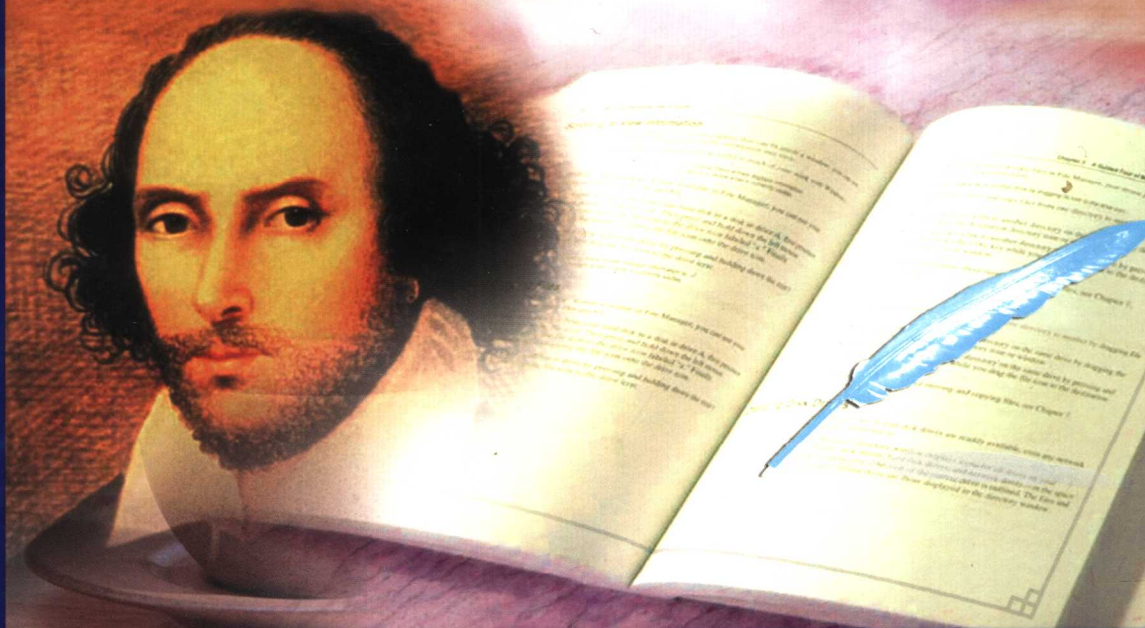




高等学校英语专业系列教材

主审 张剑 (北京外国语大学教授、博士生导师)



# 英国文学简读教程

主 编 宫玉波 郭海云

副主编 张军学 朱岩岩 王 泉 王般若 姬晓彬



清华大学出版社 · 北京交通大学出版社



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## 内 容 简 介

本书共6章。每章以英国文学史各历史阶段为主线,精选了英国文学中公认的经典作品作为选读材料,每篇选读都配有对该选读材料的简单介绍和文学评论、英语的注释和针对该选读材料进行的提问。每个章节前还附有该文学历史阶段的纲要、文学术语、作家、作品及重要作品的简单扼要的评价。

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# 前言

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“高等学校英语专业系列教材”是北京交通大学外语系联合全国近二十所高校英语专业的同行共同倾力编写的一套供英语专业本科生使用的教材。《英国文学简读教程》是该系列教材之一，是《美国文学简读教程》的姊妹篇。本书的读者对象为英语专业高年级学生，同时也可供非英语专业高年级英美文学辅修课程使用。本书还可作为报考英语专业英美文学方向的硕士生入学考试的参考教材使用。本书精选了英国文学中公认的经典作品作为选读材料，每篇选读材料都配有简单的介绍和文学评论、难点注释及针对该选读材料进行的提问。每个章节前还附有该文学历史阶段的纲要、文学术语、作家、代表作品及对重要作品简明扼要的评价。本书在参考国内几乎所有的英美文学教材的基础上，同时根据参编兄弟院校的教学特点精心编写而成。在选读作品的筛选上，编者们在浩如烟海的英国文学中采撷最美丽的浪花奉献给亲爱的读者。

