

# Understanding and Appreciation of the Novel

## Script by Morris Schreiber/ Scholastic Records SL 9119

The Novel as a "Best Seller" / The Novel as a Literary Type / Growth of the Novel  
Qualifications of the Novelist / Technique of the Novel / Some Famous World Novels Examined

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### CONTENTS:

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Read by Morris Schreiber and Kenneth Buckridge

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE, POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

# Understanding and Appreciation of the Novel Script by Morris Schreiber/Scholastic Records SL 9119

THE NOVEL AS A "BEST SELLER"  
THE NOVEL AS A LITERARY TYPE  
GROWTH OF THE NOVEL  
QUALIFICATIONS OF THE NOVELIST  
TECHNIQUE OF THE NOVEL  
SOME FAMOUS WORLD NOVELS EXAMINED

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN  
WAR AND PEACE  
THE JUNGLE  
DAVID COPPERFIELD  
HUCKLEBERRY FINN  
MOBY DICK

ROBINSON CRUSOE  
DON QUIXOTE  
A CONNECTICUT  
YANKEE IN KING  
ARTHUR'S COURT  
MADAME BOVARY

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# UNDERSTANDING and APPRECIATION of the NOVEL

by Morris Schreiber

## -- TABLE OF CONTENTS --

PART I	The Novel as a "Best Seller"
PART II	The Novel as a Literary Type
PART III	Growth of the Novel
PART IV	Qualifications of the Novelist
PART V	Technique of the Novel
PART VI	Some Famous World Novels Examined

### NARRATOR I

... Presenting "Understanding and Appreciation of the Novel," by Morris Schreiber...

--PART I... The Novel as a "Best Seller"

### NARRATOR II

You have just entered the Globe Bookshop...largest purvey or good literature to mankind...The store is thronged with busy shoppers--bibliophiles on the hunt for the latest treasure, for, as the saying goes, "Of making books there is no end."

Stop for a while at the fiction section, a particularly busy place. For adventure, fantasy, romance--with which the novel deals at length--appeal to large numbers of buyers...

### NARRATOR I

That was the sound of a best-selling modern novel ringing up its hundred thousandth sale...

But in this same bookshop are other novels that have rung up impressive totals...novels that have been selling steadily and quietly over the years...that also have their devoted readers, each one of whom has passed "the good word" on to another...

### NARRATOR II

Here is a woman looking through "Uncle Tom's Cabin," the literary crusade by Harriet Beecher Stowe which did so much to arouse the passions of the North in the Civil War against the moral evil of slavery...a novel which sold a million copies in all languages...

### NARRATOR I

Here is a customer leafing through Leo Tolstoy's "War and Peace," massive and monumental novel of Napoleon's campaign in Russia and the shattering and brutal impact of war upon the lives of the chief characters...

### NARRATOR II

Here is a student of American history, sampling the wares of Upton Sinclair's novel, "The Jungle," powerful expose of evils in the Chicago meat-packing industry in the nineteenth century...

### NARRATOR I

All three--"Uncle Tom's Cabin," "War and Peace," and "The Jungle"--are studies of social or political ills, reflecting the intense moral indignation of the novelists at inhumanity and injustice...

### NARRATOR II

In this section a man has just purchased a copy of "David Copperfield," an outstanding novel by Charles Dickens which blends pathos with warmth and humor, reflecting much of Dickens' personal life, particularly the struggles of his childhood... Another man, also interested in novels with strong autobiographical elements, is considering "Huckleberry Finn," Mark Twain's beloved tribute to his missouri boyhood.

### NARRATOR I

In that corner are two young sailors on shore leave... One of them is poring over "Moby Dick," Melville's brilliant epic of the sea and the whaling industry... The other sailor finds much to ponder in Defoe's

great work, "Robinson Crusoe," a reportorially documented record of a shipwrecked mariner's struggle for survival on a desert island for twenty-four years.

#### NARRATOR II

Here the clerk has just interested a customer in a new translation of a still older novel--that witty satire on medieval chivalry, "Don Quixote," published 350 years ago...and in its modern counterpart, Mark Twain's "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court."

#### NARRATOR I

As we complete our brief tour of the bookshop, we find that these...and countless other works in the long history of the novel--including social themes, adventure tales, stories of love and chivalry, fantasy, science fiction--are still selling, in many instances as stirring and appealing as they were when they first burst upon the literary scene...

#### (BAND)

#### NARRATOR II

PART II. ---The Novel as a Literary Type...

"Novel"...Something new...something strange... From the Latin "novellus," new, not formerly known, different...

