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The teaching of the novel in high school

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

THE TEACHING OF THE NOVEL IN HIGH SCHOOL

Submitted by

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The Teaching of the Novel in High-School

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- d. She should know the characteristics of adolescence.
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- f. She should understand the best methods of teaching a class how to study a novel, and she should be certain that these methods are in line with the most recent developments in psychology.

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1. Reasons for the selection of "Ivanhoe."

(a) It appeals to the pupils' love of adventure and of romance.

(b) It satisfies the pupils' love of justice.

2. Aims in studying "Ivanhoe."

(a) The approach to the study of "Ivanhoe" should be motivated so that pupils will understand why they are studying it.

(b) The study of "Ivanhoe" should help pupils form economical habits of study.

(1) How the factors of study can be made use of.

(c) The study of "Ivanhoe" should lead to an appreciation of literature.

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(ii) Interesting discussion of the subject matter may prove helpful.

(iii) Pictures and illustrations often are invaluable aids.

(iv) Creative work suggested by the novel studied may help pupils to enjoy the book.

(v) "Ivanhoe" may lead to the enjoyment of other novels by Scott, and also to the appreciation of other works of literature.

b. George Eliot's "Silas Marner," a typical novel of the Sophomore year.

1. Reasons why "Silas Marner" is a good choice for Sophomores.

(a) They would, as a whole, enjoy tracing the development of character.

(b) They would enjoy discussing George Eliot's philosophy of life.

(c) They would appreciate the excellent characterizations and interesting incidents.

2. Aims in studying "Silas Marner."

(a) How the approach could be motivated.

(b) The study of "Silas Marner" should foster economical habits of study.

(1) More intensive use could be made of the factors of study than in the Freshman year.

(c) The study of "Silas Marner" should help pupils to enjoy good literature.

(1) Various methods of arousing appreciation.

(i) The approach to the first chapter.

(ii) Pupils should be expected to notice passages which show the exceptional skill of George Eliot.

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c. Nathaniel Hawthorne's "The House of the Seven Gables" a typical novel of the Junior year.

1. Reasons why "The House of the Seven Gables" is suitable for Juniors.

- (a) The novel is difficult enough to challenge their best powers.
- (b) Local history is usually interesting to pupils of this age.

2. Aims in studying "The House of the Seven Gables."

- (a) The approach to the study of "The House of the Seven Gables" should be motivated.
- (b) Habits of study gained in previous years can be developed and strengthened by the study of this novel.
- (c) The pupils' powers of appreciation should be developed to such an extent by their study of literature that they will voluntarily bring to the attention of their classmates passages that appeal to them.
- (d) "The House of the Seven Gables" could be used as a stepping-stone to the appreciation of the works of other writers of the same period.

d. Charles Dickens's "A Tale of Two Cities" a typical novel of the Senior year.

- 1. Several reasons why this novel would appeal to Seniors.
 - (a) They are mature enough to appreciate the graphic account Dickens gives of the causes, progress and results of the French Revolution.
 - (b) They have had enough experience with life to appreciate the nobility of Carton's self-sacrifice.
- 2. Principal aims in the study of "A Tale of Two Cities."
 - (a) The motivation of the approach to the novel.

(b) Right methods of study should be continued.

(1) The application of the factors of study to
"A Tale of Two Cities."

(c) The teacher should attempt to make the pupils' appreciation more spontaneous and discriminating than it has been before.

III. Summary.

The Teaching of the Novel in High-School

I

The teaching of literature in the high-school has often been criticized as being vague and indefinite. It has been said that the teacher does not seem to know what her aims are, consequently the results pupils receive from their work are not commensurate with the time and labor they expend. The teaching of the novel has come in for its full share of criticism; for that reason the teacher who is using it as a basis for class-work should set certain definite aims for herself and adhere to them.

Among the most important of these aims is the arousing of appreciation for good literature. When a class is reading a novel the teacher should make the study of the novel a stepping stone to the enjoyment of good books. Pupils frequently have the idea that any book which is to be studied must necessarily be dull and uninteresting. The teacher must seek to make the book so vital that pupils will see why it is worth while, and consequently will enjoy it.

There are various ways of arousing appreciation. One of these is the taking of a vicarious attitude by the teacher. If she looks at the novel from the pupils' point of view it will keep her from being too analytical in her treatment of it. The analytical treatment of the novel has been altogether too widespread, and even at present when this method is considered wrong because it entirely ignores the pupils' tastes there is still grave danger in the teacher's losing herself in the multiplicity of the details of the book the class is studying. Nothing has

been so deadening to the appreciation of pupils as the dissecting of a piece of literature. If the teacher takes the pupils' point of view she will realize what they are likely to enjoy. Pupils, for example, get tired of a surfeit of beauty, consequently the teacher could on one day call their attention to a bit of well-developed characterization, and on another day she could bring them to see the gorgeous color glowing in a fine word painting.

After the teacher has suggested to the pupils that they should read with discrimination and should continually be trying to find out why the book studied is worth-while, she should gradually get them into the habit of expressing their own opinions about the novel. The teacher should impress upon them that they should be absolutely sincere in what they say. She could ask the class at the beginning of the period whether any of them found anything particularly worth-while while they were preparing their lesson, and she should make them realize that she will not be satisfied if they merely state that they liked a certain passage. The pupils should understand that they are expected to substantiate all of their appreciations. The teacher could spend about five or ten minutes on work of this kind at the beginning of the hour; if, however, she finds that pupils have a tendency to carry the matter too far she could omit the work from time to time.

