American Literature: Classics

Second Edition

Teacher Edition

Oak Meadow

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Teacher Edition Introduction

Welcome to *American Literature: Classics*. This teacher edition offers information, suggestions, and strategies to help you evaluate your student's work and support them throughout this full-year English literature course.

This course touches on social issues, politics, and other challenging topics that can be complicated to navigate. Use your best judgment to modify the material as needed to best serve your student.

Content warning: The books in this course are classics in the canon of American literature. The books may contain strong language, violence, and other mature topics. You are encouraged to read these books in advance so you are prepared to support your student. While most high school students are able to process this material successfully, if you feel your student may be more sensitive or find the material too intense, you are encouraged to have them skip problematic passages or provide alternate readings and assignments.

Supporting Your Student

In this teacher edition, you will find all the course content contained in the student coursebook as well as answers—shown in **orange**—and tips for guiding your student and assessing their work. You may want to look over the assignments and teacher edition answers for each lesson ahead of time. Some of the information may be useful in supporting your student before or during the assignments. In addition, the appendix contains information regarding academic expectations, citing sources, plagiarism, and more. Students are expected to apply this knowledge to all their work.

In this course, there are many open-ended and critical-thinking questions. Encourage students to discuss, debate, reflect on, and consider differing viewpoints. By taking an active interest in the lesson topics, you can help create a more meaningful experience for your student.

At the end of each lesson, students are reminded to share their work with their teacher. If you would prefer to see their work more or less frequently, you can clarify your expectations with them.

Because students are expected to produce original work, it is best not to share this teacher edition with them. Any indication of plagiarism needs to be taken seriously. Make sure your student is familiar with when and how to attribute sources. These conventions are explained fully in the coursebook appendix. Although high school students should be fully aware of the importance of academic

integrity, you are encouraged to review its significance with your student at the start of the course. (Information on this is also found in the appendix.)

A Note About the Workload

Oak Meadow courses are designed to be flexible. Teachers can require all assignments to be completed or designate some assignments as required and others as optional. This lets teachers adapt the course for a wide range of student abilities, goals, and skills.

Students vary greatly in terms of their ability to absorb information and express themselves. Some may find the reading in this course takes longer than expected; others may find the writing assignments take a great deal of time. In general, students can expect to spend about five to seven hours on each weekly lesson. If your student needs more time to complete the work, you can modify lessons to focus on fewer assignments or allow them to complete some of the written assignments orally. Modifications like these can allow students to produce work that is of a higher quality than if they have to rush to get everything done. Each lesson in this course can be customized to suit your student's needs. Use your judgment in culling, substituting, and adjusting assignments as needed so that your student can meet the course's main objectives while devoting an appropriate amount of time to their studies. Keep an eye on the workload as your student progresses through the course and make adjustments so they have time for meaningful learning experiences.

We encourage you to join your student in discussing (and, if possible, reading) the assigned literature in this course. We hope this course helps your student develop their ability to express their thoughts as they gain insight about themselves and the world around them.

Coursebook Introduction

Welcome to *American Literature: Classics*! In this course, you will be reading the thoughts and feelings of those who have lived on this land that we now call the United States. Through their words, you will experience the events that helped create this country and that made it what it is today. In the process, you will begin to understand more fully the unique heritage and vision of the American people. Each work of fiction is a window into the real-life issues experienced in the past and today.

Content warning: The classic texts in this course describe events that portray historical events, beliefs, and perspectives in an accurate, realistic way. You will encounter disturbing material. As with all material in this course, please approach the topics with sensitivity and kindness, both to the people you are studying and to yourself. If you are struggling emotionally with topics in this course, please contact your teacher or another trusted adult.

Course Materials

The following materials are used in this course:

- *Great American Short Stories*, edited by Paul Negri
- *The Oxford Book of American Short Stories*, edited by Joyce Carol Oates
- *Passing* by Nella Larsen
- *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck

This course also uses online resources, which can be easily accessed at oakmeadow.com/curriculum-links. Visit this page to familiarize yourself with how to locate the online resources for this course, and then bookmark the page for future reference.

What to Expect in This Course

In each lesson, you will find reading and writing assignments. For written assignments, include examples and direct references from the text to support your observations and opinions.

When you begin each lesson, scan the entire lesson first so you have an idea of what you will be doing. Take a quick look at the number of assignments and amount of reading. Having a sense of the whole lesson before you begin will help you manage your time effectively. Use the assignment checklist to keep track of your progress. Check off tasks as you complete them so you can see at a glance what you still need to do. Follow this process for each lesson.

This full-year course is divided into 36 lessons, and each lesson is designed to take about one week to complete. In the lessons, you will find the following sections:

An **Assignment Checklist** is included at the beginning of each lesson. Assignments are fully explained in the lesson.

Learning Objectives outline the main goals of the lesson and give you an idea of what to expect.

Lesson Introductions provide background information or questions to guide your learning.

Reading Assignments include a wide range of classical texts from American writers.

Reflect and Discuss sections offer questions and prompts to think about and talk about with others, which gives you a chance to further explore your ideas about the topics.

Writing Assignments highlight important literary elements, develop your analytical skills, and help you gain deeper insight into the literature.

Share Your Work provides reminders for students who are submitting work to a teacher.

This course is designed for independent learning, so hopefully you will find it easy to navigate. However, it is assumed you will have an adult (such as a parent, tutor, or school-based teacher) supervising your work and providing support and feedback. We will refer to this person as "your teacher" in this course. If you have a question about your work, ask them for help.

Academic Expectations

You are expected to approach your work with authenticity, integrity, and effort. The appendix contains important information that you will need to read and incorporate into your work throughout the year. Take some time to familiarize yourself with the resources in the appendix. You will find information about original work guidelines, tips on how to avoid accidental plagiarism, and details on citing sources and images as well as writing guidelines.