本书的编写者都是英美文学专业的教授、副教授和博士。他们都有多年的文学授课的经历。该书在此前一直作为自编讲义使用，很受学生欢迎。

由于编者水平所限，错误和不当之处诚望广大同仁和学生批评指正。

编者  
2007年7月于北京

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# Chapter 1

## Old and Medieval English Literature



### I. An Outline of the Literature of This Period

Literary Terms	Brief Description
Ballad (民谣)	(1) <b>Ballad</b> is a story in poetic form to be sung or recited. (2) Ballads were passed down from generation to generation. (3) <i>Robin Hood</i> is a famous ballad singing the goods of Robin Hood. Coleridge's <i>The Rime of the Ancient Mariner</i> is a 19th century English ballad.
Epic (史诗)	(1) <b>Epic</b> , in poetry, refers to a long work dealing with the actions of gods and heroes. (2) <i>Beowulf</i> is the greatest national epic of the Anglo-Saxons. John Milton wrote three great epics: <i>Paradise Lost</i> , <i>Paradise Regained</i> and <i>Samson Agonistes</i> .
Romance (罗曼史/骑士文学)	(1) <b>Romance</b> is a popular literary form in the medieval England. (2) It sings knightly adventures or other heroic deeds. (3) Chivalry (such as bravery, honor, loyalty, generosity, and kindness to the weak and poor) is the spirit of romance.
Alliteration (押头韵)	(1) <b>Alliteration</b> means a repetition of the initial sounds of several words in a line or group. (2) Alliteration is a traditional poetic device in English literature. (3) Robert Frost's poem <i>Acquainted with the Night</i> is a case in point: "I have stood still and stopped the sound of feet".

Name of the Writer	Works	Brief Description
	<i>Beowulf</i> 《贝尔武甫》	<p>(1) <i>Beowulf</i>, a typical example of Old English poetry, is regarded as the greatest national epic of the Anglo-Saxons.</p> <p>(2) The epic describes the heroic deeds of a Scandinavian hero, Beowulf, in fighting against the monster Grendel, his revengeful mother, and a fire-breathing dragon.</p> <p>(3) The poem conveys a hope that the righteous will triumph over the evil.</p>
<p>Geoffrey Chaucer (1343 - 1400) (乔叟)</p> <p>(1) He is regarded as the father of English poetry.</p> <p>(2) <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> is his masterpiece.</p> <p>(3) He presents, for the first time in English literature, a comprehensive realistic picture of the medieval English society and creates a whole gallery of vivid characters from all walks of life.</p> <p>(4) Chaucer introduced from France rhymed stanzas of various types (heroic couplet) into English poetry to replace the Old English alliterative verse.</p> <p>(5) It was Chaucer who made London dialect the foundation for modern English speech.</p> <p>(6) His characterization is vivid.</p>	<p><i>The Canterbury Tales</i> 《坎特伯雷故事集》</p> <p><i>Troilus and Criseyde</i> 《特罗勒斯和科丽西德》</p> <p><i>The Romaunt of the Rose</i> 《玫瑰罗曼史》</p> <p><i>The House of Fame</i> 《声誉之堂》</p>	<p>(1) <i>The Canterbury Tales</i> is Chaucer's monumental success.</p> <p>(2) It is a collection of stories told by a group of pilgrims on their way to Canterbury.</p> <p>(3) It was influenced by Boccaccio's (薄迦丘) <i>Decameron</i> (《十日谈》).</p> <p>(4) In the poem Chaucer presents, for the first time in English literature, a comprehensive realistic picture of the medieval English society and creates a whole gallery of vivid characters from all walks of life.</p> <p>(5) In this work Chaucer's realism, trenchant irony and freedom of views reached a high level of power.</p> <p>(6) The poem shows Chaucer's humanism and anticipates a new era to come.</p>



William Langland (1331 - 1400) (威廉·兰格伦)	<i>Piers Plowman</i> 《农夫皮尔斯》	(1) <i>Piers Plowman</i> is a poem that gives a picture of the life in feudal England. (2) It is a protest against the then social injustice.
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## II. Beowulf

