



*Illuminating Literature:
When Worlds Collide*

SAMPLE

For Christian
High Schools and
Homeschools

Sharon Watson



Writing with,
Sharon Watson

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Companion books in this series:

Illuminating Literature: When Worlds Collide, Teacher's Guide

Illuminating Literature: When Worlds Collide,
Quiz and Answer Manual

Illuminating Literature: When Worlds Collide, Novel Notebook

(Download this FREE at <https://writingwithsharonwatson.com/illuminating-literature-when-worlds-collide-gateway/> .)

The coordinating versions of eight books students read in this course are available for purchase at <https://writingwithsharonwatson.com/illuminating-literature-when-worlds-collide/> .

Coordinating versions of the books read in this course:

<u>Title and Author</u>	<u>Publisher</u>	<u>ISBN</u>
<i>Pudd'nhead Wilson</i> by Mark Twain	(Dover Publications)	0-486-40885-X
<i>The War of the Worlds</i> by H. G. Wells	(Dover Publications)	0-486-29506-0
<i>The Friendly Persuasion</i> by Jessamyn West	(Harcourt, Inc.)	0-15-602909-X or 0-15-633606-5
<i>Peter Pan</i> by Sir James Barrie	(Dover Publications)	0-486-40783-7
<i>Warriors Don't Cry</i> by Melba Pattillo Beals	(Washington Square Press/Pocket Books)	0-671-86639-7
<i>A Tale of Two Cities</i> by Charles Dickens	(Dover Publications)	0-486-40651-2
<i>Fahrenheit 451</i> by Ray Bradbury	(Simon & Schuster)	978-1-4516-7331-9
<i>The Screwtape Letters</i> by C. S. Lewis	(HarperCollins)	978-0-06-065293-7

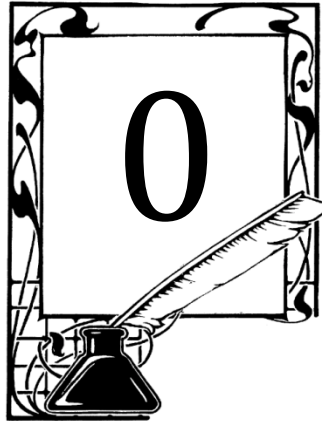
The coordinating versions students read in this course are available for purchase at <https://writingwithsharonwatson.com/illuminating-literature-when-worlds-collide/>.

Why use the coordinating versions? All page numbers referenced in the textbook are from the coordinating versions of each book. Students who do not have these versions of each novel will become discouraged trying to find the passages and will learn less than their peers.

Students reading the books from a tablet will be able to keep up if they know how to use the Search function.

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Start Here

Welcome!

Welcome to a year of insightful, illuminating literature. You'll read eight famous books, approximately one a month, while learning about conflict, characters, writer's devices, and a whole lot more. Below are this course's books:

- ✓ *Pudd'nhead Wilson* by Mark Twain
- ✓ *The War of the Worlds* by H. G. Wells
- ✓ *The Friendly Persuasion* by Jessamyn West
- ✓ *Peter Pan* by Sir James Barrie
- ✓ *Warriors Don't Cry* by Melba Patillo Beals
- ✓ *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens
- ✓ *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury
- ✓ *The Screwtape Letters* by C. S. Lewis

Which ones do you think will be your favorites? If you have already read some of them, what did you think of them?

Lesson 1

What Is Literature?

What is literature? Good question. Experts do not agree on a definition, so feel free to join the debate.

Generally speaking, though, there are a few criteria that can be applied to books (and poetry, plays, and so forth) to see if they measure up to the exalted label of *literature*. Here goes:

- Literature has some artistic value. Its language is lyrical, descriptive, poetic, or vibrant; it has a beauty or starkness that matches its story; it uses synonyms, metaphors, irony, symbols, and other devices to build its theme. Basically, it's not just *what* is written but *how* it is written that counts.
- Literature addresses themes and issues about life, humanity, and society. It shines a mirror on who we are, who we could be, or who we should not become.
- Literature expresses grand ideas and themes. For example, Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* might ask, "Is the attainment of happiness possible?" or "Will revenge make me happy?" Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* might attempt to answer this question: "Just how dark can the human heart grow when it is separated from the rest of humanity?"
- Literature is generally of universal interest: a young boy learning about life during hunting seasons with his elders in William Faulkner's *The Bear*, a young woman facing the possibility of losing the man she loves because of a scandal in her family in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, or a young man dealing with bitter betrayal in George Eliot's *Silas Marner*.
- Literature can sometimes be experimental in nature. For example, James Joyce, in *Ulysses*, writes using a stream of consciousness, a type of writing that follows the stream of what a character is thinking, pinging from one subject to another with no transition. This often makes the writing difficult to follow and would not be tolerated in popular fiction.
- Literature will be read again and again because it delights, enriches, or intrigues the reader on some level.

