

高等学校英语专业系列教材 Textbook Series for Tertiary English Majors 

总主编 石 坚

副总主编 杜瑞清 陈建平 黄国文 李 力

Selected Readings of American Literature

美国文学选读

张 强 编著



重庆大学出版社

<http://www.cqup.com.cn>

Selected Readings of American Literature

美国文学选读

江苏工业学院图书馆

张 强 编著

藏书章

金盾大学 出版社

内 容 提 要

《美国文学选读》是《求知高等学校英语专业系列教材》的一部分,旨在为英语专业高年级学生、美国文学爱好者和研究者提供一片园地,用以学习和研究美国文学,提高文学素养,开拓视野,陶冶情操。本书是一本集历史、文本、批评理论于一书的文学选读教材。该书介绍了美国自殖民地时期到20世纪末的历史文化背景和各个时期的文艺思潮以及代表作家和他们的代表著作。本书按照美国文学的发展分九章,每章包括历史文化背景简介、作家作品选读、文学聚焦、阅读与欣赏和时代之声5个部分。精简而丰富的注释、引导自主性研究的思考题能有效帮助读者加深对所选作品的理解和鉴赏。

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

美国文学选读/张强编著. —重庆:重庆大学出版社,
2008.4

(求知高等学校英语专业系列教材)

ISBN 978-7-5624-4382-7

I. 美… II. 张… III. 文学—作品—美国—高等学校—
教材 IV. I712.06

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2008)第 011309 号

求知高等学校英语专业系列教材

美国文学选读

张 强 编著

责任编辑:杨 琪 版式设计:杨 琪

责任校对:夏 宇 责任印制:赵 晟

*

重庆大学出版社出版发行

出版人:张鸽盛

社址:重庆市沙坪坝正街174号重庆大学(A区)内

邮编:400030

电话:(023)65102378 65105781

传真:(023)65103686 65105565

网址:<http://www.cqup.com.cn>

邮箱:fxk@cqup.com.cn(市场营销部)

全国新华书店经销

重庆东南印务有限责任公司印刷

*

开本:787×960 1/16 印张:23.5 字数:433千

2008年4月第1版 2008年4月第1次印刷

印数:1—3 000

ISBN 978-7-5624-4382-7 定价:39.00元

本书如有印刷、装订等质量问题,本社负责调换

版权所有,请勿擅自翻印和用本书

制作各类出版物及配套用书,违者必究

高等学校英语专业系列教材
Textbook Series for Tertiary English Majors



高等学校英语专业系列教材 Textbook Series for Tertiary English Majors 

总 主 编 石 坚

副总主编 杜瑞清 陈建平 黄国文 李 力

编 委 会 (按姓氏笔画排列)

丁廷森	石 坚	刘守兰	刘晓红
吴 念	宋亚菲	张美芳	张维友
李 力	李海丽	杜瑞清	杨瑞英
陈建平	周 仪	周玉忠	姜秋霞
段 峰	高广文	高庆选	黄国文
廖七一			

策 划 张鸽盛 饶邦华 周小群

总 序

进入 21 世纪,我国高等教育呈现快速扩展的趋势。为适应社会、经济的快速发展,人才的培养问题已经比我国任何一个历史时期都显得更为重要。当今,人才的能力和素质的衡量越来越多地采用国际标准,人才的外语水平自然地也越来越受到培养单位和用人单位的重视,由此引发了对大学外语教学模式、教材和检测机制的新一轮讨论,掀起了新一轮的大学英语教学改革。作为外语师资队伍和外语专业人才培养的高等学校英语专业,相比之下,在教学改革思路、新教材开发和新教学模式探讨等诸方面均显得滞后。尽管高等学校外语专业教学指导委员会英语组针对当前高校发展的新形式和外语专业人才培养的新规格、新模式和新要求,修订出了新的《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》,并结合 21 世纪外语人才培养和需求的新形势,制定了由教育部高等教育司转发的《关于外语专业面向 21 世纪本科教育改革的若干意见》,就英语专业的建设提出了指导性的意见,但在实际工作中这两个文件的精神尚未落实。