Another method of arousing appreciation is by having pupils do creative¹ work. For example, while studying a novel, younger classes could weave an incident of their own imagining

¹Strayer, "A Brief Course in the Teaching Process" page 87

about one of the characters in the book, or they could use the setting, suggested by the author whose book they are studying, as a background for a character they have created. Older classes who understand more about the technique of the novel, could as a class plan out a simple novel. All the members of the class, after they have talked over the subject they have chosen could write what they consider a good outline for the novel decided upon. The best outline could be chosen as a basis for the work, and this outline could be supplemented by suggestions from the other outlines. The various members of the class could then take turns in writing a chapter. The work suggested is very stimulating for a class, because it makes them realize some of the problems of an author. If they have themselves done work which is somewhat in a line with what he has done, they will be in a position to appreciate his work.

Frequently a teacher can awaken an interest and appreciation for good literature in the hearts of her pupils by reading them some especially fine passages from another book written by the author of the book they are studying. Or she can tell them some interesting incident from such a book which she knows will appeal to them. Sometimes an idea in the novel the class is studying will suggest a book containing a similar thought, and this the teacher can bring to the notice of the class, and thus arouse their interest in other works of literature.

If the teacher makes use of the methods of awakening appreciation which have been discussed pupils will gradually acquire sound criteria of literary judgment, and they will be

able to appreciate good literature when they read it. They will, perhaps unconsciously, carry over the norms acquired in the classroom to the books they read which are not prescribed by the school. If the books do not measure up to the standards the pupils have formed, they will be able to understand where the weakness lies and why the books do not give them satisfaction.

Not only should pupils learn how to enjoy and appreciate good literature from their study of the novel, but if they go about their work in the right way, they will learn economical and systematic methods of doing their studying. The eight factors of study which McKurry mentions in his book, "How to Study and Teaching How to Study," are very usable and can be applied to the study of the novel with very good results.

Making provision for specific purposes is the first of the eight factors mentioned. It should be considered first, when the teacher is taking up a novel with a class because pupils will work aimlessly if you do not have certain definite goals in mind. They cannot be expected to get anywhere if they do not know where they are going, and the zest with which they do their work will be increased many times if they realize what their aims are.

When pupils are studying the novel it is a good plan to discuss with them what they expect to get from the novel in question. This could be done after they have read the first two or three chapters because they will then have an idea of what the book treats. They could write out the questions which they expect the book to answer, they could be discussed in class, and

the best ones could be decided upon by the pupils and put into their notebooks. The aims should be kept in mind while the novel is being studied, and when a question comes up for discussion the teacher should expect the class to be able to classify it under its proper heading. This method of procedure will get the pupils into the habit of realizing that in order to make good progress in any study it is necessary to have certain definite aims.

Through the study of the novel, pupils should be brought to realize that it is often not possible to get at an author's meaning unless they frequently supplement the thought. In order to make the thought of the author clear, his words should frequently be elucidated and translated into the experience of the pupils. The pupils themselves should be stimulated to interpret passages which may be ambiguous or difficult, and the teacher should be ready to give them guidance when they need it. When a class, for example, are beginning "A Tale of Two Cities" the teacher can show the class that it is absolutely necessary to supplement the thought of the paradoxical first paragraph, otherwise they will have only a vague idea of the author's meaning. After this is done under the helpful guidance of the teacher, pupils will realize that it would have been impossible to understand the seeming contradictions of the author if they have not supplied some facts from history. Pupils should get into the habit of approaching whatever they are studying by supplementing the thoughts of the writer by means of their old experience. In this way they will make their new experience an integral part of themselves.

Pupils will quickly come to the realization, when they are studying a novel, that all the ideas that the author presents are not of equal value. It is important that the teacher should get the class into the habit of organizing the ideas of the writer. In a novel involving several plots as, for example, a novel of Dickens or Scott, pupils should learn to differentiate between the incidents belonging to the various plots, otherwise they will soon feel inextricably lost in the maze of incidents. Pupils should come to the realization that just as everything is not of equal importance in a novel, so in the various subjects they are studying, and in life itself, there are varying values. Everything must be organized so that it can be seen in its proper perspective. For that reason pupils should understand clearly that it is economical to be able to recognize those things that are important, and to be able to reorganize them so that they will come into proper relationship with their world.

Another factor of study which pupils have to make use of every day is judging of the worth of statements. It is impossible to go through life without exercising the judgment; if pupils are continually weighing the evidence while they are studying the novel they will form the habit of judging statements. This habit of carefully weighing the pros and cons will save them from many disappointments which result from hasty judgments.

The objection might be raised that the young students are too immature to judge the value of what they hear and read.

However, they should be encouraged to use their past experience as a basis for their judgment, and all high-school students, even the youngest, have a certain amount of experience they can make use of. The teacher should make clear to them that it is impossible for them to judge correctly those things that lie without the range of their experience. This should be an incentive for the pupils to widen and enrich their experiences.

