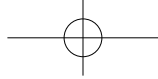


UNIT

1

The Art of Literature

What is literature? What is not literature? What makes us treat something as literature while dismissing others as non-literature? These questions are rarely answered clearly. This unit focuses on the nature of literature.



Text

A

Lead-in

Task / Do you think the following forms of writing can be counted as literature? Tick (✓) your answers.

- news report
- novel
- research paper
- diary
- poem
- letter

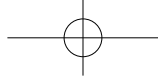
Now read Text A and see whether your answers to the question will change.

The Scope and Content of Literature¹

Kenneth Rexroth



¹ This text is adapted from “The Art of Literature”, published in *The Encyclopedia Britannica* (15th Edition, 1974) and reprinted in *World Outside the Window: Selected Essays of Kenneth Rexroth* (New Directions, 1987). Kenneth Rexroth (1905-1982) was an American poet, translator and critical essayist.

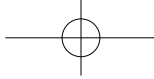


Scope of literature

- 1 Literature is a form of human expression. But not everything expressed in words — even when organized and written down — is counted as literature. Those writings that are primarily informative — technical, scholarly, journalistic — would be excluded from the rank of literature by most, although not all, critics. Certain forms of writing, however, are universally regarded as belonging to literature as an art. Individual attempts within these forms are said to succeed if they possess something called artistic merit and to fail if they do not. The nature of artistic merit is less easy to define than to recognize. The writer need not even pursue it to attain it. On the contrary, a scientific exposition might be of great literary value and a pedestrian poem of none at all.
- 2 The purest (or, at least, the most intense) literary form is the lyric poem, and after it comes elegiac, epic, dramatic, narrative, and expository verse. Most theories of literary criticism base themselves on an analysis of poetry, because the aesthetic problems of literature are there presented in their simplest and purest form. Poetry that fails as literature is not called poetry at all but verse. Many novels — certainly all the world's great novels — are literature, but there are thousands that are not so considered. Most great dramas are considered literature.
- 3 The Greeks thought of history as one of the seven arts, inspired by a goddess, the muse Clio². All of the world's classic surveys of history can stand as noble examples of the art of literature, but most historical works and studies today are not written primarily with literary excellence in mind, though they may possess it, as it were, by accident.
- 4 The essay was once written deliberately as a piece of literature; its subject matter was of comparatively minor importance. Today most essays are written as expository, informative journalism, although there are still essayists in the great tradition who think of themselves as artists. Now, as in the past, some of the greatest essayists are critics of literature, drama, and the arts.
- 5 Some personal documents (autobiographies, diaries, memoirs, and letters) rank among the world's greatest literature. Some examples of this biographical literature were written with posterity in mind, others with no thought of their being read by anyone but the writer. Some are in a highly polished literary style; others win their standing as literature because of their cogency, insight, depth, and scope.
- 6 Many works of philosophy are classed as literature. The *Dialogues*³ of Plato (4th century

2 Clio: the muse of history in Greek mythology 克利俄（希腊神话中九位缪斯女神之一，主管历史）

3 *Dialogues*: philosophical dialogues written by Plato (柏拉图, 427? BC-347? BC), a Greek philosopher whose ideas had a profound influence on Western thought. The pupil of Socrates and teacher of Aristotle, he founded the Academy (school of philosophy) in Athens. Plato set out his views in the *Dialogues*, in which Socrates is the central character who conducts the discussions on a range of subjects, including philosophy, logic, rhetoric, and mathematics. 《对话录》



BC) are written with great narrative skill and in the finest prose; the *Meditations*⁴ of the 2nd-century Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius are a collection of apparently random thoughts, and the Greek in which they are written is eccentric. Yet both are classed as literature, while the speculations of other philosophers, ancient and modern, are not.

- 7 Certain scientific works endure as literature long after their scientific content has become outdated. This is particularly true of books of natural history, where the element of personal observation is of special importance. An excellent example is Gilbert White's *Natural History and Antiquities of Selbourne*⁵ (1789).
- 8 Oratory, the art of persuasion, was long considered a great literary art. The oratory of the American Indian, for instance, is famous, while in classical Greece, Polymnia⁶ was the muse sacred to poetry and oratory. Rome's great orator Cicero⁷ was to have a decisive influence on the development of English prose style. Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address⁸ is known to every American schoolchild. Today, however, oratory is more usually thought of as a craft than as an art.
- 9 Most critics would not admit advertising copywriting, purely commercial fiction, or cinema and television scripts as accepted forms of literary expression, although others would hotly dispute their exclusion. The test in individual cases would seem to be one of enduring satisfaction and, of course, truth.
- 10 Indeed, it becomes more and more difficult to categorize literature, for in modern civilization words are everywhere. Man is subject to a continuous flood of communication. Most of it is fugitive, but here and there — in high-level journalism, in television, in the cinema, in commercial fiction, in westerns and detective stories, and in plain, expository prose — some writing, almost by accident, achieves an aesthetic satisfaction, a depth and relevance that entitle it to stand with other examples of the art of literature.