为此,重庆大学出版社和外语教学界的专家们就国内高等学校英语专业建设所面临的新形势作了专题讨论。专家们认为,把“大纲”的设计和“若干意见”的思想和理念变为现实的一个最直接的体现方式,就是编写一套全新理念的英语专业系列教材;随着我国教育体制的改革,特别是基础教育课程标准的实施,适合高等学校英语专业教学需要的教材也应作相应的调整,以应对中小学英语教学改革的新要求;高等学校学生入学时英语水平的逐年提高和就业市场对外语人才需求呈多元化趋势的实际,对高等学校英语专业的人才培养、教学模式、课程设置、教材建设等方面也提出了严峻挑战,应对这些挑战,同样可以通过一套新的教材体系来实现。

迄今为止,国内尚无一套完整的、系统的英语专业系列教材;目前已有的教材出自不同的出版社,编写的思路和体例不尽相同;现有的教材因出版时间较早,内容、知识结构、教学方法和手段已经不能适应新的发展要求;传统的教材设计多数基于学科的内在逻辑和系统性,较少考虑学习者的全面发展和社会对人才需求的多元化。

自 2001 年开始,在重庆大学出版社的大力支持下,我们成立了由华中、华南、西南和西北地区的知名专家、学者和教学一线教师组成的《求知高等学校英语专业系列教材》编写组,确定了系列教材编写的指导思想和总体目标,即以《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》为依据,将社会的需求与培养外语人才的全面发展紧密结合,注重英语作为一个专业的学科系统性和科学性,注重英语教学和习得的方法与规律,突出特色和系列教材的内在逻辑关系,反映当前教学改革的新理念并具有前瞻性;锤炼精品,建立与英语专业课程配套的新教材体系,推动英语专业的教学改革,培养高素质人才和创新人才。



系列教材力求在以下方面有所突破和创新:

第一,教材的整体性。系列教材在课程类型上分为专业技能必修课程、专业知识必修课程、专业技能选修课程、专业知识选修课程和相关专业知识课程等多个板块。在考虑每一种教材针对相应课程的特性和特色的同时,又考虑到系列教材间相互的支撑性。

第二,学生基本技能和实际应用能力的培养。在课程的设计上充分考虑英语作为一个专业来培养学生的基础和基本技能,也充分考虑到英语专业学生应该具备的专业语言、文学和文化素养。同时,教材的设计兼顾到社会需求中对英语专业学生所强调的实际应用能力的培养,除考虑课程和英语专业的培养目的,课程或课程体系应该呈现的学科基本知识和规范外,充分考虑到教材另一方面的功用,即学生通过教材接触真实的语言环境,了解社会,了解文化背景,丰富学生的实践经验。在教材编写中突出强调“enable”,让学习者在实践中学习语言、文学、文化和其他相关知识,更多地强调学习的过程,强调学生的参与,以此提高学生的实际应用技能。

第三,学生的全面发展。对高等学校英语专业学生而言,英语不仅是一门工具,更重要的是一个培养学生人文素质和跨文化意识的学科专业。系列教材强调合作性学习、探索性学习,培养学生的自主学习性,加强学习策略的指导。通过基础阶段课程的学习,使学生在语言知识、语言技能、文化意识、情感态度和学习策略等方面得到整体发展;在高年级阶段则更多地注重学生的人文精神、专业理论素养、中外文学及文化修养的培养。

第四,教材的开放性。一套好的教材不应该对课堂教学、老师的施教和学生的学习拓展有所制约,应给使用教材的教师和学生留有一定的空间,要让学生感到外语学习是一件愉快的事,通过学习让人思考,给人以自信,引导人走向成功。系列教材的总体设计既考虑严密的学科系统性,也考虑独具特色的开放性。不同地区、不同类型的学校,可以根据自己的生源和培养目标灵活地取舍、选用、组合教材,尤其是结合国内高等学校中正在探讨的学分制,给教与学一个多维度的课程体系。

我们希望通过这套系列教材,来推动高等学校英语专业教学改革,探讨新的教学理念、模式,为英语专业人才的培养探索新的路子,为英语专业的学生拓展求知的空间。

《求知高等学校英语专业系列教材》编委会

2008年1月

Preface

This course book of American literature has been written to meet the needs of English majors at the outset of their literary courses, primarily in the Mid-West of China. I hope, though, that it will also prove of interest to the general reader who feels that his reading would be enriched by a course book that puts the main outlines of American literature clearly before him and help him with the appreciation of American literature as well.

