A GENERAL DESCRIPTION

OF THE

LITERATURE PROGRAM

August, 1961
# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. ASSUMPTIONS</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B. OBJECTIVES</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. THE SHORT STORY</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Core Readings</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sequence</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. THE NOVEL</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Core Readings</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sequence</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. THE DRAKE</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Core Readings</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sequence</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. POETRY</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Core Readings</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sequence</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. NON-FICTION</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Core Readings</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sequence</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. CONNECTIONS BETWEEN STRUCTURE AND MEANING</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the study of literature there are certain givens: the short story, the novel, the play, the poem, and some forms of non-fiction. Accordingly, the works to be studied in the four year literature program are organized by types, although a few works that do not fall within the main genres are included.

If literature is a subject matter, there should be something progressive about the learning of literature. This progression can be seen as a passing from the study of the relatively simple to the study of the relatively complex, always keeping in mind the necessity for selecting important, worthwhile works. The chief guidepost which helps to differentiate the simple from the complex is the movement from external to internal. If we apply this idea to such familiar aspects of literature as structure, character, theme, and ideology, we can see that in the simpler work the emphasis is on action, incident, physical conflict; the characters are delineated through a description of external details; the theme or thesis is explicitly stated; and the view of human nature is somewhat static and conventional. But in the more complex work the emphasis is on the symbolic, on recurring patterns and heightened moments of awareness; the characters are delineated through an investigation of their internal states; the theme is multiple and is implied; and the mysterious, elusive quality of human nature is stressed. This description suggests another guiding principle: the intensification of the aspects of reality is a feature of the more complex work.

How, then, to organize a sequential program in literature in relation to these ideas? This organization is worked out in some detail in the following pages, but a brief general description of the developmental stages might help to clarify at this point. In the first stage one studies works that have linear dramatic or narrative development, that stress incident and physical action or conflict, that have limited scope, and that depend on a central character for unity. The picaresque novel would be an example. The next stage is to widen the scope. This can be done in two ways: by studying works that are panoramic in intent, that contain a multiplicity of characters and depict a broad social complex; or by studying a variety of works that demonstrate the possibilities of a form. The third stage is to study works that intensify the aspects of reality depicted, works wherein character, incident, description mean more than their denotative value. The fourth stage is to study works that combine intensity with wide scope.

This type of organization — by genre and by progression — implies certain methods of instruction. It is incumbent upon the teacher to place the work for the
student. This means using historical, sociological, biographical, and literary data where necessary. But this placing should never substitute for examining the work itself; it is merely an aid, a preliminary. The chief task of the teacher is to help the student see what is in the work, to confront the work directly. A primary way to do this is to analyze the parts of the work: narrative or dramatic development, plot, point of view, character, time-factor, place or landscape, theme, scope, diction. A third job of the teacher is to show the relationship of one work to other works and to recurring themes in literature.

If the student is to see the progression and the interrelationships, he is much more likely to do so if the sequence is embodied in concrete particulars rather than in a set of principles only. Therefore, a core of required readings for every Regular and X student is included in this program. On each grade level supplementary readings in each type are also included, any number of which may be used for purposes of comparison and contrast with the core readings.
OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of any teacher should be to help the student become an educated person. The educated person is distinguished by what he is able to do, by what he appreciates, and by what he has become. Some of the characteristics which define him are the following:

1. He has the ability to think.
2. He has the ability to solve personal and community problems.
3. He insists on retaining his individuality.
4. He recognizes various points of view.
5. He appreciates beauty in its multiplicity and variety.
6. He has the ability to recognize a diversity of possibilities for the existence of pattern and order in the universe.

Literature, of all studies, uniquely provides for the student the panorama of all human experience and aspiration, made more readily assimilable by its fusion with emotion. It permits him to participate vicariously in every endeavor that has contributed to the development of the humane tradition that moves, like a golden thread, through human history. It provides him with the principles underlying accepted human values, describes their inception and struggle for recognition and acceptance, illustrates the tragedy of their occasional abandonment, and confirms the continuous conviction of the necessity of their survival and permanence written indelibly in the record of man and his thought. If the educated man is in essence, as we believe, the humane man, then the knowledge of literature, the expression of man's most intense concern with the human tradition, is basic to his development.

