

# *Literature*

An Introduction to Reading and Writing  
Fourth Compact Edition

EDGAR V. ROBERTS

# Literature

## *An Introduction to Reading and Writing*

**FOURTH COMPACT EDITION**



**Edgar V. Roberts**

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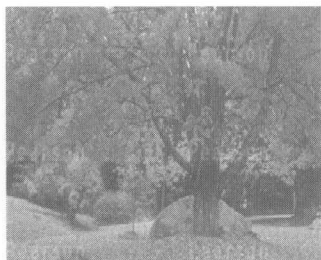
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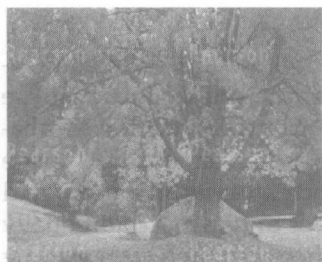


# Topical and Thematic Table of Contents

For analytical purposes, the following topical and thematic table of contents groups the selections into twenty-six separate subject categories. ("Reconciliation and Understanding" is a new category in the Fourth Compact Edition.) The idea is that the topics will facilitate a thematic and focused study and comparison of a number of works. Obviously each of the works brings out many other issues than are suggested by the topics. For comparison, however, the topics invite analyses based on specific issues. Thus, the category "Women" suggests that the listed works may profitably be examined for what they have to say about the lives and problems specifically of women, just as the category "Men" suggests a concentration on the lives and problems specifically of men. The subject headings are suggestive only; they are by no means intended to mandate interpretations or approaches. For emphasis, I will say that again, and underline it: The subject headings are suggestive only; they are by no means intended to mandate interpretations or approaches. I have accordingly assigned a number of works to two and often more categories. Ibsen's *A Dollhouse*, for example, is not easily classified within a single category.

Because the topical and thematic table of contents is to be as brief as possible, we use only the last names of authors and artists, although for authors with the same last names (e.g., Phyllis Webb, Charles Harper Webb; Beth Henley, W. E. Henley; Flannery O'Connor, Frank O'Connor), I supply the complete name. In listing works I shorten a number of longer titles. Thus I refer to *A Certain Slant* (Dickinson), and to *That Time of Year* (Shakespeare) and so on, using recognizable short titles rather than the full titles that appear in the regular table of contents, in the text itself and in the index. Of course, some titles are brief, such as *Reconciliation* (Whitman), *Eating Poetry* (Strand), and *A Worn Path* (Welty). I include these in their entirety.

Continued from the Third Compact Edition are references to works of art that are included in the plates. I hope that these will be usefully consulted for comparative purposes and that such comparisons will enhance the discussions of the various topics.



## Preface to the Fourth Compact Edition

Most of the works anthologized in the Fourth Compact Edition are by American, British, and Canadian authors, but there are also a small number of ancient and medieval writers, along with later writers who lived in or came from France, Italy, Poland, Australia, Norway, and Russia, together with authors who represent the diverse backgrounds of African-American, American Indian, Latino, and Chinese cultures. In total, 237 authors are represented here, including five anonymous authors. Slightly more than 58 percent of the authors—142—were born after 1900. Of the 63 writers born since 1935, 32 are women, or just a bit higher than fifty percent. If one counts only the number of authors born since the ending of World War II (1945), the percentage of women writers rises to 62 percent.

The Fourth Compact Edition includes a total of 373 separate works—41 stories, 318 poems (including some portions of very long poems), and 14 plays. Each work is suitable for discussion either alone or in comparison with other works. Six stories, one play, and 43 poems are added here that were not included in the Third Compact Edition. For comparison, the works in two genres by five writers are included—specifically Hughes, Oates, Poe, Shakespeare, and Updike. In addition, there are two plays by Shakespeare—a tragedy and a comedy—and there are two or more poems by a number of poets. A new feature, for more intensive study, is the addition of an increased number of poems in Chapter 18, *Four Major American Poets*. To the 18 poems of Dickinson and the 14 by Frost, who were represented in the Third Compact Edition, 14 poems by Hughes and 13 by Plath have been added.