#### NARRATOR I

How does the novel differ from other literary types? Let us examine it in two major aspects: First, in the nature of the subjects that it treats. Second, in the way in which it treats a subject.

#### NARRATOR II

The sound you hear is that of a writer at work...He is exploring several themes dealing with the sea... To express these themes he can select the most suitable of the following literary forms: A short story...A play...A poem...An essay...A biography...A novel...

--Which form will he select for each idea?

Here are the themes that are running through his mind:

#### NARRATOR I

THEME NO. 1...No matter how far I may wander, no matter what life I pursue, the sea always calls, beckoning me back...

#### NARRATOR II

THEME NO. 2...The sea offers many blessings, but it is also a hard and exacting taskmaster...

#### NARRATOR I

THEME NO. 3...A whaling captain promises his

wife, who is travelling with the ship, that he will give up the sea...He promises to honor her plea to return to the farm...Suddenly the lookout sights and announces a whale to starboard...At once the captain lunges for his harpoon and is off again on the chase...

#### NARRATOR II

THEME NO. 4...A former commander of a PT boat in World War II. describes his experiences fighting the Japanese...

#### NARRATOR I

THEME NO. 5...A sea captain who had lost his leg to a whale pursues the creature relentlessly, vowing its destruction. Month after month, across vast expanses of ocean, he hunts it, driving himself and his crew to final destruction.

#### NARRATOR II

What choice will the writer make?

If his medium of literary expression is to be a poem, he should select THEME NO. 1, his personal longing for the sea, its everlasting call. REASON: The theme describes intense personal emotion, of lyrical quality, which can best be captured through poetic expression. For examples, see such poems as Masfield's SPANISH WATERS and SEA FEVER.

#### NARRATOR I

If his medium is to be an essay, he should select THEME NO. 2, the pro's and con's of life at sea... In the essay he can most concisely express his personal opinions--analyzing and interpreting the good and bad features of a seaman's existence--AS HE HIMSELF SEES THEM... For such intimate expression of opinion the essay is an admirable medium... For an example see Conrad's fine essay, "Landfalls and Departures," in his book, "Mirror of the Sea."

#### NARRATOR II

If his medium is to be a play or a short story, he should select THEME NO. 3, that of the whaling captain who breaks his promise to his wife. REASON: This is a short, single incident, a segment of a larger story, a climax in itself, a true "slice of life." A writer could recreate these events artistically either as a play or a short story...

#### NARRATOR I

Actually, this theme was the inspiration for a one-act play, entitled "Ile," Eugene O'Neill's stirring drama of whaling captain David Keeney and his wife Annie. But it could just as well have been presented as a short story. For a short story is also a segment, a single narrative unit that can stand by itself.

#### NARRATOR II

If his medium is to be biography, he should select



THEME NO. 4, life aboard a PT boat in World War II. Here the narrative recapitulates the moments of high adventure and danger actually experienced by the captain and his crew in the naval struggle against Japan.

#### NARRATOR I

Eyewitness accounts, the ship's log, newspaper stories, and personal recollections all furnish vivid material for such a biography. For an actual biographical account of life on such a PT boat see the book about President Kennedy's experiences in the United States navy during World War II, entitled "PT-109".

#### NARRATOR II

If his medium is to be a novel, he should select THEME NO. 5, the epic struggle of a whaling captain obsessed with the almost demonic desire to revenge himself upon the great sea beast that had inflicted the crippling injury to his leg. . . . The long chase, full of stirring incidents of whaling life. . . the sharply etched individual characterizations of the captain and the other officers and the crew. . . the conflicts that arise among them. . . and the final tumultuous climax of the pursuit of the great whale -- all these require a wide, sweeping canvas. . . room enough for the elaboration and development of plot, characterization, background and style. Such a canvas is available only in the all-embracing medium of the novel as a literary form. . . And such a story has actually been told in the great American novel, "Moby Dick," epic of the sea by Herman Melville. . . .

#### NARRATOR I

And now--to answer the question about the novel which we raised earlier: How does it differ from other literary types: first, in SUBJECT, second, in METHOD OF TREATMENT?

#### NARRATOR II

First, the novel deals with fictional or imaginative subjects as opposed to those of fact. Many of its themes deal with the unusual, the different, the less common aspects of human life. However, the novelist has not neglected as material the ordinary and the commonplace in human existence. He has also selected these as themes; and by his skill as a literary artist invested these commonplace elements with dignity and importance.