### Beowulf<sup>1</sup> (Excerpt)

One of Hygelac's<sup>2</sup> thanes<sup>3</sup>, Beowulf by name,  
renowned among the Geats for his great bravery  
heard in his own country of Grendel's crimes;  
he was the strongest man alive,  
princely and powerful.  
He gave order that a good ship should be prepared,  
said he would sail  
over the sea to assist the famous leader,  
the warrior king, since he needed hardy men.  
Wise men admired his spirit of adventure.  
Dear to them though he was, they encouraged  
the warrior and consulted the omens.  
Beowulf searched out the bravest of the Geats<sup>4</sup>,  
asked them to go with him; that seasoned sailor  
led fourteen thanes to the ship at the shore.  
Days went by the boat was on the water,  
moored under the cliff. The warriors, all prepared,  
stepped onto the prow the water streams eddied,  
stirred up sand the men stowed  
gleaming armor, noble war-gear  
deep within the ship; then those warriors launched  
the well-built boat and began their journey.  
Foaming at the prow and most like a sea-bird,  
the boat sped over the waves, urged on by the wind



until next day, at the expected time,  
so far had the curved prow come  
that the travellers sighted land,  
shining cliffs, steep hills,  
broad headlands. So did they cross the sea  
their journey was at its end. Then the Geats  
disembarked, lost no time in tying up  
the boat — their corslets clanked  
the warriors gave thanks to God  
for their safe passage over the sea.



### Notes

1. *Beowulf* is regarded as England's national epic consisting of 3182 lines. It tells of two major adventures in the life of the Geatish hero Beowulf: the first adventure takes place in his youth when he fights and kills a monster Grendel and his revengeful mother, a sea monster; the second adventure occurs after Beowulf has long been king of the Geats. It happens that his kingdom is attacked by a fire dragon and his people suffer tremendously. A horrible fighting comes between Beowulf and the dragon. At long last both are mortally wounded. The dragon is killed and Beowulf dies. The selection is a part of modern version of *Beowulf*. It describes Beowulf and his warriors who are well prepared and ready to go abroad by sea to assist the Danish king who is harassed by Grendel's crimes.
2. Hygelac: a kingdom of ancient Sweden
3. thane: lord
4. Geats: a tribe of Hygelac



### Understanding the Text

1. What is Beowulf renowned for?
2. What are Beowulf and his warriors going to do?
3. What figure of speech is typical of the poem?



### III. Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

#### Sir Gawain and the Green Knight<sup>1</sup> (Excerpt)

The Green knight upon ground girds him with care  
 Bows a bit with his head, and bares his flesh;  
 His long lovely locks he laid over his crown,  
 Let the naked nape for the need be shown.  
 Gawain grips to his ax and gathers it aloft—  
 The left foot on the floor before him he set—  
 Brought it down deftly upon the bare neck,  
 That the shock of the sharp blow shivered the bones  
 And cut the flesh cleanly and clove it in twain,  
 That the blade of bright steel bit into the ground.  
 The head was hewn off and fell to the floor;  
 Many found it at their feet, as forth it rolled;  
 The blood gushed from the body, bright on the grin.  
 Yet fell not the fellow, nor faltered a whit,  
 But stoutly he starts forth upon stiff shanks,  
 And as all stood staring he stretched forth his hand,  
 Laid hold of his head and heaved it aloft.  
 Then goes to the green steed, grasps the bridle,  
 Steps into the stirrup, bestrides his mount,  
 And his head by the hair in his hand holds,  
 And as steady he sits in the stately saddle  
 As he had met with no mishap, nor missing were his head.  
 His bulk about he haled<sup>2</sup>, that fearsome body that bled  
 There were many in the court that quailed  
 Before all his say was said.



#### Notes

1. Romance is a dominant form of the Medieval English literature. The word *roman* in Old French



was applied to the popular courtly stories in verse which dealt with three traditional subjects: the legends about Arthur, Charlemagne and his knights, and stories of classical heroes, especially Alexander. It mainly tells of adventures of knights. The principles that knights cling to are termed chivalry. The essence of chivalry emphasizes such virtues as courage, honor, courtesy and concern for the weak and helpless. *King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table* is one of the most popular romances. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is a famous one of *King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table*. The selection describes the fierce combat between Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.