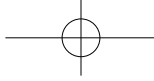
4 *Meditations*: a series of personal writings by Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius (马可·奥勒利乌斯, 121-180). It consists of reflections jotted down by the emperor at odd moments. The charm of the meditations lies in their candor, the writer's stoicism and the admirable human character shown in the writings. 《沉思录》

5 *Natural History and Antiquities of Selbourne*: a book by British naturalist Gilbert White (吉尔伯特·怀特, 1720-1793, 英国博物学家), first published in 1789. It was a compilation of letters, in which White detailed the natural history of the area around his family home. 《塞尔本博物志和古代文物》(又译《塞尔伯恩博物志及古迹》)

6 *Polymnia*: or Polyhymnia, the Muse of sacred song and oratory 波吕许谟尼亚(希腊神话中九位缪斯女神之一, 主管颂歌)

7 *Cicero*: Marcus Tullius Cicero (106 BC-43 BC), a Roman politician who was a famous orator and one of the greatest Latin writers. Cicero's name and the adjective "Ciceronian" are sometimes mentioned to suggest eloquence or oratory. 西塞罗(罗马政治家、著名演说家、杰出作家)

8 *Gettysburg Address*: a speech delivered by US President Abraham Lincoln during the American Civil War, on November 19, 1863, at the dedication of the Soldier's National Cemetery in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania 葛底斯堡演讲



Content of literature

- 11 **Themes and their sources.** The subject matter of literature is as wide as human experience itself. Myths, legends, and folktales lie at the beginning of literature, and their plots, situations, and allegorical (metaphorical narrative) judgments of life represent a constant source of literary inspiration that never fails. This is so because mankind is constant — men share a common physiology. Even social structures, after the development of cities, remain much alike. Whole civilizations have a life pattern that repeats itself through history. Jung’s term “collective unconscious⁹” really means that mankind is one species, with a common fund of general experience. Egyptian scribes and junior executives in New York City live and respond to life in the same ways; the lives of farmers or miners or hunters vary only within narrow limits. Love is love and death is death, for a South African Bushman¹⁰ and a French surrealist alike. So the themes of literature have at once an infinite variety and an abiding constancy. They can be taken from myth, from history, or from contemporary occurrence, or they can be pure invention (but even if they are invented, they are nonetheless constructed from the constant materials of real experience, no matter how fantastic the invention).

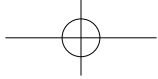
- 12 **The writer’s personal involvement.** As time goes on, literature tends to concern itself more and more with the interior meanings of its narrative, with problems of human personality and human relationships. Many novels are fictional, psychological biographies which tell of the slowly achieved integration of the hero’s personality or of his disintegration, of the conflict between self-realization and the flow of events and the demands of other people. This can be presented explicitly, where the characters talk about what is going on in their heads. Alternatively, it can be presented by a careful arrangement of objective facts, where psychological development is described purely in terms of behavior, and where the reader’s subjective response is elicited by the minute descriptions of physical reality, as in the greatest Chinese novels like *The Dream of the Red Chamber*¹¹, which convince the reader that through the novel he is seeing reality itself rather than an artfully contrived semblance of reality.

- 13 Literature, however, is not solely concerned with the concrete, with objective reality, with individual psychology, or with subjective emotion. Some deal with abstract ideas or philosophical conceptions. Much purely abstract writing is considered literature only in the widest sense of the term, and the philosophical works that are ranked as great literature are usually presented with more or less of a sensuous garment.

9 **collective unconscious:** a term of analytical psychology introduced by Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung (荣格, 1875-1961, 瑞士心理学家) who studied the importance of dreams and religion in problems of the mind, and divided people into two groups, introverts and extroverts. Jung developed the idea of the collective unconscious, the belief that people’s feelings and reactions are often based on deep memories of human experience in the past. 集体潜意识

10 **South African Bushman:** the aboriginal people from the southwestern part of Africa, especially the Kalahari desert region 南非(卡拉哈里沙漠地区的)布须曼人

11 ***The Dream of the Red Chamber:*** one of China’s Four Great Classical Novels, composed by Cao Xueqin in the middle of the 18th century during the Qing Dynasty 《红楼梦》



Thus, Plato's *Dialogues* rank as great literature because the philosophical material is presented in dramatic form, as the dialectical outcome of the interchange of ideas between clearly drawn, vital personalities, and because the descriptive passages are of great lyric beauty. In short, most philosophical works that rank as great literature do so because they are intensely human. (1,236 words)

New words and expressions

pedestrian /pɛˈdɛstriən/ *a.* ordinary and boring, without any imagination 平淡无奇的

lyric /ˈlɪrɪk/ *a.* (of poetry) expressing direct personal feelings (指诗) 抒情的

elegiac /ˌelɪˈdʒaɪək/ *a.* relating to an elegy, that is, a poem or other piece of writing expressing sadness, usually about sb.'s death 挽歌的; 哀悼的

epic /ˈepɪk/ *a.* (of a long poem) about the deeds of one or more great heroes, or a nation's past history 长篇叙事诗的; 史诗的

expository /ɪkˈspɒzɪtəri/ *a.* of, relating to, or containing exposition 说明性的; 阐述性的

verse /vɜːs/ *n.* writing which is arranged in short lines with a regular rhythm; poetry 韵文; 诗

criticism /ˈkrɪtɪsɪzəm/ *n.* the art of evaluating or analyzing works of art, literature etc. (文学、艺术等的) 评论

aesthetic /esˈθetɪk/ *a.* relating to beauty or to the study of the principles of beauty, especially in art 美学的; 审美的

as it were as if it were really so 可以说, 似乎

posterity /pɒˈstɛrɪti/ *n.* all the people in the future who will be alive after you are dead 后代, 后人

