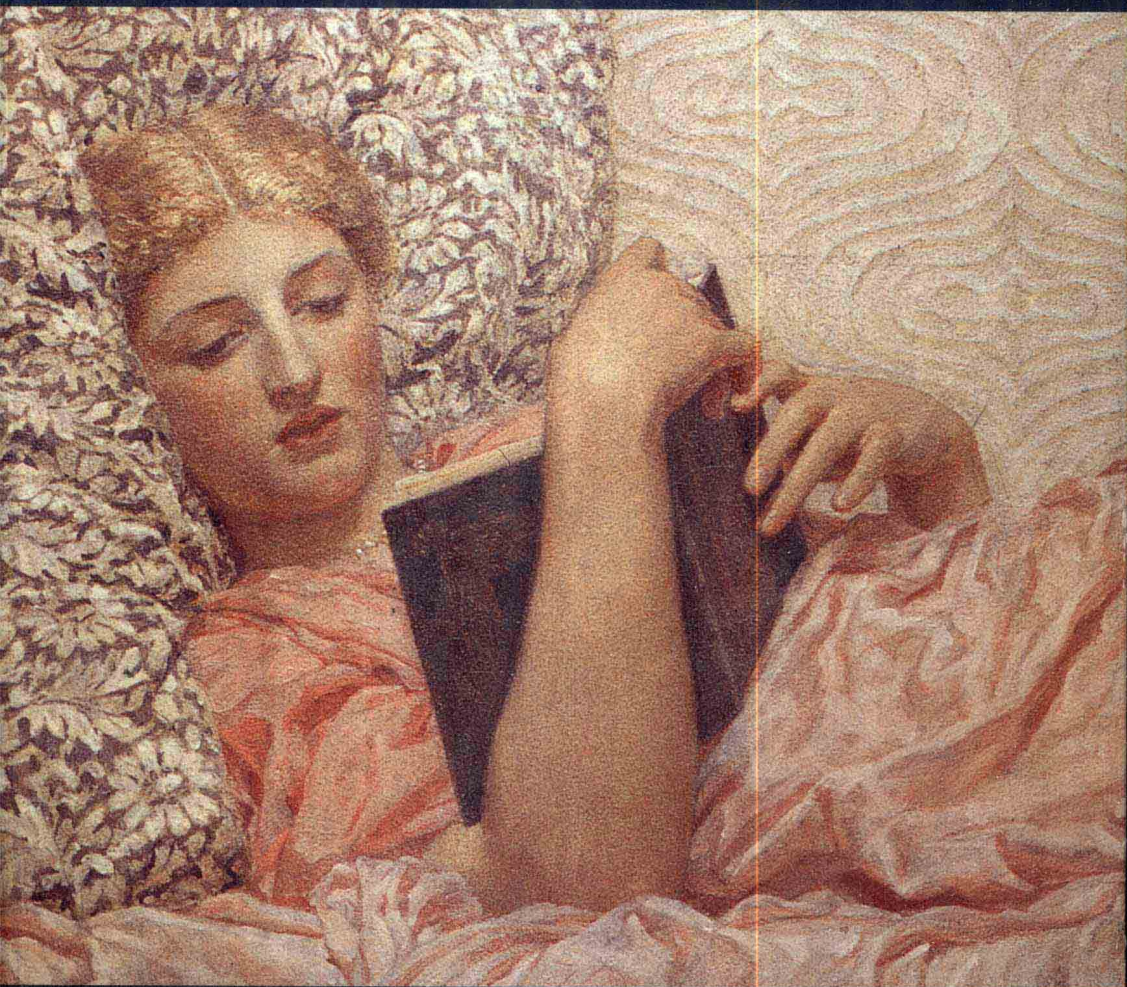


THE BEDFORD INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE

READING
THINKING
WRITING

FIFTH EDITION



MICHAEL MEYER

FIFTH EDITION

THE BEDFORD
INTRODUCTION TO
LITERATURE

Reading • Thinking • Writing

Michael Meyer

University of Connecticut

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About Michael Meyer

Michael Meyer has taught introductory writing and literature courses for more than twenty-five years — since 1981 at the University of Connecticut and before that at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and the College of William and Mary.