The very term American literature presupposes that there exists a work of literature that belongs to “America”, many students thus, as I frequently meet in my classrooms, assume that a simple definition of literature and American literature would be given at the very beginning of the course. This is, of course, quite natural and necessary, but extremely difficult. For the term American literature, this course book will devote itself entirely to formulating *its* definition, and the concrete effort will begin with its very first chapter. As for the other term, though seemingly easier to be defined, it has been debated by writers, literary historians, and others for centuries without arriving at an uncontroversial definition. Some assume that literature is simply anything that is written, thereby declaring the pictographs like the *Walum Olum* (“Painted Record”) by the Delaware (an Indian tribe) to be literary works along with *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *The Waste Land*. Derived from the Latin *littera*, meaning “letter,” the root meaning of the word *literature* refers primarily to the written word and seems to support this broad definition. Yet such a definition eliminates the important oral traditions upon which much of pre-colonial American literature is based. As we know, the traditional Indian mythologies, songs, and ritual chants were rarely written down. Most of these works of literature survived through oral tradition, each generation transmitting its literature to its young people by word of mouth.

To solve this problem, others choose to define *literature* as an art, thereby leaving open the question of its being written or oral. This definition further narrows its meaning, equating literature to works of the imagination or creative writing, that is, poetry, drama, fiction, and other imaginative writing. Although this narrowing of the definition seemingly simplifies what can and cannot be considered a literary work, the problem remains. This definition can be employed to explain why a textbook of American literature would include “Lis-



ten! Rain Approaches!", a ritual song of the Navaho (an Indian tribe) and "Calling One's Own," a song of the Ojibwa (another Indian tribe) as literary pieces. Yet people may still feel confused why the compilers of the same book would not take in any of today's pop songs, say, "My Heart will Go On" (the theme song of the spectacular movie *Titanic*) though the song is as imaginative and creative a work as the Indian folklore. Specifying and narrowing the definition of literature to a "work of art" does not, then, immediately provide consistent rule about how to declare a text a "work of literature."

Whether one accepts the broad or narrow definition, he more than often agrees that a text must have certain peculiar qualities before it can be dubbed "literature." Those who hold this view believe that an artist's creation or secondary world often mirrors the author's primary world, the world in which the writer lives and moves and breathes. Because the primary world is highly structured, so must be the secondary world. To achieve this structure, the artist must create plot, character, setting, point of view, theme, symbols, and a host of other elements that work in a dynamic relationship to produce a literary work. Some would argue that it is the creation of these elements—how they are used and in what context—that determines whether a piece of writing is literature. It is in the hope of finding out the "literary" way of arranging these elements that this course book introduces and analyzes these elements in all its chapters and sections. The effort seems fruitless except that it becomes obvious that these elements are essential to a literary work: it seems that these elements can be used in any circumstance and in constantly changing ways.

Through this effort, however, we can see that it is generally accepted that American literature in the early period referred to the whole body of valued writing in society, whether factual or fictional: sermons, philosophy, history, speeches, essays and letters as well as poems and tales. But since 19th century, literature has meant the high skills of writing in the special context of high imagination. To give a shorter version, literature is an artistic form that is achieved through the use of language (The artistic use of other materials like pictures and musical components may work out other forms of art). In other words, literature can be defined as language artistically used to achieve identifiable literary qualities and to express significant messages. And literature is characterized with beauty of expression and form and with universality of intellectual and emotional appeal.

