes her experience in using and her classes' responses to certain of the activities and techniques suggested in this chapter.

Notes on the Production of "Pyramus and Thisbe"

Charlene McMahon

I look around room 33 the day before the play and find five sets of costumes, swords, mulberry bushes, jars of ketchup, lanterns and one large painted refrigerator box (which happens to be a wall) all over the room. How will one hundred fifty kids find what belongs to them in all this? Somehow five different classes did, with just a few mix-ups. Fifth period borrowed fourth period's lantern which was found in seventh period's pile of props; second period's costumes ended up with first period's (they were returned to second period) and seventh period's mulberry bush completely disappeared until Brooks ran across the stage with it on play day shouting, "I found it; I found

it!" *after* the mulberry scene was over. But together 150 ninth grade students and I produced a play, the Pyramus and Thisbe story, taken from the last act of *Midsummer Night's Dream* on stage with lights, costumes, make up and audience. The five plays were presented the same day and if anyone in my classes had a studyhall during one of the plays he could come and watch.

I used a recording of the last act which gave the students a general idea of how the acting sounded. Then we began our three-week practice. Auditions were held the first two or three days, giving a lot of the students a chance to read. To catch the students' interest, I chose one of the funnier parts of the play to read first rather than start at the beginning of the act. I chose the actors and appointed student directors. The play used thirteen of the students as actors in each of my five classes; the rest were placed in a costume, makeup, or prop group. Each group had a student appointed leader. Anyone not in a group was appointed curtain man and prompter. I helped the directors and suggested ideas for costuming and props, but they had to obtain whatever they wanted. The groups met in various corners of the room during rehearsal. I checked on different days to see that each person in the group was bringing in or working on something for the play. A group had class time to prepare props or costumes. From the first day of practice till stage appearance, the actors moved the chairs to the edge of the room and imagined themselves on stage. Everyone offered suggestions to the actors.

The play itself is funny! A group of men act out a love scene in which the tragic heroine is played by a male actor. (The record helps the ninth grade Thisbes to use a high girlish voice.) The bumpkins offer a ludicrous interpretation of the tragic mythological story, and interest in the play was no problem. Students were excited about appearing on stage, and the competition of five plays helped; each period wanted to be the best.

Practices were fun. Once students were familiar with their lines, they started putting more physical motions into their parts. The student directors gave stage directions, and I kept reminding the actors not to stand still and recite their lines, but to move around a lot. The more they hammed it up the funnier the play would be. Ninth graders have tons of enthusiasm and use lots of imagination in their roles. The teacher needn't tell them every move to make. Ninth grade Thisbes danced around lifting their skirts, lions swung tails and a "tragic" Pyramus swooned around an entire stage dying. Walls reached out and pinched Thisbes, and not to be outdone, one Pyramus kicked Wall and almost lost his balance. When introduced they strutted, danced around and bowed vigorously. Sometimes it was difficult to get an enthusiastic actor off stage once his lines were read. Variety in actor choosing helps. In a predominately female class a shy boy made a great Thisbe in an all girl cast; a chubby girl with a booming deep voice made a marvelous Pyramus paired with a skinny, shorter male Thisbe. An enthusiastic slow reader was an impressive swaying human mulberry bush.

With lots of time the costume groups collected elaborate costumes complete with wigs and skirts for Thisbe and fearful lion outfits. Costumes weren't chosen necessarily to fit the period. The mother of the human mulberry bush made a costume out of a sheet that came to the floor. When both lovers died, the mulberry bush turned around and the back sheet, dyed red, displayed the lover's blood. Balloons under a sweater produced a voluptuous Thisbe in one class and a girl lion wriggled onto stage in a sexy black leotard outfit. Eyes peered out of a fearful shopping bag lion's face. One Pyramus wore a plastic nose mask fastened by an elastic band with mustache and glasses attached. While leaning over her slain Pyramus, Thisbe lifted the mask, moaning, "These lily lips, This cherry nose, . . ." and let go of the mask, snapping the elastic band.

The audiences were comprised of my ninth grade students. (A few days before the play, I made a list of those from each class who wanted to come from a study hall to watch another production. Some students came to three different plays. The lists were then ready for anxious studyhall teachers on play day.) In addition, another teacher sent her English classes during some of the periods my plays were enacted. Two humanities classes also attended, as well as teachers who had free periods during some of the plays.

Backstage was a little hectic on the day of the play. Stage fright appeared for the first time, and students seemed to be running in circles. But the curtain went up, and the students were tremendous. The audiences loved them. The other English classes that watched congratulated them in the hallway afterwards, and one audience ran up on stage after the play shaking hands with the actors. Even mistakes were funny. One Pyramus pulled out his sword and his costume fell off. A lion got excited and threw his lines off stage and then had to crawl backwards and get them because he couldn't remember what he was supposed to say. The voluptuous Thisbe found a pin on stage and popped his balloons as "she" died. Lines recited incorrectly brought laughter and with laughter each group relaxed and swung into action.

I walked into a classroom the day after the play and somehow I had different classes. We had worked hard together on something that was successful for them. They were actually smiling? They were the success of the play. I can't tell you how excited I was for them. They had done a tremendous job and realized it. The fears of inability to act were gone and class enthusiasm was visibly evident. We could have studied grammar together after this, smiling! We had produced a play!

It is unrealistic to say that everyone was totally caught up. Some wanted a bigger part; some with bigger parts could have worked harder. Since the class had a more relaxed atmosphere during practices, discipline was sometimes a problem. One class in particular, predominantly boys, didn't get involved in the play till close to the performance. I had actors from the other classes come in to demonstrate and this provided motivation for them to do as well as the other classes. I also told students early about having an audience which makes a difference in their efforts. I found that some of the students

with only minor participation in the play became bored or were discipline problems. Doing the play again, I would try to find something interesting for them to do. They could work on another group project from the humor unit of which this play was a part, and present this to the class. I would also try to give the student directors more freedom, discussing acting hints with them perhaps rather than the whole class.

As a group I feel the students benefited. Their personal reactions to the play can express better than anything I can say the actual value of producing a class play. The day after the performance I asked the students to write a review of the play they had watched and to tell me their personal reactions to producing their own play. They also filled out a questionnaire which made use of a seven point rating scale (one is the lowest and seven is the highest) for questions about their play, whether they wished to be in future plays, general questions about activities covered in English class and their opinions of Shakespeare.

The questionnaire was filled out by one hundred and thirty-three students, sixty-two boys and sixty-one girls. Ten had not signed names. Seventy students gave the play as a class activity a high rating of seven. One hundred and three of one hundred and thirty-three students rated the play with six or seven; only two gave the play the lowest rating of one or two. Of the seven activities listed for English classes "reading short stories" and "working in the literature book" rated as next favorites with thirty people giving a rating of seven to short stories and twenty-nine giving a seven rating to the literature book, far fewer than rated the play production 7. Students liked the stage experience. Reading a play in class was given a much lower rating than producing the play on stage. Only twenty-three gave the class reading of a play a seven rating. Speech and grammar were lowest with only nine people giving the highest rating to speech and six rating grammar high.

Not unexpectedly, the classes that were most co-operative in play practice rated the play higher than the less co-operative groups. In the all-boy class sixteen of the twenty-seven gave the play the higher rating (six and seven). The other groups were more positive as a whole.

Sex made a little difference in ratings. The lowest play rating for a girl was three; three boys rated the play one, two, or three. The girls were slightly more positive about the play. Thirty-nine girls gave the play a seven rating, and twenty-five boys gave the play the highest rating. (Interestingly enough, the boys were more positive about grammar than the girls. Five boys gave this extremely high ratings compared to one girl. Twenty-five girls gave grammar the lowest one and two ratings compared to eighteen boys.)

Desire to produce other plays was evident. One hundred and fifteen students of one hundred and thirty-three responded that they would like to participate in another play. They also seemed eager to take active parts in another production. Seventy-four students wanted to be actors and twenty-nine chose director. Only seventeen listed no participation.

Producing the play even had an effect on their response to Shakespeare. Only forty-four students stated that they liked Shakespeare before producing the play. Their reaction to Shakespeare after the production was remarkably different. One hundred and one students marked yes to the question, Do you like Shakespeare at this point after doing this play? Sex made almost no difference in this question. The responses were similar. In their choices for an introduction to Shakespeare in English class the play was overwhelmingly rated the highest. A teacher lecture was given a high (6 or 7) rating by only nine students. Reading a play received forty-two high (6 or 7) ratings compared to ninety-two students who rated producing the play with a high six or seven rating.

Their comments taken from the reviews were also impressive. Their writing has not been corrected.

1. "It showed me that there are different things that can be done with an English class. It was alot of work, but it was fun and worthwhile."
2. "I love to be part of a play. I was so excited about it that when it was my turn, I forgot all my lines and the rest of the kids went on. I felt so ridiculous!"
3. "I learned alot more about Shaskspear than if I would have just read it and answered questions."
4. "I got experant for being up in front of people."
5. "I learned that you can't goof around and then to do something right. Now I believe in the saying PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT."
6. "For the first time our class co-operated and really tried to make the play a success."
7. "Now I know what it means to see an actor on the stage that looks like his old dead grandmother came to wish him good-luck."
8. "It was more fun than just dreary old English class. I enjoyed being in the play because everyone likes to stand out and be noticed and being in a play like this certainly makes you stand out and be noticed."
9. "I learned to never give up at the last moment in doing something. What did I get out of it? I got enjoyment, satisfaction and a few ulcers."
10. "I didn't think it would be that good."
11. "You really have to know what's going on."
12. "I liked the whole play because everyone put alot of effort to make the play a success."
13. "You had to have responibility and it was fun to."
14. "When everybody puts their mind to do something everything can work out very well."
15. "I've never did this before. I got the expermentce from this play. When I get to be in the 11th and 12th grade it will be eaiser to try out for a part."
16. "The lines weren't hard and I was an important figure."

There were only a few negative comments about the play from the entire group.

17. "I didn't get anything out of it."
18. "I like being make up but I would have wanted to be an actor."
19. "I think this play was very effective except the parts that were supposed to be funny that we practiced in class because I had heard them for two weeks."
20. "I didn't like the weeks that were spent on it but it turned out really good."
21. "I really didn't get anything out of the play but it was fun."

Most rewarding of all were the changes of attitude in some students who found that they could succeed.

22. "I enjoyed working with the actors very much as a director. Last year if I would have said do this or that, I would have been the laughing stock of the whole school and my friends (supposedly) wouldn't have talked to me or let me forget about it just out of jealosy. But all the kids were wonderful and for the first time I wasn't afraid to voice an opinion. Everyone cooperated very well and I just loved it."
23. "I found that I was quite silly acting in the beginning about being afraid of acting the Pyramus part. I found that I greatly enjoyed acting in front of a group. I hope to play in a future play."
24. "I like being in the play because it give me a chanch to act and feel good like some of the pro-acters in the big time."
25. "I had fun with the class and I was happy that sonthing I helped do was so sececfule." (a hostile student at the beginning of the year)

Students discovered that English classes don't really have to be dreary; they can be fun and worthwhile at the same time.

26. "I thought it was *keen* because it wasn't English but yet it was English."
27. "I didn't get to much out of the play because I wasn't here. but what I did see in class was good I thought. And what I didn't see must of have been good of what other people said. I wish I could have seen the play. I would have laugh a lot."

NOTES

1. For a more detailed, but somewhat different, analysis see David R. Krathwohl, Benjamin S. Bloom, Bertram B. Masia, *Taxonomy of Eductional Objectives, Handbook II: Affective Domain* (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1964).
2. *The Taxonomy . . . Affective Domain* argues that "awareness" is the base for cognitive response and calls it "almost a cognitive behavior." The commentary continues, ". . . we are not so concerned that with a memory of, or ability to recall, an item or fact as we are that, given appropriate opportunity, the learner will merely be conscious of something. . . ." (p. 176) The distinction appears to be in the choice of words used to describe it rather than in reality. For example, let us assume we want to test the reader's "awareness" of Huck's decision. Our question has to be something like this, "What did Huck think the consequences of helping Jim would be?" Any adequate answer not only involves recall, "awareness," of certain specific details, but simple inference as well. Clearly this is a cognitive response. Their eagerness to claim the independence of the *Affective Domain* from the *Cognitive* results in this ambiguity.
3. For a study of direct vs. indirect patterns of influence in the classroom, see Ned A. Flanders, *Teacher Influence, Pupil Attitudes, and Achievement* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965).
4. Jerome Bruner, *The Process of Education* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960).
5. Langston Hughes, "Brass Spittoons," *The Book of American Negro Poetry,* ed. James Weldon Johnson (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1931).
6. For a catalog write to: University Prints, 15 Brattle Street, Harvard Square, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
7. "Resources for the Teaching of English" Champaign: The National Council of Teachers of English, 508 South Sixth Street, Champaign, Illinois 61820.
8. Ask for "Audio Visual Teaching Materials," Educational Audio Visual, Inc., Pleasantville, New York, 10570.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Bill Cosby, *Revenge,* Warner Brothers, W 1691.
11. Godfrey Cambridge, *Ready or Not,* Epic FLM13101.
12. George Carlin, *Take Offs and Put Ons,* RCA, LPM 3772.
13. Bobbie Gentry, *Ode to Billie Joe,* Capitol, ST 2830.
14. All in *A Journey of Poems,* ed. Richard F. Niebling (New York: Dell, 1964), pp. 95, 32, 78, and 157, respectively.
15. Ed McCurdy, Michael Kane, *The Legend of Robin Hood,* Riverside, RLP12-810.
16. See the Language in Action Series, *Education Film Catalogue,* Indiana University, Audio Visual Center, Bloomington, Indiana, 47401.
17. Julie Andrews, Dick Van Dyke, *et al., Mary Poppins,* Buena Vista Records, BV 4026.
18. John M. Culkin, S.J., "Film Study in the High School," *Bulletin of the National Catholic Education Association,* XXIII:3 (October 1965), pp. 1–35. J. Paul Carrico, C.S.C., "Matter and Meaning of Motion Pictures," *English Journal,* 56:1 (January 1967), pp. 23–37.
19. For films dealing with literature, language, and linguistics see *Educational Film Catalogue,* Indiana University, Audio Visual Center, Bloomington, Indiana, 47401.
20. All the films listed are available from Contemporary Films, 267 West 25th Street, New York, New York, 10001. Request catalogs.
21. All the films described below, except the first, are available from Contemporary Films.

22. Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics,* in *Introduction to Aristotle,* ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1947), pp. 362–364.
23. For an explicit discussion of the Aristotelian mean, see Aristotle, *op. cit.,* pp. 338–347.
24. Carl Stephenson, "Leiningen Versus the Ants," *Worlds to Explore,* ed. Matilda Bailey and Ulhin W. Leavell (New York: American Book Company, 1956).
25. Lucille Fletcher, "Sorry, Wrong Number," *24 Favorite One-Act Plays,* ed. Bennett Cerf and Van H. Cartmell (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1963).
26. Jack London, "To Build a Fire," *Fifty Great American Short Stories,* ed. Milton Crane (New York: Bantam Books, 1965).
27. B. J. Chute, "Ski High," *Prose and Poetry Adventures,* ed. William J. Iverson and Agnes L. McCarthy (Syracuse: L. W. Singer Company, Inc., 1955).
28. Stewart Alsop and Ralph E. Lapp, "The Strange Death of Louis Slotin," *Man Against Nature,* ed. Charles Neider (New York: Bantam Books, 1963).
29. A poetic translation: Homer, *The Odyssey,* tr. Robert Fitzgerald (New York: Anchor Books, 1963). A prose translation: *The Odyssey,* tr. W. H. D. Rouse (New York: New American Library, 1949).
30. Leo Tolstoy, *The Cossacks and The Raid,* tr. Andrew R. MacAndrew (New York: New American Library, 1961).
31. *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown,* MGM, IE90C.
32. See especially Charles M. Schulz, *You Are Too Much, Charlie Brown* (New York: Fawcett Publications, 1967) and *Let's Face It, Charlie Brown* (New York: Fawcett Publications, 1967).
33. Zona Gale, "Bill," *Adventures for Readers,* ed. Elizabeth O'Daly and Egbert W. Nieman (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & Company, 1958).
34. Ernest Hemingway, "A Day's Wait," *Adventures for Readers,* ed. Elizabeth O'Daly and Egbert W. Nieman (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & Company, 1958).
35. Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, "The Revolt of Mother," *Prose and Poetry Adventures,* ed. Elizabeth F. Ansorge *et al.* (Syracuse: L. W. Singer Company, Inc., 1942).
36. Pearl Buck, "Guerrilla Mother," *Prose and Poetry for Appreciation,* ed. Elizabeth F. Ansorge *et al.* (Syracuse: L. W. Singer Company, Inc., 1942).
37. *Captains Courageous,* listed in catalogue for Films, Incorporated.
38. Lucille Fletcher, *Ibid.*
39. Holworthy Hall and Robert Middlemass, "The Valiant," *Adventures in Reading,* ed. Jacob M. Ross and Blanche J. Thompson (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & Company, 1948).
40. Pearl Buck, "The Rock," *Adventures in Reading,* ed. Jacob M. Ross and Blanche J. Thompson (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & Company, 1948).
41. Lady Gregory, "The Rising of the Moon," *Thirty Famous One-Act Plays,* ed. Bennett Cerf and Van H. Cartmell (New York: Random House, 1943).

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15 Curricula in Literature

In this book considerable stress has been placed on the two major considerations in teaching English: (1) the ability and interests of the students and (2) the structure of the subject. Up to this point, however, the emphasis has been on individual lessons (lasting a few days) and units of instruction (lasting a few weeks). The same considerations are equally valid for curricula planned for several years' work in English. The idea that curricula, at least at the present time, must be based upon sound, carefully considered theory rather than experiment or intuition was stressed in the introduction to this book. The experimental trial of alternatives is so complex that it is a practical impossibility for the development of curricula. The other alternative, teacher's intuition, has demonstrated its weakness in innumerable schools throughout the country. There are simply too many teachers whose intuitions correspond neither to the subject nor to the students in their particular classes.

The two considerations of students and the structure of the subject imply a third, that of change. Obviously, students change. Shifts in population change the students in a given school, and the general environment changes them. Note how the vocabulary of young people entering school has changed. Twenty years ago, how many people were familiar with such words as "astronaut," "Apollo," and "Gemini," to take three obvious examples? Finally, the curriculum, if it works, changes the students. Once they learn to apply such concepts as "connotation of words" and "audience," they will tend to read and hear everything in a more sophisticated way. The successful curriculum outmodes itself. By the same token, different students require different curricula because they may not share the same cultural backgrounds. For example, a six-year-old youngster from one household may be able to identify paintings by such artists as Picasso, Van Gogh, Brueghel, and El Greco. Another will know the music of Thelonious Monk, Cannonball Adderley, and Josh White.

A third may not know any of that but may know the nearest source of marijuana and heroin. The backgrounds are different, but it might be difficult for people from such varied backgrounds to decide which of them is *deprived*. In short, because change or differentiation is such an important consideration, any curriculum must contain a built-in mechanism for change. The results of pretests and inventories, discussed earlier, provide the impetus, but the teacher in his attitudes and planning must provide the actual change.

The best a total curriculum can do, or perhaps should do, is to provide a general sequence within which the teacher can plan with considerable latitude, depending on the students he finds in his particular classes. At the same time, there is a genuine necessity for a sequence of study that begins with the student as he stands in relation to the subject and then moves toward increasing his sophistication. A sequence of this sort, however, requires careful inventory procedures prior to instruction and careful evaluation of the results of instruction. Any curriculum that goes its merry way regardless of the effectiveness of instruction is useless, except in the shallowest sense—it gives the teacher something to do.

In the 1960s the United States Office of Education sponsored a number of English curriculum projects that were intended to develop workable sequences of instructional materials. Recognizing that a curriculum must be far more than a list of works and interpretations to be consumed by unwary students, the participants in most of these projects took a hard look at both subject matter and students and attempted to go beyond the prevalent arbitrary and senseless offerings made by the workbooks and the generically or chronologically ordered anthologies that structured the literature curricula offered in most school systems.

These curriculum projects developed a variety of programs, ranging from a K-12 curriculum to a program for only a few grade levels. Some focused on a distinct segment of the population or on a single aspect of English. The University of Nebraska's English Curriculum Center, for example, offers a K-12 curriculum that uses thematic, generic, and historically centered units. The units on mythology and satire from the elementary through the secondary program are good examples of sequencing. The Northwestern English Curriculum Center has developed lessons on composition. The Hunter College center has focused on developing English units in a program for "educationally deprived urban children" with reading materials appropriate for the fifth- through the eighth-grade reading levels.[1]

The materials produced by the various centers can be very helpful to teachers, English departments, and school systems interested in developing units of instruction for their own students. The approach has been scholarly, and the concepts underlying the lessons and units of instruction have been rather carefully worked out. The units suggest materials and procedures that have been tried by a good many teachers. Furthermore, they suggest possi-

bilities for sequencing materials and units within grade levels and from one grade level to another.

Their weakness lies in what is at least an implied rigidity. Many present no specific mechanism for varying curricular offerings, no pretests, and few methods of evaluating instruction beyond the level of recall. A notable exception is the Nebraska curriculum in which nearly all units at the secondary level require independent work in which students must make use of what they learned during the course of their study. But most present no means for differentiating work within a single classroom or even for differentiating between, say, one tenth-grade class and another.

Despite the danger that rigor mortis frequently sets in on curriculum documents, there is a need for the individual teacher, the English department, and the school system to develop curriculum structures. Rigidity can be prevented if there is provision for change at all three levels. The individual English teacher, after examining the results of inventories and instruction, must be willing and able to vary materials, procedures, and objectives as necessary. Both departmental and system-wide structures for review and change should be available and should be used regularly.

Sequence

In planning the curriculum for several grade levels, the areas for study in literature will be dictated by the theory that the department or school system has adopted. The theory of literary meaning that guides the units of instruction presented in this book has been presented in Chapters 8, 9, and 10. Given certain student skills and backgrounds, this theory suggests that units should be scheduled into the curriculum on the basis of the type of problem and the kind of materials emphasized by the unit. Thus, a unit emphasizing the study of connotative language in advertising would precede a unit dealing with the analysis of imagery in poetry. Similarly, a general unit on concepts of the hero would precede a unit on the heroic figure of myth, epic, comedy, and tragedy. Again, a unit dealing with the relatively concrete relationships between a character and his immediate circle ("The Outcast" or "The Leader and the Group") should precede units dealing with the more abstract relationships ("Man and Social Class" and "Man and Culture"). The unit on "Courage" in Chapter 14 puts considerable emphasis on what the writer says at the literal level and requires relatively simple judgments and inferences about the motives, intentions, and feelings of characters. "The Outcast" unit for ninth or tenth graders in Chapter 9, while demanding ability to deal with literal and simple inference problems, focuses on the more subtle relationships among characters and the effects of those relationships.

Types of Units

Since one of the important characteristics of literature is its search for and examination of values, some units will be thematic, focusing on major social and cultural values. At lower levels in the seventh through twelfth grade curriculum, these will probably be relatively simple, restricted to the examination of a single value construct: courage, justice, love, money, and so on. At higher levels, the units can deal with sets of related values as they are examined, developed, or criticized in literature. "The American Dream," for example, might focus on the sets of values that affected the pioneers (Ole Rölvaag's *Giants in the Earth,* John Steinbeck's "The Leader of the People") and contemporary, urban, industrialized man (Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman,* F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby,* and Nevil Shute's *Trustee from the Toolroom*). Another unit in this series might focus on how science is changing the values of modern man, giving rise to conflicts between generations. A great deal of material for such a unit is available in magazines from *Life* to *Esquire.* Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World,* George Orwell's *1984,* and B. F. Skinner's *Walden Two* could be used in such a unit. The examination of values is so pervasive in literature that students will be concerned with that problem in any units they study.

The examination of man in relation to his several environments (physical, social, and cultural) also receives widespread attention in literature. A series of units dealing with man in relation to various aspects of environment was discussed in Chapter 10. Other units of that type might focus on the city and country as contrasting environments. Small-town environments have been the setting for a number of literary works in the twentieth century. The unit might examine the sort of treatment afforded the various environments: realistic, naturalistic, romantic, and satiric. And since writers are usually concerned with the effects of these environments on their characters' value systems, the units in this series can be easily related to those in the one directly concerned with values. Some of the units might focus on particular types of relationships among individuals, as does "The Outcast" in Chapter 9. A unit of this type for eighth graders might deal with "The Leader and the Group" and seek to identify the qualities, responsibilities, and results of leadership and to interpret the relationships existing between the leader and his followers, given certain characteristics of leadership and certain conditions. The unit could make use of biographical material at various levels of reading difficulty, traditional material such as *Tom Sawyer* and *Treasure Island* (note the battles for leadership in the latter), and contemporary adolescent novels such as Henry Gregor Felsen's *Hot Rod* and Frank Bonham's *Durango Street.* This unit would relate well to units in the value series such as "Courage" and "Justice." At more sophisticated levels of the curriculum there might be a unit on "The Uses of Power" in which students examine materials ranging from Machiavelli's *The*

Prince to Golding's *Lord of the Flies.* (See a fluent ninth grader's comparison of these works in Chapter 13.) The central problems in such a unit would be to determine, first, how and why men have used power over their fellow men and, second, when and if such uses of power are appropriate.

Another area to explore is imagery, defined broadly as in Chapter 10 to include character, and the like. Such a sequence might begin with "Animals in Literature," the seventh-grade unit described in Chapter 4, and proceed to the interpretation and writing of figurative language, also in the seventh grade or perhaps the eighth. A unit on "The Nature of Personality" might follow in the eighth grade with students examining various methods of interpreting personality, from the use of horoscopes to the more recently developed psychological approaches. A unit of this sort is outlined very briefly in Chapter 3. The unit on "Symbolism" outlined in Chapters 4 and 5 might follow at the ninth- or tenth-grade levels and be followed in the tenth or eleventh grade with an examination of "Types of Imagery." In the latter, students could examine painting, sculpture, photography, poetry, and prose as each makes use of various types of representation: Realism, Symbolism, Impressionism, Surrealism, and so on. A project for evaluation of instruction might require students to determine the types of imagery involved in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and to explain how the imagery relates to the central purpose and impression of the poem. A final unit in this sequence might examine archetypal image patterns in literature.

A fourth concern of readers of literature is that of genre. Most major genres (tragedy, epic, comedy) are too complex for study at junior high level. Although it is fairly simple to find relatively easy satiric material for study at junior high level, the same is not true for tragedy and epic. However, other more popular genre are available for study in the junior high. Science fiction is extremely popular with some students. Detective fiction and the western also make effective units of study. In any of these, the purpose would involve not simply identifying the characteristics of the form but determining how writers use and vary them in conveying the central meanings of a particular work.

At the eleventh- or twelfth-grade levels or with advanced students, units concerned with the work of a particular author or with an historical literary period can be productive. An "author" unit on Poe was suggested in Chapter 7, and a "period" unit on Augustan satire was suggested in Chapter 12. It is important to remember, however, that the vast majority of junior and senior high school students do not share the interests of college English majors. Although high school students will be interested in what a work says and how it says it, they ordinarily care little about the history of blank verse, the historical, cultural, and literary forces that influenced the work of Alexander Pope, or the ways in which one novel by Thomas Hardy is related to others he wrote. As a matter of fact, it is probably safe to suggest that not even all college English majors are enthralled by such study. Still, a carefully developed unit on the English Romantic poets that examines the various ideals and methods of the movement and supplies the background for intelligent, independent reading of other Romantic poetry not studied in class can be a rewarding experience for students who have the appropriate reading skills.

Scope and Sequence Charts

The scope and sequence chart on p. 358 is an example of how a literature curriculum for grades seven through twelve might appear. It includes a strand of units on language, most of which have direct relevance to the literature program. Although the chart has the advantage of presenting an overall view of the program at a glance, it does lack detail. To be really useful, any scope and sequence chart should be supplemented by brief synopses of the units that it incorporates. Synopses of units for two vertical series of related units across grade levels follow the chart. The synopses have been included only for units not developed in detail elsewhere in this book. The relationships among the units are far more complex than the grade level (horizontal) rows and vertical columns on the chart suggest. For instance, the unit on "Semantics" at the seventh-grade level contributes skills and concepts necessary to all units in the chart. Concepts learned in the "Courage" unit will contribute to all units in "The Hero" strand, "The Outcast" unit, and so on. Similarly, the twelfth-grade unit on the "Iconography of an Age" will draw heavily on all units in the "Imagery" strand, the "History of the English Language" and the "Value Systems" sequence.

The numbers in parentheses on the chart indicate a possible sequence for units during a given grade level. The initial activity in each grade is the administration of appropriate inventories. The first unit is one to which students ordinarily have a strong affective response. In addition, nearly all of the first and second units are conceptually important to the other units for the year. The criteria for arranging the other units involve the ways in which they contribute to one another and the unit's level of difficulty. Thus, the tenth-grade sequence opens with "Stage Comedy," which is likely to have strong appeal for the students. The unit "Communications: Ambiguity and Redundancy" prepares the students for "Levels of Interpretation." Both contribute to "Point of View in Literature," and all three contribute to "Social Protest."

Synopses of the units in two vertical sequences, The Hero and The Problem of Change, follow below. However, synopses for units that have been developed elsewhere in this book have not been included. "The Tragic Hero" unit, for instance, appears in detail at the end of Chapter 3, while "The Outcast" appears in Chapter 9. Suggestions for developing a unit on "The Nature of Personality" appear in Chapter 3. With some changes in the materials suggested, that unit can readily be adapted for use in the eighth grade.