In addition to being an experienced teacher, Meyer is a highly regarded literary scholar. His scholarly articles have appeared in distinguished journals such as *American Literature*, *Studies in the American Renaissance*, and *Virginia Quarterly Review*. An internationally recognized authority on Henry David Thoreau, Meyer is a former president of the Thoreau Society and coauthor (with Walter Harding) of *The New Thoreau Handbook*, a standard reference source. His first book, *Several More Lives to Live: Thoreau's Political Reputation in America*, was awarded the Ralph Henry Gabriel Prize by the American Studies Association. He is also the editor of *Frederick Douglass: The Narrative and Selected Writings* and the author of *The Little, Brown Guide to Writing Research Papers*, Third Edition. His other books for Bedford/St. Martin's include *The Compact Bedford Introduction to Literature*, Fourth Edition; *Poetry: An Introduction*, Second Edition; and *Thinking and Writing about Literature*.

Preface for Instructors

The fifth edition of *The Bedford Introduction to Literature* incorporates a wide range of distinctive features that have been class-tested in thousands of literature courses and carefully revised over five editions. With its balance of classic and contemporary, traditional, and multicultural works, along with its in-depth treatment of selected writers, provocative secondary materials, and its pervasive concern with critical reading, thinking, and writing, this text-anthology addresses all the requirements of the contemporary introductory literature course. Like its predecessors, the fifth edition of *The Bedford Introduction to Literature* reflects the assumptions that understanding enhances the enjoyment of literature and that reading literature offers a valuable and unique means of apprehending life in its richness and diversity. The book also reflects the hope that the selections included will encourage students to become lifelong readers of imaginative literature. Designed to accommodate a variety of teaching styles, this rich collection of 62 stories (21 of them new to the fifth edition), 417 poems (100 of them new), and 22 plays (4 of them new) represents a wide range of periods, nationalities, and voices. Each selection has been carefully chosen for its appeal to students today and for its usefulness in demonstrating the effects, significance, and pleasures of literature. To enhance these selections, this edition includes more than forty images, including photographs of selected authors and a portfolio of photographs of plays in performance.

Again, like its predecessors, the fifth edition of *The Bedford Introduction to Literature* is designed for the introductory course as it is taught today, which varies—from school to school and from instructor to instructor—more than ever before. Even the traditional course emphasizing the elements of literature and a broad range of works from the Western canon is changing in response to important developments in literary studies and, more generally, in higher education and in American society. The course is now viewed by many teachers as a rich opportunity to supplement classics of Western literature with the work of writers previously excluded from the traditional canon. Increasingly, it now also serves as an introduction to the discipline of literary study, a challenging development that brings to the undergraduate classroom important trends in literary theory and provocative new readings of both familiar and unfamiliar texts. Finally, and perhaps most often, the introduction to literature course is now also

taught as a second course in composition in which the critical thinking and writing that students do are as important as the reading that they do. The fifth edition of *The Bedford Introduction to Literature* responds to these developments with distinctive features that address the needs of instructors who teach a traditional course but who are also concerned about canonical issues, literary theory, and writing about literature.

Writing about Literature

The book's concern with helping students write about literature is pervasive. The fifth edition of *The Bedford Introduction to Literature* is especially suited for courses in which writing in response to literature is a central component. Five chapters cover every step of the writing process—from generating topics to documenting sources—and offer advice on different kinds of writing assignments. Two extensive chapters—"Reading and Writing" and "The Literary Research Paper"—discuss and illustrate the writing process while offering models of the different types of papers usually assigned in an introductory course, including explication, analysis, and comparison-contrast. A detailed chapter on the literary research paper, including a student model (with a new discussion of using and documenting on-line sources in the MLA style), provides the necessary information for finding, evaluating, and documenting sources.

