The International Story

An Anthology with Guidelines for Reading and Writing about Fiction
The International Story
An Anthology with Guidelines for Reading and Writing about Fiction

RUTH SPACK
Tufts University
PREFACE

The International Story: An Anthology with Guidelines for Reading and Writing about Fiction features a generous selection of thought-provoking classic and contemporary short stories from many different countries. Unique to this text is the integration of literary works with detailed guidelines for reading and writing and for crafting an interpretive essay. With its exciting international scope, the text has considerable appeal to a diverse group of readers.

The International Story addresses the academic needs of students who can benefit linguistically, culturally, and intellectually from exposure to literature. Students can begin with personal responses to the readings, including their lack of understanding, and move toward reflection and analysis, using interpretive tools explained and demonstrated in the text. As they gain confidence in their powers of interpretation, students are challenged to think critically about what they read and to develop analytical and argumentative skills that enable them to present and support their ideas.

Bringing different histories, cultural backgrounds, beliefs, biases, and experiences to the stories, students can compare their responses and thereby widen their perspectives. A deeper understanding of the stories can be achieved in the classroom as ideas are shared and meanings are unraveled.

THE LEVEL

The International Story is designed for literature-based composition courses and for advanced ESL programs that focus on the connections between reading and writing. Supporting linguistic and cultural material makes it possible for students of any background to appreciate the international literary works.

THE STRUCTURE

The International Story has four major sections: Part One: Reading Fiction; Part Two: Anthology of Short Stories; Part Three: Writing an Essay; and Glossary.

Part One: Reading Fiction

Part One provides strategies for reading short fiction. Throughout Part One, the reading/writing strategies of several students at work are demonstrated; and students are given the opportunity to engage in similar processes.

Chapter 1 focuses on students’ initial reactions to what they read. The chapter presents strategies such as previewing, using contextual clues to
Preface

guess at meaning, annotating, keeping a reading log, making double-entry notes, keeping a literary journal, and participating in class discussions. Students are encouraged to explore their own reactions and to recognize that there are many possible responses to a given text.

Chapter 2 focuses on analysis and interpretation. The chapter includes clear, accessible explanations of literary terms. Critical strategies help students (1) analyze the elements of a story (plot, setting, character, point of view, imagery, symbolism, tone, irony, speech, structure) and (2) interpret a story’s meanings or significance. Activities invite students both to create and to analyze scenes and characters. Through these activities, they can see how language can be used both to compose and to comprehend a story.

Part Two: Anthology of Short Stories

Part Two consists of two chapters: Chapter 3, The Stories, and Chapter 4, Discussion Activities. Because the stories and discussion activities are in separate chapters, students are able to come to the end of a story and examine their thoughts about it without having to attend to someone else’s agenda.

Chapter 3 comprises twenty-two complete stories from seventeen countries. The stories offer a wide range of choices in terms of length, style, period, gender, culture, point of view, and theme, yet lend themselves well to comparison. Footnotes are kept to a minimum so that students can read fluently and interact freely with the stories.

The stories are presented chronologically, according to the dates they were written or originally published. Spanning over one hundred years (1884–1989), they provide a sense of social history as they move from the nineteenth through the twentieth century. (A separate table of contents presents an alternative arrangement by geographic area).

Several of the stories were published in the United States and reflect the diversity of American culture. The stories published in other countries reflect traditions and concerns of and within many cultures, although, of course, no one story can be representative of a whole culture. Taken together, the stories allow for a rich multicultural and cross-cultural experience in the classroom. Each of the stories has universal as well as cultural meanings. Story after story raises issues about choices and challenges that all readers grapple with and attempt to resolve.

Chapter 4 provides discussion activities designed to stimulate students’ reactions to the stories without being overly directive. Suggestions lead readers to make their own discoveries and to ask their own questions. The activities include reflective, analytical, and creative writing. All of the activities foster an awareness of what is involved in the shaping of a text.