TABLE 15.1. Sample Scope and Sequence Chart

Grades	*Language*	*Imagery*	*Humor*	*The Hero*	*Value Systems*	*Problem of Change*
7	Semantics I, Reading: Connotation and Propaganda Analysis (1)	Animal Imagery in Literature (2)	Introduction to Humor (3)	Types of Folk Literature (4)	Courage (5)	Science Fiction (6)
8	Dialects (2)	Types of Characters (4)	American Humorists (3)	The Nature of Personality (5)	Justice (6)	Coming of Age (1)
9	Semantics II, Writing: Purpose, Audience, and Point of View (1)	Introduction to Levels of Meaning (5)	Satire (6)	Mythic Hero (4)	Survival: Values Under Stress (2)	The Outcast (3)
10	Communications: Ambiguity and Redundancy (2)	Levels of Interpretation (3)	Stage Comedy (1)	Archetypal Patterns (6)	Social Protest (5)	Point of View in Literature (4)
11	Language, Culture, and Perception (2)	Perceptions: Realism, Surrealism, Impressionism (3)	Picaresque Hero (5)	Epic Hero (4)	The Black Experience (1)	Approaching an Author: Mark Twain (6)
12	History of the English Language (2)	Evaluation of Experience: Pessimism, Optimism, Neutrality (6)	Theory of Comedy (5)	Tragic Hero (4)	Individual and Society: Alienation and Integration (1)	Iconography of an Age (3)

Initial Activity: Inventories at Each Grade Level

Numerals in parentheses indicate unit sequence during year.

Vertical Sequence: The Hero

Types of Folk Literature (Seventh Grade)

UNIFYING CONCEPTS

Myth, defined as stories of gods who create the world and of men who do not create but who, by virtue of supernatural powers, can control the environment; myth as etiological tale; legends, stories of historical men to whom extraordinary powers and virtues have been attributed; tall tales of invented heroes (occupational and regional) to whom supernatural powers are attributed; the methods of creating and conveying all such stories; the function of the stories.

CENTRAL READINGS

Tales of Greek, Norse, and American Indian gods and heroes; etiological tales from Greece, India, Africa, and American Indian tribes; legends of historical American heroes; tall tales of American occupational and regional heroes.

COMPOSITIONS

Analyses of stories of each type read independently; original heroic myth, etiological myth, and tall tale.

DESCRIPTION

The unit begins with a discussion of comic book heroes such as Plasticman and Superman. The class identifies their special characteristics and discusses why they appeal to the popular imagination. Next, the class speculates on the types of heroes that might be present in other cultures, before beginning to read Greek, Norse, and American Indian stories of gods and heroes. Following the reading, the students identify the human and superhuman characteristics of the heroes and discuss the appeal of such stories. Next, they read one or two such tales of their own choosing and write a brief essay, identifying the characteristics of the hero, comparing him to others studied by the class, and explaining the appeal of the story. After discussing what sort of hero has appeal today, students write an original "heroic myth." The following sections of the unit on etiological myths, legendary characters, and tall tales proceed in the same way from class reading and analysis to independent reading and analysis to creative writing. A class committee prepares a booklet of the best stories and analyses written by the students.

The Mythic Hero (Ninth Grade)

UNIFYING CONCEPTS

The nature and significance of the pattern of heroic myth as it appears in diverse cultures: birth, initiation, journey, triumph over the monster, mar-

riage, return, kingship, and death. The relationship of the mythic pattern to corresponding ritual events.

CENTRAL READINGS

The Greek myths of Jason, Bellerophon, Perseus, Theseus, Oedipus, Orpheus; selected hero myths from other cultures; Norma Lorre Goodrich's *Beowulf* in *Medieval Myths.*

COMPOSITIONS

Essay examining and interpreting aspects of the heroic myth pattern in a work studied independently; other short preparatory essays.

DESCRIPTION

The unit begins with a discussion of what heroes are, why they are regarded as heroes, and what they have in common. The teacher encourages student talk about both contemporary and mythic heroes. The students then proceed to read the stories of the Greek heroes comparatively. The result is a formulation of the basic pattern underlying the stories. Then the students discuss the possible significance of the parallels. Following the discussion they read the stories of heroes in other cultures. The discovery that many of these adhere to the same pattern should prompt a discussion of why they do, thus focusing on the aspects of human experience that give rise to the patterns. At this point the teacher presents a lecture on the seasonal ritual. The ensuing discussion should first relate the mythic pattern to the ritual and then examine the significance of the correspondences. The final activity before the independent reading is the study and discussion of *Beowulf*. To what extent does it appear to make use of mythic and ritual patterns? How does it transform these patterns to its own uses?

Archetypal Patterns (Tenth Grade)

UNIFYING CONCEPTS

There are certain universal aspects of human experience that all men, regardless of particular cultural patterns, undergo. These experiences are reflected in the archetypal imagery of myth, folk tale, and literature. This unit focuses on archetypes of the trickster, initiation, death and rebirth, and the Golden Age, all of which are related.

CENTRAL READINGS

Various Greek myths, selections from Grimm's Fairy Tales, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner,* Faulkner's *The Old Man.*

COMPOSITIONS

Essay examining the significance of one of the archetypes in a work studied independently; an original piece of writing involving archetypal imagery.

DESCRIPTION

The unit begins by recalling the study of the mythic hero in the ninth grade. The archetypes examined in this unit are all present in the complex of the mythic hero pattern. The discussion proceeds by examining what the most significant occurrences were in the hero pattern. Each archetype is examined in turn as it is represented in the Greek myths, fairy tales, and other short works. How these archetypes appear in modern life should be a continuing focus of attention. The students should collect and discuss representations of the archetypes in painting, advertising, and so on. The unit should focus on two major problems: (1) What is the mythic and/or psychological significance of each archetype? (2) What is the function of each particular representation of the archetype in its context? The study of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* and Faulkner's *The Old Man* synthesizes the concepts developed throughout the unit before the students undertake their independent study of selected works.

The Epic Hero (Eleventh Grade)

UNIFYING CONCEPTS

The nature and function of the epic hero and the values he represents and seeks.

CENTRAL READING

The Odyssey.

COMPOSITION

An essay examining the nature and function of an epic hero and the values he represents in a work selected for independent reading; or an essay comparing the epic hero to the mythic or picaresque hero.

DESCRIPTION

The unit opens with a discussion of the mythic hero, his characteristics and values. The students then read and discuss carefully the first thirty lines of *The Odyssey,* which adumbrate the full story of Odysseus and present his character. Thereafter, these opening lines become a guide for the study of the poem. Following the study of *The Odyssey,* the teacher divides the class for small-group comparison of *Beowulf* and *The Odyssey.* The class then discusses the nature of the epic hero, his significance, his values, and so on. They then select a work that may or may not be an epic for independent reading. The reading list should include romances, frontier novels, epic poems, and the like.

Vertical Sequence: Problems of Change

Science Fiction (Seventh Grade)

UNIFYING CONCEPTS

The world of a science fiction story as an extrapolation from existing scientific knowledge; the uses of science fiction to suggest social problems.

CENTRAL READINGS

The Martian Chronicles, various short stories.

COMPOSITIONS

Essay examining the world postulated in a science fiction work selected for independent study; original short story using science fiction material; various other short pieces of writing.

DESCRIPTION

The unit progresses from whole-class study of science fiction to group and then independent study. Since this might be one of the first units that deals with a genre, special care should be taken to examine the structural characteristics of science fiction and how they influence the meaning of the works. Thus, extrapolation and prediction become important both scientifically and morally. The vast amount of material available is conducive to considerable independent study. No matter what the reading level of the student, he can select a work in which he can examine the nature of the world postulated, how the characters behave in that world, and what the author predicts for mankind.

Coming of Age (Eighth Grade)

UNIFYING CONCEPTS

Differences between younger and older persons' views of the world and reality; the causes of those differences; how views change as the person reaches maturity; relationships between adolescents and adults.

CENTRAL READINGS

Various short stories and poems. Esther Forbes, *Johnny Tremain.*

COMPOSITIONS

Photographic essay or collage with pictures selected to emphasize the conflicts or differences between the young and old (must be accompanied by one of a variety of analytical or affective texts); personal essay explaining how the author became more mature or gained some insight through a personal experience; analysis of "coming-of-age" problems illustrated in a novel or biography read independently.

DESCRIPTION

The teacher initiates a discussion of differences in points of view between younger and older people by recounting an experience of his own as an adolescent. Then he inquires about how the point of view of the students is different from that of adults. After the differences have been sorted and listed, the students read and discuss a series of stories, poems, and popular songs which display conflict between youth and age. Next they read a series which displays changes in the attitudes of adolescents as they encounter various sorts of problems. The following discussions should work toward explanation and resolution of the various conflicts between young and old and within the adolescent. Next students begin work on the photographic essays and personal essays. When these projects are underway the teacher introduces *Johnny Tremain.* This is followed by independent reading of a long selection which involves the kinds of problems typical of the unit. This unit affords a number of opportunities for role playing of situations invented by students and dramatizing the problems developed in the class readings.

Points of View in Literature (Tenth Grade)

UNIFYING CONCEPT

The stance of the author as revealed by his language and the persona he adopts.

CENTRAL READINGS

The Eye of the Beholder (movie), various short stories and poems, *Great Expectations.*

COMPOSITIONS

Short analyses of point of view in a poem and a short story; adopting three personae to argue a controversial issue; analysis of aspects of point of view in *Great Expectations, Planet of the Apes,* or *The Prince and the Pauper,* depending on reading level.

DESCRIPTION

The unit opens with the discussion of *Peanuts* cartoons that illustrate point of view. One small group of students role-play an argument that leads to a fight. The roles are planned in advance without the knowledge of the rest of the class. Then the other students write a composition explaining what happened and who was at fault. The class compares the results, discussing the various points of view. The class views the film *The Eye of the Beholder* before

reading and discussing various short stories and poems in which the point of view of the narrator is important. In each of these, the students discuss what the narrator knows of the situation, what his words reveal about his attitude toward it, and how his point of view influences or controls the meaning of the work as a whole. These problems are central to the discussions of the major reading listed above.

Approaching an Author: Mark Twain (Eleventh Grade)

UNIFYING CONCEPTS

How to approach the body of an author's work: examining the development of his style, his literary interests, and the motifs running through his works; examining his works against the context of his life and times for changes in attitude, technique, and so on.

CENTRAL READINGS

Life on the Mississippi, Pudd'nhead Wilson, The Mysterious Stranger, selected short stories.

COMPOSITIONS

Various short compositions concerning aspects of individual works, the relationships among works, and so on; major paper examining some aspect of a series of works by an author of the student's choice.

DESCRIPTION

By the commencement of this unit, the students will have studied *Huckleberry Finn* in the "Picaresque Hero" or "Satire" and one other novel by Mark Twain as well as various short stories. In addition to the books listed, each student should choose one other major work or collection of short works to read independently. The unit begins with discussions of Mark Twain's writings that the students have read, with the teacher posing questions about his choice of subject matter, style, and the like. After reading parts of *Life on the Mississippi,* additional questions can be raised. Then students choose one of the questions for independent investigation. Class time will be devoted to library work or completing *Life on the Mississippi.* At the end of two weeks, the students can begin reporting their findings to the class. Reports should continue at intervals during the remainder of the unit, being scheduled to emphasize the changes in style, attitude, and so on, reflected in the central readings. Since the major purpose of the unit is for students to learn how to approach several works by a single author, the final unit activity is an independent project in which they examine several works by a single author. Authors who write for children and adolescents are a good choice because they afford opportunity for original research and commentary. The projects should be completed several weeks after the close of the unit on Mark Twain.

Iconography of an Age: Medieval Allegory and Modern Imagery (Twelfth Grade)

UNIFYING CONCEPTS

An author can expect an audience of his contemporaries to react to various imagery, symbolism, and modes of expression in particular ways. To understand the works of another age, a reader must understand, insofar as it is possible, the symbology and modes of expression of that age.

CENTRAL READINGS

From *The Canterbury Tales,* "The Prologue," "The Nuns' Priest's Tale," and "The Pardoner's Prologue and Tale,"; *Everyman; Sir Gawain and the Green Knight;* paintings by Bosch and Brueghel; pictures of medieval cathedrals.

COMPOSITIONS

Essay explaining the extent to which late medieval or Renaissance work involves medieval forms of allegory and explaining the allegorical significance; essay on some aspect of contemporary iconography.

DESCRIPTION

The unit opens with an examination of pictures of medieval architecture and painting. The teacher raises the problem of why cathedrals were designed and decorated as they were. What was the significance of the seating arrangement? of gargoyles? What is the significance of the various elements in Bosch's "Hay Wain"? After speculating on such problems as these, either in class discussion or in small groups, the students proceed to library work to find some of the answers. They select problems, with the teacher's approval, and work either in teams of two or three or individually in preparing oral reports or panel discussions. Following key reports that focus on the allegorical significance of paintings and aspects of architecture, the students read *Everyman.* From this obvious allegory they proceed to selections from *The Canterbury Tales* and finally to *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (all in translation). Next, the students select a work for outside reading, which becomes the subject of a major unit essay. Students then turn their attention to modern iconography through an examination of modern art, advertising, photographs, and poetry. The problem is what images have conventional significance for modern man? Why do they? How are they used? Each student then selects a project for independent study, for example, the machine as monster. The differences in the value systems of the two ages as represented in the iconography and symbology should be a major unit focus.

A Model for an Elective Curriculum in English

Recently, as part of a movement away from the arbitrarily and rigidly structured English curricula formed in most high schools, some schools have developed elective programs in which students select out of thirty to forty courses those they wish to take. The first question from skeptics is the obvious one: If students choose what they want to take, how can you be sure they will take what they need? Certainly the question requires an answer, but against a background of courses founded on little more than accidentally developed traditions, courses that offer little of what students need and even less of what they want, the question becomes almost irrelevant.

One of the best models for an elective curriculum in English was developed at Trenton High School in Trenton, Michigan.[2] The program includes approximately thirty-five courses; each is one semester in length and is offered in at least one semester during the school year. The courses offer a wide variety of subject matter, from a "Seminar on Shakespeare" to a course called "Language and Human Behavior." In addition, the courses represent various levels of difficulty (the Trenton program describes five "phases" of difficulty) from "Fundamental English" to "Research Seminar." All courses are nongraded so that a student can elect any course, regardless of his grade level.

There are several advantages to such a program. First, because the students are given a choice of what they can take, they tend to see success in the course as primarily their responsibility. Second, when the students are thoroughly informed of the nature of the courses available, they tend to select those that are appropriate to their own needs, skills, and abilities as they see them or those courses in which they have a strong interest, or both. Thus, the students in an elective program tend to see the courses as more relevant to their own lives than do students in traditional programs. Third, the teachers in such a program have a greater opportunity to teach from the strengths in their own backgrounds. Fourth, the teachers are under greater pressure to identify the skills and interest of the students who are likely to select particular courses and they tend to select materials and plan activities accordingly. As a result of all these advantages, the students tend to have a far more positive attitude toward English. Of course, the fact that a program is elective does not guarantee positive attitudes and increased learning. The individual courses must be well planned and well taught.