#### NARRATOR I

Second, the novelist treats his subjects in a different way. Other literary forms--the poem, the short story, the play, the essay--are also media for imaginative expression. But the novelist's strokes are generally broader, his artistic vision more sweeping. The novel offers him greater breadth and scope in which to develop his theme than any other literary form. And except for a rare novel in verse, such as "John Brown's Body" by Stephen Vincent Benet, it is a prose form.

#### (BAND)

#### NARRATOR II

#### PART III. . . The Growth of the Novel. . .

#### NARRATOR I

This great literary medium, the novel, did not emerge full grown. . . It was many centuries in the making. . . It has its roots deep in the past. . .

#### NARRATOR II

It is linked to the story-tellers of Greece and Rome, to Icelanders and their sagas. . .

#### NARRATOR I

Religion had a striking influence. . . Medieval priests wove parables and allegories into their sermons. . . The powerful books of the Bible with their stories of human conflict contributed. . . The King Arthur legends added tales of the Holy Grail and knightly chivalry. . .

#### NARRATOR II

Many nations shaped the novel. . .

#### NARRATOR I

Italy--through its story-teller, Boccaccio, author of "The Decameron," a collection of 100 prose tales narrated by aristocrats taking refuge from a plague in medieval Florence. . . From the Italians came the word "novella," to describe such a compact prose tale, NOVELLA, origin of our word "novel."

#### NARRATOR II

Spain--with its picaresque stories, tales of rogues and adventurers, and with its brilliant satire on medieval chivalry, "Don Quixote," by Cervantes. . .

#### NARRATOR I

France--where the modern novel probably began in 1532, with Rabelais' great work, "Gargantua and Pantagruel." Rabelais, French physician and monk, told the rousing adventures of the giant Gargantua, setting forth his views on war, education, and the monastic life at the same time.

#### NARRATOR II

England--in the 14th century, where the eminent poet Chaucer gave direction to the novel. Chaucer wrote "The Canterbury Tales," stories in verse told by colorful pilgrims en route to the city of Canterbury.

#### NARRATOR I

From England, in the 17th and 18th century, came such writers as Defoe, with his rogue story, "Moll Flanders," and his immortal "Robinson Crusoe" . . . Jane Austen, with her witty studies of

British society...and Sir Walter Scott, with his colorful historical novels...

#### NARRATOR II

In the 18th century, also, a new literary word was heard on people's lips--the word "novel"-- to describe a longer prose narrative. Thus "novel" came to supplant the term "romance," which had included verse as well as prose.

#### NARRATOR I

From England and the European continent the novel spread to many other shores, attaining its greatest development in the last two hundred years...The American novel emerged as an important medium in the 19th century...

#### NARRATOR II

In the last fifty years the novel has undergone great change, mirroring the epochal social, political, and technological changes of the 20th century... New patterns, such as the "stream of consciousness" technique and unprecedented frankness in theme, treatment, and language, have characterized its evolution.

#### NARRATOR I

As the novel has grown and changed, the novelist, like other artists, has subjected himself to searching self-appraisal, asking "Where am I going? What am I trying to do?"

#### NARRATOR II

How does the novelist envision his role in the literary world? What does he conceive to be his function and sphere of influence? What qualifications must he possess for this role?...Let us see...

#### (BAND)

#### NARRATOR II

...Part IV...Qualifications of the Novelist

#### NARRATOR I

...Approved!

#### NARRATOR II

...Disapproved...disapproved...disapproved...

#### NARRATOR I

This is the Literary Foundation, patron and sponsor of aspiring young writers--poets, dramatists, novelists, others...Many applications are received here daily for fellowships, grants, and subsidies...These help to finance worthy writers ...to encourage promising new talent.

#### NARRATOR II

Standards of admission are extremely rigorous at the Foundation...Far more applications are rejected than accepted.

#### NARRATOR I

...Two promising young writers have just applied, each for the purpose of writing a novel...Candidate A., a former medical aide and teacher in Africa, is planning a novel on his experiences there. Candidate B., with a stage background, wishes to depict the fortunes of a theatrical family.

Each is talented, earnest, and enthusiastic...with a tremendous desire to succeed.

Yet Candidate A. is accepted...while Candidate B. is rejected...

#### NARRATOR II

By what standards did the Board arrive at its decision?...What qualities did it look for in a man who aspired to be a novelist?

#### NARRATOR I

Here are some of the important attributes they sought--the ones that great novelists themselves have always found indispensable:

#### NARRATOR II

The would-be novelist must bring to his work--

#### NARRATOR I

First, KNOWLEDGE:

--which Dostoevsky regarded as the foundation of the artist's equipment. "An artist," he maintained, "must acquaint himself down to the smallest detail, not only with the technique of writing, but with everything--current, no less than historical events --relating to the reality which he desires to show forth."