Part Three: Writing an Essay

Part Three prepares students to fulfill an essay assignment to analyze and interpret a work of fiction. The four chapters include succinct guidelines to show students what they can do to achieve their writing objectives.
Preface

Each chapter tries to make students aware of what an academic audience might expect and how to go about fulfilling those expectations. Examples of student writers at work demonstrate some composing processes. At the same time, the text emphasizes flexibility: students are reminded again and again that different strategies work for different writers.

Chapter 5 provides guidelines for crafting an interpretive essay. To fulfill the essay assignment, students are guided to practice strategies such as defining the audience, taking notes, brainstorming, focusing, organizing, drafting, evaluating, revising, and completing an essay.

Chapter 6 provides guidelines for selecting evidence for critical analysis of a story. Students learn ways to analyze key words and phrases, ask questions about elements of fiction and abstract ideas in a story, and develop the vocabulary they need in their own writing. The chapter also includes suggestions for topics that students can focus on in their essays.

Chapter 7 provides guidelines for selecting, incorporating, and punctuating quotations and for citing and documenting sources.

Chapter 8 provides guidelines for proofreading and editing an essay, observing some unique conventions of writing about literature, and producing a final manuscript.

Glossary

The alphabetically arranged Glossary defines words and idioms taken from the stories. Multiple definitions allow for different interpretations of the passage in which the word occurs.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

For a number of years, students in the courses I teach at Tufts University worked with a variety of drafts of The International Story, which they knew only as a work in progress. I learned much from their responses, which shaped my writing as well my perspectives on literature across cultures.

Several reviewers read and responded to my work with great care and insight. I am pleased to have the opportunity to acknowledge the contributions of Diana Berkowitz, Nassau Community College; David Eskey, University of Southern California; Virginia Heringer, Pasadena City College; Linda Wallace Jones, St. Louis University; John Mathenia, University of Tennessee, Martin; Melinda Reichelt, Purdue University; and Jonathan Seely, University of Arizona.

Over the years, I have exchanged ideas with many colleagues about teaching and learning, reading and writing, literature and composition. In particular, I would like to thank Lucy Ferris, Catherine Sadow, Roberta Steinberg, and Vivian Zamel for their encouragement and advice as I was preparing this book.

The staff at St. Martin’s Press has always given me the support and
respect that any author needs. To Naomi Silverman, editor; Denise Quirk, project manager; Emily Berleth, manager of publishing services; Sandy Cohen, permissions assistant; editorial assistants Sarah Crowley and Sarah Picchi: Thank you.
BRIEF CONTENTS

Introduction Literature and the Short Story 1

PART ONE: Reading Fiction 3
   Chapter One Developing Effective Reading Strategies: Understanding and Responding 5
   Chapter Two Developing Effective Reading Strategies: Analyzing and Interpreting 23

PART TWO: Anthology of Short Stories 43
   Chapter Three The Stories 45
   Chapter Four Discussion Activities 183

PART THREE: Writing an Essay 231
   Chapter Five Writing an Interpretive Essay 235
   Chapter Six Selecting Evidence for Critical Analysis of a Story 277
   Chapter Seven Quoting and Documenting Sources 316
   Chapter Eight The Editing Process 339

Glossary 345

Index 371
CONTENTS

Introduction  Literature and the Short Story  1

PART ONE
Reading Fiction  3

Chapter One  Developing Effective Reading Strategies: Understanding
and Responding  5

Before Reading  5
A First Reading  5
GUIDELINES FOR A FIRST READING  6
“The Story of an Hour,” Kate Chopin (United States, 1894)  6
Subsequent Readings  8
Establishing a Goal for Rereading  9
Defining Unfamiliar Vocabulary Words  9
GUIDELINES FOR USING CONTEXTUAL CLUES TO GUESS AT MEANING  10
Annotating  10
GUIDELINES FOR ANNOTATING  11
Keeping a Reading Log: Exploring Initial Reactions  12
Responding to the Whole Story  12
GUIDELINES FOR MAKING A READING LOG ENTRY  12
Responding to a Particular Passage: Making Double-Entry Notes  14
GUIDELINES FOR MAKING DOUBLE-ENTRY NOTES  16
Keeping a Literary Journal: Writing about Specific Topics  16
How and How Often Do I Write a Journal Entry?  16
How Will My Journal Be Evaluated?  17
How Do I Start?  17
What Do I Say?  17
Participating in and Taking Notes on Class Discussions  21