In the Fourth Compact Edition a new feature has been added; this is the “visualizing” sections on fiction, poetry, and drama, which are to be found in Chapters 2, 16, and 20. Commentators have often observed that today’s students are more visually oriented than students of the past—most likely because of the ever-present influence of television in the home, and also because of the many other graphic forms in which the American public is introduced to facts and ideas. This aspect of our culture is often deplored, but it seems more fruitful to accept it as a fact of life and then go ahead to bring it to bear on the imaginative reading of literary works. What is important here is the development of the capacity

to think,  
to follow through on ideas,  
and  
to imagine—

in short, to exercise the mind totally in the interpretation of literature, and in any intellectual endeavor which our students will ever undertake. The study of fiction in the Fourth Compact Edition is augmented by a discussion about the relationship between graphic narratives and verbal narratives. In poetry, the connection is made between traditional closed-form poetry, on the one hand, and visual poetry and prose poems, on the other. Of the three genres, the study of drama has traditionally been the most visual, for students can make connections between their own reading and the experiences they have had with plays on the stage or on film. The idea of these parallel sections is to provide students with an additional armament in their comprehension, their thought, and their emotional responses.

## A Brief Overview of the Fourth Compact Edition

The Fourth Compact Edition reaffirms a principle to which *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing* is dedicated—flexibility. The earlier editions have been used for introduction-to-literature courses, genre courses, and both composition and composition-and-literature courses. Adaptability and flexibility have been the keys to this variety. Instructors can use the book for classroom discussions, panel discussions, essay or paragraph-length writing and study assignments, and questions for special topics not covered in class.

**FICTION.** The “Reading and Writing About Fiction” section, first in the book following the Introduction, consists of nine chapters. Chapter 2 presents a general introduction to fiction, and Chapters 3 through 9—the topical chapters central to each section of the book—introduce students to such important subjects as structure, character, point of view, symbolism, and idea. Chapter 10 contains four stories for additional enjoyment and study.

Readers will note that some of the eight newly added stories are classic—such as those by Conrad, Ellison, Hardy, and Hemingway. The new stories complement the thirty-three stories that are retained from the Third Compact Edition, such as those by Bierce, Faulkner, Gilman, Hawthorne, Joyce, Lawrence, Porter, and Twain.

Following Chapter 10 is Chapter 10A, new in this form in the Fourth Compact Edition. This chapter is devoted to research connected with fiction. Parallel discussions are Chapters 19A and 23A, which are about research in poetry and drama. These chapters have been added to reflect increased emphasis on research in the college teaching of literature, as noted by many observers of current practices in American colleges. Note that in Chapter 10A there is an extensive discussion of plagiarism and its avoidance. There has been great demand for this discussion on behalf of students, for as emphasis is placed on studying literature with the aid of research, comparable emphasis must also be placed on the judicious and ethical use of secondary sources.

**POETRY.** The nine poetry chapters are arranged similarly to the fiction chapters. Chapter 11 is introductory. Chapters 12 through 17 deal with topics such as diction, imagery, tone, and symbolism. Chapter 18 presents the possibility of more intensive study of four major American poets, consisting of extensive selections by Dickinson, Frost, Hughes, and Plath. Chapter 19 contains 84 poems for additional enjoyment and study. Brief biographies of the anthologized poets are included in Appendix II.

Poetry selections range from poetry of late medieval times to poetry of the present, including poems published in the early years of the twenty-first century. Representative poets are the anonymous writer of "Sir Patrick Spens," Sir Thomas Wyatt, Queen Elizabeth I, Shakespeare, Donne, Dryden, Pope, Wordsworth, Keats, Tennyson, Hopkins, Pound, Yeats, Eliot, Layton, Amy Lowell, Nye, and Clifton. Forty-five poems are new to the Fourth Compact Edition. They represent a variety of poets, most of whom are widely recognized. Brewster, Edelman, Ginsberg, Henley, Housman, Hughes, Laux, Lazarus, Montale, Tate, Kenny, Kenyon, and Plath come readily to mind. Along with the poems included for the first time, the Fourth Compact Edition retains 285 poems that were included in the Third Compact Edition. Two of the poets retained from the Third Edition—Lincoln and Carter—were American presidents. Another important poet is Micheal O'Siadhail, who has achieved distinction not only for his poetry but also for his governmental service in his native Ireland. Recent poets with many distinctions are Agüeros, Forché, Harjo, Hirshfield, Hospital, and Peacock. Of special note is the inclusion here of a number of nineteenth-century poets who were chosen for poems illustrating special aspects of American life. These are Bryant, Emerson, Ingham, Lincoln, Melville, and Whittier. (Please see the first category in the Topical and Thematic Table of Contents.)