#### NARRATOR II

How did the two candidates for a literary grant qualify on this score--the requirement of knowledge?...This is what the Board found:

#### NARRATOR I

Candidate A. had read extensively on Africa, talked with men in government, and lived among its people. His book knowledge was supplemented by first-hand experiences and personal contact. Candidate B., however, had only a superficial knowledge of the theatre. He had not even troubled to acquaint himself with its extensive history.

#### NARRATOR II

Second qualification--EXPERIENCE:



--The novelist's experience," asserted Henry Fielding, "must be not only with the wise, the good, the learned, and the polite, but with every kind of character."

#### NARRATOR I

On the score of experience both candidates qualified. A., however, had voluntarily undertaken to work with the poor and deprived in a backward area of the world.

#### NARRATOR II

#### Third qualification--CONSCIENCE:

--the author's moral point of view, his soul--or as Tolstoy put it, "His clear, definite, and fresh view of the universe, \*\*\*his ability to illuminate life."

#### NARRATOR I

In this respect, Candidate A. looked upon the aspirations of the primitive people whom he had chosen to depict with sympathy and compassion. B., on the other hand, concerned himself only with the sensational and tawdry in human existence. In the specimen chapters which each candidate submitted, he drew uncritically a chief character who lacked moral fibre and possessed a distorted sense of values.

#### NARRATOR II

#### Fourth qualification--VERSATILITY:

--the capacity to handle with equal facility themes dealing with what Hardy called "grandeur in sorri-ness and sorriness in grandeur."

#### NARRATOR I

In this connection A. found nobility in the less appealing aspects of human existence. B. concerned himself exclusively with the flashy and the glittering features of actors' lives.

#### NARRATOR II

#### Fifth qualification--TECHNICAL SKILL

--skill in literary composition...fluency of language and clarity of expression...and a style combining both grace and lucidity, a feeling for what Conrad called "the shape and ring of sentences."

#### NARRATOR I

From this standpoint, A. writes well with a luminous, vigorous style that carries his narrative smoothly along...B. has the ability to tell a story... But his bare, dry style, lacking color and sparkle, detracts from the interest of his narrative...

#### NARRATOR II

#### Sixth qualification--SKILL AT CHARACTERIZATION:

--the ability to conceive and elaborate a character...

the skill to reveal the inner workings of his mind and to explore others' reactions to him...the talent to sustain him and carry him through as events modify and shape his character "for better or worse." Such is the essence of adept characterization--a major attribute of the great novelist.

For, as Anthony Trollope described it: "I live with my characters (until) I may say that I know the tone of voice, the colour of the hair, every flame of the eye, and the very clothes they wear... Thence has come whatever success I have attained."

#### NARRATOR I

To qualify, A. lived intensively among the people who were to become his fictional characters... sharing their pain as well as their moments of happiness... B. also knew his characters, the people of the theatre first hand, but, unlike A., could not reproduce their lives and personalities with any great depth or insight.

#### NARRATOR II

For all the foregoing, compelling reasons the Foundation agreed that Candidate A. showed the greater promise as a novelist and accepted him. They feel that he will mature into a writer of distinction.

#### (BAND)

#### NARRATOR I

#### PART V. ---Technique of the Novel

#### NARRATOR II

Your attention, please... The meeting will come to order...

#### NARRATOR I

You are a student of creative writing, attending the final session of the Writers' Summer Workshop, held annually somewhere in New England... You have published some poetry, several short stories, and a few magazine articles... You are now interested in perfecting your technique in the longer narrative form, and have therefore enrolled in the seminar devoted to the novel.

#### NARRATOR II

The seminar has concerned itself with the technique of the working novelist... with the elements of his craft that he must perfect--organization and plot structure, method of telling the story, characterization, dialogue, setting, and style... Many writers, both established and new, have attended the Workshop and presented their views... Now the chairman is about to summarize... He will review the major questions raised and the answers advanced by the group...

## NARRATOR I

### QUESTION 1--On Structure:

"I am writing a long novel dealing with the Revolutionary War in America... I plan to treat many important historical incidents and develop both true and fictional characters... As I proceed, I find it difficult to give full scope to my narrative without sacrificing intensive development of character..."

"Am I justified, in an historical work of this sort, in concentrating more on the story and less on detailed treatment of my characters?"