Chapter Two  Developing Effective Reading Strategies:
Analyzing and Interpreting  23

Examining Elements within a Story  23
Plot  23
Setting  25
Character  26
Contents

Point of View 28
Imagery 30
Symbolism 31
Tone 32
Irony 33
Speech 34
Structure 36
Foreshadowing 37

Researching Elements outside a Story 37
Placement in History 38
Placement in Literature 38
Link to Biography 38

Discovering Themes 38
Theme versus Subject 38
Theme versus Topic 39
Theme versus Moral 39

"The Ant and the Grasshopper," Aesop 39

PART TWO

Anthology of Short Stories 43

Chapter Three The Stories 45

"The Necklace," Guy de Maupassant (France, 1884) 46
She was one of those pretty and charming girls who are sometimes, as if by a mistake of destiny, born in a family of clerks.

"A Trifle from Real Life," Anton Chekhov (Russia, 1888) 53
Nikolai Ilitch Belayeff was a young gentleman of St. Petersburg, aged thirty-two, rosy, well fed, and a patron of the race-tracks.

"Two Portraits," Kate Chopin (United States, 1895) 58
Alberta having looked not very long into life, had not looked very far.

"The Americanization of Shadrach Cohen," Bruno Lessing (United States, 1903) 62
There is no set rule for the turning of the worm; most worms, however, turn unexpectedly.

"Araby," James Joyce (Ireland, 1914) 69
North Richmond Street, being blind, was a quiet street except at the hour when the Christian Brothers' School set the boys free.
Contents 

“War,” Luigi Pirandello (Italy, 1918) 74
The passengers who had left Rome by the night express had had to stop until dawn at the small station of Fabriano in order to continue their journey by the small old-fashioned local joining the main line with Sulmona.

“The Egg,” Sherwood Anderson (United States, 1920) 78
My father was, I am sure, intended by nature to be a cheerful, kindly man.

“Babylon Revisited,” F. Scott Fitzgerald (United States, 1931) 86
“And where’s Mr. Campbell?” Charlie asked.

“The Man Who Was Almost a Man,” Richard Wright (United States, 1940) 103
Dave struck out across the fields, looking homeward through paling light.

“Dead Men’s Path,” Chinua Achebe (Nigeria, 1953) 113
Michael Obi’s hopes were fulfilled much earlier than he had expected.

“Six Feet of the Country,” Nadine Gordimer (South Africa, 1953) 116
My wife and I are not real farmers—not even Lerice, really.

“Like a Bad Dream,” Heinrich Böll (Germany, 1966) 126
That evening we had invited the Zumpsens over for dinner, nice people, it was through my father-in-law that we had got to know them: ever since we have been married he has helped me to meet people who can be useful to me in business, and Zumpen can be useful: he is chairman of a committee which places contracts for large housing projects, and I have married into the excavating business.

“Swaddling Clothes,” Mishima Yukio (Japan, 1966) 132
He was always busy, Toshiko’s husband.

“A Handful of Dates,” Tayeb Salih (Sudan, 1968) 137
I must have been very young at the time.

“The Plane Reservation,” Massud Farzand (Iran, 1969) 141
We lived on 23 Sadness Street.

“The Verb to Kill,” Luisa Valenzuela (Argentina, 1975) 147
He kills—he killed—he will kill—he has killed—he had killed—he will have killed—he would have killed—he is killing—he was killing—he has been killing—he would have been killing—he will have been killing—he will be killing—he would be killing—he may kill.

“Girl,” Jamaica Kincaid (Antigua, 1978) 150
Wash the white clothes on Monday and put them on the stone heap . . .

“A Woman Like Me,” Xi Xi (Hong Kong, 1982) 152
A woman like me is actually unsuitable for any man’s love.
Contents

"The Street-Sweeping Show," Feng Jicai (China, 1982) 163
  "National Cleanup Week starts today," said Secretary Zhao, "and officials
everywhere are going out to join in the street sweeping."