Some of our literary classics were wildly popular in their day, such as Bram Stoker's *Dracula* or Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Some were not popular at all when they were first published. Melville's *Moby-Dick* did not obtain a following until after the author's death, and Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* was banned from many libraries and schools when first published and was thought by some fine writers of the day to be trash.

In a sense, the difference between literature and popular best-selling fiction is the difference between listening to, say, Vivaldi's series of four violin concertos titled *The Four Seasons* and listening to a top-forty song of the week. They both have meaning and can touch our hearts, but Vivaldi's expressive work, which evokes images in music of each season, is rich and layered. You can listen to it over and over and always hear something new or be enriched by it. It has lasting value. Today's hit tunes are exciting and meaningful today but will be out of style in a few years.



The terms **literary classics** or **the classics** refer to short stories, novels, poems, and plays that have not been written recently but have stood the test of time. In your opinion, what book written recently will be a literary classic in fifty years? Write your answer below:



Some of the books in this course were written over one hundred years ago. You know what that means? You might think some parts of them are—dare I say it?—boring. Why might passages or whole books seem boring to today's teen readers? Here are some thoughts on that topic. Add your own to the list:

1. Most of the books you have to read for school were never meant to be read by teens. They were written for adults, with adult themes, characters, and events. Sorry about that.
2. Teen readers generally like to read about characters their own age or slightly older; since most characters in literature books are adults, this can translate as boring to teens. (See #1.) In addition, guys typically do not like to read about women characters, but most gals will read about either male or female characters.
3. Many older books don't begin *in media res* ("in the midst of things"). They may begin *ab ovo* ("from the egg," meaning "at the very beginning") and take a loooong time to build up to the story's main action and excitement, which leads us to the next point . . .
4. Why didn't readers care that the story began so slowly years ago? Think about it: no TVs, radios, social media, cell phones, or the Internet. Life was lived at a different pace, and readers appreciated a good, long story to entertain them.
5. Reading preferences have changed. Many modern readers now prefer shorter paragraphs, more action, and less description. They are used to

quick-changing movie scenes and seven-minute TV sitcom segments. That was not true of the original readers of these classics.

6. Our language is changing; today's readers may find the words and sentence structures (**syntax**) of older classics difficult to understand or wade through.
7. Some students believe that books are old-fashioned or obsolete.
8. Others simply don't like fiction. They appreciate nonfiction books more, books like biographies, self-improvement books, how-to guides, and so on.
9. Add your own reason why older books might be dull or difficult for you or other modern readers:



While writers of popular fiction pay attention to the age and gender of their audience, literary writers are not concerned with such things. They write their stories as they see them. And then you are forced to—I mean “get to”—read them.

You don't have to *like* the book; you just have to *read* the book. But be able to identify why you are not connecting with it. That will give you more patience with the book and make you a smarter reader.

Enough of speculation! It's time to answer a few questions. Get a pen or pencil and answer the following questions. Mark as many answers as apply to you.

1. I read a lot of historical fiction, sci-fi, popular novels, and so forth, already. Why should I read and study literature anyway?
 - Reading literature gives me a better vocabulary.
 - Reading literature gives me less of a headache than doing math does.
 - Great literature makes me think.
 - I want to know what important authors have to say about life and the human condition.
 - I want to study literature and become more aware of my culture's ideas of life and its meaning, just as Daniel did in Babylon when he was deported there as a teen.
 - I need the course to graduate.
 - I love stories with strong, quirky, or fascinating characters.
 - I don't want to miss the amazing life-and-death struggles between strong, forceful characters or the exciting, larger-than-life events they are thrown into.
 - I have a lot of issues to wrestle with today, and great literature can help me deal with these issues.

- I want to experience more of great literature's important issues such as love, death, betrayal, the condition of the human heart, justice and injustice, growing up, friendship, loss, struggling against great odds, maturity through suffering, despair and hope, and so forth.
- I'll get in trouble with my parent or teacher if I don't read this stuff.
- I want to discover how the ideas and worldviews in literature stack up to the ones I find in the Bible.
- I love the beauty of the English language, a thrilling description, and aptly expressed thoughts and emotions.
- I'll be smarter. Now when someone says he's been "sold down the river" (*Pudd'nhead Wilson*), I'll know what it means and just how treacherous it is.
- I want to get caught up in a good story.
- Add your own reason to read literature:



2. What do I want to learn from this course?

- I want to learn how to be a more discerning and savvy reader.
- I want to learn how to be a more powerful fiction writer by studying how other authors write.
- It would be nice to finally learn what a symbol is and how to recognize it.
- Ditto for theme.
- I want to learn how others view the world and our place in it.
- I want to learn how to get through a literature course without losing my mind.
- I want to recognize and practice writer's devices and other skills of story writers.
- I think the discussions and other students' opinions of these books will be enlightening.
- I want to be more successful in my life by seeing how these characters succeed or fail in their stories.
- I want to learn how to pass a literature class.
- I want to learn literary devices such as repetition, foreshadowing, assonance, allusions, and parallelism.
- Now it's your turn. Finish this sentence: From this course, I want to learn . . .