As skeptics have pointed out, the major disadvantages of an elective program lie in the lack of sequence among the courses elected and the lack of balance that may occur when a student avoids certain courses and when a teacher favors some aspects of English and ignores others. Careful planning, however, can diminish these potential dangers. The courses should begin with appropriate inventories and pretesting so that the teacher can make his instruction appropriate to his students. Each course should include a variety of activities such as those described elsewhere in this book. In short, whether the curriculum is sequential or elective, the procedures and techniques for teaching and planning described above are essential.

Adapting Literature Curricula to the Students

The scope and sequence outline presented in this chapter can only be hypothetical because it cannot take into account the actual needs and abilities of the particular set of *students* a teacher may have in his English class. Many of the units on the chart, perhaps even the whole chart, could be adopted for use in many schools. Since it is sequential, it would have to be introduced one grade level at a time. Obviously, most eleventh and twelfth graders could not do the work suggested without the preparation suggested by other units on the chart.

In some schools, the outline will be only partly appropriate, and while parts of it might be used, a teacher (or department) will have to assess the backgrounds of the students very carefully before planning the curriculum. Even then, he would have to build slowly from one grade level to the next and change the curriculum as the students gain the necessary skills for more sophisticated work.

In some schools, such as those in central city ghettos, he will have to pay far more attention to affective response than to cognitive, at least in the early stages of curriculum development. Most students in such schools view the school and its program as totally irrelevant to their real lives. Many, fearing failure in their own eyes more than a teacher's disapproval, refuse to try anything a teacher requires. Most have little outside encouragement to succeed in school. Their futures, as they predict them, will have little if any connection with what goes on in a school. A discouraging number have met failure and rejection so often in the past that they have given up trying by the seventh grade, if not earlier.

Let us consider the problem of developing a curriculum for very reluctant, even hostile students, say eleventh or twelfth graders, in a large urban school. It is obvious that traditional programs in American and English literature are totally inadequate for the job, and the units on the scope and sequence table in this chapter are inappropriate, at least until the students have more background. When then can the teacher do?

A number of teachers have developed units on the literature of protest because of its current popularity, its high interest potential, and its social relevance. Such an area of study offers a number of optional approaches, a wide variety of literary materials, and a host of materials in the popular culture including songs, films, editorials, magazine articles, and cartoons. In developing such a unit, the teacher in concert with his students can select any one of a variety of approaches. The unit might deal with the broad range of protest literature in the last twenty to thirty years, incorporating novels as

disparate as Claude Brown's *Manchild in the Promised Land* and Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five or the Children's Crusade.* Or it might examine the history of protest in the United States including early documents such as the Declaration of Independence and the speeches of early American revolutionaries. It might include the early protests against slavery by both blacks and whites: Frederick Douglas, Henry H. Garnet, and John Brown. One teacher planned a unit on protest to include the protests of the *Old Testament* prophets against various conditions. The unit might involve the many protests against unethical capitalism and working conditions in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including such material as Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle,* Frank Norris' *The Octopus,* and the many union songs of which recordings are available. It might include full-length plays such as Henrik Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People,* Bernard Shaw's *Androcles and the Lion,* and Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun.* Clearly, a great many folksongs as well as folk-type modern songs would be interesting to study. The unit might open with discussions of current songs of protest and cartoons. It might begin with the screening and discussion of one or two short films such as "Night and Fog" or any of various documentary films such as the "CBS Reports" series. From such high interest material the unit might move to an examination of various areas of protest: war, poverty, pollution, big business deceit, working conditions, women's lib movement and so forth. The teacher's problem is to become familiar with the options, suggest at least some of them to his students, and then to assemble the materials most appropriate to the interests and abilities of his students.

Prior to the study of protest literature, it is necessary for students to have some background in the study of persuasive language, especially in connotation, audience analysis, and the like. However, it is a simple matter to teach that material separately.

The unit that follows focuses on "The Literature of Black Protest" for various reasons, but primarily because of the immediate social relevance such a unit has for both black and white students and because of the high interest of the reading materials. Some other such topical units would be on the women's liberation movement, pollution, drugs, and the rights of minorities in the United States.

The Literature of Black Protest

As Richard Wright pointed out in "The Literature of the Negro in the United States,"[3] black literature, with very few notable exceptions, has always been associated with the voice of protest, and it has been and is an angry voice. This unit focuses on that literature because it has relevance for the black students in ghetto schools. Not only does the black writer speak to their needs but, because he is black, he can give the students

a sense of pride in their racial identity, a sense of pride that is frequently not otherwise available in the dreary schools they ordinarily attend. The literature in this unit also has obvious and great immediacy for whites. As someone has pointed out, the struggle against prejudice has focused on the black man, but should not some of the focus shift to the white community? The literature included in this unit certainly should create a new sense of awareness among white students.

Before undertaking this unit the teacher should become aware of the students' environment as it relates to the unit he is about to teach. Patient observation and experience are necessary but cannot provide the whole story. For this particular unit, the following books, in addition to those suggested for use in the unit, will be helpful, but they are not the whole answer.

1. "The Negro American," *Daedalus,* Vol. 94, No. 4 (Fall 1965). A collection of studies about the conditions of Negro life in America.
2. Elliot Liebow, *Tally's Corner.* Boston: Little, Brown, 1967. A study of the lives, frustrations, and aspirations of Negro "street corner" men—lower-class men with irregular jobs and sometime families.
3. Otto Kerner, *et al., The Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders.* New York: Bantam, 1968. An analysis of the riots in 1967—what happened, why, and recommendations for the future. See especially Chapters 6, 7, and 8, which deal with the formation of ghettos, unemployment, and conditions of life in the ghetto.
4. Louis E. Lomax, *The Negro Revolt.* New York: Harper & Row, 1962. An analysis of conditions giving rise to the earlier Negro protests.
5. Eldridge Cleaver, *Soul on Ice.* New York: Dell, 1968. The book speaks in anger and contempt against the white society that has debased and exploited the black man in America and around the world.
6. Lerone Bennett, Jr. *Pioneers in Protest.* Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1969. A collection of short biographies of men and women who protested against slavery and discrimination in the United States. It includes biographies of Benjamin Banneker, Henry Highland Garnet, Harriet Tubman, W. E. B. DuBois, and others. Could easily be used by students.
7. Bradford Chambers, ed., *Chronicles of Black Protest.* New York: New American Library, 1968. A collection of original documents with commentaries and biographical notes chronicling the development of black protest. A very informative and useful volume which can readily be used by students.

The following may also be useful preparation for teaching the unit:

1. Addison Gayle, Jr. (ed.), *Black Expression: Essays by and about Black Americans in the Creative Arts.* New York: Weybright and Talley, 1969. An excellent collection of essays, this book will provide

useful information to the teacher approaching black literature for the first time and to those already familiar with it.

2. Barbara Dodds, *Negro Literature for High School Students.* Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1968. A thoroughly annotated bibliography of books for classroom use extending from adult fiction to literature for youngsters. The author indicates the level of reading difficulty for each book, gives her estimate of its literary quality, and presents a synopsis and brief analysis. A very useful source of materials.
3. Lawana Trout, "Teaching the Protest Movement," *Dialog* (a periodical), New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Fall 1967, pp. 5–13. A teacher's description of her experiences in teaching a unit somewhat similar to the one that follows. The article also includes quotations indicating the reactions of students to whom she taught the unit and the reactions of teachers who observed it.

The unit is divided into two major sections that overlap to some extent but contribute to one another: (1) the targets and methods of black protest, and (2) the responses of individuals and groups. The second section will require the most class time and the most reading. Free and open classroom discussion, both small-group and whole-class and both teacher- and student-led, are extremely important to this unit because one major purpose is to create an atmosphere in which the students can express their own opinions about the relevancy of the unit materials to their own lives.

Since some students will be more competent readers than others, diversified reading is also important. Core readings (those read by all students) should probably be short and relatively simple unless all students in the class are competent readers. The unit offers students a number of options: whether or not to study black protest in the first place; which books to study; and which projects to work on. Since a major goal of the unit is positive affective response to the materials and to English, giving the students such options is very important.

For several reasons, the unit opens with a study of the power of language (connotation, "purr" and "slur" words, and advertising). First, it offers early involvement and success. (Students especially enjoy developing advertisements.) Second, such study offers a neutral base to work from. Third, an understanding of the persuasive uses of language is important to the unit.

The difficulty of the unit can be varied in several ways. To make it more or less sophisticated, the materials or the objectives (or both) can be changed. For instance, if the students are functional writers, the reports in terminal objectives 3 and 4 could be written. If they are good readers, more poetry could be studied by all of them. Of course, changing the core readings can also make the unit easier or more difficult. Bonham's *Durango Street* will be easier than *A Raisin in the Sun,* which in turn is easier than *Native Son.* To

make the unit easier, certain lessons or parts of lessons could be deleted. For example, the research lesson on organized protest groups will require students to read or listen to speeches, to read sometimes dry articles that will not sustain interest as readily as the fiction in the unit, and to deal with rather abstract language and ideas. The unit would be considerably "easier" if that lesson were deleted. In short, the teacher should consider his students very carefully and plan the unit in view of his findings. Even after the unit has begun, he should feel free to change his plans to make the unit more appropriate to his students.

TERMINAL OBJECTIVES

1. To develop, administer, and score an examination on the content of the works and the protest techniques studied. (This is to be a student-made exam.)
   Criterion statements:
   a. The exam should be comprehensive enough to include questions on vocabulary, the content of the books read, the various solutions offered by different groups, and so on.
   b. A student committee or the class as a whole should decide what makes up an appropriate answer and how many a student must answer to pass the test.
2. To write a short protest concerning some aspect of environment, social conditions, and the like.
   Criterion statements:
   a. Both the target of, and the reasons for, the protest should be clear, although both may be either implied or stated directly.
   b. The student should use specific details either to make his point or to support it.
3. To present orally, alone or as a member of a panel, an interpretation of the protest in a major work.
   Criterion statements:
   a. The work should be selected from a short bibliography prepared by the teacher.
   b. The students who select a particular book should read and discuss it together and also plan the presentation together.
   c. The presentation should identify all the targets of protest, explain the methods used, and evaluate both the targets and the methods.
   d. The students may dramatize or role-play some aspect of the book or use other methods to convey its general content.
4. To present orally as a member of a panel an exposition and analysis of the solutions or line of action advocated by reform leaders or groups. (See criterion statements for objective 3.)

STUDENT MATERIALS

Anthologies (class sets):

1. Abraham Chapman (ed.), *Black Voices*. New York: New American Library, 1968. (This is by far the most widely used anthology in the unit. Abbreviated in the text as *B.V.*)
2. Clarence Major, *The New Black Poetry*. New York: International Publishers, 1969. (Abbreviated in the text as *NBP.*)
3. Haig and Hamida Bosmajian (eds.), *The Rhetoric of the Civil Rights Movement*. New York: Random House, 1969.

Fiction and Autobiography (three to five copies each):

1. James Baldwin, *Go Tell It on the Mountain*. New York: New American Library, 1963.
2. Claude Brown, *Manchild in the Promised Land*. New York: New American Library, 1965.
3. William Demby, *Beetlecreek*. New York: Avon, 1967.
4. Lorenz Graham, *South Town*. New York: New American Library, 1958.
5. Dick Gregory, *Nigger*. New York: Pocket Books, 1968.
6. Richard Wright, *Black Boy*. New York: New American Library, 1963.
7. Richard Wright, *Native Son*. New York: New American Library, 1961.
8. Malcolm X, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. New York: Grove Press, 1966.

Drama (class set):

Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*. New York: New American Library, 1964.

Miscellaneous Books (three or four copies each):

1. Louis E. Lomax, *The Negro Revolt*. New York: New American Library, 1963.
2. Dick Gregory, *From the Back of the Bus*. New York: Dutton Books, 1962.

Recording:

Godfrey Cambridge, *Here's Godfrey Cambridge* (Epic FLM 13101).

Other (see lessons for specifics):

1. Mimeographed passages from *Native Son* and the *Negro Revolt*.
2. Mimeographed study guides as indicated in lessons for short stories, fiction, autobiography, and so on.

MAJOR UNIT QUESTIONS

The following questions should be applied rather consistently to the various readings throughout the unit—the short stories, poems, play, novels, autobiography, and study by Lomax.

1. What physical, psychological, and moral conditions does the author protest?
2. What causes those conditions?
3. What are the psychological and spiritual effects of those conditions?
4. What techniques does the author use to make his protest?
5. How valid is his protest?
6. How effective is it?
7. What are your personal feelings about the targets of the author's protest?

Part I: Protest: Targets and Techniques

Lesson 1 Introduction

OBJECTIVE

To discuss the possibility of studying the "Literature of Black Protest."

PROCEDURES

A. Introduce the possibility of studying protest with a statement such as the following: The materials you have studied so far demonstrate how people use language to influence the attitudes and actions of their audiences. People also use language to limit others, and sometimes they limit themselves by the words they use to describe themselves. Black people all over the country have been protesting various conditions, sometimes through the use of violence but often through the use of language in poetry, short stories, essays, biography, and in many other ways. Would you be interested in studying the writing of black authors who have written such protests?
B. Allow students to express their opinions about the idea. Most of them will think it a good one. If they want to know what kind of materials they will read, read aloud a selection from Dick Gregory's book *Nigger* or from Richard Wright's *Black Boy*.
C. Obviously, if the class refuses to study this topic, the lessons that follow will have to be canceled.

Lesson 2 Some Forms of Protest

OBJECTIVE

To compare fictional, expository, and humorous forms of protest.

MATERIALS

1. Selections from *The Negro Revolt* by Louis E. Lomax and *Native Son* by Richard Wright. These two passages are quoted below.
2. Copy of Dick Gregory's *From the Back of the Bus.*
3. *Black Voices,* for Langston Hughes' "Cracker Prayer."
4. Recording: *Here's Godfrey Cambridge.*

Passage from *The Negro Revolt,* pp. 68–69:

Housing and job discrimination are the major barriers faced by Negroes outside the South. The disturbing results of these barriers are evidenced by the fact that the income of the average Negro family is only 55 percent of that of the average white family; when it comes to housing, although Negroes comprise 11 percent of the population, we are restricted to 4 percent of the residential area. And the residential areas for Negroes are, by and large, Negro ghettos; this leads directly to *de facto* school segregation. As of the mid-1950's, 74 percent of the Negro population of Chicago was restricted, by practice more than by law, to six community areas. The situation in Los Angeles is about the same. There was considerable premature rejoicing in Los Angeles when the 1956 Federal Housing Administration report showed that the nonwhite occupancy of dwelling units had increased more than the nonwhite population in the past five years. On the surface it appeared that progress had been made, that white areas were being opened to Negroes. Then came the brutal facts behind the report: the increase in nonwhite occupancy had been brought about by Negroes acquiring formerly all-white property strips. The white families had moved out; thus there had been no break in the segregation pattern. The same trend is evident in New York City, where there is every promise that by 1970 the larger part of Manhattan Island will be a non-white ghetto.