When pupils are studying a novel there is ample opportunity for them to judge of the value of what they read. Definite questions to get them into the habit of judging the worth of statements should be given them. For example, they can be questioned about their opinions of the statements and conclusions of the writer of the novel. If the opinions of the pupils are faulty, the teacher should show them wherein they have failed to judge correctly.

Memorizing is no longer considered so important a factor of study as it was formerly, but it is still considered important enough to be included under the factors of study. If pupils have any memorizing to do, they should be shown by the teacher that if they do it in the right way they will accomplish much more in a short time than they would if they went about the work in the wrong way. If, for example, a class is asked to memorize George Eliot's definition of a lady, the pupils should first read over the definition and then discuss the meaning of it. After that they should judge of the value of what she has said and square it up with their own experience. Then they should notice the sequence of ideas. After they have done all this, the actual memorizing will take only a small amount of time, because

the subject matter was assimilated before the memorizing was done.

A workman does not consider himself capable unless he can use his tools. Pupils should have a similar feeling in regard to the knowledge they acquire; they should feel that learning is of little worth to them unless they can make use of it. If pupils are studying something which it seems to them they will never need they will naturally not be interested in it. For that reason, teachers should motivate all their work, for only by doing so will it become apparent to pupils how they can use their knowledge.

One of the most important means of using the knowledge acquired in the study of the novel is to have it contribute to the building of a philosophy of life. It has been argued that if the ethical value of a book is discussed in a class-room it loses its potency. However, if the teacher believe this and continually, in every novel studied, makes it a point never to discuss with the pupils the moral appeal of the book, it will soon seem evident to the pupils that the teacher does not consider that important enough for discussion. In fact, the class will soon come to the conclusion that the intellectual appeal of the novel is of far greater value than the spiritual or ethical. Surely, they will be justified in coming to this conclusion, because of the emphasis that is placed on the intellectual elements of the book.

It has also been said that if the teacher discusses the moral lesson of a book with her pupils there is danger of

her preaching to the class. If, however, she lets the class discuss the problem, and she only guides the discussion, then there will be little time for her to assume the role of preacher.

It is interesting to note what Mr. Charles S. Thomas says in his book "The Teaching of English in the Secondary Schools" concerning the teaching of ethical ideals. He makes the following interesting statements: "If an opponent argues that the moral is and should be self-revealing, our reply is that oftentimes the moral message needs the same kind of elucidation and exposure that the intellectual message needs.... Moreover, allegiance to these ideals that keep society unified needs repeated enforcements, and such discussions the study of fiction frequently invites."¹

The discussions of the moral value of a novel should be made so vital that pupils will be stimulated by them to have high ideals and then to make their lives of value to their fellowmen. Nothing is more important for pupils of high-school age to get from their study of the novel than sound ethical judgments, and each novel that they read should contribute its share toward helping them build up a usable philosophy. Surely, if the lofty ideals of a writer are incorporated into the lives of pupils and help them to live sanely and worthily, that is one important way in which ideas can be used. If pupils form the habit of regarding the ideas which they garner in the classroom as being dynamic and not static they will see that the ultimate test of the knowledge they acquire is its usability.

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If pupils are brought to the realization that the content of knowledge is continually changing they will understand why another of the factors of study is making provision for a tentative attitude toward knowledge. They will see that it is impossible for people to progress who are unwilling to change their ideas, and they will realize how utterly absurd it is for people to think that because the ideas they hold seem to square up correctly with their experience at one time that is a proof that they will always be right.

The disastrous results of holding a fixed attitude toward ideas can be vividly brought to their attention when they study "A Tale of Two Cities." The pupils can see that if the French nobles had not believed that society must remain as it was, and that if they had not held to the conviction that because certain rights and privileges seemed to be in their possession, they would always be theirs, they would have taken a different attitude toward the common people, and consequently there would probably have been no Revolution.

Pupils should realize that not only do nations reap the evil results of fixed attitudes, but individuals too are affected in the same manner. This can be vividly brought home to the pupils when they are studying the character of the old squire in "Silas Marner." They can see that if he had not clung so tenaciously to his ideas of parental authority, he would have given his sons oversight of part of his estate. Godfrey would then have had something worth while to take up his mind, and he would have been kept out of mischief. Pupils

can compare the squire with characters of a like nature in literature, for example, with some of the people in "Milestones" or with the inhabitants of Hamlin in Josephine Preston Peabody's "The Piper." Thus they can see the bad effect of an ultra-conservative point of view, and they can see how wrong it is for nations and individuals to hold a fixed attitude toward ideas.

The last factor of study is making provision for individuality. McMurry believes that the age of self-depreciation has passed and that the watch words of modern education are "self-activity, self-expression, self-development, self-reliance, self-control."¹ Since the emphasis is placed on the self at the present time, education must provide for the individuality of pupils.

In the study of the novel there is ample opportunity for pupils to develop their individuality. Of course, if the teacher does most of the talking, and superimposes her ideas upon the pupils, they will passively accept what she offers them. If the teacher takes this attitude, she is suppressing the individuality of her pupils. They should be encouraged to express their own ideas about the novel they are studying, and the teacher should seriously consider the pupils' opinions even if they are crudely expressed. If the teacher treats these ideas as if they are not worthy of her consideration, pupils will be very much averse to voicing their sentiments. The teacher should frequently ask the pupils what they think of a certain character or a situation, and if they have good ideas they should be commended for them. This will help pupils to develop

¹"How to Study and Teaching How to Study" page 246

faith in themselves, and they will thus get into the habit of realizing that in order to get through life successfully they must have confidence in themselves.