Grades

No course would be complete without grades! Here's what you'll be graded on:

- Online "Yes, I read it" quiz, graded online (1-10 points)
- Online literary terms quiz, graded online (1-10 points)
- Participation in opinion/interpretation questions online (1-10 points)
- Quality of participation in discussions (1-20 points)
- Successful completion of lessons and assignments (1-20 points)
- Successful completion of activities (1-10 points)
- Completion of each book on the book list (1-20 points)

Your Novel Notebook

You'll need a notebook we're calling a Novel Notebook for this course. Download a free one here: <https://writingwithsharonwatson.com/illuminating-literature-free-download/>.

This Course's Philosophy

Some people treat the classics as sacred. They wouldn't change a word; they consider the writing to be infallible. They reverence the stories and authors, and they characterize those who don't as rude, crude, uneducated Neanderthals. Saying anything negative about the stories or the authors just proves to those people that you don't appreciate good literature.

Maybe one reason this happens is because those readers have been touched by the stories; they have an emotional connection to them, or something in the stories changed their life. Perhaps they've experienced a piercing, poignant flash of truth that causes trembling or joy, or maybe they've fallen in love with the characters or language of the book. A remarkable book can do that—touch us and change us. As C. S. Lewis explains about some readers in *An Experiment in Criticism*, "Their whole consciousness is changed. They have become what they were not before."

And then someone comes along and shows scorn. This is akin to insulting one of their dearest friends.



This course's philosophy is that our literature is just as fallen as the rest of creation. These books are written by flawed humans who struggled with—or gave in to—their sin natures, who may or may not have been Christians, whose stories may or may not agree with the truths written in the Bible, but whose stories reflect some redeeming truth and are, therefore, worth reading.

These books are not sacred though they may be special. Enjoy them, find pleasure in them, pick them apart, find the flaws in thinking and worldview, ponder changing a passage or an ending, learn from them, copy out favorite passages and try to imitate them, and love or hate the characters.

Respect the stories or dislike them. If you opt to dislike them, have a well-thought-out reason for your opinion.

No matter how you choose to view literature, dig out the nuggets of truth and appreciate the things that make them classics. After all, there must be something in them that makes them perennial favorites.

“A classic is something that everybody wants to have read and nobody wants to read.”
-Mark Twain

You may surprise yourself if you read some of these books years from now. Ones you like now, you might find dull then. Ones you categorize as extremely boring will be suddenly full of interest. Your perspective will have changed because of your life experiences and your season of life.

This is the end of the “Start Here” sample.
On the next pages, you’ll find a sample for the chapter
Pudd’nhead Wilson.



Pudd'nhead Wilson

Have you ever done something silly or stupid and been labeled with that for the rest of your life? I know a man who, in his youth, used a karate kick on a certain red Christmas tree ornament. It hung on a branch about five feet off the ground. He aimed, he jumped, he kicked—and he missed, landing on his back with lots of noise. Guess what his brothers and sisters bring up at family reunions. He has not been able to live down that failed feat.

In *Pudd'nhead Wilson* you will meet a man who cannot live down a joke about a dog and, because of it, is labeled for years. Then you will meet a slave woman who is only one-sixteenth black and who, although she looks white, is still considered a slave. And you will meet two young boys who grow up in this story. One is the slave woman's son; the other is the son of a prominent citizen. But the slave woman . . . well, I can't give away the story.

Don't forget to watch out for a set of twins. And keep your eyes on their knife!

Pudd'nhead Wilson was rare in its day because Roxy, a black protagonist (“black” from the perspective of those around her) is not a stereotype of a slave but a real figure with normal human feelings, pains, dreams, and goals. You may definitely consider it unusual and refreshing that in the days between the failed Reconstruction of the Civil War and the codified Jim Crow laws of the South, a novel was published that contained a respectful rendering of its “black” protagonist.

Before You Read the Book

Suggested Reading and Homework Plan: Preview

Below is a four-week plan that will help you complete all the tasks in this chapter. It appears here to give you an idea of what is going on. You don’t need to memorize this plan; it will be repeated for you when it’s time to read *Pudd’nhead Wilson*. Feel free to check off the tasks as you complete them.

Check with your teacher to see if this schedule fits his or her plans.

Week 1:

- Hand in your Imitate! paragraph (see the next page) a week from now, at noon.
- Read lessons 1-3.

Week 2:

- Read chapters I – XII of *Pudd’nhead Wilson*.

