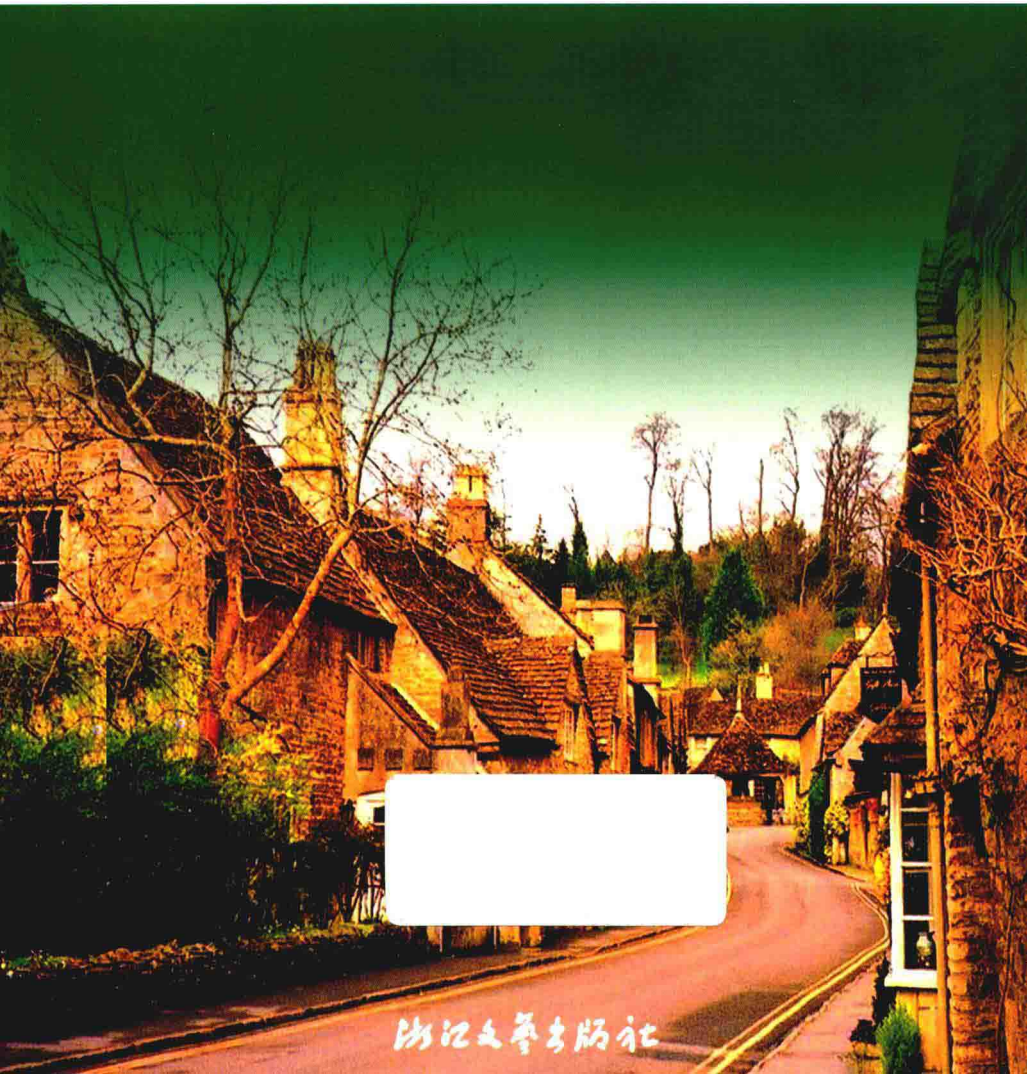
浙江省高等教育重点教材

AN INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH LITERATURE

英语文学阅读导论

高 奋 编著



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前　言

“生命是一束纯净的火焰，
我们依靠自己内心看不见的太阳而生存。”
——托马斯·布朗

当我们静下心来，回想走过的生命历程，我们会发现文学阅读占据着很重要的位置。幼年的时候，我们陶醉在祖父母、父母讲述的故事里，兴致勃勃地在动听的语言中捕捉着美丽的想象；童年和青年的时候，我们在阅读和欣赏各类课文、读物、作品中学会了表达、书写和思考，逐渐形成对社会和自我的理解和认识。可以说，我们心灵的成长在很大程度上是体验和感悟的过程，而文学作品以其灵动的想象、真挚的情感、深刻的人文关怀深深地渗入我们的思想和灵魂

之中。

我们应该已经阅读了不少中国文学名著，比如《红楼梦》、《三国演义》、《西游记》等等，但是一提起英语文学作品，许多读者可能依然一脸困惑和无奈。这是由多种原因造成的，比如文化的差异、语言的隔阂等等，其中英语文学导读类书籍的缺乏也是导致读者无法进入英语文学天地的重要原因之一。本教材正是为学习者轻松地跨入英语文学的殿堂而编写的，它带给读者的乐趣一定不会少于其他书籍。