In addition, three chapters—"Writing about Fiction," "Writing about Poetry," and "Writing about Drama"—focus on genre-specific writing assignments, each with questions for responsive reading and writing along with sample student papers. The first of these chapters, "Writing about Fiction," includes a new model of every stage of a student's paper in progress, leading from a reader's initial responses to the final draft. Also integrated throughout the book are three "Questions for Writing" units, one on incorporating outside sources, one on writing about an author covered in depth, and one on applying a critical strategy to a work. Each of these units is illustrated by a sample paper. The book includes a total of twelve sample papers that provide concrete, accessible models for a wide range of assignments. Students will also find useful a chapter on developing strategies for taking essay examinations assigned in literature courses. Finally, a quick-reference chart of all the writing-about-literature features is provided on the front endpapers of the book to help students (and instructors) find the writing advice they need. In sum, this expanded coverage offers a comprehensive overview of writing about literature; indeed, this material is strong enough to have been separately published in an earlier version as *Thinking and Writing about Literature* (1995).

Focus on Critical Reading and Thinking

To encourage the critical reading and thinking that are an integral part of the writing process, advice on how to read imaginative literature

appears at the beginning of each genre section. It offers practical advice about the kinds of questions active readers ask themselves as they read. To provoke students' interest, sharpen their thinking, and help them improve their discussion and writing skills, the number and variety of questions related to the readings have been increased in the fifth edition. New to this edition are "First Response" questions that can be used as in-class or at-home writing prompts as well as provocative means of generating the kind of critical thinking that promotes class discussion. In addition to the more than two thousand questions that comprise the "Considerations for Critical Thinking and Writing" and "Connections to Other Selections" (questions and suggestions useful for class discussion or writing assignments), the chapter entitled "Reading and Writing" describes how to read a work closely, annotate a text, take notes, keep a reading journal, and develop a topic into a thesis. This chapter also includes a section on arguing about literature that discusses how to generate arguments on literary topics and make those arguments persuasive. A list of questions based on the critical approaches covered in the chapter "Critical Strategies for Reading" helps students to discover the significant issues regarding a short story, poem, or play that may be arguable. In addition, an annotated list of important reference sources for literary research is provided.

Selected Major Authors Treated in Depth

For each genre, the book includes chapters focusing on two or more major figures. There are four stories each by Nathaniel Hawthorne, Flannery O'Connor and Alice Munro (new to this edition); an extensive selection of poems by Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, and Langston Hughes; and two plays by Sophocles and three by Shakespeare. Substantial introductions provide useful biographical and critical information about each of these important writers, and new photographs of the writers help to engage students more fully with the writers' works. A selection of "Perspectives"—excerpts from letters, journals, and critical commentaries—follows each writer's works to provide a context for discussion and writing. In addition, "Considerations for Critical Thinking and Writing" follow both selections and "Perspectives"; these questions for discussion or writing encourage critical thinking and provide stimulating opportunities for student essays.

Also included are chronologies summarizing important dates for the eight major writers featured and complementary critical readings on a particular work by each of the eight authors. These critical readings offer students examples of the variety of approaches they can take in reading and writing about literature. The two readings on Hawthorne, for instance, focus on feminist and psychological approaches to "The Birthmark." By reading commentaries by two critics who argue competing ideas about one text or who illuminate different aspects of that text, students can see immediately that there is no single way to read a work of literature, an

important and necessary step for learning how to formulate their own critical approaches in their essays.

Albums of Contemporary and World Literature

For each genre an album of contemporary selections offers some of the most interesting and lively stories, poems, and plays published in the recent past, including works by Richard Ford, Gish Jen, Tobias Wolff, Martín Espada, Donald Hall, Robert Hass, Linda Hogan, Wendy Wasserstein, and August Wilson. Biographical information about the album authors is included in the text to introduce instructors and students to these important but, perhaps, unfamiliar writers.