**DRAMA.** In the drama section, Chapter 20, which includes Albee's *The Sandbox*, is introductory. Chapters 21 and 22 deal with tragedy and comedy. Chapter 23 contains four full-length plays for additional enjoyment and study, including the newly added *Fences*, by August Wilson.

Six of the longer plays from the Third Compact Edition have been kept in this new edition because they are important and representative in an introductory study of drama (*Oedipus the King*, *Hamlet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Mulatto*, *A Dollhouse*). Adding to this number is the important *Fences*, which has received great critical acclaim. These representative full plays make the Fourth Compact Edition useful, as in the past, as the basis for a discussion of the history of drama. In an anthology of this scope, the seven shorter plays (*The Sandbox*, *Am I Blue*, *The Bear*, *Before Breakfast*, *Tea Party*, *Visitatio Sepulchri*, *Trifles*) are valuable not only in themselves but also because they may be covered in no more than one or two classroom hours. The shorter plays may be enlivened by having parts read aloud and acted by students. Indeed, the anonymous *Visitatio Sepulchri* and Keller's *Tea Party* are brief enough to permit both classroom reading and discussion—or at least the beginning of a discussion—in a single period.

### Additional Features

**TABLE OF CONTENTS.** The Table of Contents lists all the works and major chapter discussion heads in the book. A feature that has been well received are the sentences containing brief descriptions or impressions of the stories and the plays. It is hoped that these guiding sentences and questions will continue to interest students in approaching, anticipating, and reading the works.

**TOPICAL AND THEMATIC TABLE OF CONTENTS.** To make the Fourth Compact Edition of *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing* as flexible as possible, I have continued the Topical and Thematic Table of Contents. In this table, located immediately



following the chapter-by-chapter Table of Contents, a number of topics are provided, such as *Hope and Renewal*; *Women*; *Men*; *Women and Men*; *Conformity and Rebellion*; *Endings and Beginnings*; *Innocence and Experience*; and *Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality*. Under these topics, generous numbers of stories, poems, and plays are listed (many in a number of categories), to aid in the creation and study of topical or thematic units.

Also in this edition, references to the works of art in the Inserts are included along with the topics so that students may add visual references to their discussions of literature.

A special word is in order for the category *America in Peace, War, and Tribulation*, which is included first in the Topical and Thematic Table of Contents. After the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, it is fitting that a category of uniquely American topics be included for student analysis and discussion. Obviously there cannot be a full and comprehensive examination of the background and thought to be considered in extensive courses in American Literature, but a selection of works that bear on American life and values seems now to be deeply important. Some works in the category reflect an idealized America, but many also shed light on problems and issues that the United States has faced in the past and is continuing to face today. A few of the works concern our country at its beginning; some reflect the life of the frontier and the Civil War; others introduce issues of minority culture; still others introduce subjects such as war, misfortune, personal anguish, regret, healing, relationships between parents and children, the symbolic value of work, nostalgia, love, prejudice, and reverence for the land. It is my hope that students will study the listed works broadly, as general human issues that also deal with the complexity of life in the United States today.

**QUESTIONS.** Following each anthologized selection in the detailed chapters are study questions designed to help students in their exploration and understanding of literature. Some of these questions are factual and may be answered quickly. Others provoke extended thought and classroom discussion, and may also serve for both in-class and out-of-class writing assignments. At the ends of twenty chapters I include a number of more general assignments, titled "Writing Topics About (Character, Symbolism, Tragedy, etc.)." Many of these are comparison-contrast topics, and a number of them—at least one in each chapter—are assignments requiring creative writing (for example, "Write a poem," or "Compose a short scene"). Unique about these topics is that students are asked not only to write creatively and argue cogently, but also to analyze their own creative processes.