A Note About the Workload

Students vary greatly in terms of reading speed, reading comprehension, and writing ability. Some may find the reading in this course takes less time than expected; others may find the writing assignments take a great deal of time. In general, you can expect to spend about five to seven hours on each weekly lesson.

Keep an eye on the workload as you progress through the course. If you find you are struggling to complete the work, contact your teacher to discuss your options. Your teacher might modify lessons depending on particular learning goals or challenges you are facing.

UNIT 1 Nineteenth-Century Short Stories

"In truth, all through the haunted forest there could be nothing more frightful than the figure of Goodman Brown."

Excerpt from "Young Goodman Brown" by Nathaniel Hawthorne

(Image credit: Nilfanion)

For the study of nineteenth-century American short stories, we will be reading selections from two books: *Great American Short Stories*, which includes stories written from 1835 through 1927, and *The Oxford Book of American Short Stories*, which includes stories written from the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries.

The selections in the Oxford book were made by the writer Joyce Carol Oates, and she provides background information about her choices in the book's preface and introduction. The book also includes biographical information about each author selected. Oates reflects on the description of a short story:

> My personal definition of the form is that it represents a concentration of imagination, and not an expansion; it is not more than 10,000 words; and, no matter its mysteries of experimental properties, it achieves closure—meaning that, when it ends, the attentive reader understands why. (5)

She goes on to note that each short story "signals a tangible change of some sort; a distinct shift in consciousness; a deepening of insight" (5–6).

In this unit, you'll explore short stories by Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Edgar Allan Poe, Mark Twain, and Stephen Crane. As you read works by these esteemed authors, see if you can sense the "deepening of insight" in each story.

Lesson

1

Nathaniel Hawthorne

Learning Objectives

In this lesson, you will:

- Identify story elements that influence the reader's experience.
- Determine an author's point of view in a text, and analyze how an author uses the narrator for a specific purpose.
- Analyze how the style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of a text.

ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

- ☐ Read the lesson introduction.
- ☐ Read the biography of Nathaniel Hawthorne.
- ☐ Read "Young Goodman Brown" by Nathaniel Hawthorne.
- ☐ List the essential elements of a good story.
- ☐ Choose three questions to answer regarding the story's narrator, point of view, and setting.
- ☐ Reflect on the story's theme and where the author leaves things uncertain.

Lesson Introduction

We will begin this unit on nineteenth-century short stories by reading works by Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville. These two authors were contemporaries and, for a time, friends. They were also both closely associated with Emerson (whose work you will study in lessons 7 and 8). Both Hawthorne and Melville went on to write novels that were major accomplishments in American literature, considered by many to be masterpieces: Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and Melville's *Moby Dick*.

In this lesson, we'll read Hawthorne's famous short story, "Young Goodman Brown," which was written in 1835 and published in 1846 in a collection titled *Mosses from an Old Mosse*. From 1842 to 1845, Hawthorne lived with his family at the Old Manse in Concord, Massachusetts, where his neighbors were Emerson and Thoreau.

"Young Goodman Brown" takes place in Puritan times, before the Salem witch trials of 1692; the names of some of the twenty victims appear in the story. Hawthorne's grandfather had been one of the Salem witch trial judges, and because of that, Hawthorn had thoroughly studied the history of the Puritans. The main character of this story, Young Goodman Brown, enters a dark forest and meets with various spectral (ghostly) characters.

In *Hawthorne's Short Stories*, edited and with an introduction by Newton Arvin, Edgar Allan Poe—whose work you'll read in lesson 3—is quoted as describing one of Hawthorne's stories in this way: "Every word tells, and there is not a word which does not tell." In his introduction, Arvin describes Hawthorne's writing:

> . . . the palette of Hawthorne's vocabulary: the favorite adjectives, *dusky*, *dim*, and *shadowy*, or *cold*, *sluggish*, and *torpid*; the favorite verbs, *separate*, *estrange*, and *insulate*; the favorite nouns, *pride* and *egotism*, *guilt* and *intellect*, *heart* and *sympathy*. They tell us everything about his sensibility, his imagination, and the creative idiosyncrasy of his human insight. (xv)

As you read Hawthorne's story, try to be aware of this "palette of Hawthrone's vocabulary."

Reading Assignments

1. In *The Oxford Book of American Short Stories*, read the biography of Nathaniel Hawthorne (60).
2. In *Great American Short Stories*, read "Young Goodman Brown" by Nathaniel Hawthorne (1–12).
3. As you read, take notes on your impressions. Pay particular attention to the setting—you will be asked to do an assignment about the significance of the setting, so make note of any details that stand out for you.

   Other elements to note in the story:

   - Voices of the inner (or outer) world
   - Significant journeys taken by the characters (physical or emotional)
   - Human connections (or lack thereof)
   - Unfamiliar vocabulary words
4. After a day or two, read the story a second time, and then complete the writing assignments below.

Writing Assignments

1. Throughout the course, you will be reading a variety of short stories and doing several creative story writing projects. What elements do you feel are essential for a story to be engaging, entertaining, or meaningful?

   Make a list of the criteria you look for in a story. (You can use this list to evaluate the stories you'll read in this course.)

   Students may mention an unusual setting, a beginning that is exciting or riveting, lively dialogue, characters they can relate to, unusual characters, or dramatic action. They can use the criteria they come up with to assess each story they read in this course.

2. Choose three of the following assignments to complete.

   a. In "Young Goodman Brown," what does Brown believe is happening to him? Using direct quotations and examples from the story, describe Brown's feelings and ideas.

   The student response should focus on what the character is thinking about himself and his journey, using direct quotes in quotation marks with a page number cited. Examples from the text include "There may be a devilish Indian behind every tree" and "What if the devil himself should be at my very elbow!" (2). Brown is fearful, and his resolve and faith keep being challenged, but all the while he is certain that what he believes—and what he sees according to those beliefs—is true.

   b. We experience Brown's journey through Hawthorne's narrator. Do the narrator's opinions differ from Young Goodman Brown's opinions of himself? Who do you trust—the narrator or the young man? Provide evidence of your opinion.