When the teacher is presenting the novel to a class she should stimulate them to make constant use of the eight factors of study, not because of the old idea of formal discipline which is gradually being discarded because it does not stand on a firm foundation, but for the reason that if pupils wish to learn economically they will make use of the habits, methods of attack, ideals and confidence they gain through study to facilitate their learning process.

II

In "The Teaching of English" by Carpenter, Baker and Scott, the first qualification of the successful teacher of English is mentioned as being an abounding love for the teaching of the subject. The authors say, "The teacher who has not a passion and an aptitude for imparting instruction in English, who does not feel that it is the great thing in life to live for, and a thing, if necessary, to die for, who does not realize at every moment of his class-room work that he is performing the special function for which he was fore-ordained from the foundation of the world,--such a teacher cannot profit greatly by any course of training, however ingeniously devised or however thoroughly applied."¹

When a teacher is presenting a novel to the class, she should let the pupils realize her passion for teaching it to

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them, for it is only by the fire of her enthusiasm that she can kindle a life-giving flame in their hearts. She must feel intensely the consuming desire of the author to make truth and beauty known among men, and she must be able to follow him to the "Mount of Vision," and there with him stand face to face with the glory of the divine realities. These she must interpret to the pupils, and like the prophets of old, she must believe ardently and fervently in the mighty and everlasting power of her message, and be filled with the lofty desire to lead her pupils to mental and spiritual heights through their study of great and inspired novels.

The teacher's enthusiasm for teaching these novels must be built on the firm foundation of good character. No man or woman ever inspired others who was not an exponent of the ideas he sought to disseminate. If the teacher wishes, for example, to enforce any of the great moral lessons which the novels teach, the teacher must see to it that she herself lives out these great principles. If her life does not bear out what she claims to believe in the classroom, she cannot hope to have a lasting influence for good. As Langland wrote, centuries ago, in "Piers Plowman," "If golde ruste, what will iron do?"

Wide scholarship is very necessary for the teacher who wishes to teach the novel successfully. She should know the Greek and Latin classics because she should know the sources of literature. She ought to have a general knowledge of European literature, and she should know French and German

literature from first-hand study. If a teacher has a good background she can do much to broaden the mental horizon of her pupils, and she can make them feel that the present and the past, the near and the far, are their mental and spiritual heritage.

It is, of course, self-evident that the teacher who wishes to make the study of the novel vital to her classes must have read extensively in English and American literature, and must know the histories of these two literatures. Otherwise it will be impossible for her to make scholarly comparisons between novels, and to lead her classes to appreciate the development of the novel.

In addition to a wide knowledge of literature, the teacher must know the characteristics of the adolescent age, for if she does not know what feelings and emotions to appeal to in her pupils, and how to get the best response from them, she may let slip many an opportunity for making lasting impressions upon them. In the teaching of the novel the teacher has unparalleled opportunities to appeal to the pupil's newly awakened interest and zest in life, his love of beauty, and his admiration for high ideals, altruism and self-sacrifice. If she bears these characteristics in mind while she is presenting the novel to the class, she can give them the highest ideals of the noblest thinkers in the field of the novel, and thus give them an ethical basis for helpful living.

Pyle in his book, "The Psychology of Learning" makes some interesting statements about the ideals of adolescence. He says, "During the high school period, which covers roughly the

period of adolescence, boys and girls acquire what, in most cases, prove to be their final life ideals. These ideals are copied from the acts of their fellows, primarily from their elders, and from the acts which they read about in literature and history. It seems probable that the attitudes and ideals which adolescents acquire are of far more importance to their lives afterwards than all the facts they acquire during this period....The character formation of these years is crucial and determining for the future. All educational forces that concern this period should take these facts into account. In careful, scientific fashion the sources of adolescent ideals should be determined and measured. Of great use here is literature. The high-school teacher of literature has^{*} great things within her power. The whole literature of the world, of all ages and of all countries, should be studied with reference to its value in bringing before adolescents the highest ideals of actions."¹

When the teacher is presenting the novel to her classes, she should bear in mind not only the general characteristics of the adolescent age, but also the aptitudes and capabilities of each individual class. The same novel cannot be studied in the same way by strong and weak classes; the work should be adapted to the ability, needs and interests of the pupils. In weaker classes the emphasis should be put almost entirely on appreciation. The teacher should make a special effort to reach these classes and try to make them thoroughly enjoy the novel they are reading. This is especially necessary because pupils of this

¹Pyle, "The Psychology of Learning" page 273

type will get a permanent distaste for good novels if the enjoyment of them is not fostered while they are in high-school. The result will be that they will never be able to enter the enchanted fields of literature and to commune there with thinkers, sages, and seers.

The classes of good mentality should be taught not only to appreciate a great novel, but also to look at it from other points of view. The work in setting, character study, plot, theme, style, and the personality and ideals of the author should be adapted to the age of the pupils, and should gain in depth as they advance from class to class in high-school.

