

应用型高等教育英语专业类课程规划教材

# 英国文学 选读

*Selected Readings  
in English Literature*

主 编 刘富丽



大连理工大学出版社

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in English Literature*

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# 前言

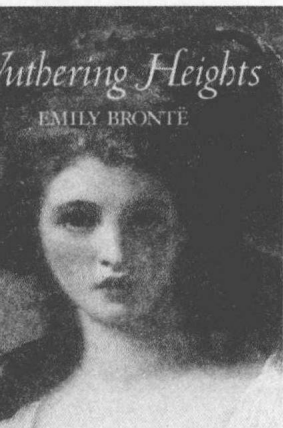
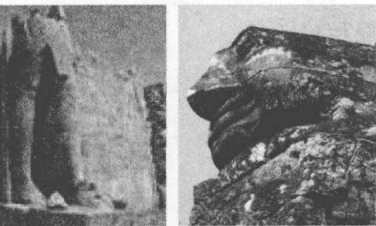
## Preface

本书分为两部分：第一部分是实训体验章节——Drama Workshop（戏剧工作室），第二部分为文本选读，共七章，以时间为线索，较均衡地贯穿了从Geoffrey Chaucer到Doris Lessing的整个英国文学发展史，可以满足一学年的教学课时需要。

### 本书特色有：

① 内容：古今并重，与时俱进。在选录作品时，既重古，遵从文学传统，也厚今，反映时代风貌。

② 体例：以自主学习和批判性思维为核心，编制实训章节，设计课外研修内容。实训章节即教材的第一部分（戏剧工作室），把静态文本变为动态的戏剧表演，在表演过程中提高英语语言能力、表现力和其他相关能力。教材配有教师和学生对表演者的评价量表。在课外研修内容中，“Discussions”部分题目设计既有文本理解，也有讨论、小论文或小组协作探究课题。某些章节适度设计了文学创作、体验性题目；在“Resources for Further Reading”部分推荐相关基础读本和前沿文献，有利于师生研修；此外，还提供较权威的网址链接，利用网络资源引导学



生自主学习（在《自主学习手册》中）。

③ 鉴赏：形式与内容兼顾。在对文本进行批评赏析时，既有艺术形式分析，也提供思想内容批评视角，既注重英语专业学生语言能力的培养，也兼顾弥补其文论知识的不足。

④ 附录：简明扼要，实用性强。本书有4个附录：其中，Terms in English Literature（文学术语表）方便学生了解文学现象，准确理解文学概念；“作家作品明细表”“历年专八真题（文学部分）”和“专八精练100题”提炼了英语专业八级考试“人文知识”部分的文学知识要点，方便学生边学习边备考。第一个附录在教材中，其余三个附录在《自主学习手册》中。

⑤ 配套辅助教材：配套辅助教材《英国文学》电子书，容量大，易更新，用丰富的音频视频资源诠释文学经典，文图声影并茂，生动直观，低碳环保，经济便捷。

为方便教与学，本教材备有配套的电子教案、PPT课件（共32讲，每学期16讲）、《自主学习手册》、资源共享的《英国文学史及选读》省精品课网站和《英国文学》电子书等，内容丰富完整，为教学提供完整的解决方案，具有助教和助学的双重功用。

本册教材由刘富丽（整体设计，组织编写，统稿校对，撰写Unit 5，Unit 7）任主编，由李荣庆（撰写Drama Workshop，Unit 6），赵学峰（撰写Unit 1，Unit 3），吴澜（撰写Unit 4），陈逢丹（撰写Unit 2）任副主编。

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# Drama Workshop

## I. English Drama as Performance



There are two contradictory opinions on the origin of English drama. One of them holds that English drama came from early church activities, in which certain religious performing ritual service evolved into early English drama. These indoor religious activities later moved to open spaces. In time they became public performances with strong religious or moral connotations. The other view suggests that the English early drama was directly introduced through the invasion of the Romans, because English archeology discovered that

throughout English cities, Roman-styled auditoriums were constructed during and before the 5<sup>th</sup> century. This indicates that as early as Roman period, people in England already evidenced a flourish of performing art. No matter what is closer to the true situation, people share the same conviction that in early medieval time the stage performances generally dealt with Christian themes, and were performed at religious festivals both indoors and in the streets.

The period of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries is known as the English Renaissance. The entire England experienced great flowerings of drama and arts in other forms. Many of the drama master pieces in this period were written in verse, particularly in iambic pentameter. On the list of the English Renaissance playwrights, William Shakespeare stood as the most prominent one.

During the reign of Elizabeth I (1533–1603), London had already grown into a culture and art centre, a large number of great poems and dramas were produced. William Shakespeare was active at this time. He wrote plays that were performed in theatres. In his life time, Shakespeare wrote altogether 37 plays including histories, comedies and tragedies. He was himself an actor and deeply involved in the running of his own theatre company. Clearly English Renaissance paved the way for the sudden dominance of drama in England. People found that the popular questioning attitudes of audience during this time were best interacted with the competing characters in the plays of the Elizabethan dramatists.