   The narrator's qualities are that he is informed, unemotional, candid, honest, and moral, and he appears reliable. Brown appears less trustworthy than the narrator because he seems to be ruled by emotions and his ideas about himself. Students will offer their own perspective about the trustworthiness of the character and the reliability of the narrator.

   c. Since the author chose not to have the main character narrate the story, what is the purpose of the narrator?

   The purpose of the narrator is to provide objective comments about the highly excitable Brown's character and his journey. The narrator gives us a larger context for Brown's experience in the story and alerts us to Brown's attitudes and sense of self-importance.

   d. How would the ending of the story have been different if it was narrated by Brown?

   Compose an alternative ending to show how the story's ending could have been different if told from Brown's perspective.

   The last paragraph of the story, beginning with "but, alas! it was a dream of evil omen for young Goodman Brown" (11), encapsulates Brown's entire life, which would not have been possible without the omniscient narrator.

   Students will write a conclusion to the story from the main character's point of view, taking into account what they know of his temperament and beliefs.

   e. Consider the descriptive setting of the story. What adjectives and adverbs does the author use to describe the path and the forest? How do these words make you feel?

   Hawthorne uses adjectives such as *dreary*, *darkened*, *gloomiest*, and *wilder* to describe the road and vividly evokes the claustrophobia of the forest. Hawthorne repeats a set of adjectives and adverbs from the beginning paragraph throughout the story and similar words are used in the final paragraph. Students will reflect on how this vocabulary influences the tone and the feeling of the story.

3. Reflect on the impact of Brown's experience that changed him so dreadfully. Brown seems to have encountered—either by seeing them or by hearing their voices—a cast of impossible people: an elderly person with a serpent staff, Goody Close, the minister, Deacon Gookin, Faith, and his dead father and mother.

   Did Brown experience these events or only imagine (or dream) them? Would you call this a ghost story? In what way is the story about evil?

   Write one or two paragraphs.

   Answers will vary as to whether what happens in the story is real or a dream. Students will give their impressions of its ghostly elements. Some students might point to Brown's wild imagination as evidence that the experience was all in his mind. Students will reflect on whether the story is about evil or about believing in evil. Students might note that Brown's unfounded beliefs and assumptions about his neighbors is the actual root of the evil in the story, as evidenced by the narrator's claim: "In truth, all through the haunted forest there could be nothing more frightful than the figure of Goodman Brown" (8).

SHARE YOUR WORK

At the end of each lesson, you will share your work with your teacher for feedback. (If your teacher prefers a different submission schedule, they will let you know.) You are not necessarily required to complete all the assignments for each lesson, so be sure to check with your teacher at the beginning of each lesson to make sure you understand what you are required to do.

Below is a list of assignments you can share with your teacher, which you can use to organize your work submission:

- List of essential elements of a good story
- Answers to three questions
- Reflection on the story's theme

Your teacher will let you know the best way to submit your work. If you have any questions about the lesson content, assignments, or how to share your work, contact your teacher.

Lesson

2

Herman Melville

Learning Objectives

In this lesson, you will:

- Explore how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
- Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics.
- Support an opinion using concrete details and relevant quotations.

Lesson Introduction

"Bartleby" by Herman Melville is written in the first-person perspective, a striking difference from Hawthorne's third-person narrative voice in "Young Goodman Brown." Melville's story is about the narrator as much as it is about the title character. Bartleby does not change, but the lawyer/narrator undergoes a transformation; it is very different from Young Goodman Brown's transformation, but both characters experience something very strange, almost uncanny. Brown is not able or willing to question, evaluate, or deeply reflect on his own experience that night in the forest, but the lawyer is able to do so, and the narrator's way of acknowledging and reflecting on his experience creates the story.

In "Melville's Parable of the Walls," Leo Marx describes "Bartleby" as told in three movements:

- Bartleby's gradual resistance
- The lawyer's attempts to make him comfortable
- Society's punishment

ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

- ☐ Read the lesson introduction.
- ☐ Read the biography of Herman Melville.
- ☐ Read "Bartleby" by Herman Melville.
- ☐ Choose one:

  Identify notable details in a description and explain their impact.

  Describe the narrator's transformation.

  Analyze, illustrate, or relate to a figurative passage.
- ☐ Write or tell a story or poem using emphasized words.
- ☐ Compare the stories of Hawthorne and Melville.

Oddly enough, the narrator's feelings of aversion to Bartleby (described on pages 30 and 31) are what begin to disrupt the lawyer's safe world view. This first awakening of conscience is accompanied by an expression of bewilderment. His struggle involves the divine injunction "that ye love one another" (39) and expands on the virtue of charity.

So, how does the voice of this first-person narrator come across to the reader? In "The Reliable Narrator," Dan McCall writes:

> Melville really does ask us questions about kindness, about love, about what we can fix and what we cannot. What happens when you run into something that you cannot explain and cannot remedy? Where is your humanity then? (*Nathaniel Hawthorne's Tales* 275)

Keep these thoughts in mind as you read (and reread) the story.

Reading Assignments

1. In *The Oxford Book of American Short Stories*, read the biography of Herman Melville (85).
2. In *Great American Short Stories*, read "Bartleby" by Herman Melville (18–46).
3. As you read, take notes on your impressions. Pay particular attention to the narrator's thoughts and reactions to Bartleby throughout the story.
4. After a day or two, read the story a second time, and then complete the writing assignments below.

Notes from the Text

- A *scrivener* is a scribe, notary, or law clerk.
- *Office* also means a position (such as the office of a Master in Chancery).
- A *dun* is a bill collector.
- A *conveyancer* is one who draws up deeds.
- *The Tombs* is a prison in New York.
- A *rockaway* is an open carriage.
- "The tragedy of Colt and Adams" refers to a famous murder case.
- "With kings and counselors" is a biblical phrase.
- The Dead Letter Office was a government office that handled letters that had no known address or living recipient.
- Notice how Bartleby's use of the word *prefer* begins to affect the narrator, Nippers, and Turkey.