The effect of this residential segregation is alarming. The Chicago Urban League has argued and documented the following disturbing facts:

First, although housing available to the Negro is poorer than that available to the white applicant, the rents charged Negroes are nearly as great as those paid by the whites. This, coupled with job discrimination, means that Negroes can only acquire housing by "doubling up," many families sharing an apartment unit. And here is the root of Negro family breakdown and crime.

Second there is a direct correlation between housing discrimination and general community health. Chicago Negroes are 20 percent of the population, yet they account for 33 percent of the city's tuberculosis. City health officers have certified that this high TB rate is due to improper diet and poor sanitation. Referring to the 1956 polio epidemic that hit Chicago, the Chicago Public Health Service said: ". . . As the (polio) outbreak progressed, high rates developed only in those areas of the city characterized by a particularly dense population, a low socio-economic status and a high proportion of nonwhites." When the final sad total was in, Negroes, 20 percent of the population, accounted for 61 percent of the polio. And the hardest hit were the children under ten years of age.

Passage from *Native Son,* pp. 19–20:

"Kinda warm today."

"Yeah," Gus said.

"You get more heat from this sun than from them old radiators at home."

"Yeah; them old white landlords sure don't give much heat."

"And they always knocking at your door for money."

"I'll be glad when summer comes."

"Me too," Bigger said.

He stretched his arms above his head and yawned; his eyes moistened. The sharp precision of the world of steel and stone dissolved into blurred waves. He blinked and the world grew hard again, mechanical, distinct. A weaving motion in the sky made him turn his eyes upward; he saw a slender streak of billowing white blooming against the deep blue. A plane was writing high up in the air.

"Look!" Bigger said.

"What?"

"That plane writing up there," Bigger said, pointing.

"Oh!"

They squinted at a tiny ribbon of unfolding vapor that spelled out the word: USE . . . The plane was so far away that at times the strong glare of the sun blanked it from sight.

"You can hardly see it," Gus said.

"Looks like a little bird," Bigger breathed with childlike wonder.

"Them white boys sure can fly," Gus said.

"Yeah," Bigger said, wistfully. "They get a chance to do everything."

Noiselessly, the tiny plane looped and veered, vanishing and appearing, leaving behind it a long trail of white plumage, like coils of fluffy paste being squeezed from a tube; a plume-coil that grew and swelled and slowly began to fade into the air at the edges. The plane wrote another word: SPEED . . .

"How high you reckon he is?" Bigger asked.

"I don't know. Maybe a hundred miles; maybe a thousand."

"I could fly one of them things if I had a chance," Bigger mumbled reflectively, as though talking to himself.

Gus pulled down the corners of his lips, stepped out from the wall, squared his shoulders, doffed his cap, bowed low and spoke with mock deference:

"Yessuh."

"You go to hell," Bigger said, smiling.

"Yessuh," Gus said again.

"I *could* fly a plane if I had a chance," Bigger said.

"If you wasn't black and if you had some money and if they'd let you go to that aviation school, you *could* fly a plane," Gus said.

"Maybe they right in not wanting us to fly," Bigger said. " 'Cause if I took a plane up I'd take a couple of bombs along and drop 'em sure as hell. . . ."

They laughed again, still looking upward. The plane sailed and dipped and spread another word against the sky: GASOLINE. . . .

"Use Speed Gasoline," Bigger mused, rolling the words slowly from his lips. "God, I'd like to fly up there in that sky."

"God'll let you fly when He gives you your wings up in heaven," Gus said.

PROCEDURES

A. Distribute the passages from Lomax and Wright to the students. Point out that they are by Negro writers and that they use different techniques of protest. Have the class read the passages and compare them, asking themselves the following questions:
   1. What do the passages protest?
   2. How does each one convey the protest?
   3. How do they differ?
   4. Are these writers using propaganda techniques?

B. The ensuing discussion should note how Wright's characters and images protest conditions and how Lomax makes use of statistics for a similar purpose. Students should note that the reader has to infer ("figure out") the protest in Wright's passage, whereas it is directly stated by Lomax.

C. Ask students what other conditions, situations, or attitudes they would expect black writers to protest. Make a list on the board that can be kept for additions.

D. Divide students into groups of four, and ask each group to prepare a skit that will protest one or more of the conditions the class has listed. They may dramatize the condition as they choose by attempting to pantomime it, by having characters talk as in the Wright passage, and so on. After each group presents its skit, have the class discusss its effectiveness as protest.

E. Have the class discuss briefly the relative merits of showing characters in various conditions and a statistical approach. Are the methods equally effective? To what extent are they both useful?

F. Introduce humorous protest by playing a band or two from Godfrey Cambridge's album *Here's Godfrey Cambridge*. Ask the students if the band called "Block Busting" can be considered protest. In what way is it protest? How does the protest work?

G. Distribute pages from Dick Gregory's *From the Back of the Bus*. Ask each student to tell the class a joke from the pages he received that he regards as successful protest.

H. Have students read Langston Hughes' short piece "Cracker Prayer" (*BV*, pp. 108–109. A cracker praying for a segregated heaven with Negro servants). Is the selection protest? How does it work? (The cracker condemns himself through the illogical prayer.)

I. Encourage the class to discuss humor as protest. Is it as effective as a statistical approach? Is it as effective as a dramatic approach? Which approach is likely to have more impact on an audience?

Lesson 3 Targets of Protest: Language and Attitude

OBJECTIVE

To identify the ways in which language limits the conceptions of others.

MATERIALS

1. Excerpt from a speech by Stokely Carmichael, "Speech at Morgan State College," in *The Rhetoric of the Civil Rights Movement*, pp. 114–115.
2. *Black Voices* for Richard Wright's "The Ethics of Living Jim Crow," Section 1, pp. 288–292.
3. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, pp. 52–55.
4. *Black Voices* for poems listed in part F.
5. *The New Black Poetry* for poems listed in part F.

PROCEDURES

A. Read aloud or have the students read the excerpt from Carmichael's speech that examines the term "definition," that is, how a word tends to define or delimit aspects of human experience that it refers to. One part reads as follows:

> I define this as yellow. *This* is not yellow. So that when I speak of yellow you know what I am talking about. I have contained this. And so for white people to be allowed to *define* us by calling us Negroes, which means apathetic, lazy, stupid and all those other things, it is for us to *accept* those definitions. *We* must define *what we are* and move from our definitions and tell them to recognize *what we say we are*. (Italics added.)

B. Have the students discuss the effects that various words have on how people see themselves and others.
   1. Is what Carmichael says here true?
   2. What experiences do you know of that support his ideas?
   3. Is it possible to break the habit of accepting the words attached to people without really examining them?
   4. How do such words influence the prejudices of people?

C. Introduce the term "stereotype" and examine how the words of prejudice operate as stereotypes of the type Carmichael described.

D. Read aloud or have the students read Section 1 of Wright's "The Ethics of Living Jim Crow." In this section he describes his experience working in an optical firm in Jackson. The white boss tells him he will have a chance to learn a trade. However, the men will teach him nothing because they think of their work as "white," and they succeed in driving him from the shop altogether. Ask questions such as the following:
   1. What stereotype do the whites hold of Richard?
   2. How does it affect him? How does he respond?

3. What do you think he should have done? What would you have done? How would you have felt?

The discussion should lead beyond the loss of the job to the effects the loss has on Richard's psyche—"his feelings."

E. Raise the question of how the students respond to such stereotypes. Do they accept it or reject it? After free discussion read aloud from *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, pp. 52–55, in which Malcolm X describes his first "conk" and comments on it. Raise the question of what else Negroes do to be more like whites. Why do they do it? Should they? Let the students develop the discussion freely.

F. Ask all students to look over the following poems and decide which they would like to study and present to the class: Frank M. Davis' "Robert Whitmore," *BV*, p. 435; Mari Evans' "Status Symbol," *BV*, pp. 370–371; Abu Tshak's "Theme Brown Girl" *NBP*, pp. 71–72; Gloria Davis' "To Egypt," *NBP*, pp. 46–47. The speakers or characters in each of these poems represent blacks who have rejected or accepted the white man's stereotype. The next two poems show white men reacting from the stereotype: Countee Cullen's "Incident," *BV*, p. 385; Sterling A. Brown's "Southern Cop," *BV*, p. 413. When students have examined all the poems, ask them to indicate their first, second, and third choices on a slip of paper. Then divide students according to their preferences insofar as possible and have each group prepare the poem it has selected.

G. Each group should discuss the poem using the following questions as a guide:

1. What stereotype is the poem concerned with?
2. What is the speaker's or character's attitude toward the stereotype?
3. How does the stereotype control the reactions of the speaker or characters in the poem?
4. What other effects is the stereotype likely to have?
5. How do you feel about the speaker's or character's attitudes toward the stereotype?

Other more specific questions will be useful for the individual poems. Each group should prepare a presentation to the class, which may include a panel discussion, role-playing, and so on, and it should also lead a whole-class discussion about the poem's meaning and how the students feel about it.

H. The lesson should close with a discussion of the extent to which stereotypes influence attitudes toward, and treatment of, others.

Lesson 4 The Targets of Protest

OBJECTIVE

To identify some of the major targets of protest.

MATERIALS

1. Dick Gregory, *Nigger*.
2. *The New Black Poetry* for the poems indicated.
3. *Black Voices* for short stories and poems indicated throughout.

PROCEDURES

A. Ask students to read or read aloud Section II of "Not Poor, Just Broke" in Dick Gregory's *Nigger*, pp. 25–35. In this short section Gregory protests against many things but mainly against the indignities to which the social system and the attitudes of others forced him to submit. Throughout this lesson the students should examine both the physical and psychological targets of protest. The major questions for discussion in each selection will be as follows:

1. What are the targets of the protest?
2. How is the protest made?
3. How do you feel about the conditions and attitudes described?
4. To what extent is the protest justified?

In addition, each of the following selections will require specific questions in regard to the characters, situations, and so on. This first one, however, gets at a number of the targets that the others will attack.

B. The students next read Norman Jordan's "Feeding the Lions," *NBP*, pp. 78–79, which also protests the attitudes of social workers. Langston Hughes' "Ballad of the Landlord," *BV*, p. 432, protests the conditions of tenement living. The Gregory selection protests both.

C. For an examination of the rural conditions that give rise to protest, have the students read Arna Bontemps' "A Summer Tragedy," *BV*, pp. 88–96, the story of an old couple who, having worked the land as sharecroppers for forty-five years, find themselves unable to continue. It is a very powerful story that is bound to promote a discussion of rural problems and perhaps solutions to them. Along with this selection, students might also read and discuss Arna Bontemps' poem, "A Black Man Talks of Reaping," *BV*, p. 424.

D. Divide the class into three or four groups according to reading ability. Assign the best readers Ann Petry's "In Darkness and Confusion," *BV*, pp. 161–191, the story of a hard-working Harlem couple who find out that their only son has been court-martialed and sentenced to twenty years' hard labor. Assign the next best readers Jean Toomer's "Blood Burning Moon," *BV*, pp. 66–73, an excerpt, complete in itself, from *Cane* that tells of a knife fight between a white and a Negro and of the Negro's fate. Assign the autobiographical essay by Richard Wright, "The Ethics of Living Jim Crow," *BV*, pp. 288–298, to the third group. Most of the incidents here also appear in *Black Boy*. A group in between the second and third might be assigned Chapter 1 of Malcolm X's *Autobiography*, *BV*, pp. 333–347. Provide brief study and discussion guides

for each selection and have each group prepare a brief explanation of the targets of protest in their materials for presentation to the class.

Lesson 5 *A Raisin in the Sun*

OBJECTIVE

To examine the effects of racial bias on a family.

MATERIAL

A Raisin in the Sun by Lorraine Hansberry.

PROCEDURES

A. For reading and discussion of the play, follow the procedures outlined for *Midsummer Night's Dream* in Chapter 1 or those for reading drama in Chapter 14.
B. Following discussion of the play as a whole, allow the students to decide whether they would like to produce a scene or more from the play. If they would, divide the class into four groups, allowing each group to elect a director, choose a scene for production, and so on. (See procedures in Chapter 14.) Allow some classroom time for planning and rehearsal.

Lesson 6 Outside Reading

OBJECTIVE

To present an oral interpretation of the protest in a major work. (See terminal objectives on page 371 for criterion statements.)

MATERIALS

Multiple copies of the following works (the Roman numerals indicate the relative difficulty of the works):

1. Dick Gregory, *Nigger* (I).
2. Lorenz Graham, *South Town* (I).
3. William Demby, *Beetlecreek* (II).
4. Richard Wright, *Black Boy* (II).
5. James Baldwin, *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (III).
6. Richard Wright, *Native Son* (III).
7. Louis Lomax, *The Negro Revolt* (III).
8. Malcolm X, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (IV).
9. Claude Brown, *Manchild in the Promised Land* (IV).

Note: All these are in paperback. For easier materials see Barbara Dodds' *Negro Literature for High School Students*

PROCEDURES

A. So far in the unit, the students have become at least briefly acquainted with five of the nine books listed. Remind them of this and give them some information about the other books on the list. Reading brief passages aloud from each is a useful approach.
B. The teacher should permit the students to select the books they want to read but should make private suggestions to guide them to a book at an appropriate level. Allow the students to browse through the books, to decide on one, and to change to another if they wish.
C. Although the unit to this point will have provided background for this independent reading, study guides containing the major unit questions and questions that relate specifically to important aspects of the books will be useful.
D. The students should be allowed class time for reading and group discussion. However, for the longer books especially, considerable reading will have to be done outside class.
E. Group presentation of the books to the rest of the class should be ready in two or three weeks.

Part II: Personal and Organized Response to the Conditions Protested

Lesson 7 Personal Response to the Conditions

OBJECTIVE

To analyze and classify various responses to the conditions presented in the literature of protest.

MATERIALS

1. *Black Voices*
2. *The New Black Poetry*

PROCEDURES

A. After the students have had a day or two in class to launch into the outside reading, ask them how the various characters and people they have read about have responded to the conditions in which they found themselves. Have them classify and list their ideas on the board.
B. Read aloud to the class Langston Hughes' "Harlem," *BV*, pp. 430–431, which begins "What happens to a dream deferred." After a short discussion of the poem in preparation for panel presentations of other poems that focus on reactions of various kinds, list the following poems for students to look over. Then follow procedures F and G in Lesson 3 for grouping students according to their preferences.

Fenton Johnson, "The Daily Grind" and "Tired," *BV*, pp. 367–368, 370.
Claude McKay, "If We Must Die," *BV*, pp. 372–373.
Sterling A. Brown, "The Ballad of Joe Meek" and "Sister Lou" *BV*, pp. 414–418 and 404–405.
Langston Hughes, "As I Grew Older," *BV*, p. 426.
Lance Jeffers, "On Listening to the Spirituals," *BV*, p. 474.
Naomi Long Madgett, "The Race Question," *BV*, p. 477.
Harry Edwards, "How to Change the U.S.A.," *NBP*, pp. 48–49.
Gerald L. Simmons, Jr. "Make Tools Our Strength," *NBP*, p. 119.