作为导读类教材，本书拟解决的核心问题是：如何阅读英语文学作品？围绕这个问题，本教材系统地介绍和展示了阅读和批评英语文学作品的基础知识、解读过程和分析方法。全书根据所论作品体裁的不同分为三个部分，即：阅读小说、阅读诗歌和阅读戏剧。每一章节都在简要介绍和简要分析某个特定的基本要素的基础上，精选优秀的英语文学作品，并对其进行详尽的分析或赏析。本书的编著者希望通过分层次提供基础知识、分析技能、赏析范例，能够为学习者提供阅读、欣赏、感悟和研究文学作品的平台。

依据小说、诗歌和戏剧的不同特性，本教材的三个部分各有侧重。“阅读小说”部分主要围绕小说的情节、人物、背景、叙述视角、反讽和主题等小说的基本要素展开；为了更贴近生活，对小说的选择基本限定在现代文学；为了更好地了解分析过程和方法，对小说的赏析大都包含三种不同的批评

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方法。“阅读诗歌”部分主要围绕诗歌的措辞、句法、基调、修辞方法、节奏、音韵等基本要素展开;为了突出英语诗歌悠久的历史,对诗歌的选择范围没有特定的限制,并且提供了诗歌类型的介绍;为了更好地把握诗歌阅读的精妙,部分分析是用母语进行的,重在唤醒我们对语词的感觉。“阅读戏剧”部分主要围绕戏剧的主要种类:喜剧、悲剧展开;为了真正了解英语戏剧的底蕴,我们选择了莎士比亚的著名悲剧作为阅读对象,由于篇幅的限制,只能选择莎剧的一部分,因此无法对莎剧作细致的赏析,不过,这样可能更切合实际,我们可以将学习重点放在阅读和表演上,以便更好地体验戏剧。

本教材的主要特点是:

1. 从读者阅读的立场出发,用形象的方式,将学习、思考和研究放置在同一个平台上,使学生轻松入门。在综合英美文学界对基本文学术语所作的研究的基础上,对这些基本术语作出精练而明确的界定,并作了简明扼要的述评,便于学习者的理解和把握。同时,用多角度的批评范文揭示英语文学中的小说、诗歌、戏剧文本的分析过程,让读者轻松地理解和掌握阅读文学作品的基本技能和方法。

2. 从文学欣赏的立场出发,以体验的方式,使学生在细读多篇原汁原味的英语诗歌、小说和戏剧作品的过程中,真正了解文学作品的精妙。每一章节都围绕一个问题展开,力求以生动的方式就文学阅读和批评中的主要问题进行讨论

和引导，旨在引发读者的兴趣，为进一步的研究打开窗户。

3. 从批评、解惑的立场出发，在解读诗歌、小说的阅读过程和阅读技巧的基础上，为文学文本提供西方批评界普遍采用的多种批评方法和视角，为学习者提高鉴赏和思考能力，增强文本研究能力提供参考和评析模板。

本教材中所采用的部分赏析文章由王霞、王金、刘鎏、姚依东、余华、孙艳艳提供，特此表示感谢。感谢浙江省教育厅和浙江大学教务处对本教材的立项和出版的大力支持。感谢浙江文艺出版社对本教材出版的支持和帮助。限于时间和精力，书中不免有疏忽不当之处，敬请读者批评指正。

高　奋

2006 年 8 年 30 日

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Section 1 Reading Fiction
第一编 阅读小说

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No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.... Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.

John Donne

Chapter 1 What Is Novel?

小说是什么?

Introduction

"**Novel**, nearly always an extended fictional prose narrative, although some novels are very short, some are non-fictional, some have been written in verse, and some do not even tell a story. Such exceptions help to indicate that the novel as a literary genre is itself exceptional: it disregards the constraints that govern other literary forms, and acknowledges no obligatory structure, style, or subject-matter. Thriving on this openness and flexibility, the novel has become the most important literary genre of the modern age, superseding the epic, the romance, and other narrative forms. Novels can be distinguished from short stories and novellas by their greater length, which permits fuller, subtler development of characters and themes. There