In addition, albums of world literature in each genre section offer students a sampling of stories, poems, and plays from other cultures, including the work of Isabel Allende (Chile), Yukio Mishima (Japan), Naguib Mahfouz (Egypt), Claribel Alegria (El Salvador), Octavio Paz (Mexico), Wislawa Szymborska (Poland), Tomas Tranströmer (Sweden), Brian Friel (Ireland), and Wole Soyinka (Nigeria), among many others. Half the stories and a third of the poems and plays in this edition are by women and minority writers and writers from other cultures. Related to this multicultural emphasis is a new section on poetry in translation in Chapter 16, “Word Choice, Word Order, and Tone.” This section presents different versions of poems that help students understand the significance of a translator’s choices concerning diction and tone. The translated poems encourage students to explore the nuances of poetic language as well as larger issues related to translation. This is complemented in the fiction section by two translations—also new—of a portion of a Chekhov story, and in the drama section by a translation of a scene from *Oedipus the King*.

“Connections to Other Selections” consist of questions that link the selections in the albums of contemporary and world literature to more traditional selections in the text. For example, August Wilson’s *The Piano Lesson* is linked with Arthur Miller’s *Death of a Salesman* and Ralph Ellison’s “Battle Royal,” while Wole Soyinka’s play *The Strong Breed* is connected to Sophocles’ *Oedipus the King*. These questions provide engaging writing opportunities and provocative topics for class discussion. “Connections to Other Selections” questions also appear after most of the works in the chapters on the elements of fiction, poetry, and drama.

Perspectives on Literature

This popular feature has been revised in ways that make the fifth edition’s 149 “Perspectives”—journal notes, letters, classic and contemporary theoretical essays, interviews, and student responses—even more useful for class discussion and student writing. “Perspectives” are included in five different places in the text: in the chapters treating major authors in depth; in the three “Critical Case Study” chapters focusing on a particular

work in each genre; in the new “Cultural Case Study” chapters in each genre; at the end of Chapter 37, on literary theory; and, finally, throughout the text’s discussion chapters. Individual “Perspectives” in these chapters follow the works to which they refer and, in many cases, discuss a literary work in terms of the elements of literature for which they serve as illustrations. A variety of “Perspectives” are integrated throughout the book to teach students how to think critically and write effectively about literature.

Sensible and Useful Coverage of Literary Theory

Chapter 37, “Critical Strategies for Reading,” deepens the introductory discussions of active reading by focusing on the different reading strategies employed by contemporary literary theorists. This chapter, which can be assigned at any point in the course, introduces students to a wide variety of major contemporary theoretical approaches—formalist, biographical, psychological, historical (including literary history criticism, Marxist criticism, new historicist criticism, and cultural criticism), gender strategies (including feminist criticism and gay and lesbian criticism), mythological, reader-response, and deconstructionist approaches. In brief examples the approaches are applied in analyzing Kate Chopin’s “The Story of an Hour,” as well as other works, so that students will have a sense of how to use these strategies in their own reading and writing. A selected bibliography for the approaches and a set of “Perspectives” by contemporary literary critics conclude this important chapter.

A “Critical Case Study” chapter in each genre section gathers four or more critical analyses of a single work—such as T. S. Eliot’s “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”—to illustrate the variety of approaches covered in Chapter 37. The questions following these readings encourage students to analyze a particular critical strategy. Included in the critical case study on Ibsen’s *A Doll House* is a “Questions for Writing” unit that shows students how to draw on critical approaches in their own writing and features a sample paper.

New to this edition is a “Cultural Case Study” for each genre that invites students to practice cultural criticism by using cultural and historical documents to ask new questions of a text. For fiction, the focus is on James Joyce’s “Eveline”; for poetry, Julia Alvarez’s “Queens, 1963”; and for drama, David Henry Hwang’s *M. Butterfly*. The accompanying documents range from photographs and advertisements to interviews, letters, popular arts, and newspaper stories, all followed by questions designed to shed light on the literary work under consideration.