The best methods of teaching the novel should be known to the teacher, and they should be in line with the most recent developments in psychology. The eight factors of study which McMurry discusses in "How to Study and Teaching How to Study" have already been mentioned in the general aims of the teacher in part I, and have been applied there to the study of the novel. However, the teacher should begin to lose faith in any one of these factors when the most recent developments in psychology prove its worthlessness. It is interesting to note that at present each of the factors of study mentioned by McMurry rests upon conclusions that W.D.Pyle arrives at in his recent book, "The Psychology of Education."

The first factor of study discussed is "Provision for specific purposes." What McMurry says in this chapter about a pupil's definite aims is practically identical with the following statements of Pyle. He writes, "If the pupil can be made to see the end sought by practice, learning is usually facilitated.

This facilitation comes through a better attention and more favorable disposition. Few people are willing to work blindly."¹

Concerning the importance of supplementing the thought of an author, which McMurry regards as the second factor of study, he says in brief:- "There are the meanings of words and phrases to be studied, references to be looked up, details to be filled in for the sake of vivid pictures, illustrations to be furnished out of one's own experience, inferences or corollaries to be drawn, questions to be raised and answered, and finally the bearings on life to be traced."²

In the chapter on Ideational Learning, the psychologist Pyle expresses an idea similar to the one just mentioned; he writes, "The child should always be asking the question, what does this thing mean? What is its true significance? What caused it? What will it cause? What is its relation to other things?"³

The organizing of ideas McMurry names as the third factor of study. Concerning the necessity of the organization of experience Pyle says, "Out of the raw material of the day's experience we reconstruct a useful world, the world that concerns us. The objective world is not lawless. The order in it determines the order of our ideas. But certain relations in the world are more important to us than others. We therefore reorganize the world by thinking over our experience in the relations that are important to us."⁴

¹Pyle, "The Psychology of Learning" page 61

²McMurry, "How to Study" page 77

³Pyle, "The Psychology of Education" page 105

⁴Ibid. page 100

Every day we are forced by the circumstances of life to judge of the worth of statements. McMurry says, for that reason he thinks pupils should be trained to discriminate between the important and the unimportant, the true and the false. Pyle makes the following statements concerning the use which the pupil should make of his judgment. He says, "The student should learn early to discriminate between fact and theory or opinion, and should always note carefully whether an author is giving facts, or the author's opinions, or the opinions of some one else."¹

Memorizing is the fifth factor of study discussed by McMurry. He says that correct methods are necessary to insure facility and speed in memorizing. Pyle arrives at the following conclusions:- "We can become immensely better at remembering not because we have changed the brain so that it retains simple impressions better than before; but through better attention, better and more repetition, better and more associations, we so organize our experience that it is much more lasting than if we got it by poorer methods."²

One of the great tests of the worth ideas have for us, McMurry says, is our ability to use them in our own lives. It should be one of the duties of the teacher to see that when pupils are introduced to new ideas, they make use of them. Pyle states that pupils learn better if they know how and when they are to use their ideas. He says, "Learning can be improved.... by giving the learner a knowledge of the use--immediate or delayed--that is to be made of the results of learning."³

Since there is a great temptation for people to regard

¹Ibid. page 122

²Ibid. page 109

³Ibid. page 64

knowledge as fixed and unchanging, McMurry makes holding a tentative attitude toward knowledge the seventh factor of study. He says, "What, then, is the proper attitude toward knowledge? While one should not be ultra-conservative, as though everything were finally settled, neither should one be ultra-radical, as though nothing were established....The ideal state of mind is illustrated by teachers in industrial pursuits, like manufacturing. They confidently make the fullest possible use of existing knowledge pertaining to their business, including the latest inventions, while they keep a very careful look-out for further improvements."¹ Pyle's ideas concerning the same subject are as follows:- "Education is conservative; it moulds us in the same mould. It must necessarily be organized and systematized. In the process there is danger that the child will lose originality and initiative."²

McMurry makes "provision for individuality" the eighth and last factor of study. He says, "Altogether, therefore, proper study is impossible without a self that is firm and energetic.....Provision for individuality is a very positive factor in study, one requiring much time and energy and on which all the others that have been mentioned are dependent."³ A few pages further on he continues by saying, "Remembering that one purpose of education is development of the self, he must ever be on his guard against being warped out of shape by others, and must therefore offer a certain normal resistance to everything that is presented to him."⁴

Pyle has some interesting statements on the same subject, he writes, "While the school is an institution of society

¹McMurry, "How to Study" page 277 ³Ibid. chapter X ⁴Ibid.

²Pyle, "The Psychology of Education" page 274

one of whose great functions has been to hand down to a new generation that which the old generations thought good, it must also be a means of progress by encouraging and stimulating individuality. In impressing the past on the young we must not destroy the future."¹

From the brief survey which has been made, it can be seen that the eight factors of study which McMurry mentions can be accepted because they are substantiated by the most recent investigations in the psychological field.

III

Sir Walter Scott's "Ivanhoe" is a good novel for Freshmen in the high-school to study. It appeals to the pupils' love of adventure, of mystery and of romance. The life of the out-of-doors in which young people delight is described with freshness and charm. The characters, which are vividly drawn, meet their just punishments or rewards, and this is particularly gratifying to young students whose sense of justice is strong.

