

# ENJOYING LITERATURE





SCRIBNER LITERATURE SERIES

# ENJOYING LITERATURE

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## A LETTER TO THE STUDENT

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*Enjoying Literature* is a collection of stories, poems, plays, and other works of literature, all carefully chosen with you in mind. Some of the events you will read about will be familiar to you, and some of the characters will seem like people you know. Other events and characters will be new to you. With every selection you read, however, you will find yourself *thinking about literature*.

Whether a selection contains familiar or unfamiliar details, you are bound to enjoy it more if you think about it. You may read about a character and think about why that character makes a certain decision. You may read about an unfamiliar setting and think about what it has in common with your own time and place. In fact, thinking is a part of reading, and both thinking and reading make enjoying possible.

This anthology has been designed to help you think about literature in an organized way. Before a selection you will find a short introductory paragraph that ends with a question or a statement. This question or statement will help you to decide what to look for as you read the selection. After each selection you will find Study Questions that ask you to *recall* the details of the selection, *interpret* the meaning of those details, and *extend* the meaning of those details into your own experience.

Near the back of this book you will find a special section called "Student's Resources: Lessons in Active Learning." The handbooks that make up this section are practical guides for responding to literature by speaking, thinking, reading and studying, and writing. Each handbook lesson is designed to help you grow as an active, independent reader and thinker, to help you take charge of your own learning.

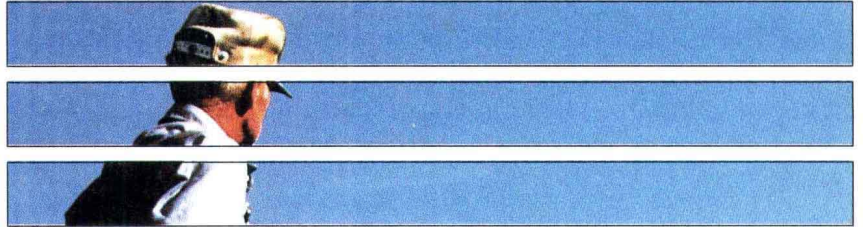
A writer once said, "Literature is news that *stays* news." Great literature, in other words, is always fresh. By thinking about what you read, you'll find that the literature in this book will remain meaningful and valuable long after you have closed this book and gone on to another.



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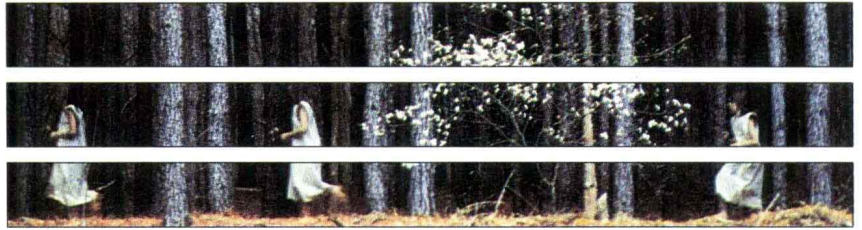
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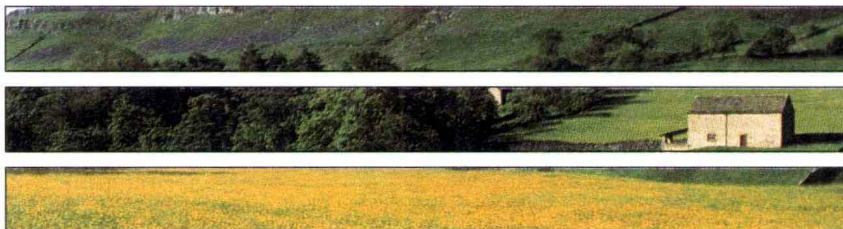
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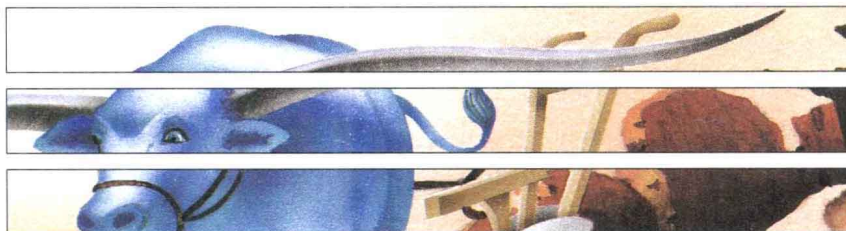
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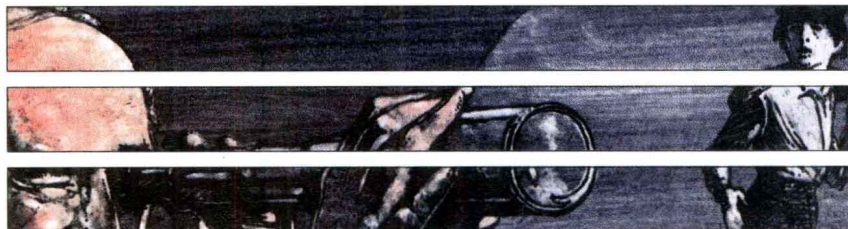
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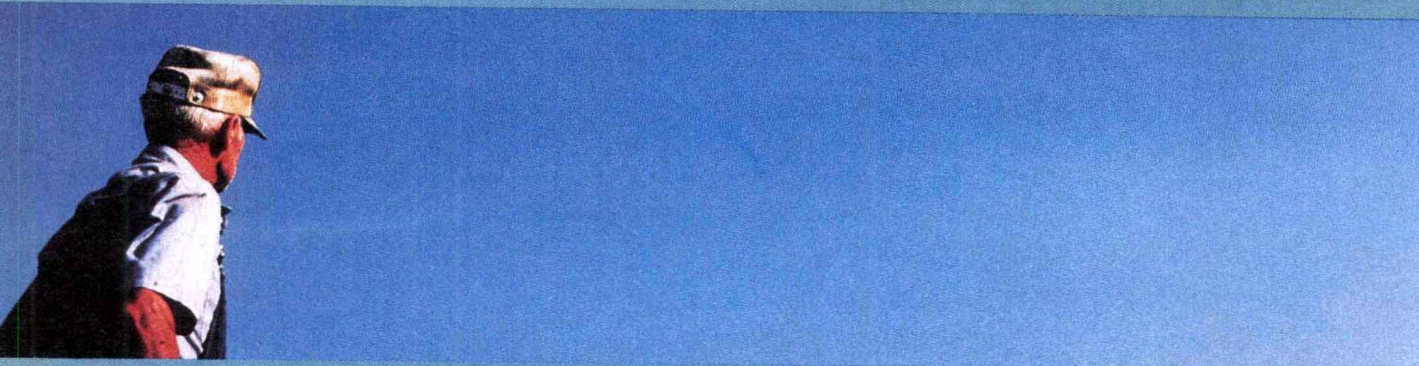
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# *Preview* *Enjoying* *Literature*