Writing Assignments

1. Choose one of the following assignments.

   a. In the story, the narrator describes Bartleby:

      > His steadiness, his freedom from all dissipation, his incessant industry (except when he chose to throw himself into a standing reverie behind his screen), his great stillness, his unalterableness of demeanor under all circumstance, made him a valuable acquisition. One prime thing was this—*he was always there*—first in the morning, continually throughout the day, and the last at night. I had a singular confidence in his honesty. (30)

   Write one paragraph on what stands out to you most in this description, and clearly express your reasons why.

   Students will write about their impressions of the content and style of this passage, and what it tells them of the character—highlighting what most strikes them about this, and clearly explaining why. For instance, students might note that the narrator pays close attention to Bartleby and is aware at the same time of his own changing attitudes to him. The narrator notices Bartleby's reliability and relates how he feels about him.

   b. Trace the lawyer's character throughout the story through exploring his reactions to and feelings about Bartleby. How and why does he change? Referring to your journal notes, write one paragraph to describe this transformation.

   Students can refer to their journal notes to complete this assignment. For instance, the lawyer who is initially self-confident, becomes baffled by Bartleby's character (or lack of character). The lawyer has never met anyone like Bartleby before, and this begins to interest him profoundly. His self-reflection about the enigmatic Bartleby provides the drama of the story because he finds himself in the presence of someone he does not comprehend. Throughout the story, Bartleby in some sense slowly disappears from life, and by being witness to this, the lawyer develops a new capacity for awe, acceptance, and compassion.

   c. In this story, the author uses figurative language when describing Bartleby as "a bit of wreck in the mid-Atlantic" (36) and "like the last column of some ruined temple" (37). These descriptions mirror the lawyer's struggle with himself and the meaning of this experience, which crescendos in a moment when he finds himself to be no longer the safe, comfortable, and protected person he took himself to be:

      > I was thunderstruck. For an instant, I stood like the man who, pipe in mouth, was killed one cloudless afternoon long ago in Virginia by summer lightning; at his own warm open window he was killed, and remained leaning out there upon the dreamy afternoon, till someone touched him, when he fell. (38)

Choose one of the following ways to respond to this passage:

- In one paragraph, give your impressions of this passage. Analyze both the language and the symbolism, drawing on aspects of the entire story.
- Illustrate this scene in the story, emphasizing the lawyer's experience.
- Recall a shocking experience you had with somebody in your life, and write about it in metaphorical terms.

Students will respond to this passage in writing, through drawing, or by recalling a similar experience and using metaphorical terms to describe it. This is the moment when the lawyer is stunned and perplexed, and the student's response should emphasize this sentiment.

2. The italicized and repeated words and phrases in the story impart a special emphasis. For instance, the phrase "I would prefer not to" occurs 37 times in the story and is italicized 6 times. Here are other repeated or italicized words (including the page numbers where they are found):

   - safe (19)
   - you (26 and 27)
   - luny (27)
   - will (29)
   - prefer (multiple references)
   - he was always there (30)
   - nonchalance (31)
   - anything (33)
   - must (36)
   - assume (38)
   - should (41)

   Write a simple story or poem that features many italicized words and phrases, either those from the list above or words of your own choosing. In homage to Melville, you might like to use "I would prefer not to" as many times as possible.

   Alternatively, you might like to tell a story to someone and emphasize certain words (the way you would use italics in writing). This can be a story you know or one you make up. Afterward, ask your audience how the emphasized words influenced their enjoyment or understanding of the story. If you choose this option, record your storytelling and/or write a few sentences about the experience and your audience's feedback.

   Students will write their own short story or poem with the given italicized words, with the goal of having students practice intentional word choice or experiment with the effect of

repetition and added emphasis. Look for a carefully crafted summary that embeds the target words within the natural flow. Look for students to apply added emphasis (in the form of repetition or italics) in a relevant, effective way that draws the reader's attention to key aspects of plot or character development.

3. Though their approach is very different, Hawthorne and Melville center their stories on something that is almost otherworldly or supernatural. Write a brief essay (two or three paragraphs) about the ways that "Young Goodman Brown" and "Bartleby" are ghost stories. In your comparison, reflect on who is being haunted and why. Use specific examples and at least one direct quotation to support your opinion.

   Young Goodman Brown is haunted by the ghostly appearances of his mentors, friends, and family. In some ways, Hawthorne, through the narrative voice, is exploring how he himself is haunted by the Salem witch trials and his community's Puritan past.

   In "Bartleby," the narrator/lawyer admits to his consternation about Bartleby by asking himself, "What shall I do? what ought I to do? what does my conscience say I *should* do with this man, or rather ghost" (41). In this story, it is Bartleby who haunts the narrator, and Bartleby's inexplicable actions are what generates the story's haunting quality.

   In their comparison, students will reflect on how both authors incorporate elements of the supernatural to explore their characters and their themes.

SHARE YOUR WORK

When you have completed your work, share it with your teacher. Remember to check with your teacher at the beginning of each lesson to make sure you understand what you are required to do.

Below is a list of assignments you can share with your teacher, which you can use to organize your work submission:

- Choice assignment (choose one):
  - Notable details in a description
  - Description of the narrator's transformation
  - Response to a figurative passage
- Story or poem that uses emphasized words
- Comparison of stories by Hawthorne and Melville

If you have any questions about the lesson content, assignments, or how to share your work, contact your teacher.

Lesson

6

Unit Project and Literary Analysis

Learning Objectives

In this lesson, you will:

- Examine some of the themes of the stories through developing a creative project.
- Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation and its significance, establishing a point of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters to create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
- Write an impression of early American literature and reflect on why the stories are considered classics and masterpieces that have endured for so many years.

ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

- ☐ Complete a creative project or short story.
- ☐ Write a reflective or analytical essay.

Writing Assignments

1. Choose one of the following project options.

   a. Do a creative project—visual or graphic art, music, poetry, etc.—on a topic of interest connected to the stories you have read. Include an artist's statement along with your project.

   When brainstorming your project, think about some of the inspiration for the short stories you have read, which include the following:

   - Hawthorne's study of Puritan history and his own ancestor's involvement in the Salem witch trials
   - Melville's association with Emerson
   - Poe's interest in the human psyche
   - Twain's lack of experience with war
   - Crane's understanding of the reality of war

   Students completing a creative project should demonstrate a clear, intentional connection to themes of the stories and include an artist's statement that explains their

work. Whatever form it takes, the project should relate directly to the topic. If this focus is not clear, encourage your student to discuss what they have done and explain their interpretation.

b. Poe wrote,

> A skillful literary artist has constructed his tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single effect to be wrought out, he then invents such incidents—he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. (*The Oxford Book of American Short Stories* 8)

Following Poe's formula, craft a short story with a first-person narrator who harbors a secret. Once you have decided on this "single effect," create a setting and story incidents that best support your theme and character. Your story doesn't have to be long, but it should be well structured and center on this character and their secret.

This first-person creative story should revolve around a character with a secret. The setting, episode, and narrator can be drawn from the student's life or imagination. It can be an adventure, a mystery, or a fantasy tale. The goal is to write a story that comes alive through the narrative voice.

2. Choose one of the following options, and write a one- or two-page essay. Your essay should be well organized, include relevant quotations, and express your thoughts clearly and with originality.

Follow the steps of the writing process to plan, write, revise, edit, and proofread your essay. Refer to the outline template in the appendix for details on how to sequence your ideas into a well-organized essay. Additional information about the writing process can be found in the appendix of this coursebook.

Students will write a reflective or analytical essay, following the prompts below. Look for students to choose relevant quotations to support their ideas, organize their essay in a logical way, and demonstrate their skills in revision, editing, and proofreading. The essay should be one or two pages.

a. Write a reflective essay on the stories of Hawthorne, Melville, Poe, Twain, and Crane. Address the following questions:

- Of these five stories, which was most difficult to read, and why? Was it worthwhile to read?
- What story did you most resonate with? What about the story did you relate to?
- How do these stories express what it means to be an American?
- These stories are considered classic masterpieces of American Literature. Why do you think these stories have endured for so many years?

You might want to look over your responses to previous assignments before writing your essay. When answering the questions (and the last question in particular), explain the reasoning behind your opinion.

Students will express their personal experience of reading the stories. In particular, look for a detailed response about why these stories have endured. This is a key overarching question in the course, and students will be brought back to it several times. Some might suggest that the texts are classics because of their masterful literary technique or expression of experiences that many people can relate to. Others might suggest that one or more texts have endured only because adults read them when they were in school but that the texts have lost their relevance in the modern era. No matter how the student responds, look for them to explain their reasoning clearly.

b. Some of the themes that have emerged in these stories are:

- Voices of the inner and outer world
- Significant journeys taken by the characters (physical or emotional)
- Human connections (or lack thereof)

In a one- or two-page analysis, compare one of these themes across several stories you have read. Use relevant quotations to help explain how the stories expressed the theme.

Students will choose one of the themes above and analyze it in three or more short stories from this unit. For instance, the theme of the inner and outer voices is explored in many of the stories. Hawthorne ("Young Goodman Brown") and Poe ("The Tell-Tale Heart") bring forth the voice of inner struggle, while Crane ("The Little Regiment") gives voice to the external sounds of war. There is a significant journey taken in "The Private History of a Campaign That Failed," which is very different from the night journey in "Young Goodman Brown," yet both journeys have major consequences for the characters involved. The theme of human connections (or the lack of human connections) appears in "Young Goodman Brown" and "Bartleby," where the main characters become increasingly disconnected and alienated from others as the story evolves.

SHARE YOUR WORK

When you have completed your work, share it with your teacher. Below is a list of assignments to help you organize your work submission:

- Creative project or short story
- Reflective or analytical essay

If you have any questions about the lesson content, which assignments to complete, or how to share your work, contact your teacher.

Lesson

17

William Faulkner and Eudora Welty

Learning Objectives

In this lesson, you will:

- Practice close reading to see how the opening of the story prepares you for the rest of the narrative.
- Analyze the perspective of different characters and draw logical conclusions from the evidence given.
- Consider the relationship between historical events and literature.

Lesson Introduction

African American authors were not the only ones using literature to explore intolerance and oppression. White writers, especially ones in the South, also took up the topic as they illuminated the forms of racism and bias that they observed in their own communities. This week, you will read two such authors: William Faulkner and Eudora Welty. Both writers used their native Mississippi as a setting for their stories. Faulkner is slightly older than Welty—he was born in 1897, and she was born in 1909—yet, as you will see, both provide a powerful representation of race in Southern life.

Both authors also share a focus on psychology. As you read the stories, think about how they reveal the ways in which their characters think. How do they create vivid portraits of human consciousness? How does racism fit in with other thoughts their white characters hold? Both Faulkner and Welty place the reader in the consciousness of a very limited narrator: "That Evening Sun" is narrated from the perspective of a child; "Where Is the Voice Coming From?" is narrated by a white supremacist who has just murdered

ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

- ☐ Read the lesson introduction.
- ☐ Read the biography of William Faulkner.
- ☐ Read "That Evening Sun" by William Faulkner.
- ☐ Read the biography of Eudora Welty.
- ☐ Read "Where Is the Voice Coming From" by Eudora Welty.
- ☐ Use close reading to analyze the opening paragraphs of a story.
- ☐ Provide evidence of how dialogue is used to reveal values and beliefs.
- ☐ Research the historical setting of Welty's story and examine the impact of fictional and nonfictional accounts.
- ☐ Identify and explain revealing character details.
- ☐ Create a detailed outline for your essay on intolerance and oppression.

a Black civil rights activist. As you read, consider how the perspective of these characters shape your understanding of the stories.