The poems represent a range of response from the despair of Johnson's poems to the violence of "The Ballad of Joe Meek" and "How to Change the U.S.A." and from the religious solace suggested in "Listening to the Spirituals" to the self-sufficient dignity of "The Race Question."

C. In presenting the poems the student groups should consider the following questions.
   1. What are the special conditions to which the speaker or character responds, if any?
   2. What is the nature of his response?
   3. To what extent do you approve of the response? What is your response?
   4. To what extent is the response appropriate? inevitable?

D. The lesson should conclude with a discussion of the various personal responses before moving on to the question, What are the *organized* responses to the conditions?

Lesson 8 Organized Responses to the Conditions

OBJECTIVE

To learn the positions and methods used by organized groups in fighting the conditions faced by American Negroes.

MATERIAL

The Rhetoric of the Civil Rights Movement.

PROCEDURES

A. This lesson is a research lesson. The volume mentioned above serves as an introduction to the ideas of Martin Luther King, Jr., in "Letter from Birmingham City Jail," of James Farmer and Malcolm X in "A Debate at Cornell University," of Stokely Carmichael in "Speech at Cornell University," and of Floyd B. McKissick in "Speech at the National Conference on Black Power." The teacher should read brief selections from the various speeches and articles before asking the students to choose one movement or leader they would like to study. Then ask them to read the article representative of that leader or movement in *The Rhetoric of the Civil Rights Movement* to confirm their interests.

B. Group students according to interests and have each group do research on the following questions:
   1. What is the position of the leader or movement in regard to Negro life in the United States?
   2. What tactics have they used to improve the situation?
   3. Where have they used them?
   4. What persuasive techniques have they used?
   5. How successful have they been?
   6. What advantages does one movement have over others?

C. The teacher should take the students to the library, demonstrate how to use the card catalog and the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* if necessary, and put the students to work.

D. In answering question 6 above, students can use *The Rhetoric of the Civil Rights Moment* as a guide to positions other than the one they are studying.

E. In a few days, after the research is completed, the students can present their ideas in a symposium. They should be encouraged to debate the relative merits of the various movements.

Lesson 9 Writing a Protest*

OBJECTIVE

To write a brief protest.

PROCEDURES

A. After the students have studied several examples of protest, lead a discussion of how the writers make their points forcefully. The discussion should develop a list of the characteristics of protest such as the following:
   1. The use of appropriate connotative language.
   2. The careful selection of details to make the point.
   3. The development of characters for whom the reader has sympathy.
   4. Picturing people, places, and events that the reader finds appalling or disgusting.
   5. Presenting enough detail to involve the reader.
   6. Use of some propaganda techniques.

B. Next, have the students suggest conditions that they might protest.

* This lesson can appear almost any time after Lesson 3.

C. Have them begin writing in class. Give help to those who need it. Ask the students to prepare a draft for criticism by other students.
D. Divide the class into groups for criticism of their own papers.
   1. Is the target of protest clear?
   2. Are connotative language and details appropriate to the writer's purpose?
   3. Do you have sympathy with the appropriate persons or things?
   4. What should be done to make the protest stronger?
E. Following the group criticisms, allow the students to revise if they wish before turning in the final draft.
F. A special committee might be appointed to prepare a booklet of student writings from this lesson.

Lesson 10 Evaluation

OBJECTIVE

To develop, administer, and score an examination on the content of the works and the protest techniques studied.

PROCEDURES

A. Follow procedures for student preparation of examination in "Introduction to Humor" in Chapter 1 and in Chapters 6 and 14.
B. In addition, develop a questionnaire to determine affective response to the unit. See Chapter 14 for an example and suggestions.

NOTES

1. For a more detailed introduction to the Curriculum Centers, see Shugrue and Crawley, *The Conclusion of the Initial Phase: The English Program of the USOE*, available from the National Council of Teachers of English, 508 South Sixth Street, Champaign, Illinois 61820, Order No. 01152. The NCTE/ERIC Clearing House on the Teaching of English has published a thoroughly annotated bibliography of materials from the Curriculum Centers: *A Guide to Available Project English Materials* by Donna Butler and Bernard O'Donnell (Champaign: NCTE, 1969). The *Guide* describes the materials and lists the addresses at which the materials are available.
2. For a detailed description of Project Apex at Trenton High School, see *Project Apex: A Nongraded Phase–Elective English Curriculum*, available from Trenton High School, Trenton, Michigan 48183.
3. Richard Wright, "The Literature of the Negro in the United States," in *Black Expression*, ed. Addison Gayle, Jr. (New York: Weybright and Talley, 1969), pp. 198–229.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

1. PAUL A. OLSON, *A Curriculum Study Center in English. Final Report.* 1967. (Available from ERIC Document Reproduction Service, The National Cash Register Co., 4936 Fairmont Ave., Bethesda, Md. 20014.) This final report of the University of Nebraska Curriculum Center in English presents the rationale for the Nebraska curriculum itself.
2. FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER, *Curriculum III*, (Available as above.) *Curriculum III* presents the units for a ninth and tenth grade English program based on certain cognitive processes.

16 Teaching Reading Skills in the English Class

In most secondary schools there are a substantial number of "problem readers." In addition to the immediate instructional difficulties that such students present in the English class, another burden is related to teaching them: the English teacher's colleagues in other departments, school administrators, and the general public often equate English instruction with reading instruction and expect the English teacher to teach general reading skills. This is true despite the fact that many, if not most, English teachers are untrained in and ill-informed about the techniques of teaching reading. The purpose of this chapter is to offer guidelines for (1) teaching reading skills that are needed generally in teaching English and (2) helping problem readers overcome their deficiencies.

If some English teachers are ill-informed about reading problems and the type of instruction needed to correct them, many teachers of other subjects are even less informed. Consequently, they fail to select textbooks at an appropriate reading level, fail to create the appropriate instructional context, and fail to individualize instruction. When the students go to another class (social studies, for example) ill-prepared, that teacher may blame the English teacher for not teaching them how to read. Since the cover-to-cover reading of textbooks forms such a minor part of the English curriculum, the English teacher might easily answer that he is teaching his students the necessary skills to read successfully in his discipline and that if the other teacher does not know how to make effective assignments, it is his fault and not that of the English teacher. Although such an answer would be logical, it would be a disservice to the students. The fact is that they will be given poor assignments at which they may fail unless they have learned the skills of textbook reading. Since the English teacher is the one looked to for reading instruction, he must do the job, or it will more than likely not get done. Rationally, he may reject the task because he has his own discipline to teach. But since English and

reading instruction are synonymous in most people's minds, he must accept the task as a necessary service to the students.

A natural question for the beginning teacher to ask is "Why are there so many problem readers at the secondary level?"

When students begin school in the first grade, they are much the same in their ability to read. But as they move through the grades the differences among them will constantly increase. In the second grade, for example, some will still be reading at the first-grade level, while others will have advanced to the third-grade level. In other words, in the second year of school the teacher should expect an achievement range of three years. Because the weakest advance slowly and the stronger students advance rapidly, the bottom of the range tends to move up very slowly whereas the top advances quickly; therefore, the range constantly grows broader. In the eighth grade, the teacher can expect a range of at least six years, with 13 percent reading at the fifth-grade level or below and 16 percent reading at the tenth-grade level or above.[1] Nancy Vick suggests as a rule of thumb that the range of reading will be approximately two-thirds of the age of the students.[2] If the eighth graders are thirteen, this rule of thumb gives us a range of eight and two-thirds years. High school seniors will have a range of over eleven years, with some reading at the sixth-grade level. Thus, the higher the level, the more complex the instructional task becomes, since instruction must deal with a constantly widening range.

The instruction of problem readers should begin as soon as they have been identified during the inventory period at the beginning of the school year. "Problem reader" is a general term; the inventories (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 11) will help subclassify problem readers by indicating the specific kind of deficiency each has. The teacher may find that the inventory battery has indicated four kinds of problems that he must deal with:

1. The reluctant reader. The problems of some reluctant readers do not result from failure to have developed the appropriate skills; they are simply not interested in reading. Others are made reluctant as a result of inadequately developed skills.
2. The student with poor study patterns. There are two general patterns besides inadequate skills development that result in consistent failure to do outside assignments. The first pattern is that of the student who may have neither the time (because of a part-time job) nor the place (because of overcrowded living conditions at home) to prepare outside study assignments. The second pattern is that of the student who has never developed a systematically organized approach to independent study.
3. The student with a low rate of reading. Many students who have no other deficiencies in reading skills read too slowly and as a consequence are unduly hampered by routine reading tasks. Some slow readers

have low rates as a result of frustrations caused by weaknesses in other skills.

4. The dysfunctional reader. All of the problems enumerated above may be the result of a general reading dysfunction, the failure (for whatever reasons) to have developed comprehension and skills of a more mechanical kind, such as the techniques for word analysis. These readers will be identified by a consistent failure to answer the first four questions on the reading comprehension inventory (see Chapter 11), and they cannot do grade-level reading tasks. In order to help such students it is first necessary to develop a more thorough diagnosis of their problems than the routine, whole-class inventories can provide. Frequently, the symptoms that a dysfunctional reader shows will indicate the direction that instruction should take.

Let us consider each of these problems and the relevant instruction in greater detail.

The Reluctant Reader

In planning instruction for reluctant readers who are functional at reading, the central problem is that of motivating them. Lack of motivation can be the result of the reader's uncertainty about the purpose of the assignment or being unable to "get into" a story because the first part seems dull. Let us assume that a teacher of a tenth-grade class has completed his inventories and has concluded that most of his students can read the kind of material he has preplanned for the year. His first task in presenting a reading assignment is to make the purpose of the assignment clear. If there are many reluctant readers in the class, it is wise to precede the first *reading* assignment with some other activity—one that will engage the students in the work of the unit generally and help motivate their early reading as well.

Suppose the teacher has chosen "Survival" as the theme for his first unit. The major goal of the unit will be to develop his students' ability to infer from a text the main points: the opposing systems of values that create conflict within the protagonist and the generalizations implied by the results of the protagonists actions to resolve his conflict. Within this framework, the first reading assignment has the more specific purposes of arousing the students' interest, focusing their attention on the problem, and helping them to begin to formulate the kinds of questions they will need to answer to complete the unit successfully. As the first reading assignment the teacher has chosen Carl Stephenson's "Leiningen versus the Ants"[3] because it is the best work that he knows of to accomplish these purposes. That is, the purposes have become criteria to guide him in his choice of materials. To determine what preparation his students will need to read the story successfully, and to help them establish purpose in their reading, he rephrases his purposes as student

objectives: to state the choices Leiningen has, to decide why he made the choices he did, to recognize the values implied by the results of his choices.

There are many aspects of the story that these objectives do not deal with, but we cannot, after all, do everything at once. There is no more reason to carry on an exhaustive study of this particular story than there is to write a closely reasoned critical analysis of every mystery story that is read. Because what we do with a work is determined by our purpose or purposes in reading it, the problem is how best to help the students understand their purpose in reading a particular work. The clearest way is to tell them: "When you are finished reading this story, I want you to be able to answer the following questions . . ." The questions used are based on the pupil objectives, for example: "What choices does Leiningen make?"

Aware of his need to provide some preliminary activity that is engaging and relevant to the story and the unit, the teacher has planned a discussion based on a fictitious situation that he presents to the class:

A group of six soldiers are on patrol when an enemy movement traps them behind the lines. When the presence of the patrol is discovered, three of the six men are severely wounded by mortar fire. As the enemy closes in, the lieutenant in command is forced to make a decision. Should the three unharmed men make an effort to fight off the far superior numbers and fire power of the enemy, or should they make an attempt to escape the trap? The lieutenant is faced with three alternatives: (1) to remain and fight with the probability that all six men will be killed or at best taken prisoner and tortured; (2) to attempt to escape with the wounded men, bringing almost certain death to all; or (3) to attempt escape, leaving the wounded men to their fate but gaining safety for the three uninjured soldiers.

1. What decision *should* the lieutenant make?
2. What decision would *you* make?
3. What decision would most people make?
4. Is there a difference between what people should do and what they actually do in an instance such as this?
5. What values or beliefs would be reflected in either a decision to remain with the wounded men or a decision to leave them to their fate?
6. Do people actually make decisions on the basis of such beliefs? If not, on what basis do they act?

Because "Leiningen versus the Ants" is a long story and because there is a heavy load of unfamiliar vocabulary at the beginning, many reluctant readers may become discouraged. Anticipating this, the teacher could read the opening section to the class, stopping when it becomes obvious that they are caught up in the excitement of the story. Additionally, he may provide some class time for students' silent reading, thus shortening the amount of outside reading time they will require to complete the story. The discussion at the next class

meeting should focus on the similarities between problems of value judgments involved in the fictitious incident and those in "Leiningen versus the Ants."

Another problem connected with teaching reluctant readers is that of encouraging them to read as a leisure activity. In his search for suitable materials the beginning teacher must proceed by trial and error to a considerable extent; no amount of available knowledge about the difficulty of material, the general interests of the age group, or the special interests of a particular student will guarantee the discovery of the particular materials that will spark a particular student. Nevertheless, there are works of high interest and easy readability that should appeal to these students. Two helpful guides to such titles are Spache's *Good Reading for Poor Readers*[4] and Ray Emery's *High Interest—Easy Reading for Junior and Senior High School Reluctant Readers.*[5] Most librarians know of many others and have lists of works in their own libraries that are both interesting and readable.

Moreover, in selecting books that are most likely to catch the interest of a particular student, the teacher can refer to the interest inventory, the student's folder, previous teachers, and casual conversation with the student.

Books, magazines, and newspapers should be available in the classroom, and the student should have time to browse among them. If he finds material in which he shows interest, he should be given at least enough time to begin reading it. In this way the teacher will create the best possible atmosphere to support and encourage the student's interest in reading.

The Student with Poor Study Patterns

The inventories will reveal which students have poor study patterns, and an early conference should be held with each student as he is identified. The symptoms of poor study patterns are usually failing to prepare outside assignments or preparing them inadequately. The aim of the conference is to determine the reasons for these poor patterns.

If the conference reveals that students do not have time for much home study because of conflicting responsibilities such as a part-time job or supervising younger brothers and sisters, very often the only solution is a reduction of the student's academic load so that he has more study time in school. In many such cases this solution is not available. Another touchy area is the case of a student whose home is overcrowded and noisy: there is simply no place for him to work at home. If for valid reasons he cannot use the facilities of a public library, the school library, or study halls during his out-of-class time, he will be unable to complete home study assignments If a teacher has many such students—and in some classes there will be many—he should plan alternatives to frequent or heavy outside assignments. The most obvious alternative would be to plan guided study sessions in class.

