



高等学校英语专业系列教材

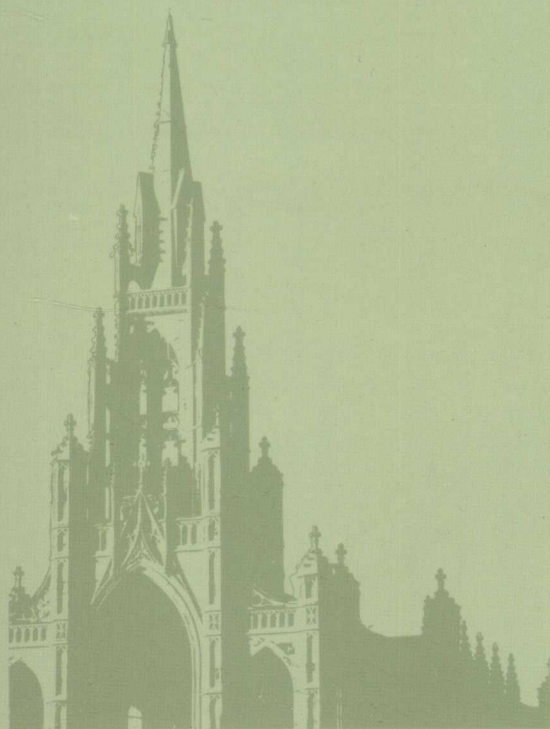


北京市高等教育精品教材立项项目

# 英语短篇小说解读

张在新 编著

*Reading the Short Story in English*



外语教学与研究出版社

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS



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## 致读者

本教材主要用于课堂讨论。多年来，编者在北京外国语大学英语系（学院）教授专业选修课“短篇小说与西方文化”，本书是在该课程试用教材的基础上编写的，旨在拓宽学生的文学和文化视野，让学生触摸和反思西方文明，感悟情感教育，掌握解读英语短篇小说的基本原理和技巧，了解西方文学思潮和理论，提高理论分析和批判思维的能力。

本教材吸纳了国内出版的其他同类教材的优点，在继承“新批评”细读传统的基础上，结合作品加入较深层次的文化概念的讨论。本教材有以下特色：

一、利用英特网资源，引入“第二课堂”教学内容：1) 利用国外大学（如美国科罗拉多大学、普渡大学等）相关课程网页的内容，以补充国内资源的不足；2) 开辟编者博客网页（<http://bfsutheory.blog.163.com>），在日志簿上（“第二课堂”文件夹）公开编者在北京外国语大学教授小说课的课件，并逐年更新内容，供使用本教材的学生和教师参考。

二、设计学生（个人或小组）口头汇报的话题，并提供具体书单（均为国内专业出版社引进的原版书籍或编者博客网页上的课程阅读材料），培养学生的课外自主学习能力。口头汇报的材料中还包括可在网上观看的原版外国电影，能充分调动学生的学习热情，寓教于乐。

三、部分单元结合作品（如“Love Is a Fallacy”、“The Lottery”等作品中从逻辑观念看性别和文化传统的主题）介绍逻辑陷阱及其在作品分析中的运用，提高学生的批判思维能力。

四、教材是以20世纪的作品为主体，内容新颖，有较强的时代气息，可读性强。

五、解读方法力求从新的视角入手，介绍西方批评理论的基本概

念,如:意识形态、商品、无意识、释梦、性别、种族、同性恋、现实与再现等,并将其运用到短篇小说的解读中去,提高学生的理论分析能力。

六、通过设问,引导学生提出自己对作品的解读,有助于活跃课堂气氛,提高学生对作品的感悟和独立分析能力。

七、介绍针对作品的相关评论或文化概念,并以此作为问题讨论的引子和深化对作品理解的切入点。

为了便于课堂教学,本教材针对课堂讨论的参考答案、评论和补充作品只对任课教师在网开放(其余材料对所有读者公开)。任课教师只有成为编者的博友之后(请按以下步骤操作),才能查看到这部分资料:

1. 在网易(163.com)注册博客用户(网易博客用户名即是网易电子邮箱的用户名)。

2. 进入网易博客账户后,点击“个人中心”→“邀请好友”→“通过博客地址邀请”→输入 [bfsutheory.blog.163.com](http://bfsutheory.blog.163.com) → 发送好友邀请。

3. 将您在网易博客上使用的昵称(如John)及所在地(如“北京海淀区”)和证明任课教师身份的有关信息发送到编者的电子邮箱([longfellow@yahoo.cn](mailto:longfellow@yahoo.cn)),便于博友身份的确认。

4. 在您的网易博客上得到博友的确认信息后(被接受成为博友后,您所登记的昵称及所在地会被编者博客作为博友信息记录在案),浏览编者博客(<http://bfsutheory.blog.163.com>)。

