

# LITERATURE

An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama

Sixth Edition

Includes 1995  
MLA  
Guidelines

X. J. Kennedy  
Dana

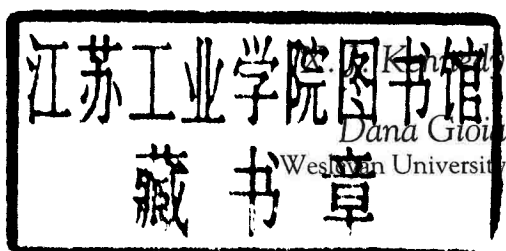
# LITERATURE

*An Introduction to*

*Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*

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*Sixth Edition*



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*Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*, Sixth Edition

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# Preface

Literature, in the widest sense, is just about anything written. It is even what you receive in the mail if you send for free information about a weight-reducing plan or a motorcycle. In the sense that matters to us in this book, literature is a kind of art, usually written, which offers pleasure and illumination. We say it is *usually* written, for we have an oral literature, too. Few would deny the name of literature to “Bonny Barbara Allan” and other immortal folk ballads, though they were not set down in writing until centuries after they were originated.

*Literature*—the book in your hands—is really three books sharing one cover. Its opening third contains the whole of the text-anthology *An Introduction to Fiction, Sixth Edition*; its middle third, the whole of *An Introduction to Poetry, Eighth Edition*; and its closing third is composed of a text-anthology of drama that includes fifteen plays. All together, the book is an attempt to provide the college student with a reasonably compact introduction to the study and appreciation of stories, poems, and plays.

I assume that appreciation begins in loving attention to words on a page. Speed reading has its uses; but at times, as Robert Frost said, the reader who reads for speed “misses the best part of what a good writer puts into it.” Close reading, then, is essential. Still, I do not believe that close reading tells us everything, that it is wrong to read a literary work by any light except that of the work itself. At times I suggest different approaches: referring to facts of an author’s life; comparing an early draft with a finished version; looking for myth; seeing the conventions (or usual elements) of a kind of writing—seeing, for instance, that an old mansion, cobwebbed and creaking, is the setting for a Gothic horror story.

Although I cannot help having a few convictions about the meanings of stories, poems, and plays, I have tried to step back and give you room to make up your own mind. Here and there, in the wording of a question, a conviction may stick out. If you should notice any, please ignore them. Be assured that no one interpretation, laid down by authority, is the only right one, for any work of literature. Trust your own interpretation—provided that, in making it, you have looked clearly and carefully at the evidence.

Reading literature often will provide you with reason to write. At the back of the book, the large supplement has for the student writer some practical advice. It will guide you, step by step, in finding a topic, planning an essay, writing, revising, and putting your paper into finished form. Further, you will find there specific help in writing about fiction, poetry, and drama. (Even if you don’t venture into creative writing, you will find these sections full of glimpses into the processes of literary composition.)

To help you express yourself easily and accurately, both in writing papers and in class discussion, this book supplies critical terms that may be of use to you. These words and phrases appear in **boldface** when they are first defined. If anywhere in this book you meet a critical term you don't know or don't recall—what is a *carpe diem* poem? a *dramatic question*?—just look it up in the Index of Terms on the inside back cover.

## A WORD ABOUT CAREERS

Most students agree that to read celebrated writers such as Faulkner and Tolstoi is probably good for the spirit, and most even take some pleasure in the experience. But many, not planning to teach English and impatient to begin some other career, wonder if the study of literature, however enjoyable, isn't a waste of time—or at least, an annoying obstacle.

This objection, reasonable though it may seem, rests on a shaky assumption. On the contrary, it can be argued, success in a career is not merely a matter of learning the information and skills required to join a profession. In most careers, according to one senior business executive, people often fail not because they don't understand their jobs, but because they don't understand the people they work with, or their clients or customers. They don't ever see the world from another person's point of view. Their problem is a failure of imagination.

