

Using *Adventures in Literature*

A Note to the Teacher

We believe that teaching English through literature is the most effective method for learning a new language. We also believe that literature in general has much to teach us all and that the sooner students are exposed to the great writers and stories, the sooner they become active members of a global community.

In this text we have adapted short stories into dialogue form. We chose dialogues as a medium for students to explore literature because we have found that students feel comfortable while role-playing in a new language. In our experience as ESL teachers in a variety of settings, we have seen our students respond enthusiastically to using dialogues as a form of introduction to literature, which can sometimes be daunting. Through the use of dialogues, though, students become actively involved and engaged in the learning process and experience opportunities for creativity.

Today, many school curricula include an emphasis on literature. This textbook will introduce students to stories that are diverse, interesting, and thought-provoking. At the same time, students will learn to analyze and appreciate the literary elements of each story. A variety of language-developing activities are included in each unit—from practicing vocabulary/idioms and journal writing to critical-thinking and group/pair work.

The stories we chose to adapt in this text are representative of five high-interest themes: **courage, secrets, mystery, personal relationships, and fantasy**. Some are humorous, others romantic; many are ironic, and all expose students to the exciting world of literature. Most of the stories were written by well-known authors—such as Kate Chopin, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, O. Henry, and Washington Irving. We have also added some wonderful stories by lesser-known writers like Roger Burlingame and Mona Gardner. We encourage more ambitious students to read the original versions of the stories or pursue other stories or even novels by the authors they'll be introduced to here.

The following suggestions will help you use this text effectively. You may choose to use the chapters in the order in which they appear or select them according to the needs and interests of your students.

Each chapter opens with an illustration that sets the scene for the upcoming story. You may want to use this for schema-building or have students predict what the story will be about.

Getting Ready to Read is a pre-reading activity that is intended to stimulate interest in the story by asking questions and using the personal knowledge of students.

The **Vocabulary Preview** highlights a few vocabulary words (about five) that occur in the story. First, they appear in a paragraph (in context), and then they are part of a cloze exercise to give the student some practice seeing them in use and using them.

Journal Writing is another opportunity for students to reflect and write on a topic related to the reading.

We offer **Idioms and Expressions** that appear in the story; we include an exercise where students try to find the idioms used in context.

Meet the Author precedes the story. Here, students find out about the author in a way that will be helpful when discussing the story. The names of other well-known or high-interest works by the author are provided as well. These could be extension activities or challenging new readings for more advanced students.

The Story may be read in small groups or individually, or as a class. If read in a group, roles may be interchanged, and different interpretations should be encouraged. The general intention is to have students feel comfortable reading aloud and sharing the experience with classmates. Our experience has been that students enjoy reading aloud, and some enjoy “pretending” to be the characters. It is a perfect opportunity for students to work with other students they may not know well. The dialogues do not have to be performed as plays, but some groups may choose to read their parts in front of the class. Note that vocabulary items that are important to understanding the reading but that are not otherwise high-frequency words/phrases are glossed.

Understanding the Story provides comprehension questions and offers students the ability to check their understanding of the story. Students should respond in writing and discuss with a partner.

Reading between the Lines enables the student to use deductive reasoning to understand inferences in the story. This is an important skill for students to acquire in preparation for more advanced reading and studying in English. Explain to students what “reading between the lines” means and about implied meanings.

Practicing Vocabulary gives additional practice using *targeted* vocabulary from the story. The exercises are varied from chapter to chapter to avoid monotony. Word form charts are included to expand students’ vocabulary. The word form charts do not include every possible form—just those students at this level may encounter in their academic work. Appendix D lists all the vocabulary items practiced/taught in the book.

Learning New Skills allows students to explore characterizations, cause and effect, critical thinking, summarizing, and many other skills important to academic success.

Talking about the Story presents questions about the story and its characters for students to discuss with a partner or in a small group. This enables students to practice new vocabulary and improve their understanding of the story.

Writing about the Story provides creative ideas for short paragraphs or essays related to the topic of the story; they can be written in class or assigned for homework.

Grammar Review reinforces an element of grammar with contextual examples from the story. The exercises related to the grammar use the context as well. The explanations are intended for in-class instruction, but the exercises may be assigned for homework. The grammar lesson may be used to introduce or supplement a unit in a grammar text. The **Irregular Verbs** section reviews an important part of grammar, one in which students can always use more practice.

Literary Elements of the Story focuses on a few of the key literary elements. The elements are provided for the first two stories; after that, students are asked to fill in the information based on their understanding of the story. By analyzing the elements of a story in dialogue form, students develop insight as readers, and this promotes self-confidence and prompts students to explore literature on their own.

End-of-Part Activities appear at the end of each part (after three chapters); these incorporate the theme of the stories and are designed to be interactive, creative, and fun!

An answer key is available on the University of Michigan Press website: www.press.umich.edu/esl/tm.

You are about to experience an exciting way to teach English. You will find your students responding enthusiastically to the adapted literature in this text. Students relax and enjoy learning English through dialogues that allow them to inhabit a character's role. Even shy students "get into" the roles and feel less intimidated by English.

We all know that students become more involved in language when it is learned in context. The pre-reading exercises create interest in the stories. The vocabulary words and idioms are learned in context, and the post-reading exercises provide additional reinforcement of skills. We have geared the language to the intermediate student and have maintained the spirit of the original literature. The 15 readings are arranged by themes that are tied together at the end of each chapter with a special class activity.

You and your students will learn while enjoying yourselves. Your own creative ideas may be used to supplement the text. For example, you may want to add props and costumes. You may decide to videotape presentations and even invite other classes to observe a "production." Then again, you may prefer to have students simply read the stories. The choice is yours. The main idea is to expose your students to literature and to whet their interest in exploring the rich language that awaits them.

To the Student

Our students over the years have enjoyed learning English by reading short stories. From these stories they've explored new vocabulary; reviewed grammar and idioms; and developed reading, writing, and speaking skills. We thought it would be fun for students to read short stories in dialogue form. The stories we chose are by authors from around the world.

You can read these stories in small groups and work on the exercises with your classmates. Some of the stories are funny and some are sad, but you will learn from all of them. The grammar, vocabulary, writing exercises, and discussion topics will develop your English skills and help you feel more comfortable with the language.

We also hope you will continue to explore the world of literature by reading other stories by the authors in this book.