2. haled; hauled



### Understanding the Text

1. How do you describe the appearance of the Green Knight?
2. What kind of person is the Green Knight?
3. Who has won at last? Sir Gawain or the Green Knight?
4. How did Sir Gawain win the Green Knight?

## IV. Geoffrey Chaucer

### The Canterbury Tales<sup>1</sup> (Excerpt)

#### GROUP A

#### The Prologue

When the sweet showers of April fall and shoot  
Down through the drought of March to pierce the root,  
Bathing every vein in liquid power  
From which there springs the engendering<sup>2</sup> of the flower,  
When also Zephyrus<sup>3</sup> with his sweet breath  
Exhales an air in every grove and heath  
Upon the tender shoots, and the young sun<sup>4</sup>  
His half-course in the sign of the Ram<sup>5</sup> has run,  
And the small fowl are making melody



That sleep away the night with open eye  
 ( So nature pricks<sup>6</sup> them and their heart engages<sup>7</sup> )  
 Then people long to go on pilgrimages  
 And palmers long to seek the stranger strands<sup>8</sup>  
 Of far-off saints, hallowed in sundry lands,  
 And specially, from every shire's end  
 In England, down to Canterbury they wend  
 To seek the holy blissful martyr<sup>9</sup>, quick  
 In giving help to them when they were sick.  
 It happened in that season that one day  
 In Southwark, at The Tabard, as I lay  
 Ready to go on pilgrimage and start  
 For Canterbury, most devout at heart,  
 At night there came into that hostelry  
 Some nine and twenty in a company  
 Of sundry folk happening then to fall  
 In fellowship, and they were pilgrims all  
 That towards Canterbury meant to ride.  
 The rooms and stables of the inn were wide;  
 They made us easy, all was of the best.  
 And shortly, when the sun had gone to rest,  
 By speaking to them all upon the trip  
 I was admitted to their fellowship  
 And promised to rise early and take the way  
 To Canterbury, as you heard me say.

But none the less, while I have time and space,  
 Before my story takes a further pace<sup>10</sup>,  
 It seems a reasonable thing to say  
 What their condition was, the full array  
 Of each of them, as it appeared to me.  
 According to profession and degree<sup>11</sup>,  
 And what apparel they were riding in;  
 And at a Knight I therefore will begin.

...





There also was a Nun, a Prioress;  
Simple her way of smiling was and coy<sup>12</sup>.  
Her greatest oath was only By St Loy<sup>13</sup>!  
And she was known as Madam Eglantyne<sup>14</sup>.  
And well she sang a service, with a fine  
Intoning through her nose, as was most seemly,  
After the school of Stratford-atte-Bowe<sup>15</sup>;  
French in the Paris style she did not know.  
At meal her manners were well taught withal;  
No morsel from her lips did she let fall,  
Nor dipped her fingers in the sauce too deep;  
But she could carry a morsel up and keep  
The smallest drop from falling on her breast.  
For courtliness she had a special zest.  
And she would wipe her upper lip so clean  
That not a trace of grease was to be seen  
Upon the cup when she had drunk; to eat,  
She reached a hand sedately for the meat.  
She certainly was very entertaining,  
Pleasant and friendly in her ways, and straining  
To counterfeit a courtly kind of grace,  
A stately bearing fitting to her place<sup>16</sup>,  
And to seem dignified in all her dealings.  
As for her sympathies and tender feelings,  
She was so charitably solicitous  
She used to weep if she but saw a mouse  
Caught in trap, if it were dead or bleeding.  
And she had little dogs she would be feeding  
With roasted flesh, of milk, or fine white bread.  
Sorely she wept if one of them were dead  
Or someone took a stick and made it smart<sup>17</sup>;  
She was all sentiment and tender heart.  
Her veil was gathered in a seemly way,  
Her nose was elegant, her eyes glass-grey;