When the teacher is taking up the study of "Ivanhoe," she should motivate the work. She could tell the pupils briefly the history of the English language, and mention the struggle between the Norman and the Saxon. She could lead them to see that they would be able to have a better appreciation for the English language if they knew something about this period in detail.

Then the teacher could ask the class how many of them knew anything about the Norman Conquest. The few items of in-

¹Pyle, "The Psychology of Learning" page 275

formation that she would get would probably be an incentive for the class to get information about the period. This could be done by assigning certain topics for oral composition or to a committee. Preliminary work of this kind will facilitate the work in the first few chapters which pupils usually find hard.

When the first few chapters have been read, pupils should decide upon their aims. Some of these might be to see if the life of the author throws any light on the story, to enjoy the novel, to learn something about the struggle between the Normans and the Saxons, to appreciate the value of tolerance, to abhor evil and to admire virtue.

"Ivanhoe" should not be analyzed, nevertheless, there will be ample opportunity for the pupils to supplement the thought of the writer. Unfamiliar terms and words should be translated into the experience of the pupils, and scenes should be visualized. Oftentimes the re-thinking of a scene or of dramatic action can best be done by dramatization.

Opportunity to organize the thought could be given at the beginning of each recitation. Pupils could then be called upon to give a brief summary of the preceding lesson,-- they should be taught to select the leading ideas and to grasp the few details they choose around them.

Ability to judge of the worth of statements could be given pupils by allowing them to compare the historical events mentioned by Scott with those of actual history. Selecting the main incidents which make up the story also gives pupils opportunity to exercise their judgment. This is the only work in the study of plot that needs to be done with Freshmen. Work in

characterization helps to develop judgment; this is within the scope of first-year students.

The ethical ideas Freshmen receive from the study of "Ivanhoe" should stand out in such bold relief that they would want to incorporate them into their own lives.

Pupils should be taught that they have not exhausted the study of the twelfth century when they have completed "Ivanhoe," but that they should hold an open-minded attitude toward new information they may find concerning it.

Provision for individuality can be given by allowing pupils to state their own ideas about the book. The teacher should not attempt to superimpose her ideas upon them.

While the teacher bears the above-mentioned factors of study in mind, she should not forget that her chief aim ought to be to have the pupils enjoy the book.

It is very necessary that the teacher should arouse the right emotional attitude in pupils when she is beginning the book.¹ This can be done not only by motivating the work as suggested, but also by reading the first chapter with the pupils, and by lively discussion arouse the interest of the pupils in the story. The first impression pupils get of a book is very important, for if they like a book when they are beginning the work in it, they will usually like it all the way through.

However, pupils may become lost in the maze of details in "Ivanhoe." Their enjoyment of the book will then wane, because they do not understand the connection between the various incidents. For that reason, the teacher would do well if she

¹ S.D.Strayer, "A Brief Course in the Teaching Process" p.81

would let the class discuss the chapters as they read the book. She would then become aware of their difficulties and would be able to help them over the hard places. During these discussions the teacher could call the attention of the class to certain passages in the book which are especially fine, and she could point out to them why these passages are good. In this way, she could interpret some of the noblest thoughts of the author to the pupils.

Frequently, pupils will enjoy a book better if they can see some good illustrations of the story. For that reason, if the teacher or the pupils have any illustrations of the life in England in the twelfth century they could be shown to the class. Thus the story would seem much more real to the pupils, and they would as a result get more enjoyment from the book.

Creative work, suggested by the book studied, often leads pupils to a better appreciation of it. In "Ivanhoe" certain scenes could be chosen by the class for dramatization, or certain interesting subjects might be chosen from the story as a basis for composition work.

While the teacher is presenting "Ivanhoe" to the class, she might mention other of Scott's works, whenever there was occasion to do so. She could tell them about some interesting event in another of his novels, which is suggested by some incident in "Ivanhoe." This might lead the class to enjoy other novels of Scott's. Or she might tell them, for example, about Alfred Noyes' "Sherwood" and read part or the whole of it to

them. In this way, the teacher could broaden their appreciation of good literature.

Sophomores are, generally speaking, more reflective than Freshmen, consequently George Eliot's "Silas Marner" would be a good book for them to read. They would enjoy tracing the development of character. They would see that no character is static, and that environment and companionship have a great influence on people. Pupils, as a whole, would appreciate George Eliot's philosophical reflections, and would enjoy talking them over to see how they tally with life. The excellent characterizations, and interesting incidents would appeal to their powers of appreciation, which are more discriminating than those of Freshmen.

The teacher could motivate the work by giving pupils a brief outline of the history of the novel, and showing them the part George Eliot played in the development of it. This would arouse their interest in her life, and in the kind of novel she produced.

When the pupils have finished reading the first two or three chapters, they could decide upon their aims. These might include the enjoyment of the story, the tracing of the incidents of the plot, and working out the relation to it of the sub-plot, the tracing of character development, and the comparison of George Eliot's philosophy with the pupils' own experience of life.

More emphasis should be put upon setting, characterization, plot, theme and the finding of the author's personality in her writing than in Freshman classes. Sophomores will be

interested in the terminology of the plot, and in being able to apply and use these new terms in the study of "Silas Marner." The factors of study which enter into the work just mentioned are supplementing the thought, organizing the ideas and using them.