cogency /ˈkɒdʒənsi/ *n.* the quality of being logically valid 说服力

eccentric /ɪkˈsentrɪk/ *a.* unusual; peculiar; not conventional or normal 怪异的; 古怪的

antiquity /ænˈtɪkwɪti/ *n.* (usually *pl.*) an object or building that existed in ancient times and still exists 古物; 古迹

oratory /ˈɒrətəri/ *n.* the skill of making powerful speeches 演讲术, 雄辩术

orator /ˈɒrətə/ *n.* sb. who makes speeches in public, especially sb. who is good at doing this 演说家, 演讲家

copywriting /ˈkɒpi,raɪtɪŋ/ *n.* the act of writing advertising or publicity copy 公关文案

fugitive /ˈfjuːdʒɪtɪv/ *a.* (especially of thoughts or feelings) lasting for only a short time; temporary 短暂的; 易逝的

allegorical /,æljɪˈɡɒrɪkəl/ *a.* used in or characteristic of or containing allegory, that is, a story, play, or poem in which the events and characters are used as symbols in order to express a moral, religious, or political idea 寓言的; 讽喻的

metaphorical /,metəˈfɒrɪkəl/ *a.* a metaphorical use of a word is not concerned with real objects or physical events, but with ideas or events of a non-physical kind 隐喻的

physiology /ˌfɪziˈɒlədʒi/ *n.* the way that the body of a particular living thing operates 生理机能

scribe /skraɪb/ *n.* sb. whose job was to copy documents and books before

printing was invented (印刷术发明之前的) 抄写员, 抄书吏

surrealist /səˈrɪəlɪst/ *n.* an artist who is a member of a cultural movement called surrealism, which is characterized by unusual combinations of images to represent dreams and unconscious experience 超现实主义

abiding /əˈbaɪdɪŋ/ *a.* continuing without change 持久的; 永久的

elicit /ɪˈlɪsɪt/ *vt.* succeed in getting information or a reaction from sb., especially when this is difficult 引出; 诱出

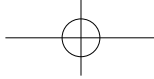
contrived /kənˈtraɪvd/ *a.* artificial or false 人为的; 虚假的

semblance /ˈsembləns/ *n.* appearance of being sth.; likeness to sth. 外表; 外观; 类似

sensuous /ˈsensjuəs/ *a.* giving or expressing pleasure through the physical senses, rather than pleasing the mind or the intelligence 愉悦感官的

dialectical /ˌdaɪəˈlektɪkəl/ *a.* achieved or attempted by dialectic, that is, a method used in philosophy to try to discover truth by considering ideas together with opposite ideas 辩证的

interchange /ˈɪntətʃeɪndʒ/ *n.* an exchange, especially of ideas or information, between different people or groups (尤指观点或思想的) 交流