Although the emphasis in this text is on critical reading and understanding rather than on critical terminology, terms such as *symbol*, *irony*, and *metaphor* are defined and illustrated to equip students with a basic working vocabulary for discussing and writing about literature. When first defined in the text, these terms appear in boldface italic type. An “Index of Terms” appears inside the back cover of the book for easy reference, and a

“Glossary of Literary Terms” provides thorough explanations of more than two hundred terms central to the study of literature.

Connections between “Popular” and “Literary” Culture

As in previous editions, *The Bedford Introduction to Literature*, Fifth Edition, features introductions to each genre section that draw on carefully chosen examples from popular culture to explain the elements of the genre, inviting students to make connections between what they already know and what they will encounter in subsequent selections. Comparisons between popular culture and more canonical literary selections offer excellent writing opportunities, and suggestions are provided after each popular culture example. The examples include excerpts from a romance novel and from *Tarzan of the Apes*, greeting-card verse, and, new to this edition, Queen Latifah’s “The Evil That Men Do” as well as scenes from a television script for *Seinfeld*.

Resources for Teaching THE BEDFORD INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE, Fifth Edition

This thorough and practical instructor’s manual—now more than 500 pages long and spiral bound—discusses every selection, suggests answers to many of the questions posed in the text, and provides teaching tips from instructors who have taught from previous editions. The manual also offers questions and writing assignments for the selections in the collection chapter at the end of each genre section. It includes biographical information for authors whose backgrounds are not discussed in the text and offers selected bibliographies for authors treated in depth, as well as a bibliography of articles on teaching literature. The manual also gives several suggestions for teaching thematic units, a list of selections linked by “Connections” questions, and an annotated list of videos, films, and recordings related to the works of literature in the text.

Moreover, additional works of literature from any of Bedford Books’ literary reprint series are available at a special price with *The Bedford Introduction to Literature*. Titles from the highly praised Case Studies in Contemporary Criticism include *The Awakening*, *The Dead*, *Death in Venice*, *Frankenstein*, *Great Expectations*, *Gulliver’s Travels*, *Hamlet*, *Heart of Darkness*, *The House of Mirth*, *Howards End*, *Jane Eyre*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Secret Sharer*, *Tess of the D’Urbervilles*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *The Wife of Bath*, and *Wuthering Heights*. Volumes from the Bedford Cultural Editions, the Bedford Shakespeare Series, and Case Studies in Critical Controversy include *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *The Blithedale Romance*, *The Commerce of Everyday Life: Selections from THE SPECTATOR and THE TATLER*, *Evelina*, *The First Part of King Henry the Fourth*, *Life in the Iron-Mills*, *The Rape of the Lock*, *Reading the West: An Anthology of Dime Westerns*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *The Yellow Wallpaper*.

Literature Aloud

A CD — also available as an audiotape — of selected poems, stories, and scenes is available to instructors who adopt *The Bedford Introduction to Literature*, Fifth Edition. This rich resource for instructors and students offers the voice of literature as read by celebrated writers and actors.

Robert Frost: Poems, Life, Legacy

This comprehensive CD-ROM on the life and works of Robert Frost includes searchable text of his poetry, audio performances of Frost reading sixty-nine of his finest poems, over 1,500 pages of biography and literary criticism, and a new documentary film narrated by Richard Wilbur. It is available to qualified adopters of *The Bedford Introduction to Literature*.

Bedford Links to Resources in Literature

Because trying to do literary research on the Web can be a daunting task for an undergraduate, Bedford Books has provided research links to get them started. Concise annotations guide students to over 250 professionally maintained sites built around the most often assigned writers, texts, and literary periods. These can be accessed at <<http://www.bedfordstmartins.com>>.

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