Reading Assignments

1. In *The Oxford Book of American Short Stories*, read the following:
    - Biography of William Faulkner (335)
    - "That Evening Sun" by William Faulkner (336–352)
    - Biography of Eudora Welty (395)
    - "Where Is the Voice Coming From" by Eudora Welty (396–401)

Writing Assignments

1. Reread the first two paragraphs of "That Evening Sun," and underline any details that help you understand the setting of the story. What qualities of Jefferson, Mississippi, appear most important to you? How does this opening set the tone for the rest of the story? In your response, be sure to cite and interpret specific details from the first two paragraphs.

    Writing tip: This type of response requires *close reading*, which means you examine small details carefully and consider how they relate to the whole passage as well as the larger work of literature. It is essential that you include details and explain what impression they create. You may find it useful to keep in mind these three *I* words when you integrate textual evidence: *introduce*, *insert*, and *interpret*. When you **introduce** a quote, you give some context for it in terms of the story and how it connects to the point you are making. You **insert** the quote in a relevant place, and then you **interpret** or analyze the quote by explaining what your understanding is. Don't assume the quote will speak for itself—tell your reader what you see and why you find it illuminating.

    Responses will vary depending on what details students choose to focus on. The basic idea is that the two first paragraphs contrast the past with the present and yet point to how Black women are doing the same work during both time periods (albeit with different technologies). Students may think that the narrator sounds nostalgic as he notes that "the telephone and electric companies are cutting down more and more of the shade trees" (336). It sounds like modern technology is ruining some of the beauty of the setting as he contrasts the native trees with "iron poles bearing clusters of bloated and ghostly grapes" (336). This metaphor emphasizes the contrast between the generative trees that provide shade and these poles that do not provide anything nourishing. The narrator repeats this idea that modern technology makes things ghostly as he discusses how the Black women take away the wash in cars so that "the soiled wearing of a whole week now flees apparitionlike behind alert and irritable electric horns" (336). By contrast, he seems to regard the way that the women used to take away the laundry—balanced on their heads—with a sense of wonder and respect for their skill. The opening establishes the idea of a society with strict roles based on one's gender and race.

2. Although Nancy is the central character of "That Evening Sun," Faulkner often focuses on how the white characters in the story—the children (Jason, Caddy, and Quentin) as well as their parents (Jason and the unnamed mother)—view her. Pick any two of these white characters and discuss how their dialogue reveals their thoughts about Nancy or African Americans in general. For each of the two characters, include at least two examples of something they say to support your characterization of them.

   Jason, the youngest child, is extremely aware of racial differences, although he also seems to need to be taught to tell the difference. For example, Jason identifies several characters by race and then asks, "Are you a nigger, Nancy?" (343). He is very self-involved and seems unable to see Nancy is in trouble. When she urges the children to stay so they can have fun, Jason says, "I didn't have fun . . . You hurt me. You put smoke in my eyes. I'm going to tell" (350). He blames her for something that wasn't directly her fault and cares only about himself.

   Caddy uses racist expressions casually as she teases her brother, "You were scairder than Frony. You were scairder than T.P. even. Scairder than niggers" (340). Like her brother Jason, she seems self-involved and only focused on her own enjoyment. When Nancy tries to get them to stay at her place, Caddy says, "We ought to go . . . Unless we have a lot of fun" (347). She uses Nancy for her entertainment.

   Quentin, the narrator, is quieter than the others. He seems to express the same self-involvement as his siblings as he asks his father, "Who will do our washing now?" (352). Whereas Nancy is scared she will die, Quentin is only curious about who will take care of their laundry if she cannot do it.

   Jason, the father, seems the most concerned about Nancy, but ultimately he minimizes her fears. He tries to be helpful at first when he volunteers to ease Nancy's fears by accompanying her home: "I am going to walk down the lane with Nancy" (339). By the end, he also expresses doubt about her worries as he assures her that she will live through the night and says that "[she]'ll be the first thing I'll see in the kitchen tomorrow morning" (351).

   The mother is callous and sees herself as suffering because of the attention her husband is giving to Nancy. She asks him questions such as "Is her safety more precious to you than mine" (339) and "How much longer is this going on? I to be left alone in this big house while you take home a frightened Negro?" (341). She seems to think that she is more threatened being in a big house alone than Nancy is.

   Responses will vary depending on what evidence students use. Look for them to quote dialogue and draw logical conclusions from the evidence.

3. Eudora Welty's "Where Is the Voice Coming From?" tells a fictionalized story of the murder of Medgar Evers in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1963. She wrote the story immediately after the murder was committed and before the assailant (Byron de la Beckwith) was discovered.

   Drawing on at least two reputable sources, compose a paragraph about the historical facts of Evers's murder. Then, write one or two paragraphs reflecting on the difference between learning

about this event through historical research and experiencing it through a story written from the perspective of the murderer.

For historical research, you may want to consult the following resources:

"White Supremacist Convicted of Killing Medgar Evers"

"Medgar Evers"

(All online resources can be accessed at oakmeadow.com/curriculum-links.)

In the student's first paragraph, look for an accurate summary of the historical event. (See the suggested websites above for more information.)

In the next paragraph(s), look for a reflection on the different experiences between reading fiction and nonfiction. Answers will vary, but students may note that the story allows them to get inside the perspective of another person instead of just learning about the facts. This can help them better understand the killer's motive and, consequently, examine his extreme intolerance.

4. In addition to shedding light on a historical event, "Where Is the Voice Coming From?" showcases Welty's mastery as a writer. How does Welty use descriptive details to create the impression of a vivid character?