This definition of literature is still incomplete and debatable as what kind of language can be rendered as "artistically used" and who should make this judgment remain unsolved.



Most critics, then, suggest that an examination of a text's total artistic situation would help us decide what constitutes literature. This total picture of the work involves such elements as the work itself (an examination of the secondary world created within the story), the artist, the primary world the work supposedly represents, and the audience or readers. Although readers and critics will emphasize one, two, or even three of these elements while de-emphasizing the others, such a consideration of a text's artistic situation immediately broadens the definition of literature from the concept that it is simply a written work that contains certain qualities to a definition that must include the dynamic interrelationship of the actual text and the readers. Perhaps, then, the literary competence of the readers themselves helps determine whether a work should be considered literature. If this is so, then a literary work may be more functional than ontological, its existence and therefore its value being determined by its readers and not by the work itself.

As the compiler of this course book, I am fully aware that the available space of this book does not allow me to take in all valued writings of American literature. Therefore, I have to select from a sea of American literary writings what I believe to be "great", "valuable", "timeless", and "universal"—what I think to have high artistic and literary values and therefore worthy of continued academic study. In other words, I am following the traditional practice of demonstrating the canon, or the core of American literature through my own choice. The canon has never been completely formalized, with particular writers being always either in or out (even Twain, Hemingway, and Eliot are not always "in" on American Literature courses). Of course, the range of what is counted as great remains restricted, and reliably reproduced, if only because teachers tend to teach what they are familiar with and publishers tend to publish what they know will sell. However, fashions always change, and the judgment of how a text might qualify for greatness, universality and value also changes with the age. In this case, I am fully confident that my choice will set up a canon that fits for today's English majors in China. I am a reader before I am a compiler. I share with the reader of this course book the right to determine the value of the work of American literature. For nearly twenty years, I have been studying and teaching English language and literature (American literature in particular), and I am now quite clear about the interest and preference of the teachers, publishers, and other professionals, abroad and at home. I trust myself in that I am among those who know both the distinguished scholar's requirements and the common reader's needs.



In writing a course book of this kind, with intention of an access to American literature as a whole, my main aim has been to acquaint the reader with the generally accepted view of the authors and periods under discussion as well as the history and the major works of American literature. Firstly, I have divided the history into nine periods to bring about a relatively clear outline of American literature. By far the greatest weight will fall on the 19th and the 20th century, where most of the reading of the beginning student and the general reader is likely to be. Secondly, many minor figures that would normally be expected to put in an appearance in a literary history are quietly forgotten, so that attention can be focused on the major figures. Thirdly, in treating these major writers, I have tried to concentrate on a few works, the ones that are most likely to be read, I hope, in this way, to increase the usefulness of the work to the student, but I hope, too, that this plan may give to the general reader a better grasp of the major writers through their most important works.

Of course, even teachers who choose to use this course book may occasionally hold different views. They may disagree on who are the major writers and what are the most important works. More than often they may interpret the selected texts differently. In this case, I suggest that the student should neither casually deny the insights of the teacher's views nor hastily doubt the value of the book. As has been mentioned, such thing as a formalized canon does not exist. Besides, the vitality of a literary work is attested to by the fact that it continues to provoke new explorations and new assessments, to provide new perspectives of meaning and invite new insights. While driving as hard as possible to make definitions, perform analyses, and sketch outlines, one should realize that absolute and total "truth" is certainly not possible in such matters and, if it were, perhaps not wholly desirable. I will never delude myself that this book is in any sense "definitive". Nor will I offer any precise prescription for its use. There are many ways to cut the cake. I have baked it; the teacher must cut it to suit himself. What I hope for is that what we have written will be regarded as a serious, thoughtful, and reasonably well-informed effort to make sense of a rich and various body of literature.