Week 3:

- Read chapters XIII – XXI of *Pudd’nhead Wilson*.

Week 4:

- Decide on one activity and begin work on it. You’ll find the list of activities at the end of this chapter. Your teacher will tell you when this is due.
- Complete the online *Pudd’nhead Wilson* “Yes, I read the book” Quiz.
- Complete the online *Pudd’nhead Wilson* Literary Terms Quiz.
- Complete the online, ungraded *Pudd’nhead Wilson* Opinion Survey.
- Complete the Vocabulary Quizzola in your book.
- Unscramble your brains after all those quizzes.
- Read lesson 4.
- Discuss selected discussion questions with your teacher, reading group, or class.
- Hand in your activity and breathe a sigh of relief.

Begin your Week 1 tasks now.

Imitate!

As an example of something written well, turn to the chapter “The Nymph Revealed” and read the paragraph that begins like this: “A gigantic eruption, like that of Krakatoa a few years ago, . . .” The paragraph is comparing Roxie’s life-altering revelation and its effects on Tom to a huge volcanic explosion and eruption.



Most likely, you have had something cataclysmic happen to you, too, or you have watched a friend go through something catastrophic.

Choose a natural disaster and then write about your own personal upheaval or that of your friend’s using verbs and word images normally associated with the natural disaster.

After You’ve Read the Book

Five-Star Report

Give *Pudd’nhead Wilson* a rating by circling the number that best describes how you feel about it.

	Couldn’t stand it.		It was okay.		Loved it!	
1		2	3	4	5	

Complete the Online Quizzes and Survey

Pudd’nhead Wilson “Yes, I read it” Quiz. Password: TWAIN

Go to <https://writingwithsharonwatson.com/illuminating-literature-when-worlds-collide-gateway/> and click on the *Pudd’nhead Wilson* “Yes, I read it” Quiz link to complete this short, graded quiz. The quiz contains certain facts you will know because you read the book. After completing the quiz, a graded report will be sent to the email address you use when you sign in.

Pudd’nhead Wilson Literary Terms Quiz. Password: TWAIN

Go to <https://writingwithsharonwatson.com/illuminating-literature-when-worlds-collide-gateway/> and click on the *Pudd'nhead Wilson* Literary Terms Quiz link to complete the short, graded literary terms quiz. Review these terms for the literary terms quiz: conflict, protagonist, antagonist, text, context, foreshadowing, irony, and pseudonym. After completing the quiz, a graded report will be sent to the email address you use when you sign in.

Pudd'nhead Wilson Opinion Survey. Password: TWAIN

Go to <https://writingwithsharonwatson.com/illuminating-literature-when-worlds-collide-gateway/> and click on the *Pudd'nhead Wilson* Opinion Survey link to answer the ungraded set of opinion questions.

When you finish those, take the Vocabulary Quizzola on the next page and look for the secret word encoded vertically in the correct answers. Then try to unscramble your brains because that's a lot of quizzes in one day.

Before you finish today's work, look at Your Choice of Activities at the end of this chapter. Choose one of the activities today and begin work on it soon so it will be completed by the due date your teacher gives you.

Vocabulary Quizzola for *Pudd'nhead Wilson*

Directions: Match the meaning in the right column to the correct word in the left column. The numbers after the words indicate page numbers where the words can be found in the Dover Thrift Edition of *Pudd'nhead Wilson*.

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| ___ 1. indolent, 22 | A. a mark of disgrace |
| ___ 2. usurpation, 16 | B. deep in thought |
| ___ 3. sycophancy, 41 | C. to scout out |
| ___ 4. gibe, 81 | D. property |
| ___ 5. chattel, 47 | E. to taunt; a taunt |
| ___ 6. stigma, 84 | F. flattery in order to gain something |
| ___ 7. calaboose, 66 | G. a mongrel dog (insulting to be called this) |
| ___ 8. perdition, 57 | H. apparent, but usually fake |
| ___ 9. atrophied, 100 | I. one who talks sheer nonsense |
| ___ 10. grenadier, 40 | J. generosity |
| ___ 11. blatherskite, 42 | K. taking someone else's place |
| ___ 12. skiff, 61 | L. a state of being lost; hell |
| ___ 13. benefactor, 101 | M. lazy |
| ___ 14. teetotaler, 57 | N. a small rowboat or sailboat |
| ___ 15. magnanimity, 55 | O. slang for <i>jail</i> |
| ___ 16. pensive, 68 | P. wasted away, not strong |
| ___ 17. ostensible, 47 | Q. done by stealth, sneaky |
| ___ 18. reconnoiter, 49 | R. a soldier |
| ___ 19. surreptitious, 51 | S. one who abstains from alcoholic drinks |
| ___ 20. cur, 62 | T. one who does good for others |

Total number correct _____

Vertical word encoded in your correct answers: _____