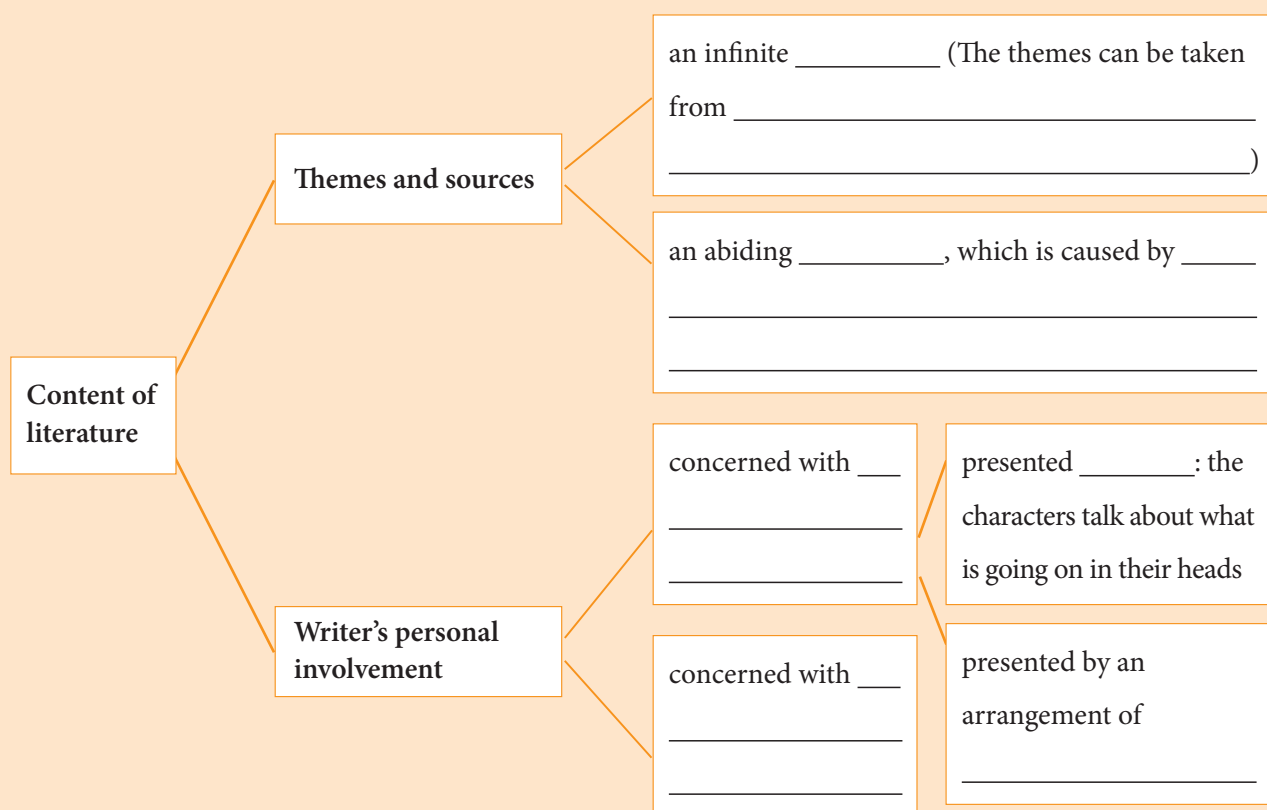
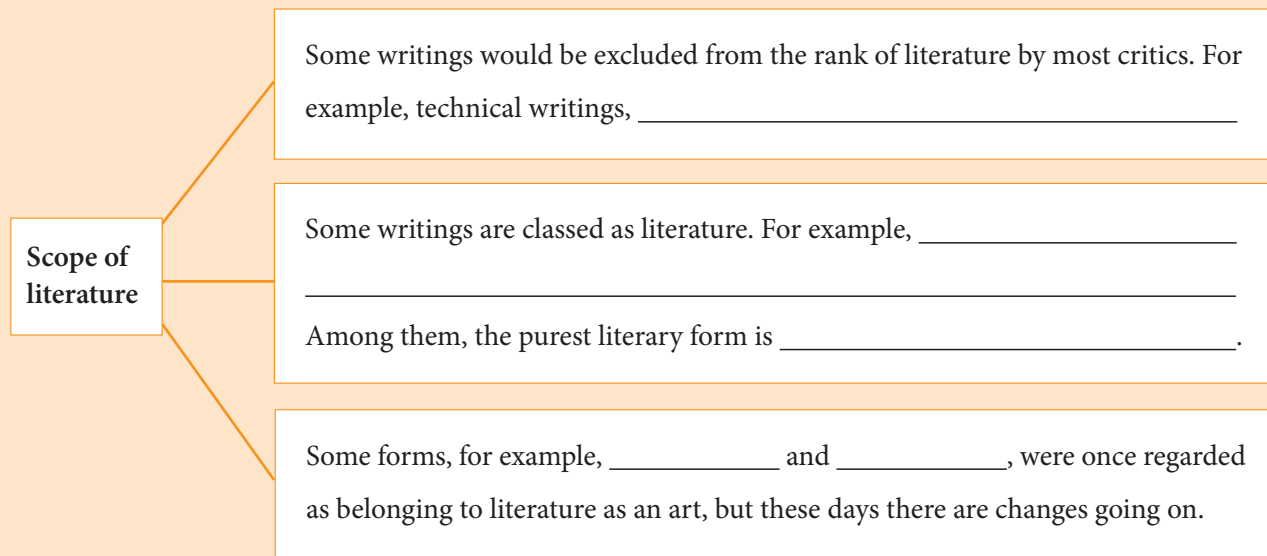


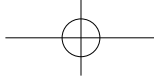
Critical reading and thinking

Task 1 / Overview

Summarize the main ideas in Text A by completing the following diagrams.

The author gives his thought on two issues: the scope of literature and the content of literature.

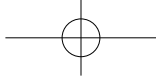




Task 2 / Points for discussion

Work in pairs and discuss the following questions.

- 1 Literature is a form of human expression. (Para. 1)
What do human beings want to express through literature? What are the other forms of human expression?
- 2 The nature of artistic merit is less easy to define than to recognize. The writer need not even pursue it to attain it. (Para. 1)
How do you understand these lines? Do you agree with the author's view? Why or why not?
- 3 The test in individual cases would seem to be one of enduring satisfaction and, of course, truth. (Para. 9)
What does this sentence mean?
- 4 Even social structures, after the development of cities, remain much alike. Whole civilizations have a life pattern that repeats itself through history. (Para. 11)
Do you agree with these words? Do you think that the themes of literature have an abiding constancy? Why or why not?
- 5 Many novels are fictional, psychological biographies which tell of the slowly achieved integration of the hero's personality or of his disintegration ... (Para. 12)
What do "integration" and "disintegration" of personality mean here?
- 6 Alternatively, it can be presented by a careful arrangement of objective facts, where psychological development is described purely in terms of behavior, and where the reader's subjective response is elicited by the minute descriptions of physical reality, as in the greatest Chinese novels like *The Dream of the Red Chamber*, which convince the reader that through the novel he is seeing reality itself rather than an artfully contrived semblance of reality. (Para. 12)
Use one example from *The Dream of the Red Chamber* to show how psychological development can be described in terms of behavior and physical reality.



Language building-up

Task 1 / Specialized vocabulary

Specialized vocabulary consists of the words and phrases used regularly in a given subject area. For example, you might read the following sentences in an article about ocean and life.

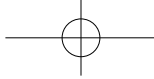
The ocean has a significant effect on the biosphere. Oceanic evaporation, as a phase of the water cycle, is the source of most rainfall.

“Biosphere”, “oceanic evaporation”, “water cycle”, “rainfall” are all technical terms belonging to this field. To comprehend writings or talks about a specific subject, you must have a good command of the terms particular to that subject.