In the early secondary grades, however, it is more often the case that a

student has a poor general study pattern because he has never learned to approach his outside assignments in a systematic way. It is a simple matter for a teacher to suggest ways of organizing a study corner, taking notes when assignments are given in class, and budgeting time. It is somewhat more complicated to help a student organize his approach to assignments once these more mechanical problems are out of the way.

Most reading study assignments in English will involve some sort of literary reading—short stories, plays, novels, poetry, essays—rather than the textbook-type reading assignments that are more typical of other courses. But there are certain special skills that are required for reading textbooks that are important to the student and must be considered part of the instructional responsibility of the English teacher.

Those special skills derive from the unique qualities of the genre. Although in reading a textbook the student must take into account its purpose, background information, and vocabulary just as he would with any reading assignment, the textbook has been organized to simplify the reading task. Normally, each chapter will include an explanation of its purposes and a set of guide questions to help the student focus on the important aspects of the textbook. Boldface type, indentations, numbers, spacing, and italics will be used to emphasize important points and will usually create an outline of the chapter as it develops. Key words often will be explained in the text or in footnotes, and the vocabulary load will be controlled. Finally, the chapter will be followed by study guides and suggestions for activities ranging from simple to complex. Because a textbook is specifically created to facilitate learning, it embodies the techniques of good reading instruction. It is created to be as self-instructional as possible, leaving to the teacher only a minimum of the procedures necessary to giving good reading assignments. Unfortunately, many teachers do not supply the minimal procedures necessary to make textbook reading successful. Thus, instruction in textbook reading consists primarily in helping students learn to take advantage of the reading clues that are built into the book. The instruction may be scheduled in a variety of ways. First, the teacher might set it as a medial objective of regular English instruction. Second, it might be introduced as part of the general inventory of study skills at the beginning of the year, although this will delay the start of regular English instruction. Third, it might be treated as an isolated unit of instruction later in the year. This scheduling has the advantage of following grade reports, which can serve as a diagnosis of which students need work in which subject areas. Fourth, it might be scheduled as practice reading exercises for weak readers. Since the relationships of ideas are cued by visual devices and the vocabulary is controlled, textbooks are a particularly good source of literal comprehension exercises for slow readers. In addition, the textbook from another subject area may have far more pragmatic value than the more or less diffuse exercises normally used in reading instruction.

Probably a combination of these scheduling methods is most effective.

During the inventory period, the teacher should use an inventory of textbook reading skills for diagnosis and beginning instruction. After he has identified weak readers, he should use textbooks from other subjects as the basis for skill-building sessions. Moreover, he should reinforce good textbook reading habits when they are needed in English class. Finally, he should develop a brief unit of instruction to be used after the students know what particular courses are giving them difficulty.

During the inventory of study skills, the teacher should select a particular textbook to use as the basis for diagnosis. He should then explain that an important study skill is the ability to learn from textbooks. The students should be asked to bring the textbook he has selected to class on the next day, so that the teacher can help them learn to read textbooks easily and well. On the following day, he should discuss briefly the general skills of textbook organization and then ask the students to fill out a diagnostic worksheet adapted to the particular book he plans to use. The following is an example:

DIAGNOSTIC WORKSHEET: Textbook Reading Skills

Directions: The purpose of this worksheet is to find out how well you can use a textbook for learning. All the questions are based on Chapter 6 of your social studies textbook.

1. What is the number of the first and last page of the chapter? (*Note which students use the table of contents.*)
2. On what page is there a reference to John C. Calhoun? (*Note which students use the index.*)

(Questions one and two are text organization skills, unnecessary if they have been previously inventoried.)

3. On what pages do you find a summary of the general contents of the chapter? (*Introductory statement, summary at end of chapter, questions after chapter; this question forces students to get an overview of the chapter.*)
4. On what page do you find the best short statement of the topic of the chapter? Write it down. (*Title; again forces overview.*)
5. Write down the major headings that give the major topics of the chapter. (*Major headings in boldface capital letters or other distinctive type; again forces overview.*)
6. Write a brief paragraph that explains the purpose of this chapter. (*Evaluates students' ability to use the information they have found; emphasizes purposeful reading.*)
7. Change each of the subheadings in boldface type on p. 136 into questions. (*Emphasizes purposeful reading skills.*)
8. Define the two key words in this subsection. (*Emphasis on important vocabulary items.*)

When each of the students has completed the diagnosis, the teacher should collect their answers and lead a discussion on them to explore why they are

important to good textbook reading. Following this instruction, the students should undertake a second diagnostic worksheet. The teacher should use both sheets for determining which students need additional instruction. Two other approaches can be used following these inventories to furnish additional information. The students may be asked either to make up a test on a chapter or to outline the chapter. Both will give the teacher insight into the students' ability to work more independently. The request for outlining should not, of course, be used until the teacher has established that the students have the necessary skill at outlining. Otherwise he will be diagnosing outlining ability rather than the students' ability to see relationships within the chapter.

Fortunately, there is considerable empirical evidence concerning the effectiveness of various procedures in the study of textbook materials. Much of this evidence is summarized by Robinson in *Effective Reading*[6] and *Effective Study*.[7] These books also explain a system of study that has been tested empirically. Commonly called the SQ3R method, it consists of these steps:

Survey: Skim the chapter and read introductory and summary statements to get an overview of the chapter.

Question: Turn major headings into questions.

Read: Find the answers to the questions you have formulated.

Recite: Recite what you have learned in order to fix it in your mind. Repeat these procedures for each section of your reading.

Review: Review the reading at frequent intervals, spreading learning over many short sessions rather than a single intensive session.

The books contain many other valuable suggestions about study skills that can also be incorporated into a brief unit of instruction.

In any school the importance of textbook reading skills must be gauged by the actual practices in the school. Teachers who have been influenced by "discovery" teaching procedures will place less emphasis on textbooks than on experimentation, document reading, and so on. Those who are aware of appropriate practices in reading instruction will select textbooks carefully and make good assignments. If there is a reading specialist in the school, he may have instituted special instruction in textbook reading skills for weak students and may be working with teachers to help them improve their instructional practices and develop special materials for weak readers. To the extent that these conditions prevail, the English teacher may not need to give special instruction in reading textbook materials. But in most situations, he will find it necessary to give some special attention to these skills.

Students with a Low Reading Rate

Some students will have good reading comprehension but read very slowly. It is wise for the teacher to be alert to clues to which

of his students have this problem. If he has had all the students stop reading the stories that make up the inventory after a specified amount of time, low scores in comprehension may disguise what is really only a matter of low reading rate. The pattern of not writing answers to the last few questions suggests that rate may be the student's problem. The diagnostic procedure to use with students suspected of having a low rate but no problem with reading comprehension is to allow students all the time they need for completing a reading assignment and to compare test results to those on a timed assignment. If there is considerable divergence between the two scores, the teacher may assume that the real problem is rate, not comprehension.

The treatment of such a problem is not an easy task. Usually students who read slowly but well are firmly convinced that if they speed up they will miss something. Unfortunately, there is a misleading element of truth in that assumption. If the teacher were to push such a student to a faster rate on a particular assignment, the result would probably be a drop in comprehension because the student's old habits would interfere, and he could not in fact comprehend as well at the faster rate. But if the student practices enough to develop different habits, he will find that a faster rate will become as comfortable as the slower rate used to be, and his comprehension will be as high as it was before. Hence, the teacher should allow this student enough practice at a faster rate so that he can convince himself that greater speed does not necessarily mean lower comprehension. There are a variety of activities that will help build the reading rate, but *none* of them should be used with school-assigned materials; the task of getting a student to read *any* material at a faster rate is difficult enough. Contemporary "teen" magazines, high school newspapers, or sports articles may prove useful. Getting him to increase his rate with school-assigned material for which he feels a responsibility would be even more difficult.

Students often read slowly because they backtrack or regress by rereading part of a sentence or an entire paragraph. Control of regression will help break this reading habit; for example, the student can read using a blank piece of paper to cover each line as he completes it. In this way he will get into the habit of not looking back.

Some students read slowly because they read one word at a time, whereas faster readers take in several words at a single glance. To build the habit of reading groups of words, the student can practice with flash cards containing phrases like "in the house," "had been running," "down the stairs," and so on. He can also practice marking such phrases in a running text. Practice with narrow-columned reading material like the newspaper and the *Readers Digest* can also help develop this skill. The student can practice by covering lines as his eye sweeps down the column while he tries to see an entire line in one eye fixation. Practice with such materials is particularly effective because the student knows that he has no responsibility for the contents. The purpose of the practice is to improve his reading *rate*. Consequently, comprehension tests should *not* be used at the end of each rate exercise. Instead, the student should continue practice *without* testing until he has become comfortable at a higher rate. Only then should comprehension checks be used.

Short practice drills against time will also build the student's reading rate. With a book of short stories, he can set a time limit per page and chart his results on a graph, gradually decreasing the time limit as he proceeds. Such private practice can be supplemented by timed reading tests that will help convince the student (by his test results) that his increased speed is not decreasing his comprehension.

Two important cautions: (1) *Do not use* school assignments as materials for increasing student reading rate. (2) Rate-building activities are *only* for students who have given evidence of high comprehension and a slow reading rate. Training in increased rate will only compound the problems of students whose reading comprehension is superficial to begin with.

The Dysfunctional Reader

By far, the teacher's most difficult instructional problem is teaching the dysfunctional reader—the student who cannot do grade-level reading tasks because, for whatever reasons, his reading comprehension skills are poor. Such students will usually be identified by their inability to answer the first four questions on the reading comprehension inventory (see Chapter 11). These questions are easy ones because the answers are explicitly stated in the text. When it is clear that the teacher has such students he must plan his subsequent procedure with care.

His first recourse must be to seek help from a trained specialist. If there is such a person on the staff the student should be referred to him; there is no doubt that the specially trained reading teacher will have more success in corrective instruction than a teacher without such training. Unfortunately, many secondary schools do not have remedial reading teachers on the staff, so the classroom teacher must be prepared to do the best job he can in dealing with dysfunctional readers.

But even if there is no specialist in the building, most school systems employ some staff members who are regarded as local reading "experts." Every administrator will know of such persons, usually elementary school personnel, who can be very helpful in many phases of planning and instruction. This expert undoubtedly has materials available that he can give or lend, and he can be of great assistance in deciding what supplementary materials to order. The teacher can rely on him for practical suggestions about building instructional materials and about pedagogical procedures for organizing the classroom. In addition, the expert can help with diagnosis and any specific problems that the teacher encounters.

If such help is not immediately available, the teacher must proceed on his

own. He must first begin collecting supplementary materials to use with weaker readers, he must make a more thorough diagnosis of each dysfunctional reader to specify the weaknesses peculiar to each, and he must plan his routine classroom instruction so that their special needs are accommodated. Let us consider each of these procedures in some detail.

Finding Supplementary Materials

Fortunately, reading is an area of great interest to the teaching profession; consequently there are a multitude of sound commercial materials available. Harris,[8] Spache,[9] and Emery[10] list a tremendous variety of them. With this variety of materials readily available and with a bit of initiative, any teacher can develop a fine collection of materials. The following sources are commonly known, but perhaps the suggestions will serve as a reminder:

1. *Materials already available.* It is very likely that someone in the district already has a collection of materials. The curriculum director, the department chairman, another secondary teacher, or an elementary teacher may be able to loan or give many sound materials.
2. *Community sources.* Often the local newspaper will furnish educational services. Public libraries often have easy reading materials. A nearby college may have a curriculum library or a professor who has developed a collection.
3. *Correspondence.* Two dollars worth of postage will bring a flood of brochures, announcements, and examination copies from publishers.
4. *Outside financial aid.* Someone in the school district may be willing to spend thirty dollars for reading materials. Those thirty dollars might buy three copies of five or more different workbooks, enough material for a reasonable beginning program. The P.T.A. or local service groups are possible benefactors.
5. *Students and parents.* Students and parents can contribute old magazines and paperback books to a classroom library. Publications about automobiles, sports, and adolescent interests such as fashion, hair styling, and romance are especially desirable since these have strong motivating power for students.

In a very short time the use of these resources will result in an extensive collection of supplementary materials for the classroom library.

Diagnostic Procedures

The general inventory does not go far beyond identifying weak readers, so a more thorough diagnosis is now in order. Hopefully this

second diagnosis will uncover the *cause* of the student's disability, and enable the cause to be removed, permitting a relatively quick correction. If the cause cannot be determined readily—and this is usually the case—the teacher must specify the symptoms and treat them.

The first step is examining the student's records that are kept on file in the office. The teacher should compare the scores on standardized tests with the scores on IQ tests. The student's test records may indicate that although his performance seems "poor" he is working to capacity.

The intelligence quotient is equal to mental age divided by chronological age. For example, a sixteen-year-old eleventh grader with an IQ of 80 has a mental age of 12.8. Consequently, if he is reading at the eighth-grade level, he is doing about as well as can be expected. In other words, within the group that the teacher has identified as slow readers, he will find both students who are working up to expectations and those who are performing below their expected level. Although both should have the benefit of a planned skill-building program, the teacher should not expect great improvement in the former group.

Of course, the IQ tests that are the basis for such judgments are usually paper and pencil tests in which the student must be able to read in order to do well. Consequently, the test may be measuring his reading ability rather than his native intelligence. Although the IQ score may generally identify students of limited ability, the teacher may investigate further by comparing the student's results when he does the reading and writes his answers, to the results when the assignment is *read to him* and he answers the questions orally. If the latter score is higher, the student has a reading problem. If the two scores are the same, the problem is not reading. However, whether the problem lies with reading ability or native intelligence, students who are generally handicapped will continue to need considerable support throughout the year. Perhaps the best support is the oral reading of assignments to the student. The logic behind this approach is that the weak reader's listening vocabulary exceeds his reading vocabulary—he knows words when he hears them that he does not know in print. Hence, his comprehension will be better if his reading of the assignment is supported by hearing the words as he sees them. Since such an approach would take an inordinate amount of the teacher's time, he can turn to two sources of assistance. Most schools have student organizations (particularly Future Teachers groups) that are willing to do tutoring. They will usually be quite willing to assist the teacher in this manner during study periods. If a private place can be provided for this activity, it will not be embarrassing to the slow reader. The second source of assistance is the P.T.A. Usually, many mothers are willing to tape-record reading selections. In this way the tapes will be available at any time, and if the school has earphones available, they may be used even in noisy surroundings. If the student has the opportunity to hear the words at the same time that he sees them, he will come to associate the meaning of the oral symbol

with that of the written one. This procedure will help build his reading vocabulary and help him become a better reader.

Standardized reading tests will give a great deal of information about students, but the teacher must be sure that he understands that information and is not misled by his failure to interpret the test results properly. For example, the test results will be inaccurate for the low rate–high comprehension student, just as the teacher's diagnosis will be. With such students the test will give little useful information unless it is readministered without time limits.