Why do we read literature? The title of this book gives the answer. We read literature to enjoy it. Stories, poems, nonfiction, and drama enable us to enjoy sharing the thoughts and experiences of interesting characters. We meet these characters just as we meet people in our own lives. We may travel with literary characters to places that we might otherwise never visit. Through literature we may enjoy new adventures, challenges, and victories.

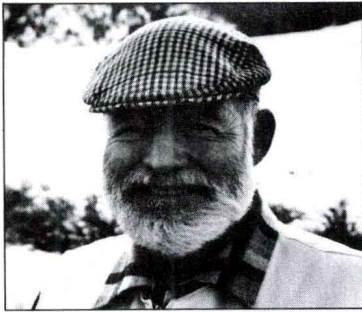
Enjoying literature, however, means much more than getting pleasure from our reading. Enjoyment also includes understanding. Literature is a kind of mirror that enables us to see ourselves better and to understand what we see. When we read about a character who faces up to a challenge, we may better understand how to face our own challenges. In other words, literature helps us to think about ourselves and understand our own lives. That understanding is one of our greatest sources of enjoyment.

People write literature because they want to say something about life. To express themselves, writers select the form of literature best suited to their ideas. One writer may create a drama. Another may write a poem. Each form of literature gives an author a different way of presenting his or her view of the world.

This unit presents four different types of literature, or literary forms: story, poem, nonfiction, and drama. You will study one example of each form in order to recognize its distinct qualities. Later in this book you will find additional examples of each.

Even though the types of literature may look different on the pages of a book, they can deal with the same idea, or topic. In this unit all the selections show individuals trying to communicate with one another. As you read each selection, think about the problems that are created when characters fail to make their thoughts and emotions clear. Ask yourself what these characters help you to understand about communicating.





Ernest Hemingway (1899–1961) is one of America's greatest writers. In 1953 he won the Pulitzer Prize for *The Old Man and the Sea*, his novel of a battle between an old man and an enormous fish. In 1954 he won the Nobel Prize for Literature. Hemingway's characters are famous for their courage. Hemingway based the following story on the actual experience of one of his sons.

- What thoughts might the boy have during his illness?

*Ernest Hemingway*

## A Day's Wait

He came into the room to shut the windows while we were still in bed, and I saw he looked ill. He was shivering, his face was white, and he walked slowly as though it ached to move.

"What's the matter, Schatz?"<sup>1</sup>

"I've got a headache."

"You better go back to bed."

"No, I'm all right."

"You go to bed. I'll see you when I'm dressed."

But when I came downstairs he was dressed, sitting by the fire, looking a very sick and miserable boy of nine years. When I put my hand on his forehead I knew he had a fever.

"You go up to bed," I said, "you're sick."

"I'm all right," he said.

When the doctor came he took the boy's temperature.

"What is it?" I asked him.

"One hundred and two."