History study indicates that from 1649 to 1660, English theatres were mostly closed by the Puritans for religious and ideological reasons. When the London theatres opened again with the restoration of Charles II in 1660, they soon achieved its prosperity under the king's personal support. It was said that all the female roles on the stage used to be played by males, and now the audiences of mixed classes of people were attracted by the introduction of the actresses. This period also saw the first professional woman playwright. Aphra Behn (1640–1689)

was a female author in that time of many comedies. Restoration comedy was notorious for its sexual explicitness. Charles II (1660–1685) encouraged this quality which was hailed collectively by the aristocracy around his court.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century, many English people turned their interest from the provocative Restoration comedy to Italian opera. Popular entertainment became more dominant in this period than ever before. English drama had limited development in this century. By the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, very few new English dramas were being produced and in addition plays were meant to be presented more privately rather than on stages.



In the Victorian era (1837–1901), London citizens enjoyed a broader range of performing art in their leisure time. Farces, musical burlesques and comic operas were in fashion by turns. In the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the famous series of comic operas by Gilbert and Sullivan, and musical comedies by Edward brought about changes to the domination of Shakespeare's serious dramas. W. S. Gilbert and Oscar Wilde were leading dramatists of the late Victorian period.

Some changes also occurred to London physical theatres during the Victorian era. The improvement of public transportation and street lighting system made it safer to travel at night, and daytime theatres may well remain open long after the sunset. During the late Victorian period, the number of theatres increased enormously. It was recorded that the length of runs of several Gilbert and Sullivan's comic operas broke 500 consecutive performances.

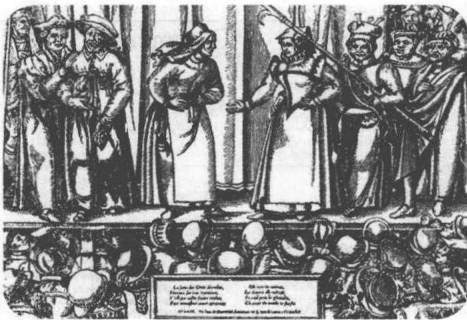
The close of Victorian age did not stop the enthusiasm of British people for their love of stage art. Playwrights were still active around World War I. Textual drama for performances were being produced to reflect social conflicts which gave rise to a new tendency in the theatre. In early 20<sup>th</sup> century, George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950) who wrote more than 50 plays became the leading drama writer and diverged the course of the English stage from traditional contents to dramas defined by modern natures. It is believed that the birth of new media like motion films was a great challenge to the stage performing art of drama. In deed, some dramatists began to write for the new medium, but playwriting continued. Like other forms of literature, postmodernism left a profound effect on English drama in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## II. Drama in Literature Classroom

Drama, as a literature genre, only partly refers to the textually existed form of fictions. More widely, drama should be understood and treated as activities performed around theatres by actors before audience. Because of this, the structure of dramatic texts is directly

influenced by the collaborative production of actors and collective reception of audience. Traditionally, there are two kinds of drama, comedy and tragedy. Comedy in its popular sense means any humorous play intended to amuse, whereas tragedy is usually characterized by its nature revealing human sufferings.

Drama performance is also often accompanied with music and dances, and drama in some opera form is meant for the actors to sing throughout. There are drama musicals which include both spoken dialogues and songs. In certain periods of time in history, dramas have been written to be read rather than performed, and it is also often the case that actors and audience enjoyed a drama without a written text or before people wrote it down. In reality, a well received drama is usually the result of negotiation between actors, audience, writers, readers and critics in different times and spaces. As early as Plato's time, people already



began to realize that the stage performance was to represent the social reality or historical context. Nevertheless, this stage or textual representation never accurately or objectively mirrored its counterpart in life. Actors, audience, readers, directors and writers alike kept on adding their mind of intelligence of understanding into their products. They concerned about issues of hair style, make-ups, clothes, theatrical properties of the actors and

actresses. They designed sound effects, musical effects, background set, the length and tones of the songs, music and dialogues to their own ideological ends. Through the negotiations of all these they created drama, which may represent anything in the objective world. In other words, the bargaining process in the creation of a drama by the writers, actors, audience, readers and directors was a real process to reconstruct or create reality and history. From this point of view, to study a drama, students are also required to join the process of renegotiation. Thus, in the English Literature classroom, we insist that the best way to teach and to learn a drama is to perform, bargain and consume it. As a logical consequence, we require students not only to read the textual drama, but renegotiate the drama through classroom drama performing.