**DATES.** To place the various works in historical context, I include the life dates for all authors. Along with the title of each anthologized work, I list the year of publication.

**NUMBERING.** For convenient reference, I have adopted a regular style of numbering the selections by fives:

Stories: every fifth paragraph.

Poems: every fifth line.

Poetic plays: every fifth line, starting at 1 with each new scene and act.

Prose plays: every fifth speech, starting at 1 with each new scene and act.



**GLOSSES AND EXPLANATORY FOOTNOTES.** For poetry and poetic plays, I provide brief marginal glosses wherever they are needed. When a fuller explanation is required—for stories, poems and plays—I supply explanatory footnotes. Words and phrases that are footnoted or glossed are highlighted by a raised degree sign (°). Footnotes are located according to line, paragraph, or speech numbers.

**GLOSSARY.** In the introductory discussions in the various chapters, significant terms and concepts are boldfaced. These are gathered alphabetically and explained briefly in the extensive glossary following the appendices, with references locating page numbers in the text where the terms are considered more fully. Although the glossary is based on the chapters of the Fourth Compact Edition, it is, in fact, comprehensive enough to be useful for general purposes.

**BOXED DISCUSSIONS WITHIN THE CHAPTERS.** In a number of chapters, separately boxed and shaded sections signal brief but essential discussions of a number of significant matters. The topics chosen for this treatment—such as the use of tenses in discussing a work, the use of authorial names, explanations of how to refer to parts of plays, and the concept of decorum—were based on the recommendations of instructors and students. Users of previous editions have found these boxed discussions interesting and helpful.

**SPECIAL WRITING TOPICS.** In the Fourth Compact Edition I have retained the section titled “Special Writing Topics About Literature,” which follows the drama section. This section contains three chapters (24–26) that were formerly appendices, but that on the advice of many readers are now presented as a major section of the book. These chapters are arranged for emphasis on recent critical theory together with practical guides for writing comparison-contrast essays on literature and writing examinations on literature.

**PHOTOGRAPHS AND ART REPRODUCTIONS.** To encourage the comparison of literary art and fine art and photography, a number of art reproductions and photographs are included, some within the chapters, and many in a full-colored insert. Most of these art works are considered directly in the introductions to the various chapters. I hope that the reproductions, together with others that instructors might wish to add during the course of teaching, will encourage comparison-and-contrast discussions and essays about the relationship of literature and art. As already noted, the “Topical and Thematic Table of Contents” lists relevant art works along with literary works.

**DRAMATIZATIONS ON VIDEOTAPE AND DVD.** To strengthen the connections between fiction and drama, a number of stories are included that are available on videocassettes and also DVDs, which can be used as teaching tools for support and interpretation. References to a number of the available dramatizations are included in the Instructor’s Manual. In the introductions to many of the plays there is a listing of many of the cassette and DVD versions that can be brought into the classroom.

## Revisions

There is little throughout the Fourth Compact Edition that has not been reexamined, revised, or rewritten. Extensive revisions have been made in the general introduction (Chapter 1); the introduction to poetry (11); the introduction to drama (20); the introductory sections on Dickinson, Frost, Hughes, and Plath (18); and the chapters on Fiction: An Overview (2), Characters (4), Research (10A, 19A, and 23A), and Four Plays for Additional Enjoyment and Study (23).

The two appendices have also been changed and updated. Many of the current MLA recommendations for documenting electronic sources, for example, are illustrated in Appendix I. The glossary has been amended and rewritten throughout.

Throughout all the chapter discussions, the feature of subheads as sentences rather than topics has been retained from the Third Compact Edition. It is the hope that pointed sentences will enable students to assimilate the following content more easily than before. Of special importance in each of the main chapters are the sections "Questions for Discovering Ideas" and "Strategies for Organizing Ideas," which have been revised in the light of the continuing goal to help students focus on their writing assignments.