Ample opportunity to judge of the worth of statements can be given the pupils in the discussion of George Eliot's philosophy of life, and in the study of her power in the use of the English language.

Pupils should, however, be warned not to consider their judgments final, but to hold a tentative attitude toward them.

The pupils' individuality can be developed by allowing them to think out for themselves answers to questions like the following:- What do you think of the influence of bad company upon people? Do you think the drawing of lots is a wise way to settle a matter? Do you think Godfrey Cass was right in having faith in chance? Does the author allow any characters to suffer for the misdeeds of others? How do you justify her attitude?

If pupils read the first chapter of "Silas Marner" without receiving any help from the teacher, they usually find it rather tiresome. Consequently, it would be a good idea for the teacher to read the opening chapter of the book with the class. Pupils can be started on the road to the enjoyment of the novel, if they are stimulated by the teacher to discuss and interpret what they read.

As they progress in their study of "Silas Marner" they should watch for thoughts that are beautifully expressed and passages that show exceptional skill in story-telling. They could have their attention called to certain technical devices that authors make use of, for example, foreshadowing and suspense, and they could see how skilfully George Eliot makes use of them in "Silas Marner."

When the pupils study the setting, the plot, and the characters in detail, they will realize how great an artist George Eliot was, and thus their appreciation of her skill and power will increase.

When pupils really enjoy "Silas Marner" it will not be difficult for the teacher to arouse their interest in her other novels. In order to show them that George Eliot is still appreciated and read with delight at the present time the teacher could, for example, read her class excerpts from the chapter entitled "George Eliot and Real Women" in Henry Van Dyke's "Companionable Books."

"The House of the Seven Gables," written by Nathaniel Hawthorne, is frequently used for study in Junior classes. Many of the author's artistic effects would be entirely lost on Freshmen, but should appeal to third-year pupils because their appreciation of beauty is more developed. They would also be in a position to enjoy Hawthorne's analytic method, his subtle sense of humor, and his symbolism. The work in "Silas Marner" should have prepared them for Hawthorne's minute characterizations and his careful study of the inner life of his characters. Juniors

frequently take an interest in local history, consequently they would enjoy reading a book depicting life in an early New England town.

A large number of pupils will probably have heard of Brook Farm, and the teacher can use this as a basis of motivation. By telling the pupils about the Brook Farm movement she can arouse their interest in Hawthorne. Pupils can then see for themselves how his book was an outgrowth of the man himself.

After there has been a rapid reading of the book in two or three assignments, the pupils will be ready to discuss their aims. Among these might be included the following:- the enjoyment of the book, the acquisition of knowledge about life in an early New England town, the work in setting, plot and character, the finding of the central theme, the possibilities of finding the author in his work, the appreciation of the author's style, and the arousing of the interest of the pupils in other novels of Hawthorne.

Hawthorne's cultivated sense of humor, his frequent use of symbolism, his use of romantic elements, his marvelous manner of creating atmosphere, and his great ability to make use of suggestion, give pupils ample opportunity to supplement the thought.

The work in plot and characterization should be carefully done. Juniors should be able to present well-thought-out reasons for their decisions concerning the moment of rising action, the climax and the denouement. Their attention should be attracted to the struggle of opposing forces, and they should be able to discuss these intelligently, with the help of the

teacher. The pupils should be ready to group the incidents in the following manner:- those used to reveal character, those used to supply information, those used to supply relief, and those necessary to the plot. Work of this kind will give the pupils the needed work in the organization of ideas.

The judgment of the pupils can be developed by letting them decide many questions that arise in the reading of the book. For example, they should be able to judge the value of Hawthorne's teaching, and they should be able to select a particularly well-written passage and give their reasons for considering it good.

Many theme topics are suggested by the story, and these will give pupils an opportunity to use the ideas. The great central truth of the book that "as a man soweth so shall he reap" should be made so vital to pupils that it will become a part of the fabric of their ethical lives.

A tentative attitude could be developed by telling pupils that there is still at the present time doubt in the minds of psychologists concerning the relative importance of heredity and environment. For this reason, they should be ready to modify their views in the light of further experimentation.

Questions like the following can be used to develop originality and individuality. What does the book teach about the influence of good and evil? Do you agree? Does Hawthorne show any sympathy for his characters? If you knew people like them in real life would you sympathize with them? Where is the

author at his best, in plot construction or character delineation? Do nature descriptions ever hint at the trend the story is to take?

Pupils in the Junior year should have had enough experience with literature in the high-school, so that they will voluntarily select passages that appeal to them, and will be eager to bring them to the attention of their classmates. They should be able to enjoy not only the author's skill in making his book artistic, but they should also be able to appreciate the depth of his moral purpose.

It ought not to be difficult for the teacher to interest pupils in other works of Hawthorne, if she goes about the matter in the right way. She could, for example, tell them something about "The Blithedale Romance." The fact that this was an outcome of the Brook Farm Movement would naturally arouse their interest in the story. The teacher could mention other writers connected with this movement, and this would stimulate pupils to wish to read some of the works of these authors.

Charles Dickens's "A Tale of Two Cities" is a book well-worth studying with Senior classes. The pupils are mature enough to understand the significance of the causes, progress, and results of the French Revolution, and they will enjoy the graphic account that Dickens gives of those turbulent times. They will appreciate the heroism of Sydney Carton, and they will understand why the nobility of his self-sacrifice makes him one of the greatest characters of fiction.