- 1 Text A contains many literary terms, such as “the lyric poem” and “drama”. Find other terms in Text A that are closely related to the theme of literature.

- 2 Complete the following sentences by translating the Chinese into English. You may need to use some of the literary terms that you have found in Text A.

- 1 Most of the stories in the book are _____ (具有讽喻意味的).
- 2 Today few read classics and even fewer still read _____ (史诗) like Milton’s *Paradise Lost*.
- 3 _____ (抒情诗) may be an emotional response to an event or occasion.
- 4 *Death of a Salesman* was written by Arthur Miller, _____ (一位戏剧大家).
- 5 This book is _____ (一部虚构作品) and not intended as a historical account.
- 6 The students prepared _____ (关于他们所熟悉的话题的阐述).



Task 2 / Signpost language: parenthetical statements

In streets, you can see many signposts. They show directions to people. In English writing, some expressions function as signposts to prepare the reader for what is coming up. In each of the ten units, we will focus on one particular type of signpost language.

Parenthetical statements allow the writer to insert additional information without creating a separate sentence and are often demonstrated by parentheses or dashes. For example:

Literature is a form of human expression. But not everything expressed in words — even when organized and written down — is counted as literature.

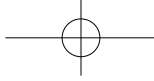
Find at least five more examples of parenthetical statements from Text A.

Task 3 / Formal English

Synonyms might be different in terms of style. For example, “kids” is informal, “offspring” is formal, and “children” is neutral. The expressions we use when we are writing to friends must be different from those we use when we are writing a research paper. In the latter situation, formal or not so colloquial words are preferred.

The following sentences are selected from Text A. Replace the underlined formal words with less formal ones.

- _____ 1 Through the novel he is seeing reality itself rather than an artfully contrived semblance of reality.
- _____ 2 ... others win their standing as literature because of their cogency, insight, depth, and scope.
- _____ 3 The writer need not even pursue it to attain it.
- _____ 4 Thus, Plato’s *Dialogues* rank as great literature because the philosophical material is presented in dramatic form, as the dialectical outcome of the interchange of ideas between clearly drawn, vital personalities, and because the descriptive passages are of great lyric beauty.
- _____ 5 The reader’s subjective response is elicited by the minute descriptions of physical reality.
- _____ 6 Individual attempts within these forms are said to succeed if they possess something called artistic merit and to fail if they do not.



In this text, we will continue our quest for the definition and meaning of literature, from a writer's perspective.

Text B

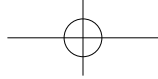
Introducing Creative Writing¹

David Morley



- 1 Think of an empty page as open space. It possesses no dimension; human time makes no claim. Everything is possible, at this point endlessly possible. Anything can grow in it. Anybody, real or imaginary, can travel there, stay put, or move on. There is no constraint, except the honesty of the writer and the scope of imagination — qualities with which we are born and characteristics that we can develop. Writers are born and made.
- 2 We could shape a whole world into that space, or even fit several worlds, their latitudes and longitudes, the parallel universes. Equally, we could place very few words there, but just enough of them to show a presence of the life of language. If we can think of

¹ This text is extracted from *The Cambridge Introduction to Creative Writing (Cambridge Introductions to Literature)* (2007). David Morley (1964-) is a leading British poet, critic and ecologist. His poetry and prose have been translated into several languages and his book on creative writing *The Cambridge Introduction to Creative Writing* is popular around the world.



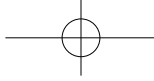
the page as an open space, even as a space in which to play, we will understand that it is also space itself.

- 3 By choosing to act, by writing on that page, we are creating another version of time; we are playing out a new version of existence, of life even. We are creating an entirely fresh piece of space-time, and another version of your *self*.

The iceberg

- 4 Space-time is a four-dimensional space used to represent the universe in the theory of relativity, with three dimensions corresponding to ordinary space and the fourth as time. I mean the same when thinking about creative writing. Writing a poem, a story or a piece of creative nonfiction, is to catalyze the creation of a four-dimensional fabric that is the result when space and time become one.
- 5 Every event in the universe can be located in the four-dimensional plane of space and time. Writing can create personal universes in which this system of events within space-time operates for the reader; the reader is its co-creator. Writing and reading are collaborative acts in the making and performance of space-time. Readers participate; they become, partly, writers. They will take part, consciously and unconsciously, in a literary creation, and live their life in that moment and at that speed — while they are reading. You make the words; they make the pictures. The reader lives their reading time in a kind of psychological fifth dimension, where the book takes them, where the reader places themselves. A novel or poem is the visible part of an iceberg. As Ernest Hemingway² put it, the knowledge a writer brings to the creation of that novel or poem is the unrevealed submerged section of that same iceberg. This book dives under that iceberg.
- 6 The writer weaves a certain degree of sparseness into their final text. If matters are left unexplained, untold, or the language of a poem is elliptically economical without becoming opaque, then inquiring readers will lean toward that world. Readers fill in the gaps for themselves, in essence, writing themselves into that small universe, creating that fifth dimension, and their experience of that dimension. The reader is active, as a hearer and a witness.
- 7 Moreover, if they are reading aloud to others, that piece of space-time will attract and alter several lives simultaneously. Some readers may be affected for the rest of their lives, loving that space so much they return to that work repeatedly, and even act out their own lives differently, in their own worlds, once they have put down the book. A well-drawn character in fiction or poetry, say, may find their actions and language imitated by readers simply because of the creative radiation of that fictional self, and

2 Ernest Hemingway: (1899-1961) an American writer and journalist. Many of his works are classics of American literature, for example, *In Our Time* (1925, including “Indian Camp” and “Big Two-Hearted River”), *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940) and *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952). 欧内斯特·海明威（美国作家、记者）



the accuracy of the writing. Think about the force and precision behind the creation of fictional or dramatic characters we admire or cherish.