To leap over the wall of self, to look through another's eyes—this is valuable experience, which literature offers. If you are lucky, you may never meet (or have to do business with) anyone *exactly* like Mrs. Turpin in the story "Revelation," and yet you will learn much about the kind of person she is from Flannery O'Connor's fictional portrait of her. In reading Tolstoi's *The Death of Ivan Ilych*, you will enter the mind and heart of another human being. He is someone unlike you: a Russian petty bureaucrat of the nineteenth century. Still, you may find him amazingly similar to many people now living in America.

What is it like to be black, a white may wonder? James Baldwin, Gwendolyn Brooks, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Dudley Randall, Alice Walker, August Wilson, and others have knowledge to impart. What is it like to be a woman? If a man would learn, let him read (for a start) Sandra Cisneros, Kate Chopin, Susan Glaspell, Beth Henley, Doris Lessing, Alice Munro, Sylvia Plath, Katherine Anne Porter, Flannery O'Connor, Tillie Olsen, Adrienne Rich, and Amy Tan, and perhaps, too, Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* and John Steinbeck's "The Chrysanthemums."

Plodding singlemindedly toward careers, some people are like horses wearing blinders. For many, the goals look fixed and predictable. Competent nurses, accountants, and dental technicians seem always in demand. Others may find that in our society some careers, like waves in the sea, will rise or fall unexpectedly. Think how many professions we now take for granted, which only a few years ago didn't even exist: computer programming, energy conservation, tofu manufacture, videotape rental. Others that once looked like lifetime meal tick-

Amy Uyematsu, Yusef Komunyakaa, and many more. Those interested in The Cowboy Poetry movement will now find a cowboy poem: Wallace McRae's "Reincarnation." A discussion of Rap has also been added to the chapter on Song. The Persian poet Omar Khayyam now occupies a central place in the section on translation in Chapter Twenty-seven. But veteran users of this book needn't fear that it has gone wildly trendy. It now has *two* of Keats's odes and more Donne, Frost, Millay, and Larkin than ever, and still clings to both "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" and "Lycidas."

The chapter "Poems for the Eye," little used, has disappeared to save space, but you will find its meat in Chapter Twenty-three under "Visual Poetry." Many of the questions and the *Suggestions for Writing* (useful topics that end practically every chapter) have been fine-tooled, and the popular section, "Lives of the Poets," has been updated.

The DRAMA section now includes Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as well as *Othello*. This addition will provide instructors the option of teaching either play as well as give students another play for research papers or further reading. A new chapter, "New Voices in American Drama," offers four diverse approaches to contemporary theater. It also highlights the increasing importance of women and minority playwrights to the American stage. Meanwhile we have heeded the request of many instructors to reinstate the classic Robert Fitzgerald/Dudley Fitts translations of *Oedipus the King* and *Antigone*. The "Criticism: On Drama" section has been revamped and expanded to reflect contemporary concerns—not only about new plays but about the classics.

Finally, there is an entirely new supplement, "Critical Approaches to Literature," that many instructors and students wished to see included. Nine critical approaches—some immediately useful to students in writing papers—are explained. Each is followed by passages from prominent critics to illustrate how the method may be applied. Most of the critical selections refer to stories, poems, or plays found elsewhere in the book, so students will not find the approaches unnecessarily difficult or abstract. This substantial new feature reflects the increasing importance (and complexity) of theory and criticism to literary studies.

No doubt the most beneficent change, however, is the arrival of Dana Gioia as a collaborator. Why should the title page now claim two authors? Some explanation is due. For the book to stay alive, for it to keep responding to the newer and harder demands of students and instructors today, I realized, it was going to need the insights of someone younger and spryer, someone in the thick of current literary and intellectual life, someone actively engaged in the college classroom. Ideally, I hoped to enlist someone who would be both an outstanding writer and a courageous, broad-minded critic, someone with stamina, zeal, a sense of humor, with experience in both teaching and the rough-and-tumble workaday world that many students know—someone, I thought wistfully, exactly like Dana Gioia.