   Choose three details and explain how they shaped your understanding of the character and the events described in the story. Present your answer in the form of a chart, such as the one shown below—an example is given that you can use as a model.

Descriptive Detail	**Impression of Character**
Protagonist looks at the victim's green yard and thinks, "I bet my wife would hate to pay her water bill" (308).	This points to his family's poverty and suggests his envy of people who have more.

Answers will vary depending on what details students choose. Look for students to cite specific details and to explain how those details help build their understanding of the protagonist.

5. Read over the ideas you generated in the previous lesson when brainstorming about your personal essay on intolerance and oppression. Circle the main ideas that you want to include. Using these ideas as a starting point, create an outline that organizes your ideas into sections (paragraphs) that focus on the main points you will address. Your essay will be three or four pages, so you will want to identify several main ideas to explore. (Feel free to use the outline template in the appendix to help organize your main ideas and supporting details.)

   Add specific details you will use as you explore each main idea. For each paragraph, consider what topic you will cover and what details you will use to support it. For instance, if you have three main ideas, you might write two or three paragraphs for each main idea. Identifying the sequence of topics and details in your outline will help you create a solid structure for your essay. Your outline should be quite detailed.

   The student's ideas about intolerance and oppression should be organized into a logical order in their outline, and specific details should be included under each main idea. Assess whether the student has sufficient ideas and details for a three- or four-page paper.

SHARE YOUR WORK

When you have completed your work, share it with your teacher. Below is a list of assignments to help you organize your work submission:

- Analysis of a story's opening paragraphs
- Evidence of how dialogue is used to reveal values and beliefs
- Research of the historical setting of Welty's story and comparison of fictional and nonfictional accounts
- Explanation of revealing character details
- Detailed outline for your essay

If you have any questions about the lesson content, which assignments to complete, or how to share your work, contact your teacher.

Lesson

23 Complications

Learning Objectives

In this lesson, you will:

- Interpret a text in terms of what is explicitly stated and what is meant.
- Write an argument in support of a claim using reasoning and evidence.
- Produce coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style match the task, purpose, and audience.

ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST

- ☐ Read the lesson introduction.
- ☐ Read chapters 4–6 in *The Great Gatsby*.
- ☐ Interpret a passage from the story.
- ☐ Write an argument regarding the significance of a passage in the story.
- ☐ Choose one:

  Describe a character using imagery or figurative language.

  Describe a character using visual images.

Lesson Introduction

As Gatsby leans on his friends to bring Daisy into his sphere, the extent of his contrived existence becomes clearer. All his aspirations were woven tightly around his dream of Daisy. His house, parties, and entire persona were built to attract her to him, and when Daisy comes to his house, he is eager to show off all that he has created:

> He hadn't once ceased looking at Daisy, and I think he revalued everything in his house according to the measure of response It drew from her well-loved eyes. Sometimes, too, he stared around at his possessions in a dazed way, as though in her actual and astounding presence none of it was any longer real. (91)

Yet Gatsby is not satisfied, and his driving desire to recreate the past causes complications for everyone.

Reading Assignments

1. Read chapters 4–6 in *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald (61–113).

Vocabulary

The author uses a varied and complex vocabulary. Here are some words that may be unfamiliar to you.

- punctilious: adj. meticulous; showing great attention to detail.
- girder: n. a strong horizontal beam used as a main support in building.
- benediction: n. a blessing.
- postern: n. a small rear gate.
- laudable: adj. commendable; worthy of praise.
- notoriety: n. the quality or state of being widely and unfavorably known.
- meretricious: adj. outwardly attractive but inwardly worthless; false.
- ingratiate: v. to gain favor or acceptance by flattery or obsequiousness.

You are encouraged to look up words you don't know to expand your vocabulary and gain a greater understanding of the text.

Writing Assignments

1. In this assignment, you'll continue your analysis of the author's use of language. Choose one of the following passages and write your own interpretation. What is the author expressing that goes beyond the literal or figurative meaning? Use the prompts below each quote to guide your interpretive response, and write at least one paragraph for the quote you choose.

   As an exercise in interpreting text, students will come up with different answers than those given below, which provide background information and sample interpretations to help you assess your student's response.

   a. "His correctness grew on him as we neared the city" (68).

      How did "his correctness" manifest? Have you ever experienced or witnessed this type of shift from informality to formality? Why do you think Gatsby's demeanor changed as they neared the city? Interpret this statement within the context of the scene and in terms of plot and/or character development.

      In this passage, Gatsby is concealing the favor he wants from Nick, saying only that Jordan Baker will speak on his behalf. This, naturally, annoys Nick not only because of the secrecy but also because Nick intended to spend time with Jordan to further their own relationship, not to talk about Gatsby. Students might surmise that after opening up to Nick earlier in the scene (because, as Gatsby says, "I didn't want you to think I was just some nobody"), Gatsby becomes uncommunicative to put space between them

again. This cloak of "correctness" is the normal armor Gatsby wears to set himself apart from others.

b. "He came alive to me, delivered suddenly from the womb of his purposeless splendor" (78).

How did Gatsby "come alive"? Have you ever experienced a similar change in how you perceive someone? What happened to bring about this change in Nick's perception of Gatsby? Interpret this statement within the context of the scene and in terms of plot and/or character development.

It is Jordan's revelation that Gatsby had purchased his mansion just so that he could see Daisy's house across the bay that brings about this new revelation for Nick. Previously, Nick had only seen Gatsby as "purposeless," despite the ostentatious splendor of his lifestyle. Suddenly, Nick understands that Gatsby has hidden depths.

c. "His count of enchanted objects had diminished by one" (93).

What object is diminished? Why do people tend to imbue objects with extraordinary significance? Does it make Gatsby seem more human or more eccentric in your eyes? Why?