is no established minimum length for a novel, but it is normally at least long enough to justify its publication in an independent volume, unlike the short story. The novel differs from the prose romance in that a greater degree of realism is expected of it, and that it tends to describe a recognizable secular social world, often in a skeptical and prosaic manner inappropriate to the marvels of romance. The novel has frequently incorporated the structures and languages of non-fictional prose forms (history, autobiography, journalism, travel writing), even to the point where the non-fictional element outweighs the fictional. It is normally expected of a novel that it should have at least one character, and preferably several characters shown in processes of change and social relationship; a plot, or some arrangement of narrated events, is another normal requirement. Special subgenres of the novel have grown up around particular kinds of character (the spy novel), setting (the historical novel, the campus novel), and plot (the detective novel); while other kinds of novel are distinguished either by their structure (the epistolary novel, the picaresque novel) or by special emphases on character (the Bildungsroman) or ideas.... It is the publication in Spain of the first part of Miguel de Cervantes's *Don Quixote de la Mancha* in 1605 that is most widely accepted as announcing the arrival of the true novel.... In England Daniel Defoe is regarded as the founder of the English novel with his *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and *Moll Flanders* (1722). The novel achieved its predominance in the 19th century, when Charles Dickens

and other writers found a huge audience through serial publication, and when the conventions of realism were consolidated. In the 20th century a division became more pronounced between the popular forms of novel and the various experiments of modernism and postmodernism—from the stream of consciousness to the anti-novel."[1]

简析

什么是小说？英语的小说有两种称谓：fiction 和 novel。fiction 是对虚构作品的总称，通常包括小说、故事、寓言等叙事作品，它大都以散文体形式出现。novel 是 fiction 的同义词，同时指"小说"这一种特定的叙事体裁。上文用简洁的语言对小说作了全面的界定和勾勒：

1. 从形式上看，小说是开放而灵动的，它在语言、篇幅、结构、风格、题材等方面都没有特别的规定和限制。

2. 从内容上看，小说以主题和人物为核心向外拓展，具有一种独立的整体性。

3. 从构成上看，小说基本的要素包括：人物、主题、情节、背景、叙述视角、反讽等。

4. 从类型上看，小说由于突出某个要素而构成一种特别的类型。比如，突出人物的小说有：流浪汉小说、成长小说等；突出情节的小说有：侦探小说、言情小说、科幻小说等；突出背景的小说有：历史小说、校园小说、社会小说、宗教小说等。当然，这种分类是主观的，其中有重叠的成分。

5. 从历史发展角度看，英语小说从十八世纪小说家笛福的伪自传体小说《鲁滨逊漂流记》开始，经历了十九世纪的现

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1 Baldick, Chris. ed. *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Literary Terms*. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2000. 151—152.

实主义小说和二十世纪的现代主义小说，到二十和二十一世纪的后现代主义小说，已经走过了三个世纪的历程。

经历了三个世纪的发展，小说的形式、内容、类型都经历了很多的变化，唯独它的基本要素依然保留。本编内容将在简要介绍小说的基本要素的基础上，对部分短篇小说进行赏析，帮助读者形成自己的阅读和批评方式。

Elements of Fiction:

* Plot: author's deliberate arrangement of events and actions
* Character: the persons created in the literary work
* Setting: time, place and social context
* Point of view: the way a story is told
* Irony: basic tone of a story
* Theme: the central idea of a story

Questions

1. What do you think of the definition offered?
2. Please tell your understanding of the novel based on your reading of novels.
3. What is the relationship between the novel and our life?

I have always felt that the first duty of a writer was to ascend—to make flights, carrying others along if he could manage it.

E. B. White

Chapter 2 Plot

情 节

Introduction

The **Plot** refers to the author's deliberate arrangement of events and actions in a dramatic or narrative work, which are manipulated as a coherent and unified whole to achieve particular artistic and emotional effects.

The plot is different from the story. The plot is the selected and manipulated version of events and actions as presented to the reader or audience in a certain order and duration, whereas the story is the chronological sequence of events in their "natural" order and duration. Therefore, the story is the "raw material" of events, which is used by the author to reconstruct the plot.

The events and actions of the plot are performed by particular characters in a work, for instance, protagonist

(the chief character in a plot), antagonist (the character against protagonist), villain (evil antagonist), and are the means to reveal moral and values of the characters through their relationship.

The plot mostly develops with conflicts, with suspense and surprise used to elicit the interest of reader and audience. The conflict may be that of person against person, or of person against environment, or of person against himself/herself, which may be physical, mental, emotional or moral.

The order of a plot is a continuous sequence of beginning, middle and end, as Aristotle points out in his *Poetics*, and all the parts are closely connected into a unified whole. The basic elements of the traditional plot generally include the following four parts:

1. Exposition: it depicts the initial setting, for example, who the characters are, where the story takes place, when the story happens, what the social background is

2. Elaboration: the actions develop into conflicts

3. Climax: the conflicts develop into a crisis

4. Dénouement (resolution, ending): the crisis is resolved with either a happy ending or an unhappy ending or an indeterminate ending

Although there are four parts in the plot, yet it does not mean that all novels must have all of them. Generally speaking, there are three kinds of plot patterns:

1. Common type: the story is narrated with four basic parts

2. In medies res: the story is narrated without an

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