## Reading and Writing Now and in the Future

Many former students who have long since left our classrooms will often remember many works fondly because they once wrote essays about them in literature and composition classes. In fact, it is an article of faith, to adapt a well-known phrase of Joseph Joubert, that students learn twice when they write about literature, for as they develop their thinking and writing skills they also solidify their understanding of what they have read. Because writing is so major a mode of thinking, it is an essential reinforcement of analytical and critical reading. This interlocking approach is the bedrock idea of the Fourth Compact Edition of *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*.

Because writing so strongly reinforces reading, throughout the book I have included twenty-six illustrative essays, together with an additional twenty illustrative paragraphs, that demonstrate the strategies and methods brought out in the various chapters. These illustrative essays, in the previous editions of *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*, have been intended as specimens to show what *might* be done (not what *must* be done) with a particular topic. Please emphasize this distinction. The essays have the goal of showing that the development of actual thinking does not take place until writers are able to fuse their reading responses with particular issues or topics (e.g., the symbolism in a poem, the main idea in a story, the use of stage directions in a play).

The illustrative essays are not as long as some instructors might assign (i.e., "write a 2,000-word essay"), but are relatively short, on the grounds that when responding to longer assignments, many writers inflate their papers with summary that is beside the point and therefore needless. It is clear that without a point, we don't have thinking, and that without thinking we cannot have a good essay. An unstructured summary of a work does not qualify as good writing.

Throughout the book, following each of the illustrative essays, there are analytical discussions of how the topics have brought out the thought. The format of underlining thesis and topic sentences in the illustrative essays is a graphic way of emphasizing the connections, and the format is thus a complementary way of fulfilling an essential aim of the book.

A logical extension (and a major hope) of the combined approach of topic and thought is that the techniques students acquire in studying literature as a reading and also a writing undertaking will help them in every course they may ever take, and in whatever professions or occupations they may eventually follow. Students will always *read*—if not the authors contained here, then other authors, and certainly newspapers, letters, legal documents, memoranda, directions, instructions, magazine articles, technical and non-technical reports, business proposals, Internet communications, and much more. Although students in their working years may never again need to write about topics such as setting, imagery, or symbolism, *they will certainly find a future need to express themselves and to write.*

Indeed, the more effectively students write about literature when taking their literature courses, the better they will be able to write later on—no matter what the topic. It is axiomatic that the power to analyze problems and make convincing written and oral presentations is a major characteristic of leadership and success in all fields. To acquire the skills of disciplined reading and strong writing is therefore the best possible preparation that students can make for the future, whatever it may hold.

While I stress the value of the Fourth Compact Edition as a teaching tool, I also emphasize that literature is to be enjoyed and loved. Sometimes we neglect the truth that study and delight are complementary, and that intellectual stimulation and emotional enjoyment develop not only from the immediate responses of pleasure, involvement, and sympathy, but also from the understanding, contemplation, and confidence generated by knowledge and developing skill. I therefore hope that the selections in the Fourth Compact Edition of *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing* will teach students about humanity; about their own perceptions, feelings, and lives; and about the timeless patterns of human existence. I hope they will take delight in such discoveries and become enlarged as they make them. I see the book as a steppingstone to lifelong understanding, future achievement, and never-ending joy in great literature.

## Acknowledgments

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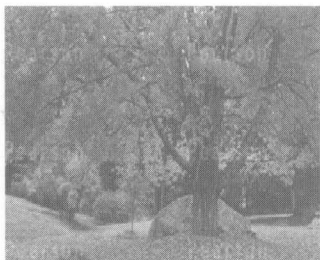
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—Edgar V. Roberts

N.B. The Prentice Hall Companion Web site offers many resources at <[www.prenhall.com/roberts](http://www.prenhall.com/roberts)>. Here you will find a chapter-by-chapter guide through this text, as well as online quizzes that include instant scoring, a Syllabus Manager™ for instructors, and a message board where you may post questions or comments to a national audience. There is also an abundance of Web links to research specific authors, famous works written during numerous literary periods, and online literary journals.





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#### ■ Ernest Hemingway Hills Like White Elephants, 289

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