Once Gatsby and Daisy meet, the significance of the green light at the end of her dock ceases to hold any magic for him; she is no longer out of his reach. People commonly attach special significance to certain objects—such as mementos, gifts from a loved one, or family heirlooms—as a way to extend a memory or relationship. Doing so makes Gatsby seem more human; he's just a man with hopes, flaws, and emotions that are easy to identify with. Any answer is acceptable as long as the student provides reasoning for their opinion.

d. "The truth was that Jay Gatsby of West Egg, Long Island, sprang from his Platonic conception of himself. He was a song of God—a phrase which, if it means anything, means just that—and he must be about His Father's business, the service of a vast, vulgar, and meretricious beauty." (98)

What is this Platonic (in reference to Plato) sense of self? If this is how Gatsby sees himself, do his actions align with this image?

It is likely that the author was referring to the Platonic sense of self as one's ideal self. Gatsby has a kind of transcendent sense of self where he believes his intentions to achieve an ideal life of beauty and glory are pure and just. While this may accurately describe how Gatsby sees himself, his methods of achieving his goals fall far short of being ideal, just, or godly.

e. "For a while these reveries provided an outlet for his imagination; they were a satisfactory hint of the unreality of reality, a promise that the rock of the world was founded securely on a fairy's wing." (99)

Explain this in your own words within the context of the story and Gatsby's later life.

This passage describes how Gatsby—at that time still James Gatz—dreamed of a better life, one filled with wild riches. These "fancies" spun out by his imagination promised

a world built on magical dreams. Some readers might speculate that this unreal dream of a future reality, while eminently satisfying to his young self, was always going to be a fragile existence that could be toppled at any time. If Gatsby knew all along that the life he was building was not "real," he nevertheless intended to pursue it with all his might. Attaining this dream of future glory was more important to him than its permanence.

2. Using your rhetorical skills, you will state a claim related to a passage from the story, provide reasoning to support your claim, and engage your audience by appealing to their emotions. Complete each of the steps below.

    - Select a phrase, sentence, or longer passage from the reading that you judge to be significant to the plot or characters.
    - Explain the context of the passage.
    - State a claim as to its significance.
    - Defend your claim with reasoning and by referencing specific events from the story.
    - Support your argument with an example that appeals to your audience's emotions by connecting with something they can relate to. (Remember *pathos* from the tools of rhetoric? See the introduction in the previous lesson.)

    Here is an example that you can use as a model (or you can write your response in one or two well-organized paragraphs):

    Quote:

    "His count of enchanted objects had diminished by one" (93).

    Context:

    Once Daisy and Gatsby meet, the significance of the green light at the end of her dock ceases to hold any magic for him because she is no longer out of his reach.

    Claim:

    This is a turning point in Gatsby's life.

    Reasoning to support the claim:

    Gatsby had been building his entire life on trying to impress Daisy and be worthy (in his eyes) of her love and joining her social circle. By devoting all his energies to this pursuit, he found meaning in his life. Once he and Daisy were reunited, the "object" (the green light at the end of her dock) ceased to have special meaning for him. This is a turning point in Gatsby's life because it signifies the beginning of the end for Gatsby. Suddenly, the single-minded goal that has been the focus of his life was achieved.

    Example that appeals to the audience's emotions:

    If Gatsby has achieved his lifelong dream, what will define him now? Have you ever wanted something so badly that it was all you could think about, but then when you got it,

it didn't seem so special anymore? Ultimately, this is how Gatsby feels—his dream was more exciting and more real to him than reality.

Students will choose a passage, put it into context, and then make a claim relating to its significance in terms of the plot or character development. The goal is for students to strengthen their argument by using relevant examples to help the audience emotionally connect with the claim. They can use the example above as a model or write one or two well-organized paragraphs.

While students are likely to have experience with the first four elements of the assignment, incorporating an emotional appeal might be a new rhetorical skill for them. There are many ways that students can engage the audience's empathetic response to their claim. Using hypothetical scenarios ("What would you do if . . . ?"), common experiences (family traditions, holidays, childhood games, etc.), stories and imagination ("Imagine there was a . . ."), and referencing beliefs and values ("Anyone who cared about _____ would feel this way") are all strategies to appeal to the audience. Look for how the students connect their claim to something the audience can relate to.

3. Fitzgerald uses striking imagery to convey elements of the setting, tone, characters, and plot. Choose one of the following assignments to explore the use of imagery.

   a. Write an original passage that uses imagery or other figurative language to describe one of the characters in the story. Your description can be related to their sense of self, how they present themselves to the world, or something that they have experienced. Write one paragraph.

      This assignment focuses on figurative language. Fitzgerald's work is full of figurative language, so students should have a clear understanding of the varied techniques they can use, such as metaphors, similes, analogies, anthropomorphism, and imagery. Figurative language should clearly relate to the subject. For instance, if describing a character's frivolity, imagery that brings to mind something solid and unchanging (such as a mountain) wouldn't work well, but imagery related to flitting butterflies would.

   b. Imagery creates a visual picture in the reader's mind. Use visual images—artwork (well-known works or your own), sketches, photographs, graphics, etc.—to describe a character, episode, theme, relationship, etc., from the story. Write a brief description of the significance of the images you chose.

      In using visual imagery instead of words, students will still need to match the imagery to the subject matter. For instance, a frivolous character might be pictured as a wildly decorated hat with a riot of flowers and feathers but not as a cow lying down and chewing its cud. The visual interpretation should be evocative and relevant. Students will include a statement that explains the relevance of their art choices.

SHARE YOUR WORK

When you have completed your work, share it with your teacher. Below is a list of assignments to help you organize your work submission:

- Interpretation of a story excerpt

- Argument about the significance of a passage in the story
- Choice assignment (choose one):
    - Character description using imagery or figurative language
    - Character description using visual images

If you have any questions about the lesson content, which assignments to complete, or how to share your work, contact your teacher.

Appendix