## NARRATOR II

ANSWER: "This is a problem that has been faced by many novelists who have attempted this large, panoramic type of work. Dickens, for example, was confronted with the problem in writing such extensive works as "A Tale of Two Cities," "David Copperfield," "Pickwick Papers." His solution was to use a comprehensive or inclusive method of treatment, crowding his literary canvas with a multitude of incidents and characters. Although our interest in the vigorous story and colorful personalities of these novels rarely flags, we are troubled by their loose-knit structure, their episodic nature, their dependence on coincidence at times to tie together different skeins of the plot."

"Henry James, on the other hand, in much of his later work, such as "Portrait of a Lady," "The Ambassadors," and "Wings of the Dove," was the exclusive type of novelist. He subjected his characters to intense psychological analysis, portraying their inner thoughts, their emotions, and their reactions to one another. Incident is kept to a minimum in these works; intensive character development is all important. Furthermore, although James--like Flaubert, strongly identified himself with his characters, he rarely allows his own personality to intrude."

"There are many difficulties in adopting either the comprehensive or intensive approach to the novel. Your solution may lie in a compromise--either giving full scope to your story and developing only the more important characters in depth--or narrowing the range of your action to a smaller period of the Revolution and developing more fully a larger number of characters."

## NARRATOR I

### QUESTION 2--ON NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE

"I am troubled by the problem of the best narrative method to employ. I have studied many works of fiction--some told in the first person, others in the third; some through an exchange of letters, others through the "stream of consciousness" technique."

"Which method do you feel offers the modern novelist the greatest flexibility in telling a story?"

## NARRATOR II

ANSWER: "The third person narrative is the most

common and generally the most effective. The writer using it becomes an all-knowing narrator. He can tell a story objectively and also portray the shifting moods and interrelationships of his characters with greater accuracy and variety."

"But these narrative methods are not mutually exclusive. Combinations or variations of them are found in many works of literature. Thus you would be well advised to employ that narrative method or combination of methods most suited to the particular novel you plan to write."

## NARRATOR I

### QUESTION 3--ON DIALOGUE

"I have written extensively and successfully for the Little Theatre group in my community. However, I am making slow progress on the novel that I am writing on my war experiences. I find the novel much more exacting and complex, far more unwieldy than drama. Am I plunging in beyond my depth?"

## NARRATOR II

ANSWER: "If you have handled dialogue successfully as a playwright, you probably have some potentialities as a novelist. You should, therefore, persevere in attempting to master this form."

"Dialogue has always presented great difficulties for writers, even for some of our most successful novelists. Flaubert, for example, handled dialogue well. Yet he was often set back for weeks because he was so determined to write dialogue that was accurate and convincing."

"For dialogue must be differentiated and objective. It must not only serve to identify and set characters apart; it must also reveal their thoughts and reactions and the interplay of their emotions. Dialogue must be accurate and idiomatic, not stilted or artificial. It must capture the natural rhythms and flow of speech. It must not be extraneous or digressive--but must help to advance the action."

"You will find your experience in playwriting of great benefit to you as a novelist. Ability to write good dialogue will help make your story more realistic, more credible, more warmly personal. Through skilful dialogue you can fill out your role of third person narrator by letting your characters literally speak for themselves."

## NARRATOR I

### QUESTION IV...ON PLOT

"In the novel on my war experiences, I am also faced with the problem of selection and arrangement. With such a mass of material to choose from, how can I construct a workable plot?"

## NARRATOR II

A well-ordered plot will give both structure and substance to your work. Some novelists, we



concede, have been successful with loosely constructed plots or little plot at all. But, as a beginner, you should try to sift your material and arrange the key events so that they move logically and chronologically toward a climax.

"Admittedly, real life is not so neatly ordered. Yet it provides enough moments of drama, conflict, and suspense for a competent writer to discriminate and to select and arrange the most meaningful experiences in some orderly pattern."

NARRATOR I

#### QUESTION V... ON SETTING

"In some of the chapters read aloud in the Novel Writing seminar, I found my interest lagging as the writers paused to sketch the background or setting of the story. In one work, in particular, a novel on college life, the writer spent fully five minutes describing the college buildings and campus.

"What do you regard as the proper emphasis to be given to background or setting in the story?"

NARRATOR II

ANSWER: "The novelist setting the college background elaborated it too much, failed to integrate it with plot and characterization. His description of the campus was accurate and colorful, but it failed to advance the story. Like the setting for a stage play, the background can only come to life when the characters begin to move around in it or are influenced by it. A notable example of this can be found in Thomas Hardy's novel 'The Return of the Native.' In this work the rural setting of Egdon Heath exerts a powerful effect on the attitudes and actions of the chief characters."