Moreover, the teacher must remember that the reading level indicated by a standardized test is not necessarily the level of graded material that he should provide the student for either an instructional or an independent reading assignment; students read at different levels in different situations. The test situation is one of high pressure, high concentration, and limited time period. In such a situation most students will do significantly better than they will in less structured situations. The reading level in these highly structured intense situations is called the "frustration" level and is typically two years above the student's "independent" reading level, the level at which he can read without the support of a structured situation or teacher's direction. For example:

Frustration level	(standardized test)—eleventh grade
Instructional level	(teacher direction)—tenth grade
Independent level	(without support)—ninth grade

Standardized test scores will often offer reading profiles that subdivide the total score into subscores that are more useful diagnostically. But again, such scores must be carefully evaluated so that the teacher is sure his understanding of the score matches what the test actually measures. Suppose, for example, that the teacher finds that a particular student scores at the fifth-grade level in vocabulary and the ninth-grade level in comprehension. These results seem to imply the need for a particular kind of corrective program, but a closer look at the test may reveal that the vocabulary section included four major parts—mathematics vocabulary, science vocabulary, social studies vocabulary, and general vocabulary. A breakdown of the student's score may reveal that he was extremely low in the mathematics and science vocabularies, whereas his social studies and general vocabulary scores were very similar to other members of the class. In this case, the solution seems to be tutoring in mathematics and science, not special reading instruction in the English classroom. It is also possible that further analysis of the student's comprehension score may reveal weaknesses that are masked by the total grade-level score of ninth grade. For example, the high comprehension score may have resulted from excellent work in reading maps, charts, and diagrams, and from correct answers to questions that require the skill of finding specific facts in a paragraph; however, he may have failed to answer correctly questions that call for selecting the best statement of the topic of a paragraph. In this case the

teacher should prepare special materials to treat this weakness, which is a particularly important English class reading skill. Thus, although standardized reading tests offer the teacher a great deal of information about student strengths and weaknesses, he must take the time to study the individual student's test performance carefully so that he will not be misled by the relatively superficial analysis of the generalized scores. In many cases he may find that the emphases of the test are relatively unimportant to him and that he would rather develop his own diagnostic devices for the specific problems in which he is most interested.

Although the office records of a student may contain reports from his previous teachers, these reports may be suspect. In some cases, they will be subject to a "halo" effect. If the teacher found the student generally pleasant and easy to work with, this general attitude may serve to mask the teacher's recognition of a reading problem. Contrariwise, if the teacher has found the student generally difficult, the appraisal may carry over into his evaluation of the student's reading ability. A second weakness of teacher reports is that they tend to be general. Quite often they are made out at the end of the year when the teacher is pressed by the many duties of closing school. Furthermore, a teacher trained as a secondary rather than as an elementary teacher may be unaware of the specific skills involved in reading. For all these reasons, the reports of previous teachers will be inadequate help in developing a good skills program. However, if the reports give evidence of a knowledge of reading skills and careful diagnosis, the teacher can place far more confidence in them than he can in a standardized test. A good teacher's report is the result of a year's work with the student and consequently is far more useful than a sixty-minute test. Also, a good teacher may include comments on procedures that have been helpful—information that the reading test cannot provide. If the teachers who have written good reports are still on the staff, it would be wise to schedule conferences with them to discuss approaches and materials to use with the students.

Classroom Observation

Observing students' behavior during routine class procedures can give a teacher clues to possible physiological problems. If a student misses directions such as to open books or to stop reading, if he turns to the wrong page, if he watches the teacher's face intently, if he frequently misinterprets statements or questions during class discussions, he may have a hearing disorder. A student who squints, who holds books very close, who loses the place, who covers an eye or reads with his head tilted at a peculiar angle may have problems that can be cured by glasses. The teacher should immediately check the records of such students to see if they have had a recent examination and, if not, should contact both the school counselor and the

parents to encourage such an examination. If such previously undetected physiological disorders are the cause of reading disability, correcting the physical problem should result in correcting the reading problem.

Many specific reading weaknesses can be pinpointed by using a brief oral-reading diagnostic procedure. The teacher works with a student individually using an easy passage. The teacher follows the reading on his own copy of the passage. (See the example on page 401.)

Although this diagnostic step may seem complex in its application, it is relatively simple in classroom practice. Its administration will take about ten minutes for each weak reader. The follow-up of a second similar diagnosis will take about the same time. In other words, even if the teacher must use three progressively more difficult passages with each of eight students, he will have spent only four hours. If he manages one student a week, he will have an excellent diagnosis by the end of October and will have seven months to spend in carefully planned, specialized instruction that will have far more advantages for the students and for classroom management than the same amount of time spent in disciplining the students for being inattentive with materials they cannot manage.

Planning Instruction

The early inventory may have revealed one of two situations: either the whole class is weak in reading or a small number of students have reading deficiencies. In some ways the latter situation is the more difficult: in addition to providing different instruction for those in the weak group, the teacher must also take pains to prevent their embarrassment at having an "easier" program and thus suffering a real or imagined status loss. In many instances, to oversimplify, the teacher is faced with two major alternatives in organizing instruction. If he has all the students in the class read the same material, he must individualize instruction by focusing on different skills for the weak students. If, on the other hand, he focuses on the same skills for all students, he must individualize by giving different students different reading materials. Of course, the alternatives are not quite that simple: there are a great variety of solutions in between the two listed here.

Even if the whole class is weak there will still be present some range in differences of ability; consequently there will be a need to differentiate instruction. However, when the entire class has weakness in the fundamental skills, the teacher can openly devote class time to correctional drills and similar activities.

Whichever situation proves to be the case, there are two major avenues of instruction: (1) the development of vocabulary skills and (2) the development of reading comprehension skills. These skills are related and in a sense are hierarchical. That is, success in one skill makes possible success in an-

Many people were busy all week on an empty lot near the park. Several boys were cleaning it off. Seven of them picked up old boards, sticks, and dry branches. Others cut the tall grass and carried it away. Then all the girls raked the ground and made it smooth. At last two men came and built a strong fence. Then the children had a safe playground.[11]

1. As the student reads the paragraph:
   a. Underline any words, letters, or groups of letters that the student finds difficult to pronounce. **DIAGNOSIS:** Special instruction in basic vocabulary and phonics skills necessary. Use simpler materials for comprehension skill building. Do not bother with step 2; skip to step 3.
   b. Listen for lack of intonation, poor phrasing, and the like. **DIAGNOSIS:** Conceivably a vocabulary weakness; probably comprehension is poor. Use all questions to specify weakness.
   c. Note *good* reading fluency. **DIAGNOSIS:** Material too easy for comprehension work. Use questions a through d to support this analysis. Use more difficult material to recheck vocabulary-attack skills and find appropriate level for comprehension work. Skip steps 3 and 4.
2. Ask the following comprehension questions:
   a. What is the story about? (main idea)
   b. What are they doing? Why are they doing it? (main idea)
   c. What are the three steps in clearing the lot? Which comes first? second? third? (organization)
   d. Who cleaned the lot? (details)
   e. What did the boys do? The girls? The men? (details)

DIAGNOSIS: The student who answers "Preparing a lot to be a children's playground" to question *a* should move to more difficult materials. Skip steps 3 and 4.

The student who has difficulty with the first question but can be led to a good answer through the others is working at the appropriate level. Skip steps 3 and 4, but follow with a diagnosis of vocabulary-attack skills in more difficult material.

The reading level of the material is too high for students who have difficulty. Use steps 3 and 4.

3. Point to words in the passage and ask the student what they mean: empty, several, seven, branches, smooth.
   DIAGNOSIS: Success indicates that the problem is comprehension, not vocabulary, at this level of difficulty. Use step 4 and find assistance so that the student can continue these activities. Failure indicates a weak vocabulary. Training in phonics and basic sight vocabulary is appropriate; use easier materials for comprehension work.
4. Read the passage aloud to the student as he listens. Repeat steps 3 and 2 orally.
   DIAGNOSIS: Success indicates that the problem is reading. Continue with planned program. Failure indicates some other deficiency. Seek professional help.

3. Stephenson, Carl, "Leiningen Versus the Ants," *Great Tales of Action and Adventure* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1959).
4. Spache, George D., *Good Reading for Poor Readers* (Champaign, Ill.: Garrard Publishing Co., 1966).
5. Emery, Raymond C. and Margaret B. Houshower, *High Interest—Easy Reading for Junior and Senior High School Reluctant Readers* (Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1965).
6. Robinson, Francis P., *Effective Reading* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962).
7. Robinson, Francis P., *Effective Study,* revised edition (New York: Harper & Row, 1961).
8. Harris, *op. cit.*
9. Spache, *op. cit.*
10. Emery *et al., op. cit.*
11. Gray, William S., *Gray Oral Reading Test, form C., Reading Passages,* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1963).

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

1. ALBERT J. HARRIS, *How to Increase Reading Ability.* New York: David McKay Co., 1961. An excellent basic text on the principles and practices of reading instruction.
2. RAYMOND C. EMERY and MARGARET B. HOUSHOWER, *High Interest-Easy Reading for Junior and Senior High School Reluctant Readers.* Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 1965. A slim pamphlet that contains a brief statement of principles, extensive lists of appropriate works, and an excellent bibliography of additional sources.
3. FRANCIS P. ROBINSON, *Effective Study,* revised edition. New York: Harper & Row, 1961. A basic source for improving study skills with principles based on extensive research.

PART THREE

Language

The major purpose of teaching language in the English class is to help students understand the way their language works and to develop in them an ongoing enthusiasm for studying it. Although this book is divided into four major parts, Instruction, Literature, Language, and Composition, these divisions are primarily organizational conveniences, for each part is about teaching language. The focus of the entire text and of the English teacher's work is to excite students' enthusiasm for language and to develop their skill in using it.

This part of the text is devoted to the direct study of language as an end in itself rather than as a tool for understanding a written work or as a means of improving writing. To be sure, the distinctions are often not clear-cut. The study of hyperbole as a technique of satire could easily be moved from the literature section to this section. Similarly, the study of semantics which is discussed here could be moved to either the literature or the composition sections. In short, the study of language is a constant process in the English classroom. It cannot be set apart from either literature or composition and thus, every English curriculum is language centered by definition.

This insight is not so useful in curriculum planning as it may seem to be. The English teacher's knowledge that language is the *sine qua non* of the English program is no more useful to him than the mathematics teacher's knowledge that numbers are central to the arithmetic program. However, the importance of language carries a significant implication: the English teacher should be trained in at least the rudiments of contemporary language study. Unfortunately, this is only rarely the case.

Traditionally, the content of the language portion of the English curriculum has been determined to a great extent by the content of the grammar books that the students have used: syntactic analysis, usage, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, some dictionary work, and letter writing, all presented in a prescriptive way. Teachers have often come

other; success in a high-level skill is impossible without success in a low-level one. If a student does not know what the words in a story mean, he cannot understand his reading at the literal level. If he cannot comprehend the literal level, he cannot recognize the implications. And if he cannot recognize the implications, he cannot make rational valuations. Thus, all these higher-level skills depend upon the basic skill of knowing what the words mean. Yet this skill depends upon still other more basic skills. Given a word that he does not know, the student has a variety of possible word-attack skills available to him. He may attempt to pronounce the word, since he may know it orally but not visually; this attack requires skill with phonics. He may attempt to interpret its meaning from the context, which requires skill in recognizing context clues. Or he may refer to a dictionary, which requires knowledge of the order of the letters in the alphabet (which, unfortunately, some high school students do not have).

The oral reading diagnosis will indicate the kinds of vocabulary work most immediately needed by each student. If a student stumbles over common everyday words in his reading, he needs drill on the basic sight vocabulary. Flash cards with words and phrases of the basic vocabulary are readily available commercially. Pairs of students can drill with these, and students can drill with the help of their parents at home. If only the longer, less familiar words present the problems, the teacher can give instruction in simple techniques for word analysis as follows: with a word like "tripartite," the teacher might ask: "What does tri mean? What does it mean in tricycle? What does it mean in trio? What little word do you see in tripartite? What does part mean? What must tripartite mean?" If the student understands "tripartite" with this support, it is fair to assume that he will profit from additional study of prefixes and roots.

In addition there are the routine techniques for teaching the vocabulary of the course (see pp. 485–487). When preparing the class for a reading assignment, key vocabulary terms should be introduced before the student encounters them in reading. The teacher clarifies the meanings of these words, not with rigid, formal definitions, but in a way that communicates strongly to the students. Using the word in a variety of simple, clear ways provides the students with the best chance to understand the word.

The careful introduction of reading assignments is a central technique for strengthening the comprehension skills. The purpose of reading is specified by the preliminary guide questions, and the teacher develops questions of the type most needed by the students for practice at comprehension skills (see Chapter 11). In addition, during his search for supplementary materials the teacher will encounter many titles of commercial materials designed to provide practice in comprehension.

Practice is the key idea in the development of any skill. A person cannot learn to swim by watching instructional films and never getting wet. There is no way to improve reading skill without reading. However, practice and

drill periods should be kept relatively short; the practice materials should be as interesting as possible; and they should be relatively easy.

Generally speaking, nothing is easier or more interesting to read than plays (those that are not period pieces). Since the lines reflect conversational speech, the vocabulary load is easy. Lines and speeches are short so that a reader's frustration does not have time to build. Since different readers read different roles, the relationships among characters are quite clear. Since drama is more compressed than fiction, the action moves along at a faster pace. The experience of many teachers in using plays that are read aloud in class with some opportunity for acting, is that interest in this dramatic activity does not flag. As many plays as possible should be read during the year, since in addition to the strengths enumerated, work with drama is a grade-level task.

The school grammar book can be used to advantage in working with weak readers. The exercises are usually composed of short, discrete sentences, permitting a student to read only a single sentence at a time, and thus preventing the frustration build-up. Additionally, because the sentences are written to demonstrate some principle of analysis, they exhibit parallel construction that proves to be supportive of the reading task. Again, the drill is oral, and again, the student is working at grade-level tasks. Lessons on capitalization, pluralizing, and punctuation can give real aid in developing reading skills. Of course, when the teacher's purpose in using the school grammar is to provide reading practice, he need not be overly concerned about weaknesses in the responses to the analytical portions of the lessons. Unfortunately, in contrast to work with drama, work with the grammar book is not very interesting to students and must be scheduled with some restraint.

There should be frequent opportunities for free reading and browsing in the classroom library of old magazines and paperbacks. If students find something they want to read in these periods, they should be given time and freedom to do so. Encouragement and support cannot be lavished too heavily on these students. They need this comfort more than most, and they respond to it more warmly than do other students.

As he gains experience, the English teacher must go as far as he can in diagnosing and treating individual problems in all the areas of English instruction. Since reading is the *sine qua non* of success in our educational system, he has a particular responsibility in this area.

NOTES

1. Harris, Albert J., *How to Increase Reading Ability* (New York: David McKay Co., 1961), p. 100.
2. Vick, Nancy, "The Role of a Reading Consultant in a Content Area Classroom," Perspectives in Reading No. 6, *Corrective Reading in the High School Classroom,* eds. H. Alan Robins and Sidney J. Raush, International Reading Association.