5. 进入编者博客后可看到“张在新的博客”字样,请点击“登录”(在网页右上角)。

6. 输入您的网易电子邮箱(也是博客)的用户名(如[storyclass@163.com](mailto:storyclass@163.com))及登录密码,便自动进入编者博客的“博友可见”模式。

日志簿里的“补充作品”、“评论”和“参考答案”等三个文件夹中的所有文章均限定为“博友可见”,只有博友才能看到其全部文章数并阅读其中的文章。

本教材是北京市精品教材资助项目，特此致谢。

多年来，学生在课堂上的积极参与和独到的见解带给我的惊喜让我至今难忘。

张在新

北京外国语大学英语学院

2009年5月1日

# 本书使用说明

## 课程安排

本教材可供英语专业高年级文学课程使用，周期为一学期（共16周，周学时为两小时）。教材分为9个单元，共17篇英语短篇小说。除第一单元和第九单元外，其他七个单元均有口头汇报话题、小说作品、评论观点和问题讨论等四个模块。部分单元另加补充作品（共四篇，在编者博客中提供），供时间充裕的班级学习与讨论。以下是16周的课程安排，供任课教师参考：

### Course Objectives

This course aims to help students to better understand Western culture through short stories. We are going to discuss issues like desire, man and woman, marriage and family, capital and commodity, society and tradition, racial conflict, reality and representation, man vs. nature, etc.

### Requirements and Grades

Pair work: a 15-minute presentation on an assigned topic (15%);

Active participation in discussion (15%);

Final examination (70%).

### Tentative Schedule

Week 1	Introduction: Reading the Short Story to Discover Meaning Anton Chekhov, "A Wicked Boy"
Weeks 2-3	Desire (Presentations: Psychoanalysis) (Week 2) Frank O'Connor, "My Oedipus Complex"; (Week 3) Katherine Mansfield, "Feuille d'Album"
Week 4	Man and Woman (Presentations: Feminism)

- John Collier, "The Chaser"  
 Supplementary Story (Optional): "The Model" by Bernard Malamud
- Weeks 5-6 Marriage and Family (Presentations: Feminism)  
 (Week 5) Kate Chopin, "The Story of an Hour"  
 Supplementary Story (Optional): "I Could See the Smallest Things" by Raymond Carver  
 (Week 6) John Updike, "Unstuck"
- Weeks 7-8 Capital and Commodity (Presentations: Marxism and Commodity)  
 (Week 7) Max Shulman, "Love Is a Fallacy"; Mark Twain, "The £1,000,000 Bank-Note"  
 (Week 8) D.H. Lawrence, "The Rocking-Horse Winner"
- Weeks 9-10 Society and Tradition (Presentations: Marxism and Ideology)  
 (Week 9) James Joyce, "The Boarding House"; William E. Barrett, "Señor Payroll"  
 (Week 10) Shirley Jackson, "The Lottery"
- Week 11 Racial Conflict (Presentations: Racism and Colonialism)  
 Somerset Maugham, "Mr. Know-All"  
 Supplementary Story (Optional): "Fear" by Rhys Davies
- Weeks 12-13 Reality and Representation (Presentations: Post-modernism)  
 (Week 12) O. Henry, "The Last Leaf"  
 Supplementary Story (Optional): "The Scoop" by James T. Farrell  
 (Week 13) Milos Macourek, "Jacob's Chicken"; Julio Cortazar, "Continuity of Parks"
- Week 14 Man vs. Nature  
 Jack London, "To Build a Fire"
- Week 15 Review
- Week 16 Final Examination



## 口头汇报

可供口头汇报的材料主要选自国内主流出版社出版的西方文论丛书，全国各大书店有售。选材语言深入浅出，通俗易懂，适合高年级学生阅读。以下是部分书单，其他材料可到编者博客上查阅。

Bressler, Charles E. *Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice*. 3rd ed. Pearson Education, 2003. 北京：高等教育出版社，2004.

Eagleton, Terry. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. 2nd ed. Blackwell, 1996. 北京：外语教学与研究出版社，2004.

Freud, Sigmund. *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Trans. A. A. Brill. Intro. Stephen Wilson. Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth, 1997.

(Excerpts available at <http://bfsutheory.blog.163.com>).

— *Sigmund Freud on Sexuality*. Ed. Angela Ridards. London: Penguin, 1991.

(Excerpts available at <http://bfsutheory.blog.163.com>).

Grosz, Elizabeth. *Jacques Lacan: A Feminist Introduction*. London: Routledge, 1990.

(Excerpts available at <http://bfsutheory.blog.163.com>).

Guerin, Wilfred L., Earle Labor, Lee Morgan, Jeanne C. Reesman, and John R. Willingham. *A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature*. 2nd ed. Oxford UP, 1999. 北京：外语教学与研究出版社，2004.