NARRATOR I

#### QUESTION VI... ON STYLE

"I am a newspaper reporter, interested in trying my hand at a novel. I have reported on events both in this country and abroad. My editors characterize my style as 'hard-hitting, crisp, and incisive.' They feel that I can succeed at a novel. I am writing one on my experiences investigating conditions in a big city slum. I feel, however, that my literary style is inadequate for the purpose. On the basis of the two chapters you have seen, do you advise me to continue?"

NARRATOR II

ANSWER: "Like the young playwright planning a novel, you begin with one strong element in your favor. In this case it is the ability to handle dialogue convincingly. In yours it is the sharpness of observation that has made you a good reporter, reinforced by your clear, objective style.

"In the two chapters you submitted we find several important ingredients of good style. You have an extensive vocabulary, the ability to convey shades

of expression, clarity, simplicity, and logic. All these are vital attributes.

"But what we feel is lacking are eloquence, warmth, and grace. You still need that subtle polish and refinement that lifts a good 'bread-and-butter' prose style into the class of a distinguished one. Whether you can acquire this additional refinement we cannot tell at the moment.

"Many eminent writers have by the force of their personality and their message overcome the handicap of an average or undistinguished style. But good style in writing like that in personal attire imparts greater elegance and distinction."

NARRATOR I

...The meeting is adjourned...

NARRATOR II

In this closing session of the Writers' Workshop you have heard a critical analysis of the novelist ... of the basic equipment which he needs ... and of the essentials of his art--narrative technique, characterization and dialogue, background design, and style. It is these that he must possess in good measure to promote his maximum growth...

(BAND)

NARRATOR II

#### Part VI... Some Famous World Novels Examined

NARRATOR I

This is the longest corridor in the Universal Hall of Fame... The one dedicated to the world's distinguished writers... For the great literary artists, who can touch and stir men's souls, enjoy a far more honored place than most in the world's affections.

NARRATOR II

Nominated for a permanent niche in this literary shrine are six novelists, each immortalized by one monumental work with which his name is inseparably associated.

NARRATOR I

In considering each nomination, you are asked to decide what each novel has contributed to the world's literary heritage.

NARRATOR II

NOMINATION NO. 1--"Don Quixote," by Miguel de Cervantes, published in two parts in 1605 and 1615, ten years apart, and translated into more languages than any other book except the Bible. A literary achievement which its author,



despite much personal suffering and neglect by the public, lived to see widely acclaimed. A work for all ages, for, as Cervantes himself said: "Children handle it, youngsters read it, grown men understand it, and old people applaud it."

#### NARRATOR I

REASONS FOR THE NOMINATION: Selected for its---  
Style--brilliant, satirical, melancholy, profound.

Theme--Ostensibly a satire on the exaggerated exploits of chivalry... Actually a penetrating social study of Cervantes' Spain--its morality, its politics, its social structure--seen through the eyes of its great idealistic hero and his squire, Sancho.

#### Characterization

A portrayal of Quixote, the supposed visionary, and Sancho, called the practical man... Actually, the characters are reversed. The erratic knight sees the outside world with astigmatic vision, but inwardly he dreams of a perfect, ideal world. Nor is he content to sit back and speculate. Even in his wild exploits he is the real man of action, Sancho, the hesitant talker.

#### NARRATOR II

--Don Quixote, who, frustrated and defeated, and at the end of his long and turbulent journey, can still lift up his head and say:

"I risked all for adventure: I did my best and was overthrown, and though it cost me my honor, I have not lost my integrity and I can still perform my promise."

#### NARRATOR I

NOMINATION NO. 2: "Robinson Crusoe," by Daniel Defoe... Published in 1719... and still a literary treasure after two hundred years...

#### NARRATOR II

Selected for its--

Theme--The indomitability and ingenuity of a shipwrecked mariner, his twenty-four year struggle for survival on an isolated island, and his victory over the forces of Nature, time, and solitude.

Characterization--The picture of a man endowed with extraordinary resolution and strength... fighting stoically and, with eventual success, against hunger, danger, and the loss of human companionship.

Style--Simple, incisive, vigorous, conveying both the beauties and terrors of solitude, of life away from a turbulent world... Despite fear, hardship, and loneliness Crusoe remains uncomplaining, devout, a lover of God and his fellow men.

Defoe has endowed his hero with great compassion and humanity. Nowhere is it more eloquently shown than in Crusoe's thoughts on the basic decency and intelligence of all men and on the power of education to lift them from savagery. As he joyously undertakes to teach Friday the arts of civilization and sees him grow day by day, he reflects on the so-called "primitive mind" in these words:

"He has bestowed upon them the same powers, the same reason, the same affections, the same sentiments of kindness and obligation, the same passions and resentments of wrongs, the same sense of gratitude, sincerity, fidelity, and all the capacities of doing good and receiving good, that He has given to us; and that when He pleases to offer to them occasions of exerting these, they are as ready, nay, more ready, to apply them to the right uses for which they were bestowed than we are."