Born in Los Angeles, son of an Italian-American father and a Mexican-American mother, Dana Gioia (pronounced "Dane-a Joy-a") is used to working hard. On his way up, he garnered a B.A. and an M.B.A. from Stanford, and an M.A. in comparative literature from Harvard besides. Author of two admired col-

lections of poetry, *Daily Horoscope* and *The Gods of Winter* (Graywolf Press, 1986 and 1991, respectively), he recently became the first American poet (as far as I know) to have a book selected by Britain's Poetry Book Society. "Can Poetry Matter?," the title essay in his 1992 collection of criticism from Graywolf Press, drew an unprecedented response from readers of *The Atlantic* when it first appeared in May of 1991. He has also translated Eugenio Montale's *Mottetti* (Graywolf, 1990) and co-edited two anthologies of Italian poetry. The perfect guy to tackle a literature textbook, I figured. But, as a busy and successful business executive, Dana was otherwise engaged.

Then, to my glee, a miracle happened. Dana Gioia gave up his business career to become a full-time writer and a teacher at Johns Hopkins, Sarah Lawrence, and (currently) Wesleyan University. Soon—I couldn't believe my luck!—we were sitting down together in my musty workspace, where old textbooks and textbook paraphernalia had gathered mold for over a quarter century, mulling the fresh new book that this sixth edition ought to be. I think we were both surprised by how easy it was to work together. This edition pleases me more than did any previous. It builds, I believe, a Golden Gate Bridge across a generation gap. The new chapter "Poetry and Personal Identity," the sections dealing with narrative poetry and with popular culture, and the supplement entitled "Critical Approaches to Literature" were all inspired by Dana. As it turned out, some thoughts from us both went into them, but mainly they embody his ideas, and indeed, his very words.

## USING THIS BOOK TO TEACH WRITING

The "Supplement: Writing," especially in "Writing about Literature," continues to derive from recent research. Until the last edition, this book's advice on writing had been traditional, quite uninformed by recent research in composition. In earlier editions, I used to see the writing of a paper as a lockstep trip through stages, with an always-foreseeable product at the end. This advice has since been recast, more accurately to describe real life. Strategies for discovering material are given priority. Students are still told they may find it helpful to state a thesis, but this advice is offered as only one possible way to write. Editing and mechanics, while given careful attention, take a back seat to more vital matters, such as the tendency of fresh ideas to arrive when it's time to revise. The directions for documenting sources now follow the latest *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.

Many instructors use this book in teaching a combined literature-and-writing course. To serve their needs, effort has been made to improve the guidance offered to student writers—improve, but not greatly lengthen it, on the assumption that the editors's prose matters less to the study of fiction than William Faulkner's or Tillie Olsen's.

Several of the *Suggestions for Writing*, found at the end of every chapter in the body of the book, have had additions made to them or have been enlivened. Should instructors prefer to let students discover their own topics for papers,



these suggestions may help them start thinking on their own. The well-received section "Criticism: On Fiction" is still here. While an instructor need not do anything about it, it can supply not only ideas for class discussion but further writing possibilities. So can the new feature, "Critical Approaches to Literature."

## TEXTS, DATES, AND A POSSIBLY PUZZLING ASTERISK

Every effort has been made to supply each selection in its most accurate text and (where necessary) in a lively, faithful translation. For the reader who wishes to know when a work was written, at the right of each title appears the date of its first publication in book form. Brackets around a date indicate the work's date of composition, given when it was composed much earlier than when it was first published.

In the poetry section, "Lives of the Poets" (Chapter Thirty-two) offers 76 brief biographies: one for most poets represented by two selections or more. For easy reference, they are tucked in one place (pages 1035–1060). Throughout the poetry pages, an asterisk (\*) after a poet's byline indicates the subject of a biography.

## FICTION AND POETRY AVAILABLE SEPARATELY

Instructors who wish to use only the fiction section or only the poetry section of this book are assured that *An Introduction to Fiction, Sixth Edition*, and *An Introduction to Poetry, Eighth Edition*, contain the full and complete contents of these sections. Each book has a "Supplement: Writing" applicable to its subject, including "Writing about Literature." There is now also a compact edition in paperback of *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama* for instructors who find the full edition "too much book." Although this new compact version offers a slightly abridged Table of Contents, it still covers the complete range of topics presented in the full edition.