Selden, Raman, Peter Widdowson, and Peter Brooker. *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*. 4th ed. Pearson Education, 1997. 北京：外语教学与研究出版社，2004.

Tyson, Lois. *Critical Theory Today: A User-Friendly Guide*. New York: Garland, 1999. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge, 2006.

(Excerpts available at <http://bfsutheory.blog.163.com>).

考虑到第一周只是简单的课程导入，而第十四周是课程的收尾，所以这两周均未安排学生作口头报告。在下面的口头汇报安排中，以Lois Tyson的书为例（还可结合Bressler, Eagleton, Guerin和Selden等其他书），

加上英文原版电影（均可在网上观看，有关信息详见“第二课堂”的“Movies”文件），可供约30位同学全学期完成的口头汇报。具体如下：

*In your 10-minute pair-work presentation, report on an essay, a chapter of a book, or a movie related to the assigned topic for discussion. Student A in each pair is responsible for the 10-minute presentation and Student B for the 5-minute Q&A session that follows the presentation.*

*You may choose from the following titles for your presentation on the topic assigned to you:*

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| Week 2:  | Desire<br>Tyson, Chapter 2 “Psychoanalysis”<br><i>Tadpole</i> (DVD)—the Oedipus Complex                                  |
| Week 3:  | Desire<br><i>The Hours</i> (DVD)—(effects of homophobia) or <i>Notes on a Scandal</i> (DVD)—(prejudice against lesbians) |
| Week 4:  | Man and Woman<br>Tyson, Chapter 4 “Feminism”<br><i>Girl with a Pearl Earring</i> (DVD)—(art and the muse)                |
| Week 5:  | Marriage and Family<br><i>Mona Lisa Smile</i> (DVD)—(women’s place in society)   |
| Week 6:  | Marriage and Family<br><i>Gigli</i> (DVD) or <i>The Brave One</i> (DVD)—(gender as performance)                          |
| Week 7:  | Capital and Commodity<br>Tyson, Chapter 3 “Marxist Criticism” (commodity)  |
| Week 8:  | Capital and Commodity<br><i>Indecent Proposal</i> (DVD)—(woman as commodity)   |
| Week 9:  | Society and Tradition<br>Tyson, Chapter 3 “Marxist Criticism” (ideology)   |
| Week 10: | Society and Tradition<br><i>The Pursuit of Happiness</i> (DVD)—(the American Dream)                                      |
| Week 11: | Racial Conflict  |

Tyson, Chapter 11 “Postcolonial and African American Criticism”

*Men of Honor* (DVD)—(racism) or *A Passage to India* (DVD)—(white self vs. black other)

Week 12: Reality and Representation

*Changeling* (DVD)—(power and truth)

Week 13: Reality and Representation

*Simone* (DVD)—(images as reality) or *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (DVD)—(fusion of representation and reality)

## 课堂讨论

本教材的思路主要是通过课堂讨论（而不是通过授课）来学习短篇小说和了解西方文化中的基本概念，因此，教师要留给学生充分的时间预习，以便他们提前准备并积极参与课堂讨论。讨论时尽量让大家各抒己见，以便仁者见仁，智者见智。可先由学生们围绕针对作品提出的问题进行讨论，也可由他们提出各自的问题来抛砖引玉。如果学生们的回答已经涉及到或接近教师的解读，可引导他们形成自己的结论，必要时才点出教师自己的解读。问题讨论的答案可以“百花齐放”，不应厚此薄彼，只要言之有理，又有充分的文本论据支持都不失为好的解读。以下以第一单元中问题讨论的参考答案为例，任课教师可依据自己的判断来鼓励和引导学生对其进行扩展、发挥或修正：

## Questions for Discussion

1. *Fishing and the boy-meets-girl romance are juxtaposed in the beginning of the story. What does this juxtaposition imply?*

Fishing and romance are juxtaposed in the beginning of the story to set the tone for the whole story. This should be a scene of solemn vows and protestations, but its solemnity is “contaminated” by a touch of playfulness of fishing, one kind of thing that is “poisoned by something from outside.”

More importantly, fishing has something to do with being patient for a big catch (“that must be a big one that’s biting”, “let it bite harder”)

and also about being hooked and free of the hook. (“The perch got free of the hook, flopped through the grass toward its native element... and plopped into the water!”)

The saddest thing is that a fish may feel the pain and tries to fight back to get free of the hook and escape to “its native element,” while a human being, in contrast, may never feel the pain when trapped. Some of the questions we may ask are “Who gets hooked?”, “Who fails to feel the pain?”, “Who gets the big catch?” and so on.