The infinite range of literature, its multiplicity of form and theme, its apparent divergence into numerous channels of national consciousness and individual idiosyncrasy, often hide from the student the essential harmony and unity conferred by its quintessential concern, on all levels and in all ways, with humane values. The identification of this continuum of humane tradition, its importance to the development of man, and the necessity of its continuance if he is to survive with dignity and humanity . . . is the job of the teacher of literature.

Therefore, the teacher of literature is obligated to direct the student's progress by teaching him some of the following kinds of knowledge about literature:

1. The student should be aware of the contents of literature. He should know that types such as the short story, novel, drama, etc., exist and differ.

2. The student should know the special nature of the various elements that differentiate the types of literature.
3. The student should know the purposes of literature.

4. The student should know what constitutes success of failure in a work of art.

5. The student should be aware of the human values that exist in literature.

6. The student should be aware of the relationship of literary value to human development.

In summary, the student should be able to judge the value of a literary production and in so doing exercise his intelligence and taste.
THE NOVEL - CORE READINGS

9th Grade

1. Adventures of Huckleberry Finn - Twain
2. David Copperfield - Dickens
3. The Odyssey - Homer

10th Grade

1. Jane Eyre - Bronte
2. Cry, the Beloved Country - Paton
3. Arrowsmith - Lewis
4. Death Comes for the Archbishop - Cather

11th Grade

1. Pride and Prejudice - Austen
2. The Ox-Bow Incident - Clark
3. The Great Gatsby - Fitzgerald

12th Grade

1. Fathers and Sons - Turgenev
2. Lord Jim - Conrad
3. Passage to India - Forster
4. Gulliver's Travels - Swift
THE NOVEL SEQUENCE

The sequence in studying the novel follows closely the general developmental stages described in the introduction. The first stage is to study works that have a limited scope, have an episodic narrative development, and are unified through a central character. The next stage is to study works that are panoramic in intent, that attempt to depict broad tendencies of an age or a society. This type of novel contains many characters, intertwines subplots with the main plot, and depicts a complex social organization. Another way to widen the scope, which is the intention of this stage, is to study a variety of novels that indicate the possibilities of the form. The third stage is to study works that, while seemingly limited, gain dimension through intensity. In this type of novel the individual character, while particularized, is representative of a way of life or a universal response to life (he is more than a type); the incidents, while concrete, are symbolic. The fourth stage is to study works that combine panoramic intent with intensification; the individual, the society, the universal are depicted and intertwined.

Some aspects of the novel which help differentiate the simple from the complex and which serve as a means for analysis are the following:

Narrative Development and Action: In the simpler work the narrative is developed episodically, and the emphasis is on physical action; there is much incident. In the more complex work the narrative either has a clear rising and falling pattern or is developed by parallels and contrasts; the action is internalized.

Plot: In the simpler work the emphasis is on what happens; there may be sub-plots but they are not integrated; and contrivance and coincidence are present. In the more complex work the emphasis is on cause and effect, the sub-plots are integrated, and the plot illuminates the theme as well as the author's world view.

Point of View: The omniscient point of view is usually used for the panoramic novel. Although much may be encompassed in this type of novel, the author helps the reader by commenting on the action and interpreting motive. The first person narrative is very often a feature of the simpler novel, especially when the main character tells the story. The selected third person or the interested first person observer is often the point of view selected for the more complex novel.

Characterization: In the simpler novel the characters are developed through external detail; in the more complex novel the characters are investigated internally or are allowed to reveal themselves.

Time-Factor: A simple chronological, day-by-day progression is a feature of the less complex novel, and the length of time spanned is relatively short. In the more complex work such features as flashback, simultaneity, suspension of time are present. Here the emphasis is on "life by values" rather than on "life by the clock."
Setting - Landscape: On the simpler level the setting is described for its own sake. On a more complex level the setting becomes an integral part of the action, characters, and theme (e.g., the naturalistic novel). On another level the setting, viewed through the consciousnesses of the characters, reflects their emotional states. Finally, the setting can become thematic, symbolic, metaphoric; paralleling tone, theme, and states of emotion.

Theme: In the simpler work the theme is often single and is overt. In the more complex work the theme is multiple and is implied.

Humor: Situation humor, satirical description, and exaggerated irony are features of the simpler novel. The more complex work contains verbal wit and a subtle use of irony.

Diction: Mannerisms, verbal pyrotechnics are often features of the simpler novel; the diction can be abstracted and studied independently. Lewis' and Dickens' works are examples that come readily to mind. In the more complex novel the mannerisms disappear; the form and content become one.