New worlds

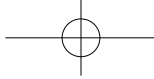
- 8 Stories, like dreams, have a way of taking care of people, by preparing them, teaching them. I argue that, although there is an inherent simplicity to this, it is not simple as a practice. With dreams come responsibilities, and the created worlds of a book require a vocation of trust between the writer and reader. We will none of us become a good writer unless we become a great reader, of more matter than just books. We must also learn to become shapers of language and, in that way, shapers of the small, new worlds that take the form of poems or novels, each of them a piece of fresh space-time, remembering itself. Hemingway, writing of the practice of fiction, states:

You have the sheet of blank paper, the pencil, and the obligation to invent truer than things can be true ... to take what is not palpable and make it completely palpable and ... have it seem normal ... so that it can become a part of the experience of the person who reads it.

- 9 Writing can change people, for writing creates new worlds and possible universes, parallel to an actual. At best, creative writing offers examples of life, nothing less. To some, writing remains an artifice, a game even, and it is — as most things are, as all of us are — something made or played upon. However, when nurture builds carefully on nature, then life is not only made well, it can be shaped well and given form.

A balance

- 10 Having created a life, the first duty of the writer is to give it away. So long as what we have written is well made, this is a huge gift. Generosity is one of the pleasures of invention, and a principle of human love: Honest of itself, it must be given, or given away freely. Now, look at that blank page again. Hold in the mind for a moment that this is both a private and a public space. The first to know this space is you, the writer, and the next person to know that space is yourself, the reader; a balance of perception and self-perception. To move from “this” to “that” requires a process which is both creative and which requires work, work that is sometimes euphoric and easy, and sometimes difficult, jagged.
- 11 Sometimes you will write for weeks as though your mind itself is running and even flying, independent of your ability and knowledge. It will seem like the mind has mountains, that it can contain the world. Sometimes you will write as though you are stumbling through a dark forest; your thought is sheer plod. Sometimes you will be completely helpless, as though language’s light had never existed in you or for you. There are feasts and famines. Any new writer who fears that flow and ebb, who takes no pleasure or pain in it, who is incapable of studying their own flaws or the flaws of



their writing too nearly, must try to find their own balance. Marianne Moore³ wrote in her poem “Picking and Choosing”:

Literature is a phase of life. If one is afraid of it, the situation is irremediable; if one approaches it familiarly, what one says is worthless.

- 12 But, for all that commitment or familiarity, creative writing is not a mystery. One of the purposes of the academic discipline of creative writing is to demystify itself without falsifying its intricacy. Creative writing can be opened and learned, like any craft, like any game of importance. “You become a good writer just as you become a good carpenter: by planing down your sentences” — Anatole France⁴.
- 13 As a writer, especially of fiction, you are obsessed by character. However, your own character has to be shaped and planed. “Writing is rewriting”, and the “character” of the writer is rewritten by the activity of writing and rewriting. If you are interested in the energies of language, rather than “being a writer”, then you stand a very good chance of becoming a writer. The character of the reader, your character — you as a writer — are central to that journey. Yet you do not need to write creatively if your ambition is to be a great reader. It is essential that you become a great reader if your purpose is to become a good writer. There is only dual citizenship on this continent. I hope you have already begun the journey. If so, then everything is possible, at this point endlessly possible. Think of that open space as an empty page. (1,361 words)

New words and expressions

latitude /'lætɪtju:d/ *n.* distance of a place north or south of the equator, measured in degrees 纬度

longitude /'lɒndʒɪtju:d/ *n.* distance east or west of the Greenwich meridian, measured in degrees 经度

catalyze /'kætəlaɪz/ *vt.* bring about; inspire 催化; 促成

sparseness /'spɑ:snɪs/ *n.* the quality, state, condition of being small in numbers or amount 稀疏

opaque /əu'peɪk/ *a.* difficult to understand 难理解的

palpable /'pælpəbəl/ *a.* (of a feeling or an atmosphere) so intense that it seems capable of being touched 可触摸的

at best under the best of conditions 至多

artifice /'ɑ:tɪfɪs/ *n.* a clever trick; skill 巧计; 技巧

euphoric /ju:'fɔrɪk/ *a.* extremely happy and excited 欢欣的

jagged /'dʒæɡɪd/ *a.* having an uneven edge with sharp points 有尖突的; 锯齿状的

plod /plɒd/ *n.* the act of moving or walking heavily and slowly 缓慢的脚步;

沉重的前行

flow and ebb (or *ebb and flow*) the way in which the level of sth. regularly becomes higher or lower in a situation 消长; 盛衰

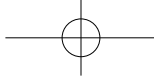
irremediable /,ɪrɪ'mi:diəbəl/ *a.* impossible to correct or cure 不可补救的; 不能改正的

demystify /di:'mɪstɪfaɪ/ *vt.* make sth. that is difficult easy to understand, especially by explaining it clearly 使非神秘化

plane /pleɪn/ *vt.* give a piece of wood a smooth surface using a plane 用刨子刨平

3 **Marianne Moore:** (1887-1972) an American modernist poet and critic, who wrote clever and satirical poems 玛丽安娜·穆尔 (美国现代主义诗人、评论家)

4 **Anatole France:** pseudo of Jacques-Anatole-Francois Thibault (1844-1924), a French poet, journalist, novelist and satirist 阿纳托尔·法郎士 (法国诗人、记者、小说家)



Critical reading and thinking

Task 1 / Studying famous quotes

Read aloud the words by Hemingway, Moore and France quoted in Text B. Then work in pairs and share your understanding of the quotes.