For these purposes, we have selected 3 pieces of textual dramas as the foundation for students to design and perform their activities. These activities include:

- 1) Students of 3–6 in a group study one of the textual dramas and revise it into a performable dialogue text.
- 2) Each group divides the drama performing activities into manageable individual tasks and allocates the tasks among the group members. Factors to be considered should include: the number of actors and actresses, the narrator, the director and other roles.
- 3) Rehearsal is the major site for renegotiating the drama. The students will use the entire

semester to prepare for the performing activity. Each participating student needs to contribute to some degree on matters as: costumes, stage properties, dialogue tone, music effects and PPT slides background, etc. Each student group is encouraged to invite other student groups as audience to watch their rehearsal so as to offer new ideas.

4) Classroom performing of the product. This occasion usually happens at latter weeks of the semester. The length of each performance is to be confined to as long as 10–15 minutes. Classroom or real stage may be used to consume the student drama.

5) Evaluation of the drama performed. Each group of students is given an evaluation of the performance collectively. The evaluation is based on the following assessment criteria and scoring table. The evaluation can be either given by the teaching instructor alone or given by a student evaluation committee.

Items to be Evaluated	10 Points for Each Item	Comments
1) Understanding		
2) Creativity		
3) General Atmosphere		
4) Dialogue Clarity		
5) Facial Expressions		
6) Plots Design		
7) Activity Design		
8) Musical-Sound Effects		
9) PPT Set Design		
10) General Impression		

### III. A Selection of Plays

#### 1. William Shakespeare: *Romeo and Juliet*

##### Pre-performing discussion questions:

1) What is the story about? What time and in what place does the story happen?

- 2) If it is revised into a text of modern English dialogue form, how many actors and actresses may be needed, and who are they?

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- 3) What kind of clothes, properties, PPT sets, musical effects and sound effects may be needed?

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## William Shakespeare's Biography



William Shakespeare (April 26, 1564–April 23, 1616) is a British poet and playwright, and is often considered the greatest writer in world literature. His literary legacy includes 37 plays, 2 narrative poems and 154 sonnets.

## *Romeo and Juliet*

### Play summary

The play *Romeo and Juliet* begins with a feud between the Capulets and the Montagues, two prestigious families in Verona, Italy. These families have been fighting for quite some time, and the Prince declares that their next public brawl will be punished by death. When the fight is over, Romeo's cousin Benvolio tries to cheer him off his melancholy. Romeo reveals that he is in love with a woman named Rosaline, but she has chosen to live a life of chastity. Romeo and Benvolio are accidentally invited to their enemy's party; Benvolio convinces Romeo to go.



At the party, Romeo locks eyes with a young woman named Juliet. They instantly fall in love, but they do not realize that their families are mortal enemies. When they realize each other's identities, they are devastated, but they cannot help the way that they feel. Romeo sneaks into Juliet's yard after the party and proclaims his love for her. She returns his sentiments and the two decide to marry. The next day, Romeo and Juliet are married by Friar Lawrence; an event witnessed by Juliet's nurse and Romeo's loyal servant, Balthasar. They plan to meet in Juliet's chambers that night.

Romeo visits his best friend Mercutio and his cousin Benvolio but his good mood is curtailed. Juliet's cousin, Tybalt, starts a verbal quarrel with Romeo, which soon turns into a duel with Mercutio. Romeo tries to stop the fight but it is too late: Tybalt kills Mercutio. Romeo, enraged, retaliates by killing Tybalt. Once Romeo realizes the consequences of his actions, he hides at Friar Lawrence's cell.

Friar Lawrence informs Romeo that he has been banished from Verona and will be killed if he stays. The Friar suggests Romeo spend the night with Juliet, then leave for Mantua in the morning. He tells Romeo that he will attempt to settle the Capulet and Montague dispute so Romeo can later return to a united family. Romeo takes his advice, spending one night with Juliet before fleeing Verona.

Juliet's mother, completely unaware of her daughter's secret marriage to Romeo, informs Juliet that she will marry a man named Paris in a few days. Juliet, outraged, refuses to comply. Her parents tell her that she must marry Paris and the Nurse agrees with them. Juliet asks Friar Lawrence for advice, insisting she would rather die than marry Paris. Friar Lawrence gives Juliet some poison which will make her appear dead and tells her to take it the night before the wedding. He promises to send word to Romeo—intending the two lovers be reunited in the Capulet vault.



Juliet drinks the poison and everybody assumes that she is dead—including Balthasar, who immediately tells Romeo. Friar Lawrence's letter fails to reach Romeo, so he assumes that his wife is dead. He rushes to Juliet's tomb and, in deep grief, drinks a vial of poison. Moments later, Juliet wakes to find Romeo dead and kills herself due to grief. Once the families discover what happened, they finally end their bitter feud. Thus the youngsters' deaths bring the families together. *Romeo and Juliet* is a true tragedy in the literary sense because the families gather sufficient self-knowledge to correct their behaviour but not until it is too late to save the situation.