"The Grass-Eaters," Krishnan Varma (India, 1985) 167
  For some time several years ago I was tutor to a spherical boy (now a
spherical youth).

"Las papas," Julio Ortega (Peru, 1988) 171
  He turned on the faucet of the kitchen sink and washed off the knife.

"Village," Estela Portillo Trambley (United States, 1989) 176
  Rico stood on top of a bluff overlooking Mai Cao.

Chapter Four Discussion Activities 183

Discussion Activities for “The Necklace” 183
Discussion Activities for “A Trifle from Real Life” 186
Discussion Activities for “Two Portraits” 188
Discussion Activities for “The Americanization of Shadrach Cohen” 190
Discussion Activities for “Araby” 192
Discussion Activities for “War” 195
Discussion Activities for “The Egg” 198
Discussion Activities for “Babylon Revisited” 200
Discussion Activities for “The Man Who Was Almost a Man” 203
Discussion Activities for “Dead Men’s Path” 205
Discussion Activities for “Six Feet of the Country” 207
Discussion Activities for “Like a Bad Dream” 209
Discussion Activities for “Swaddling Clothes” 211
Discussion Activities for “A Handful of Dates” 213
Discussion Activities for “The Plane Reservation” 215
Discussion Activities for “The Verb to Kill” 217
Discussion Activities for “Girl” 219
Discussion Activities for “A Woman Like Me” 221
Discussion Activities for “The Street-Sweeping Show” 223
Discussion Activities for “The Grass-Eaters” 225
Discussion Activities for “Las papas” 226
Discussion Activities for “Village” 228
PART THREE
Writing an Essay 231

Chapter Five  Writing an Interpretive Essay 235

Suggested Essay Assignments 235
Defining the Audience 235
Exploring a Topic 236
  Selecting a Story to Analyze 236
  Rereading and Taking Notes on the Story 238
  Brainstorming Ideas to Find and Develop a Topic 239
  GUIDELINES FOR MAKING A LIST 239
  GUIDELINES FOR FREEWriting 240
  GUIDELINES FOR LOOPIng 241
  GUIDELINES FOR CUBING 242
  GUIDELINES FOR CLUSTERING 243

Writing a Trial Draft 244
  GUIDELINES FOR WRITING A TRIAL DRAFT 244

Organizing the Essay 245
  The Introduction 246
  The Body 255
  The Conclusion 260

Writing and Evaluating an Interim Draft 262
  GUIDELINES FOR WRITING AN INTERIM DRAFT 263

Receiving Feedback on a Draft 264
  Peer Review 264
  GUIDELINES FOR PEER REVIEWING 267
  Instructor’s Comments 268

Revising 268
  GUIDELINES FOR REVISING 268
  What Should I Keep? 269
  What Should I Add? 269
  What Should I Delete? 269
  What Should I Change? 269
  What Should I Rearrange? 270
  What Should I Rethink? 270

Completing the Essay 272
  GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE ESSAY 272

“The Character of Louise Mallard,” Rosa Gutierrez (student essay) 272

Chapter Six  Selecting Evidence for Critical Analysis of a Story 277

Selecting Evidence about Character 277
  Analyzing Key Words and Phrases Related to Character 278
Contents

Developing a Vocabulary for Discussing Character 280
Asking Questions about Character 281
Focusing on a Topic for an Essay on Character 282

Selecting Evidence about Setting 283
Analyzing Key Words and Phrases Related to Setting 284
Developing a Vocabulary for Discussing Setting 286
Asking Questions about Setting 288
Focusing on a Topic for an Essay on Setting 288

Selecting Evidence about Point of View 289
Analyzing Key Words and Phrases Related to Point of View 290
Developing a Vocabulary for Discussing Point of View 291
Asking Questions about Point of View 292
Focusing on a Topic for an Essay on Point of View 293

Selecting Evidence about Imagery 294
Analyzing Key Words and Phrases Related to Imagery 295
Developing a Vocabulary for Discussing Imagery 296
Asking Questions about Imagery 298
Focusing on a Topic for an Essay on Imagery 298