A few words need to be said about the inclusion of The Odyssey (9th Grade) and Gulliver's Travels (12th Grade) in this sequence. The Odyssey is a germinal work, the first great narrative emerging from the oral tradition, embodying mythological elements that appear and reappear in every type of literature that follows, with a theme, the wanderer or seeker working out his fate, that presides over much of contemporary literature. That a familiarity with it is essential to any student about to plunge into the labyrinth of literature, as a thread, a guide-line, that enables him to move with greater security into the unknown with a firm connection to the beginning, is axiomatic.

The definition of Gulliver's Travels as "novel" will seem to many as extremely novel. However, so broad is the area encompassed by the novel form that a temporary residence on the periphery of the form may be granted without too much argument in terms of the usefulness of this particular work at this particular level. Here we have the apparent, simple external narrative that suggests the choices on the earliest level which careful reading and analysis discloses to be a document most devious, subtle, ironical, critical, sophisticated. The demands made upon the reader to comprehend the inner workings of this superficially simple mechanism parallel the goal of the literature program to go deeper and deeper into a work of literature to reveal its truth and meaning. Gulliver's Travels reveals that, as in all great art, the most complex ends derive from an inspired use of the simplest means.
THE DRAMA - CORE READINGS

9th Grade

Midsummer Night's Dream - Shakespeare
Julius Caesar - Shakespeare
Ah, Wilderness - O'Neill
Antigone - Sophocles

10th Grade

Merchant of Venice - Shakespeare
Macbeth - Shakespeare
Cyrano de Bergerac - Rostand
Pygmalion - Shaw

11th Grade

A Doll's House - Ibsen
Biography - Behrman
The Crucible - Miller
Henry IV, Part 1 - Shakespeare
Oedipus Rex - Sophocles
The Rivals - Sheridan

12th Grade

The Cherry Orchard - Chekhov
Juno and The Paycock - O'Casey
Twelfth Night - Shakespeare
Hamlet - Shakespeare
THE DRAMA SEQUENCE

The sequence in studying the drama is similar to that of the short story and novel and follows the general principles indicated in the introduction. The movement is from contrivance to organic integration, external to internal, single level and function to multiple level and function, statement to implication, overt action to symbolic action.

A fundamental aspect which differentiates the drama from the other literary forms, especially the novel and the short story (poetry is also direct experience) is that element called "enactment." The drama is in doing. Performance modifies and intensifies meaning and can be influenced by the group response of the audience. In the main, point of view and overt author comment are handled most commonly, through the technique of the director, actors, scene designer, and technicians who attempt to supplement and intensify the literary content of the work with direct manifestations of the theatrical art and craft. The competent author, aware of these techniques, incorporates them to give his work added richness, meaning, and complexity. The sequence is from primitive dance, to mimicry, to pantomime, to interpretation; from sound as an expression of a physical condition to sound as a combination of symbols; from spectacle as an attempt to reproduce reality to the distortion of reality to achieve abstraction.
No Shakespearean play is simple. But surely Julius Caesar and Midsummer Night's Dream are less complex and less mature than Hamlet and Twelfth Night.

In Julius Caesar the poetry is less integrated; the charge derives from the persuasive rhetoric; any mob would be swayed by Antony. The characters, fairly flat except for Brutus, represent aspects of the Roman world of Caesar (and the English world of Elizabeth). (Note Orson Wells' World of Hitler.) Time and place are simple, a few days in Rome, a few days in Asia Minor.

In A Midsummer Night's Dream, although the poetry is more integrated in incanting place (watery moonlight of the woods), it still has Ovidian lush decorativeness. The characters represent aspects of love. Note Hermia and Helena are distinguished by height. Time is concentrated to afternoon, night, and morning. Place moves from city to woods, but all the action is framed in the celebration of a noble wedding. The celebration, tied to May-Day fertility rites, is an expansion of the pageant-spectacle like the one given for Elizabeth at Kenilworth. The play's pattern follows the movement of country and court dances. The situation is simple: Puck, the lord of misrule makes fun of mortals. The theme deals with the metamorphosis of love in which we are reminded that we belong to nature if only for one night of midsummer.

The Merchant of Venice enables us to present a new concept, the involvement of characters in a society. In Merchant two societies are contrasted -- the one where love and money were compatible with the new world of counting and legally binding contracts. In Merchant complexity is greater in that the sub-plots are intertwined. A new concept is introduced -- that of the outrageous in comedy. In Merchant one is asked to temporarily accept the baiting of the spoil-sport, Shylock.