There is also a unique selection of support materials available free to instructors assigning either edition of *Literature*—in addition, of course, to the substantial *Instructor's Manual*, which provides commentary and teaching ideas for every selection in the book. First, there is David Peck's new book, *Issues in Teaching Multicultural Literature*, which has been specially designed to accompany the new edition of *Literature*. We were delighted to have David Peck, a professor at California State University in Long Beach, prepare this new supplementary volume since he is a widely acknowledged expert in the area of multicultural studies. *Issues in Teaching Multicultural Literature* should prove extremely useful to instructors in today's diverse classrooms. Second, there is another new volume, *Teaching Composition with Literature*, which has been put together to assist instructors who either use *Literature* in expository writing courses or have a special emphasis on writing in their literature courses. Edited by Dana Gioia, *Teaching Composition with Literature* collects proven writing assignments and classroom exercises from instructors around the nation. Each assignment or exercise uses one or more selections in *Literature* as its departure point. A great many instructors have



enthusiastically shared their best writing assignments for *Teaching Composition with Literature*. They are acknowledged individually in the following section, "Thanks."

Finally, HarperCollins has a program to provide supplementary videos for *Literature*. To celebrate the addition of *Hamlet* to the new edition, a video of the excellent 1991 Franco Zeffirelli version of Shakespeare's classic tragedy starring Mel Gibson, Glenn Close, Alan Bates, and Paul Scofield is available gratis to adopters of *Literature*. Other literary videos are also available to qualified adopters. Instructors should not be shy about getting the details of the program from their HarperCollins sales representatives.

For examination copies of any of these books or information on the video program, please contact your HarperCollins representative, or write to Humanities Marketing Manager, HarperCollins College Publishers Inc., 10 East 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022.

## THANKS

In the revision of this book and its manual, many instructors have contributed their advice and experience. (Some responded to the book in part, focusing their comments on the previous editions of *An Introduction to Poetry* and *An Introduction to Fiction*.) Among them, we deeply thank John Adair, Cumberland County College; William Adair, University of Maryland, Bangkok, Thailand; Jonathan Aldrich, Maine College of Art; Dick Allen, University of Bridgeport; David R. Anderson, Texas A & M University; Candace Andrews, San Joaquin Delta College; Herman Asarnow, University of Portland; Crystal V. Bacon, Gloucester County College; Raymond Bailey, Bishop State Community College; Carolyn Baker, San Antonio College; Bob Baron, Mesa Community College; Robert L. Barth, formerly of Xavier University; William W. Betts, Jr., Indiana University of Pennsylvania; Eric Birdsall, University of Akron; Adrienne Bond, Mercer University; Norman Bosley, Ocean County College; Mark Browning, University of Kansas and Johnson County Community College; Barbara M. Brumfield, Louisiana State University, Alexandria; Paul Buchanan, Biola University; John Campion, Austin Community College, Northridge Campus; Al Capovilla, Bella Vista High School; Eleanor Carducci, Sussex County Community College Commission; Gary L. Caret, Pima Community College; Thomas Carper, University of Southern Maine; Edward M. Cifelli, County College of Morris; Marcel Cornis-Pope, Virginia Commonwealth University; James Finn Cotter, Mount St. Mary College; Lynn Crabtree, Somerset Community College; Janis Crowe, Furman University; Allison Cummings, University of Wisconsin, Madison; Robert Darling, Keuka College; Allan Davis, Moorhead University; Phyllis Davis, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College; Robert Dees, Orange Coast College; Kathleen R. DeGrave, Pittsburg State University; George Detrana, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College; Mary R. Devine, Stephen F. Austin State University; Wilfred O. Dietrich, Blinn College; Esther DiMarzio, Kishwaukee Community College; Fred Dings, West Chester

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X. J. Kennedy

Publisher's Note: HarperCollins is pleased to announce the availability of an exclusive videotape interview with X. J. Kennedy and Dana Gioia. These poets read and discuss their own work, the writing process, and what it means to read literature in today's world. This interview is free to all adopters of the sixth edition of *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*, as well as adopters of the paperback compact edition of *Literature*, the sixth edition of *An Introduction to Fiction*, or the eighth edition of *An Introduction to Poetry*. For more information, please contact your HarperCollins representative or write to: English Literature Marketing Manager, HarperCollins College Publishers, 10 East 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022.

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