Task 2 / Points for discussion

Work in pairs and discuss the following questions.

- 1 Think of an empty page as open space. (Para. 1)
Think of that open space as an empty page. (Para. 13)
How do the two sentences differ in meaning?
- 2 According to Text B, what is the relationship between a writer and a reader?
- 3 However, when nurture builds carefully on nature, then life is not only made well, it can be shaped well and given form. (Para. 9)
How do you understand this sentence?
- 4 What does Text B say about the writing process?

Researching

Task / Interviewing and presenting

According to the author of Text B and many other writers, literature can have a profound impact on readers, helping them grow both personally and intellectually. Do you think this kind of influence still holds true for the e-generation whose lives have been closely connected to mobile phones and the Internet?

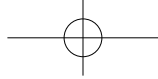
Interview at least three classmates about this, and give a two-minute presentation on your findings.

Example questions for your interview:

- How often do you read literature?
- Is literature losing its charm in this fast-paced and high-tech world?
- Do you think literature helps you grow in personality? Please give examples.
- Do you think literature helps you grow in intelligence? Please give examples.
- Which one do you prefer, e-books or traditional print books? Why?

Useful expressions for your presentation:

- I'd like to talk about ...
- According to my survey/interviews, ...
- I have ... points to make. My first point is ...
- Secondly, / Thirdly, ...
- In conclusion, / To sum up, ...



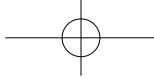
Text C

Types of Literature: the Genres¹



- 1 We usually classify literature — imaginative literature (excluding nonfiction prose) — into the following genres or classes: (1) prose fiction; (2) poetry, and (3) drama. These three genres have many common characteristics. All are art forms, each with its own requirements of structure and style. In varying degrees, all the genres are dramatic and imaginative; they have at least some degree of action, or are based in part on dramatic situations.
- 2 Imaginative literature differs from textbooks, historical and biographical works, and news articles, all of which describe or interpret facts. While literature is related to the truths of human life, it may be based on situations that have never occurred, and which may never occur. This is not to say that imaginative literature is not truthful, but rather that its truth is to life and human nature, not necessarily to the detailed world of reportorial, scientific, and historical facts in which we all live.

¹ This text is taken from *Fiction: An Introduction to Reading and Writing* (1989), written by Edgar V. Roberts and Henry E. Jacobs. Edgar V. Roberts is an emeritus professor of English at Lehman College of the City University of New York. Henry E. Jacobs is a published author of children's books and young adult books.



- 3 Although the three main genres have much in common, they also differ in many ways. Prose fiction, or narrative fiction, is in prose form and includes novels, short stories, myths, parables, romances, and epics. These works generally focus on one or a few major characters who undergo some kind of change as they meet other characters or deal with problems or difficulties in their lives. Poetry, in contrast to prose fiction, is much more economical in the use of words, and it relies heavily on imagery, figurative language, rhythm and sound. Drama (or plays) is the form of literature designed to be performed by actors. Like fiction, drama may focus on a single character or a small number of characters, and it presents fictional events as if they were happening in the present, to be witnessed by a group of people composing an audience. Some dramas employ much of the imagery, rhythm, and sound of poetry. (308 words)

New words and expressions

genre /'ʒɒnrə/ *n.* a particular style used in cinema, writing, or art, which can be recognized by certain features (文学、艺术等的)类型, 风格

reportorial /,rɪpə'tɔ:riəl/ *a.* of, noting

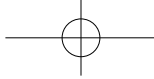
or characteristic of a report 报告的, 报道的

parable /'pærəbəl/ *n.* a short simple story which teaches or explains an idea, especially a moral or religious idea 寓言故事

imagery /'ɪmɪdʒəri/ *n.* the use of words and phrases in literature to create an image of sth. 意象, 形象化的描述

Task / Text C has listed three main genres. Look at the table below and write down your favorite works of imaginative literature according to their genres. Then share your answers with your classmates.

Genres		Your favorite works
Prose fiction	Novel	
	Short story	
	Myth	
	Parable	
	Romance	
	Epic	
Poetry		
Drama		



Listening

Lecture

Prediction

A valuable skill for listening comprehension is prediction. That is, instead of relying first on the actual words or sounds, you use background information and common sense to develop expectations about what you will hear and then confirm or reject them as you listen. This strategy is considered as an effective way of processing speech because it makes the most use of the resources available to you.

For instance, in this section, you will listen to a clip of a lecture. It is the first lecture given in a course named “An Introduction to Theory of Literature”. Before listening to the clip, think about the following questions: What is the course mainly about? What will the professor most likely talk about in the first session? Reflection on these questions can facilitate the access to relevant knowledge and enhance subsequent understanding.