In Macbeth, continuing the concept of involvement in a society, we introduce a concept that prepares for a full understanding of Hamlet, the Elizabethan concept that the welfare of the state depended on a good king at the pinnacle of a hierarchy. Macbeth is a short play, concentrated with no sub-plot, and a clear dimension of the forces for and against the protagonist. With Macbeth the teacher can emphasize the concept that Shakespeare creates intensity with words.

In Henry IV, Part One the sequence continues the concept of the good king. Henry IV introduces the concept of serious comedy. It further develops the concept of comedy as a temporary suspension of decorum, moral because the moral framework is always in the background. Henry IV furthers the idea of intensity, with the world contained in the unique individual. Note the pattern of prose and poetry -- elements of diction juxtaposed for meaning.

In Twelfth Night there is a great advance in the treatment of love over that first presented in Midsummer and then in Merchant. With Malvolio the
No Shakespearean play is simple. But surely Julius Caesar and Midsummer Night's Dream are less complex and less mature than Hamlet and Twelfth Night.

In Julius Caesar the poetry is less integrated; the charge derives from the persuasive rhetoric; any mob would be swayed by Antony. The characters, fairly flat except for Brutus, represent aspects of the Roman world of Caesar (and the English world of Elizabeth). (Note Orson Welles' World of Hitler.) Time and place are simple, a few days in Rome, a few days in Asia Minor.

In A Midsummer Night's Dream, although the poetry is more integrated in incanting place (watery moonlight of the woods), it still has Ovidian lush decorativeness. The characters represent aspects of love. Note Hermia and Helena are distinguished by height. Time is concentrated to afternoon, night, and morning. Place moves from city to woods, but all the action is framed in the celebration of a noble wedding. The celebration, tied to May-Day fertility rites, is an expansion of the pageant-spectacle like the one given for Elizabeth atKenilworth. The play's pattern follows the movement of country and court dances. The situation is simple: Puck, the lord of misrule makes fun of mortals. The theme deals with the metamorphosis of love in which we are reminded that we belong to nature if only for one night of midsummer.

The Merchant of Venice enables us to present a new concept, the involvement of characters in a society. In Merchant two societies are contrasted -- the one where love and money were compatible with the new world of counting and legally binding contracts. In Merchant complexity is greater in that the sub-plots are intertwined. A new concept is introduced -- that of the outrageous in comedy. In Merchant one is asked to temporarily accept the baiting of the spoil-sport, Shylock.

In Macbeth, continuing the concept of involvement in a society, we introduce a concept that prepares for a full understanding of Hamlet, the Elizabethan concept that the welfare of the state depended on a good king at the pinnacle of a hierarchy. Macbeth is a short play, concentrated with no sub-plot, and a clear dimension of the forces for and against the protagonist. With Macbeth the teacher can emphasize the concept that Shakespeare creates intensity with words.

In Henry IV, Part One the sequence continues the concept of the good king. Henry IV introduces the concept of serious comedy. It further develops the concept of comedy as a temporary suspension of decorum, moral because the moral framework is always in the background. Henry IV furthers the idea of intensity, with the world contained in the unique individual. Note the pattern of prose and poetry -- elements of diction juxtaposed for meaning.

In Twelfth Night, there is a great advance in the treatment of love over that first presented in Midsummer and then in Merchant. With Malvolio the
concept of the baiting of the spoil-sport continues with the note of aberration (madness) introduced. The melancholy madness of Olivia and Orisino is not the simple lunacy of the lovers in Midsummer. Note the songs of Feste as integral, a reminder of the beauty of love in a world where it raineth every day.

Hamlet is the most complex statement of the concept of the poisoned kingdom. But magnitude is achieved with the asking of the large questions, "What is Man?" "What is God's design in placing a sensitive man (God's noblest instrument) in a world of corruption and chaos. In the character of Hamlet Shakespeare combined in one man many men: the son, the lover, the soldier, the student, the friend, the director. Hamlet unites the great themes of literature: Order vs. Chaos, friendship and betrayal, the impermanence of beauty, sacred and profane love.

* Here we have tragic waste; the hero who is tragic because of what he might have been, as opposed to what he has become.

** Through the use of Falstaff and Hotspur, Shakespeare gives the classic demonstration of how to develop character by contrast as well as example (the pattern of counterstatement).