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978-0-521-14081-2 - Selections: From Classic and Modern English Literature

Clare West

Frontmatter

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# Selections

From Classic and  
Modern English Literature

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## INTRODUCTION

*Selections* contains thirty extracts from classic works in the English language. These span three centuries of literary achievement, from Daniel Defoe, who was born in 1660 and wrote what many consider to be the first English novel, to P. D. James, the current ‘Queen of Crime’, writing in the last years of the twentieth century. This book is an introduction to the best of English literature. I hope that the texts chosen will not only be of interest in themselves, but will also encourage students to read other works by these authors.

### The texts

These are unsimplified and have been carefully selected for level, so that intermediate to upper-intermediate students, or those preparing for the Cambridge First Certificate or the IGCSE in ESL or Literature, will be able to understand them, with the help of the notes and exercises. The devices . . . or . . . . . are used occasionally to indicate where a few words or lines have been omitted.

The extracts are presented in the chronological order in which they were originally published in book form. This gives an interesting overview of the way the English language has developed in the last three hundred years. However, units may be studied in any order.

### Biographical details

Each unit starts with a biographical sketch of the author, outlining his or her literary

significance, with suggestions for further reading. There follows an introduction to the text. Careful reading of this page, and the extract itself, could be done as homework to prepare for the lesson.

### Notes

The notes immediately following the text are intended to clarify, in language suitable for the reader’s level, difficult vocabulary, structures or usage. Any ungrammatical or old-fashioned expressions are always commented on here, or in the exercises. Only the meaning of the word or expression as it is used in the text is given.

### Comprehension exercises

The comprehension exercises are designed to check the reader’s global understanding and to help him or her to appreciate the finer details of the text, which may not be apparent on the first reading. There is also a short preliminary exercise to check understanding of the author’s biographical details.

### Discussion and role-play

Discussion questions use elements of the text as a starting point, but tend to encompass wider themes, to encourage free expression of ideas. Seventeen of the units also have a role-play section, which provides extended oral practice in realistic everyday situations.

There is a short Further Discussion section at the back of the book, where students are asked to compare units, writers and writing styles.

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### Extension exercises

The extension exercises have two aims: to draw students' attention to important areas of syntax and lexis in the text, and to give extended practice in using them. These areas have been selected for their relevance to FCE preparation. The example word, phrase or sentence which begins each exercise always comes directly from the text.

A variety of exercise types has been used, to maintain reader interest and to reflect the different examination tasks. No specific structural rules are given: students are advised to consult *Practical English Usage*, *English Grammar in Use* or *Recycling Your English* if they are in doubt.

### Composition work

The composition section in each unit provides suitable homework or follow-up tasks, within

the FCE word limit. These questions cover all the main types of composition set in Paper 2 of the revised FCE, although the emphasis is naturally on narrative, descriptive and discursive writing.

### Index

Teachers and students can refer to the Index on page 128 to check where a particular structure or vocabulary area is dealt with.

A **With Key** edition of *Selections* is available.

I very much hope that teachers and students will enjoy *Selections* and will feel inspired to explore English literature further.

*Clare West, 1997*