#### NARRATOR II

NOMINATION No. 3--"War and Peace", by Leo Tolstoy... a monumental, panoramic novel of the Napoleonic era in Russian history... Published in serial form from 1865 to 1869.

#### NARRATOR I

Selected for its--

Aim and Scope--To show the vast forces that shape human history... to show the individual's influence on society and society's impact on the individual... to analyze the great issues of war and peace as they alter human destiny...

Structure--Though loosely knit and episodic in structure, though filled with hosts of characters whom it is sometimes hard to keep track of, "War and Peace" has a large over-all design into which the individual pieces fit.

#### NARRATOR II

Characterization--No one hero or villain dominates the novel but most memorable among the characters are: the rough and frivolous Pierre Bezuhov, whom war shapes into a balanced and responsible personality... his friend, Prince Andrei Bolkonsky, the proud and cynical aristocrat who suffers a horrible death in the battle of Borodino... Nikolai Rostov, dashing young nobleman who finds a soldier's life exhilarating and exciting... Maria, Pierre's sister whom Nikolai marries and who helps him find contentment... charming Natasha, Nikolai's sister, who, after Prince Andrei, her lover, dies in battle, marries Pierre and brings him happiness... and disreputable, pleasure-loving Anatole Kuragin.

Sharply delineated, too, are the two chief military antagonists, the wily Napoleon and his determined Russian opponent, General Kutuzhov, as their forces clash in massive battles in which whole armies and the civilian population alike are deci-



mated--a struggle which ends in Napoleon's ignominious and shattering retreat from Moscow.

Symbolic of the heroic resistance of the Russian peasantry to Napoleon is the character of Platon Karataev, the valiant soldier whose simple code of morality is devotion and help to his fellow men, and who imbues the once worldly and cynical Pierre with the same spirit of selfless dedication to his fellows...

#### NARRATOR I

Style--Caustic and bitterly satirical, as when Tolstoy is attacking the shams and pretensions of high Russian society, the conceit of Napoleon, the heartlessness of General Pfuhl, planning a military campaign as if his men were toy soldiers... Richly realistic, as when Tolstoy describes the Russian countryside, the changing seasons, or the physical traits of such characters as ungainly Pierre or plump Napoleon... Encyclopedic, as when he describes the massing of troops, the fury and din of battle, moments of victory and defeat.

#### NARRATOR II

NOMINATION NO. 4--"Madame Bovary," by Gustave Flaubert, published in 1857, perhaps the most famous French novel... A powerful study in realism... Written with painstaking care and great literary skill, the novel is a searing study of middle class attitudes, customs, and morality in the French society of Flaubert's time.

#### NARRATOR I

Selected for its--

Theme--The drabness, coarseness, and superficiality which Flaubert found at the roots of French provincial life--as mirrored in the life of the heroine, Emma Bovary, wife of a dull and plodding country doctor.

Characterization--Emma, reader of sentimental romantic novels, disgruntled with the drab, uninspiring life which she leads, becomes involved in secret affairs with lovers, Leon and Rodolphe. She deceives her husband, gets him into increasingly heavy debt, and finally, on the verge of exposure for her intrigues, poisons herself... Homais, the smug, scheming pharmacist, who manages to get Emma into his power, is another brilliantly drawn character...

Style--To show the ironic contrast between Emma's real life and her romantic dream world Flaubert writes with delicacy, precision, and intense insight into the mind of his heroine. In Emma Bovary he has created a character and a situation of symbolic, universal significance.

#### NARRATOR II

Perhaps the most poignant and heartbreaking moment in the book comes when Emma's husband,

Charles Bovary, the doctor, a tragic figure, finds the hidden love letters of Emma after her suicide:

"All Leon's letters were there. There could be no doubt this time. He devoured them to the very last, ransacked every corner, all the furniture, all the drawers, behind the walls, sobbing, crying aloud, distraught, mad. He found a box and broke it open with a kick. Rodolphe's portrait flew full in his face in the midst of the overturned love letters."

#### NARRATOR I

--Shortly after, the grieving, bitterly disillusioned husband dies of a broken heart...

#### NARRATOR II

NOMINATION NO. 5--"Huckleberry Finn," by Mark Twain, published in 1885, a joyous and sparkling reconstruction of the author's boyhood, generally regarded as his finest novel.