2. *The title of the story, “A Wicked Boy,” may be viewed as ironic. What role does Kolia play in Ivan’s romance?*

“A Wicked Boy” may be viewed as ironic (actually another translation has given the story a much more playful title: “A Naughty Boy”). Obviously, what Kolia demands from the young couple is sheer blackmail: first a ruble, then some paints, empty pill-boxes, cuff-links, and finally a pocket watch; he seems to demand more each time he sees the two lovebirds. He also spies on them all the time, giving them no chance to be together again without the presence of the boy—“Wherever Lapkin and Anna Semionovna went, he went, too. He didn’t leave them alone for a minute.”

But one detail is quite revealing here: Anna’s empty pill-boxes. We don’t know much about Anna, but from these “presents” to the brother we know she is not in good health (no wonder Ivan proposes to Anna and receives her parents’ consent right away; he may be their big catch). As a result, it may be a mismatch for the young man, but he doesn’t have time to think about anything, because he’s been consumed with the burning desire to kiss Anna again since the day when “their mouths inadvertently merged in a kiss” at the fishing scene. But the “wicked boy” follows them everywhere, and there’s no stopping him unless Ivan does something drastic. That is to say, the only “sensible” thing for him to do, from his perspective, in order to “consummate” his simple happiness is to propose to the girl. So, in a sense Kolia’s blackmail serves as a catalyst for the couple’s romance, and in this sense the “wicked boy” may be viewed as ironic. After all,

Ivan's got what he wanted, and he's mighty happy about it. ("Oh, what a happy day that was!")

3. *We may also understand the title literally, not as an irony. There are places in the story where Kolia is "staring at the young people" or "keeping his eye on them," etc. Is there any way to relate his wickedness to this ever-present watchful eye? If yes, what wickedness does the boy represent?*

The ever-present watchful eye that Kolia may represent is convention that exercises its surveillance on the young couple (and on all of us). The customs and conventions of proper dating behavior followed by the villagers are reinforced every time Kolia says to Anna and Ivan "I'll tell Mama" or "Shall I tell?" or when he keeps his eye on them wherever they go. These conventions may be viewed as wicked in the sense that they become the "invisible hand" that has put Ivan on a hook, of which he can never get free. He can if he wants to, but the problem is he never feels the pain, the way the perch feels it, so he'll never realize the need to fight back, the worst scenario in any pitiful situation. Instead, he willingly walks into that trap convention has set for him by proposing to Anna for marriage partly to thwart Kolia's further blackmail, for revenge, and mostly to "legitimize" his burning desire to kiss the girl. One lousy kiss seals the marriage, an accidental kiss that is forbidden by convention and kept memorable by an ever-growing curiosity to make it right, to make it official.

4. *According to the narrator, "Happiness usually carries a poison in itself, or else is poisoned by something from outside." How do you understand the happiness Ivan and Anna feel when they are pulling Kolia's ears in the end? What may be the "poison" in it?*

When Ivan and Anna are pulling Kolia's ears in the end, they feel even happier than they were together with each other during the summer. The ending highlights the irony of the whole "romantic" relationship; namely, the motive for the marriage proposal is just an

attempt for revenge. The so-called “bliss” from pulling Kolia’s ears comes from the satisfaction in getting even with the boy, which is the “poison” in this scene, for what he has put the couple through since their first date. This “poison” has blinded the couple to the fact that their engagement results from a mistake to equate their mutual hate for Kolia’s “wickedness” with their mutual affections for each other, certainly a shaky foundation on which to build a life together.

##### 5. *What is the theme or central idea of the story?*

There can be many interpretations about the theme, but to me it is what the narrator tells us: “Happiness usually carries a poison in itself, or else is poisoned by something from outside.” We must understand it on many different levels, as we have discussed it above. Most noticeably, the theme has to do with the ending of the story, where the couple fails to feel the pain as they are punishing Kolia for his “wrongdoing” during the summer. Echoing the fishing scene in the beginning of the story to form a sharp contrast with the perch, the young people’s happiness here has been “poisoned” by their curbed desire for love, restrained by the invisible hand of nineteenth-century tradition of romance and marriage. Metaphorically, the human condition sometimes can be even worse than a fish’s survival in the natural world, for a fish can feel the pain when hooked and thus can seek better self-protection, while human beings may ironically feel elated when snared because convention can numb them so that they don’t feel the pain. It’s so ironic for the couple to feel happy while they are actually “hooked” or trapped by convention. The narrator drives this point home by saying in the end “during the whole time they had been in love with each other they had never once felt such happiness, such breath-taking bliss as during those moments when they were pulling the wicked boy’s ears.”

The above reading of the story is not a given; it is something we need to discover by making connections between details within the story and/or between the story and critical views we’ve learned elsewhere. And that is what this course is really about.

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# **Unit 1**

## **Introduction: Reading the Short Story to Discover Meaning**