Zhang Qiang
Brighton & Hove, England
Autumn, 2007

How to Use This Course Book

Object and Objective

Selected Readings of American Literature is compiled primarily for the third and fourth-year Chinese college students majoring in English language and literature, with the aim to give them a brief survey of American Literature from the colonial time to the late 20th century. This is primarily an attempt to introduce the history and the classical works of American Literature, which mainly consists of two parts, namely, 1) introduction to the historical and cultural background, and 2) selected classical works. The compiler of this book hopes that the user will acquire the fundamental knowledge of literary criticism through the appreciation of the selected readings and suggests that the user might further read the supplementary electronic book accompanied with this one to find out more basic concepts and methods of literary criticism.

Academic Tasks and Hours

Selected Readings of American Literature involves American writers, selection of their masterpieces, the historical and cultural background of the age, and a few relevant concepts and methods of literary criticism. The teaching of this course book generally demands 36 ~ 40 academic hours. It is to be accomplished in one semester with 2 academic hours every week. To facilitate the further study and research of the English majors, the teaching of this course book should be carried out during the third academic year and the first semester of the fourth academic year. Providing the teacher maintains the clue of the development of American Literature, he may leave out some of the writers and their works in his teaching and ask the students to study the omitted parts after class.

Design

Selected Readings of American Literature consists of 9 chapters, thus dividing the history of American Literature into 9 periods. The chapters are all cut into the same basic pattern, which is made up of five sections:

1) **Introduction**: This is a summary overview of the historical and cultural background



of the age. It focuses on the major literary thoughts and movements and compares the ideas and crafts of the major writers of the period. This section will also mention the name of or even briefly introduce the life and career of some important or unique writers of the age concerned who will not be analyzed in the section of “Major Writers and Selected Readings”.

2) Major Writers and Selected Readings: This section introduces the life and career of the major writers that belonged to the literary period and chooses excellent pieces from their writings for the students to read. Notes are provided to facilitate the understanding and questions are given for further discussion and thinking. The usual parts of this section are as follows.

Life and Career: consisting of the profile, the major works, and the artistic features of the writer.

Selected Readings: involving various literary styles such as poetry, essay, fiction, and drama, presenting the full text of relatively short works and excerpts of relatively long ones.

Annotation: providing background knowledge of the selected readings, explanation of the key and difficult expressions, and definition and brief analysis of the relevant rhetorical devices.

Questions: including questions for recalling, interpretation, comparison, and discussion.

3) Literary Focus

This section aims at helping the reader to deepen his understanding and expand his horizons by introducing and exploring the relevant artistic thoughts and movements as well as a few popular literary theories.

4) Reading for Appreciation

This section is based on the assumption that “reading literature offers us an experience” and thus makes an attempt to offer a few methods of reading literature actively to make the words come alive and further the appreciation of the text.

5) Voice of the Age

This is a summary overview of the spirit of the age, supported by quotations from the selected readings.

《美国文学选读》使用说明

教学对象与目标

《美国文学选读》适用于英语语言文学专业三、四年级学生。本教程主要提供自殖民地时期至20世纪末美国文学简要的历史文化背景和经典作品选读。编者希望读者能通过对相关选读材料的欣赏获取文学批评的基础知识;建议读者阅读配套的光盘,以了解更多的文学批评基本概念和方法。

教学任务及教学时数

《美国文学选读》前后共选录35位美国作家及其部分作品,同时涉及有关的文学史及文艺批评常识,共需36~40学时。以周学时2计,可一学期完成教学任务。开课时间宜安排在大三上学期至大四上学期之间,以有利于专业学生进一步的升学和深造。授课老师在不影响对美国文学发展的整体理解的前提下,可根据具体情况删减部分作家作品的讲授。

框架结构及主要内容

《美国文学选读》分9章,将美国文学划分成9个时期。每章都包括历史文化背景简介、作家作品选读、文学聚焦、阅读与欣赏和时代之声五个部分:

- 1) 历史文化背景简介:简要介绍该时期大致的社会文化背景、主要文艺思潮以及重要作家创作思想和技巧的异同等。对相关时期一些较为重要或有特色但未被收入“作家作品选读”部分的作家,该部分会对其生平和艺术特色加以简要介绍。
- 2) 作家作品选读:主要包括作家生平与创作、经典作品选读、注解和问题等部分。
生平与创作:简要介绍作家生平、代表作、该作家创作的主要艺术特色等。
经典作品选读:包括诗歌、散文、小说和戏剧等形式;较短的篇章完整的收录,较长的篇章则为选段。
注解:对篇章的创作背景、关键词、疑难表达法、修辞与创作手法等加以注释,帮助理解。
问题:包括理解、比较和探讨等类型的问题。
- 3) 文学聚焦:通过对相关艺术思潮、文艺运动和常见文艺理论的介绍,加深对作品

Contents

Chapter 1	EARLY AMERICA TO 1750	1
INTRODUCTION		1
◇ William Bradford (1590-1657)		5
from <i>Of Plymouth Plantation</i>		6
◇ Anne Bradstreet (1612-1672)		11
<i>To My Dear and Loving Husband</i>		12
LITERARY FOCUS		13
READING FOR APPRECIATION		13
VOICE OF THE AGE		14
Chapter 2	REASON AND REVOLUTION 1750-1800	16
INTRODUCTION		16
◇ Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)		19
from <i>Poor Richard's Almanac</i>		21
◇ Thomas Paine (1737-1809)		22
from <i>The American Crisis</i>		23
◇ Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)		25
<i>The Declaration of Independence</i>		26
LITERARY FOCUS		31
READING FOR APPRECIATION		32
VOICE OF THE AGE		34
Chapter 3	NATIVE GROUNDS 1800-1840	36
INTRODUCTION		36
◇ Washington Irving (1783-1859)		39



<i>Rip Van Winkle</i>	41
◇ James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851)	55
from <i>The Last of the Mohicans</i>	58
◇ William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878)	71
<i>Thanatopsis</i>	73
◇ Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)	77
<i>To Helen</i>	79
<i>The Raven</i>	81
LITERARY FOCUS	87
READING FOR APPRECIATION	89
VOICE OF THE AGE	90
<hr/>	
Chapter 4 NEW ENGLAND RENAISSANCE 1840-1855	92
INTRODUCTION	92
◇ Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)	96
from <i>Nature</i>	98
from <i>Self Reliance</i>	101
◇ Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864)	104
from <i>The Scarlet Letter</i>	107
◇ Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882)	118
<i>A Psalm of Life</i>	119
<i>The Tide Rises, the Tide Falls</i>	121
LITERARY FOCUS	123
READING FOR APPRECIATION	124
VOICE OF THE AGE	125
<hr/>	
Chapter 5 CONFLICT AND CELEBRATION 1855-1880	127
INTRODUCTION	127
◇ Walt Whitman (1819-1892)	131
from <i>Song of Myself</i>	133
<i>O Captain! My Captain!</i>	137



◇ Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)	138
<i>Success is counted sweetest</i>	139
<i>Because I could not stop for Death</i>	141
<i>I heard a fly buzz—when I died—</i>	143
◇ Mark Twain (1835-1910)	145
<i>The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County</i>	146
◇ Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)	153
<i>The Gettysburg Address</i>	153
LITERARY FOCUS	155
READING FOR APPRECIATION	156
VOICE OF THE AGE	157

Chapter 6 REGIONALISM AND REALISM 1880-1910 158

INTRODUCTION	158
◇ Bret Harte (1836-1902)	162
<i>The Outcasts of Poker Flat</i>	163
◇ Kate Chopin (1851-1904)	174
<i>The Story of an Hour</i>	175
◇ Jack London (1876-1916)	179
<i>The Call of the Wild</i>	181
◇ Edwin Arlington Robinson (1869-1935)	197
<i>Richard Cory</i>	198
<i>Miniver Cheevy</i>	200
LITERARY FOCUS	203
READING FOR APPRECIATION	205
VOICE OF THE AGE	206

Chapter 7 THE BLOOM OF MODERNISM 1910-1930 207

INTRODUCTION	207
◇ Ezra Pound (1885-1972)	210
<i>In a Station of the Metro</i>	212