#### NARRATOR I

Selected for its--

Theme--Adventures of the hero and an escaped Negro slave on an improvised raft along the Mississippi River... Realism, lifted by Mark Twain's colorful and imaginative touch, into a romantic fantasy of boyhood.

Characterization--Most thoroughly developed are the portraits of Huckleberry Finn, derelict hero of the book, a resourceful and enterprising boy who balks at attempts to impose the veneer of civilization and culture upon him... Huck, a symbol of the universal boy, hard-headed, practical, with a code of his own... and Jim, the runaway slave, fiercely loyal and devoted to Huck, Jim, ingenious and courageous, an unforgettable characterization...

Style--Terse, colorful, vivid, colloquial, authentically reproducing the speech of boys, in particular, with amazing accuracy.

#### NARRATOR II

Confronted by the problem of turning Jim over to his owner or letting him continue on to freedom, Huck faces one of the most difficult dilemmas of his life:

"It made me shiver. And I about made up my mind to pray, and see if I couldn't try quitting being the kind of boy I was, and be better. So I kneeled down. But the words wouldn't come. Why wouldn't they? It warn't no use to try and hide it from Him... Nor from me, neither... I knowed very well why they wouldn't come... It was because my heart warn't right... it was because I warn't square... it was because I was playin' double... I was lettin' on to give up sin, but away inside of me I was holding on to the biggest one of all. I was trying to make my



mouth say I would do the right thing and the clean thing, and go and write to Jim's owner and tell where he was; but deep down in me I knowed it was a lie, and He knowed it... You can't pray a lie--I found that out."

#### NARRATOR I

NOMINATION NO. 6--"Moby Dick", by Herman Melville... Called "the world's greatest sea novel,"... an American epic... Published in 1851... An engrossing adventure story, and at the same time, a massive symbolic work probing good and evil and the role of Man and God in the universe.

#### NARRATOR II

Selected for its--

Theme--The true meaning of "Moby Dick" is still in critical dispute; nor has Melville himself fully resolved it. But behind Captain Ahab's relentless search for the whale, Moby Dick, the mighty sea monster that had sheared off his leg, lies more than the thirst for revenge and destruction. To Ahab the whale is the incarnation of evil and he, Ahab, is the self-appointed avenger. The whale, in this vast, allegorical work, may represent evil, but it is one of Nature's creatures. It is sacrilege to destroy it. Thus, in trying to annihilate it, Ahab is no less evil.

Characterization--Ahab, obsessed, tormented, driven as if by demons, pushing inexorably on in his feverish hunt for the great white whale... Starbuck, the first mate, the voice of reason, who tries to temper and check Ahab in his dangerous mission, and to whom Ahab finally bares his tortured soul... Queequeg, former cannibal, devoted and loyal friend of Ishmael, the narrator, and fearless sailor and harpooner... Ishmael, the spiritual voice of Melville himself, appalled at Ahab's demonic fury and insane desire to find and destroy Moby Dick... Fedallah, Ahab's Parsee servant, a mysterious, shadowy figure aboard

the ship, whose strange prophecies about the fate of the ship come grimly and strangely true.

Style--Profoundly moving, at times almost majestic... Powerful and vigorous in the narrative sequences... sonorous and vividly poetic in the descriptive passages... Rises to Biblical solemnity and power in Ahab's great soul-searching soliloquies, violent, denunciatory, seething with passion...

#### NARRATOR I

Here is Ahab, in his last agonized outburst against the universe, inveighing against the whale as he sinks to his death:

"Towards thee I roll, thou all-destroying but unconquering whale; to the last I grapple with thee; from hell's heart I stab at thee; for hate's sake I spit my last breath at thee. Sink all coffins and all hearses to one common pool... Thus, I give up the spear!"...

#### NARRATOR II

This concludes the nominations for the Universal Hall of Fame... You are invited to acquaint -- or reacquaint -- yourself with these superb novels and to cast your vote for the admission of their creators into this great literary shrine.

... As we leave the Hall, there come once more to mind the penetrating observations of Jane Austen on what it means to plan and consummate the long work of fiction, the novel:

#### NARRATOR I

"Only a novel... In short, only some work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, in which the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humor are conveyed to the world in the best chosen language."

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Mr. Morris Schreiber, author and narrator of THE ANATOMY OF LANGUAGE, is a New York City School principal and college lecturer in English. He has taught or supervised classes in English on all levels of the system for more than twenty years.

In addition to feature articles on education in official publications, he is:

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Author of *Favorite Myths and Legends* (Grosset & Dunlap)

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