Downstairs, the doctor left three different medicines in different colored capsules with instructions for giving them. One was to bring down the fever, another a purgative, the third to overcome an acid condition. The germs of influenza can only exist in an acid condition, he explained. He seemed to know all about influenza and said there was nothing to worry about if the fever did not go above one hundred and four degrees. This was a light epidemic of flu and there was no danger if you avoided pneumonia.

Back in the room I wrote the boy's temperature down and made a note of the time to give the various capsules.

"Do you want me to read to you?"

"All right. If you want to," said the boy. His face was very white and there were dark areas under his eyes. He lay still in the bed and seemed very detached from what was going on.

I read aloud from Howard Pyle's *Book of Pirates*; but I could see he was not following what I was reading.

1. **Schatz:** [shäts]: German nickname meaning "dear."

"How do you feel, Schatz?" I asked him.

"Just the same, so far," he said.

I sat at the foot of the bed and read to myself while I waited for it to be time to give another capsule. It would have been natural for him to go to sleep, but when I looked up he was looking at the foot of the bed, looking very strangely.

"Why don't you try to go to sleep? I'll wake you up for the medicine."

"I'd rather stay awake."

After a while he said to me, "You don't have to stay in here with me, Papa, if it bothers you."

"It doesn't bother me."

"No, I mean you don't have to stay if it's going to bother you."

I thought perhaps he was a little light-headed and after giving him the prescribed capsules at eleven o'clock I went out for a while.

It was a bright, cold day, the ground covered with a sleet that had frozen so that it seemed as if all the bare trees, the bushes, the cut brush and all the grass and the bare ground had been varnished with ice. I took the young Irish setter for a little walk up the road and along a frozen creek, but it was difficult to stand or walk on the glassy surface, and the red dog slipped and slithered and I fell twice, hard, once dropping my gun and having it slide away over the ice.

We flushed a covey of quail<sup>2</sup> under a high clay bank with overhanging brush and I killed two as they went out of sight over the top of the bank. Some of the covey lit in trees, but most of them scattered into brush piles and it was necessary to jump on the ice-coated mounds of brush several times before they would flush. Coming out while you were

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2. **flushed a covey of quail:** drove a small flock of quail from under cover. Quail are small game birds.



poised unsteadily on the icy, springy brush they made difficult shooting, and I killed two, missed five, and started back pleased to have found a covey close to the house and happy there were so many left to find on another day.

At the house they said the boy had refused to let anyone come into the room.

"You can't come in," he said. "You mustn't get what I have."

I went up to him and found him in exactly the position I had left him, white-faced, but with the tops of his cheeks flushed by the fever, staring still, as he had stared, at the foot of the bed.

I took his temperature.

"What is it?"

"Something like a hundred," I said. It was one hundred and two and four tenths.

"It was a hundred and two," he said.

"Who said so?"



"The doctor."

"Your temperature is all right," I said. "It's nothing to worry about."

"I don't worry," he said, "but I can't keep from thinking."

"Don't think," I said. "Just take it easy."

"I'm taking it easy," he said and looked straight ahead. He was evidently holding tight on to himself about something.

"Take this with water."

"Do you think it will do any good?"

"Of course it will."

I sat down and opened the *Pirate* book and commenced to read, but I could see he was not following, so I stopped.

"About what time do you think I'm going to die?" he asked.

"What?"

"About how long will it be before I die?"

"You aren't going to die. What's the matter with you?"

"Oh, yes, I am. I heard him say a hundred and two."

"People don't die with a fever of one hundred and two. That's a silly way to talk."

"I know they do. At school in France the boys told me you can't live with forty-four degrees. I've got a hundred and two."

He had been waiting to die all day, ever since nine o'clock in the morning.

"You poor Schatz," I said. "Poor old Schatz. It's like miles and kilometers. You aren't going to die. That's a different thermometer. On that thermometer thirty-seven is normal. On this kind it's ninety-eight."

"Are you sure?"

"Absolutely," I said. "It's like miles and kilometers. You know, like how many kilometers we make when we do seventy miles in the car?"

"Oh," he said.

But his gaze at the foot of the bed relaxed slowly. The hold over himself relaxed too, finally, and the next day it was very slack and he cried very easily at little things that were of no importance.

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## STUDY QUESTIONS

### Recalling

1. What is the boy's temperature? What illness does he have?
2. How does the father try to entertain his son? How does the boy respond to the attempts?
3. What does the boy fear is going to happen to him? What misunderstanding is the basis of his fear?

### Interpreting

4. How can you tell that the boy has been under a great deal of pressure all day?
5. Why do you think the boy hides his fears all day? Do you consider his behavior courageous or foolish? Explain.

### Extending

6. Why do you think people often are reluctant to reveal their true thoughts to others? Why might this lack of communication lead to misunderstandings?

## READING AND LITERARY FOCUS

### The Short Story

A **short story** is a fictional account of events written in prose paragraphs. Usually each event in a story leads to the next event. Often the beginning of a story introduces a problem that becomes more complicated as the story develops. By the end of the story, the difficulty is somehow settled.

Think of a story you may be familiar with—*A Christmas Carol*, for example. At the beginning of