Word bank

- enticing /ɪn'taɪsɪŋ/ *a.* 诱人的
- circularity /sɜ:kjʊ'lærɪti/ *n.* 循环性
- epistemological /,epɪstɪ(ɪ)mə'lɒdʒɪkəl/ *a.* 认识论的
- utterance /'ʌtərəns/ *n.* 表达; 言辞
- purport /pɜ:'pɔ:t/ *vt.* 声称
- rattle ... off 滔滔不绝地讲述
- upsurge /'ʌpsɜ:dʒ/ *n.* 突发, 激发
- ecumenical /,i:kjʊ'menɪkəl/ *a.* 普遍的; 大众的
- neo-pragmatist /,ni:əʊ'prægmətɪst/ *n.* 新实用主义者
- give ... short shrift 忽略, 轻视

Task 1 / You will hear a clip of the first lecture given in a course named “An Introduction to Theory of Literature”. Before listening, write down what you expect to hear.



Task 2 / Listen to the lecture and then choose the best answer to each of the following questions.

- 1 What is the most fascinating question asked by literature theory, according to the speaker?
 - A What is literature?
 - B What causes literature?
 - C What are the effects of literature?
- 2 What is the epistemological difference between literature and other types of utterances?
 - A The language of literature has more aesthetic value than other types of utterances.
 - B Literature is more lasting and widely accessible than other types of utterances.
 - C Common utterances purport to be saying something true, while literature is under no such obligation.
- 3 Why is the definition of literature not a big problem even without an accurate and complete definition?
 - A Because great literary works will be created anyway.
 - B Because we can still understand works of literature.
 - C Because we can still do interesting work on the basis of a particular notion.
- 4 What will the professor and his students do in this course?
 - A They will make every effort to define literature carefully.
 - B They will not go further into the definition of literature.
 - C They will focus only on defining literature.
- 5 What is the professor most likely going to talk about next?
 - A What is literature.
 - B What causes literature.
 - C What are the effects of literature.

Task 3 / Listen to the lecture again and then complete the following summary.

Theory of literature shares one thing in common with other kinds of theory, that is, the need for (1) _____. There are definitions of literature based on (2) _____, circularity, symmetry, (3) _____ of form, (4) _____ of economy of form, (5) _____, psychological complexity, psychological (6) _____, psychological (7) _____, psychological (8) _____ and psychological (9) _____. However, according to the neo-pragmatist argument, literature is (10) _____.

Asking for information/clarification

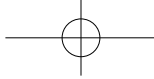
Being polite is important in academic discussions. One way of being polite is to avoid direct questions. Read the expressions in the following two boxes and compare them.

Can you explain that again?	Could you explain that again, please?
I didn't understand what you said about ...	I'm sorry, I didn't quite understand what you said about ...
Can you repeat what you said about ...?	Could you repeat what you said about ...?
Can you give an example of ...?	Could you give an example of ...?
Are you saying that ...?	Excuse me, are you saying that ...?
What does ... mean?	Could you explain what ... means?
What is ...?	Could you explain in more detail about ...?
less polite	more polite

Task / Work in pairs and play the roles of A and B. Role A, a student, consults a literary critic, Role B, about characteristics of literature. Employ the strategy of politeness in asking for information/clarification. Exchange roles when you have finished.

Role A: turn to page 215.

Role B: turn to page 215.



Research Paper Project

Writing

Deciding upon a topic for your paper

An essential part of academics is writing a research paper, which presents the results of systematic investigations on a particular topic. For this semester, you need to write a research paper in one of the fields covered in this course, for example, literature, history and philosophy. You are expected to gather, sort, synthesize and analyze relevant information and offer your own unique perspective. To guide you through this challenging, arduous yet fascinating process, we outline the major steps and issues in each of the ten units.

Let's start with the first step: deciding upon a topic.

Keep in mind the following points:

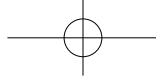
- 1 Choose a topic that really intrigues you. Your attitude determines the amount of effort put into your research.
- 2 Narrow down a topic. Some topics are too broad to make a manageable paper. Begin by doing some general reading about something you are interested in and then try to find a focus. For instance, you may narrow down a topic from "James Joyce" to "James Joyce's landmark novel *Ulysses*" to "the 'stream of consciousness' technique employed in *Ulysses*".
- 3 Avoid a topic that has very limited relevant source materials.
- 4 Remember that an initial topic may not be the topic you end up writing about, because you may find some fresh points in the ongoing research.

Following the above guidelines, you may start thinking about a topic for your research paper now. Thinking early leads to starting early.

Task 1 / Which of the following topics are suitable and manageable for a term paper on literature? Tick (✓) your choices.

- 1 The Influence of Materialism on American Literature
- 2 Literature and Music
- 3 Gender Relations in *Jane Eyre*
- 4 Robert Frost's Attitude Toward Death
- 5 Loneliness as a Major Theme in 20th-Century American Literature
- 6 How the Great Depression Is Reflected in *Of Mice and Men*

Task 2 / Write down the topics that you are curious about in the field of literature, history or philosophy.



Reference

Key Terms and Websites for Further Study

literary theory 文学理论
literary criticism 文学批评
artistic merit 艺术价值
collective unconscious 集体潜意识
genre 类型, 体裁
neo-pragmatist 新实用主义者

<http://www.literature.org/>

<http://www.online-literature.com>

http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/english_literature/