Selecting Evidence about Symbolism 299
Analyzing Key Words and Phrases to Discover Symbolism 300
Developing a Vocabulary for Discussing Symbolism 302
Asking Questions about Symbolism 304
Focusing on a Topic for an Essay on Symbolism 305

Selecting Evidence about Tone 305
Analyzing Key Words and Sentences Related to Tone 306
Developing a Vocabulary for Discussing Tone 308
Asking Questions about Tone 310
Focusing on a Topic for an Essay on Tone 311

Selecting Evidence about an Abstract Idea 311
Analyzing References to an Abstract Idea 312
Developing a Vocabulary for Discussing an Abstract Idea 313
Asking Questions about an Abstract Idea 314
Focusing on a Topic for an Essay on an Abstract Idea 315

Chapter Seven Quoting and Documenting Sources 316

Quoting 316
Selecting a Quotation 316
GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING A QUOTATION 317
Incorporating Quotations into an Essay 318
GUIDELINES FOR INCORPORATING QUOTATIONS 318
Punctuating Quotations 324

Citing and Documenting Sources 327
Citing Course Material 327
Citing Outside Material 328
Contents

GUIDELINES FOR AVOIDING PLAGIARISM 330
GUIDELINES FOR PARAPHRASING 331
GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR LIST OF WORKS CITED 333
Preparing the List of Works Cited (Bibliography) 333
MLA GENERAL FORM: BOOKS 334
MLA GENERAL FORM: ARTICLES IN PERIODICALS 336

Chapter Eight The Editing Process 339

Editing 339
GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR EDITING 339

Proofreading 340
GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PROOFREADING 340

Observing Special Conventions for Writing about Literature 341
GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR PROOFREADING AND EDITING REFERENCES TO READINGS 341
GUIDELINES FOR USING THE APPROPRIATE VERB TENSE 342
GUIDELINES FOR REFERRING TO THE AUTHOR BY NAME 343

Manuscript Form for Final Copy 343
GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR A HANDWRITTEN PAPER 343
GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR A TYPEWRITTEN PAPER 344
GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR A COMPUTER-GENERATED PAPER 344

Glossary 345

Index 371
GEOGRAPHICAL ARRANGEMENT OF THE STORIES

AFRICA
“Dead Men’s Path,” Chinua Achebe (Nigeria, 1953) 113
“Six Feet of the Country,” Nadine Gordimer (South Africa, 1953) 116
“A Handful of Dates,” Tayeb Salih (Sudan, 1968) 137

ASIA
“Swaddling Clothes,” Mishima Yukio (Japan, 1966) 132
“The Plane Reservation,” Massud Farzan (Iran, 1969) 141
“A Woman Like Me,” Xi Xi (Hong Kong, 1982) 152
“The Street-Sweeping Show,” Feng Jicai (China, 1982) 163
“The Grass-Eaters,” Krishnan Varma (India, 1985) 167

EUROPE
“The Necklace,” Guy de Maupassant (France, 1884) 46
“A Trifle from Real Life,” Anton Chekhov (Russia, 1888) 53
“Araby,” James Joyce (Ireland, 1914) 69
“War,” Luigi Pirandello (Italy, 1918) 74
“Like a Bad Dream,” Heinrich Böll (Germany, 1966) 126

NORTH AMERICA
“The Story of an Hour,” Kate Chopin (United States, 1894) 6
“Two Portraits,” Kate Chopin (United States, 1895) 58
“The Americanization of Shadrach Cohen,” Bruno Lessing (United States, 1903) 62
“The Egg,” Sherwood Anderson (United States, 1920) 78
“Babylon Revisited,” F. Scott Fitzgerald (United States, 1931) 86
“The Man Who Was Almost a Man,” Richard Wright (United States, 1940) 103
“Village,” Estela Portillo Trambley (United States, 1989) 176

SOUTH AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
“The Verb to Kill,” Luisa Valenzuela (Argentina, 1975) 147
“Girl,” Jamaica Kincaid (Antigua, 1978) 150
“Las papas,” Julio Ortega (Peru, 1988) 171
The International Story

An Anthology with Guidelines for Reading and Writing about Fiction