Before beginning the actual study of "A Tale of Two Cities" with Senior classes the teacher could approach the work

by speaking to the class briefly about events in Russia preceding the last revolution, the excesses and horrors taking place during the progress of it, and the wild and savage ferocity of the people there at the present time. Then pupils could be asked if they know of any other revolution similar to it. They will probably mention the French Revolution, and they could be asked to draw parallels between that and the Russian Revolution. In this way the teacher could motivate the work.

"A Tale of Two Cities" should be read rapidly in about three or four assignments before the more detailed work is begun. After this rapid reading the class should be ready to discuss their aims. Some of them might be as follows:- to see if any incidents in the life of Charles Dickens helped him to understand the point of view of the oppressed, to appreciate and understand the book, to arouse through the study of the book an interest in the history of other peoples, to decide whether the results of a revolution are better or worse than those of steady progress, to learn the value of sympathy, mercy, good habits, virtue and sacrifice.

Pupils frequently find the style of Dickens difficult; for that reason, they will frequently have to supplement the thought if they wish to understand the story.

Since there are many characters in "A Tale of Two Cities" pupils will do well to group them in order to get an intelligent understanding of the book. Work of this kind, the careful tracing out of the plot, and the study of character delineation will give pupils opportunity to organize their ideas.

The judgment can be developed by letting pupils compare Dickens's account of the Revolution with an account of the same period given in a history.

The new material acquired by a careful study of the story can be used as a basis of composition work. It ought also to make pupils thoughtful concerning the great principles which are at work in the lives of individuals and nations.

Pupils should learn from their study of the character of Sydney Carton that they should hold a tentative attitude toward people, and that many a person who seems disreputable is capable of great and noble things.

The individuality of the pupils can be developed by letting them discuss interesting questions which arise in their study of the book. For example, they themselves could decide upon what they consider the salient features of Dickens's style. They should be encouraged to find out for themselves why Dickens is a great writer.

It is especially important that the teacher should not lose sight of aiming to have the pupils appreciate and enjoy "A Tale of Two Cities" while they are studying it. It is very necessary that the teacher take up the book so that pupils will like it, otherwise they may develop a distaste for literature during their last year in the high-school which will seriously affect their later reading.

During the Senior year, the teacher should expect that the appreciation of the pupils for those things that are really fine in literature should be more spontaneous and discriminating than it has been before. For that reason, when pupils are study-

ing "A Tale of Two Cities" the teacher should do all in her power to encourage pupils to bring whatever they enjoy in the book to the attention of their classmates. The pupils should realize that they ought to be able to see much more in a book than they ever did before.

The teacher should let no opportunity go by to encourage the appreciation of "A Tale of Two Cities," for this appreciation is a gateway to the enjoyment of other interesting novels by the same author. And if pupils are able to enjoy books that are worth-while mediocre books will not appeal to them. They will then get into the habit of reading only those books that they find an inspiration. A teacher who knows that her Senior English classes are leaving the school with an appreciation for the best books has accomplished an inestimable amount of good.

Summary

The general aims in the study of the novel may be twofold; (1) the study of the novel should lead to the pupils' appreciation of good literature; (2) the study of the novel should teach the pupils the most economical and systematic methods of doing their work.

The various methods of awakening appreciation are as follows:-

1. The teacher should look at the work from the pupils' point of view.
2. The class should be encouraged to express their own opinions about the novel.
3. The novel studied can be used as a basis for creative work.
4. The teacher can read interesting excerpts from other books by the author of the novel studied, or from books suggested by the novel studied.

The eight factors of study suggested by McKurry in "How to Study and Teaching How to Study" are applicable to the study of the novel. By having these factors in mind, pupils will get into the habit of attacking their work in the right way.

The teacher must possess certain qualifications in order to present the novel successfully. She must be able to enter sympathetically into the ideas of the author and interpret them to her class. In addition, she should have an extended knowledge of literature. The characteristics of the adolescent age should be known to her, and she should bear them in mind

while presenting a novel to the class. The aptitudes and capabilities of her individual classes should also be known to her, and she should understand the best methods of teaching a class how to study a novel. These methods must, moreover, be in line with the most recent investigations in psychology.

When teaching the novel in the high-school, the teacher should bear her general aims in mind, which are the awakening of appreciation, and teaching pupils economical habits of study (through their study of the novel). These aims should be in the teacher's mind throughout the high-school course, and she should do everything in her power to make these aims vital in her work. If the result of her teaching of the novel is satisfactory in that she makes apparent to pupils the best methods of approaching their work, and in that she has been able to awaken their appreciation she has accomplished a vast amount of good.

- Chapter X The Teaching of the Drama, with Particular
Reference to Shakespeare
- Chapter XI The Teaching of the Essay
- Chapter XII The Problem of Outside Reading
- Chapter XIII Supplementary Aids to the Teaching of
English
- Chapter XIV Adjusting the High School English Course
to the Demands of the Commercial,
Technical and Vocational Pupils
- Chapter XV The Training of the English Teacher
(Pages 1-306)

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Group II Novels and Romances

U.S. Bureau of Education "The Cardinal Principles of Secondary
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Bulletin 35, 1918