

# Recommended Open Educational Resources for an Undergraduate Course in Short Novel: Introduction to Literary Studies

by Laurel Smith

## Reading and Writing Strategies:

Bennett, Tanya L. *Writing and Literature: Composition as Inquiry, Learning, Thinking, and Communication*. GALILEO Open Learning Materials, 2018, [oer.galileo.usg.edu/english-textbooks/15/](https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/english-textbooks/15/).

This text teaches students how to read and analyze texts. It has good review and/or introduction material to annotation and analysis. The second chapter has a unique section on considering one's own values and interests, which is important when analyzing literature. The book also covers critical perspectives, analysis papers, and research papers. The book has four genre sections. The fiction section is relevant to this particular course.

This book has chapters that can work well for an Introduction to Literary Studies course. It helps students envision how literature connects to their lives and helps them learn how to structure assignments. Chapters 1, 2, 8, and 9 can apply to any literary studies course. Chapter 5 focuses on fiction and the literary elements related to it. The book also contains other chapters regarding other genres that could be suitable for other literary study courses.

Purdue Writing Lab. *Purdue OWL // Purdue Writing Lab*, [owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue\\_owl.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html).

I utilize the Purdue Writing Lab to provide an overview of paragraph and essay structure, critical literary theories, citation, and so forth. Since students in a literature class may need a review of writing strategies (or an introduction to writing strategies, depending on the pre-requisites, I use this site for writing information.

The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) has numerous citation guides available at this link as well as an overview of research strategies. All their citation guides provide examples of in-text and works cited/reference page citations.

The Purdue OWL also provides information on critical reading, annotation, and analysis, all of which are essential to a literature course.

Patricia, Kain. "How to Do a Close Reading." *Harvard College Writing Center*, Harvard University, 2021, [writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/how-do-close-reading](https://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/how-do-close-reading).

This source is a reliable source for additional explanation about close reading in regards to literature. It is from the Harvard College Writing Center, which is another reliable writing center. They offer numerous resources, and I've found this particular website helpful for teaching students how to identify elements of literature and showing how elements create a

theme. It shows how to focus on the text itself, which is a key place to start before moving into more complex analysis and research.

## General Overview and Additional Reading

*Britannica Academic Online Edition,*

<https://login.cenproxy.mnpals.net/login?url=https://academic.eb.com/levels/collegiate>.  
(Accessible through the Century College Library.)

Fassler, Joe. "The Return of the Novella, the Original #Longread." *The Atlantic*, 26 Apr. 2012, [www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2012/04/the-return-of-the-novella-the-original-longread/256290/](http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2012/04/the-return-of-the-novella-the-original-longread/256290/).

Jones, Cyan. "The Case for Very Short Novels." *PublishersWeekly.com*, 1 Apr. 2016, [www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/tip-sheet/article/69808-the-case-for-very-short-novels.html](http://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/tip-sheet/article/69808-the-case-for-very-short-novels.html).

McEwan, Ian. "Some Notes on the Novella." *The New Yorker*, Conde Nast, 29 Oct. 2012, [www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/some-notes-on-the-novella](http://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/some-notes-on-the-novella).

Whedon, Tony. "Notes on the Novella." *Southwest Review*, vol. 96, no. 4, 2011, pp. 565–571. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/43473196](http://www.jstor.org/stable/43473196). Accessed 30 Aug. 2021. (Accessible through the Century College Library.)

These sources provide an overview of the novella, which is a type of short novel. They show what is happening with the short novel in the modern world. They demonstrate the cultural significance of the genre and its place in history. The Britannica Online is a solid resource for collecting biographical information about authors and explaining various concepts and movements of literature and/or society. While it is fairly general, it can be a good way to provide author information that would normally appear in the front pages of a book or in the introduction to a section in a textbook. These resources can all contribute to students' and instructors' understanding of the features of the genre of the short novel.

## Short Novels

Bradbury, Ray. *Fahrenheit 451 : A Novel*. Vol. 1st Simon & Schuster trade paperback ed, Simon & Schuster, 2012. *EBSCOhost*, search-ebSCOhost-com.cenproxy.mnpals.net/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1962249&site=ehost-live. (Accessible through the Century College Library, 3 user license.)

Chopin, Kate, and Pamela Knights. *The Awakening : And Other Stories*. OUP Oxford, 2000. *EBSCOhost*, search-ebSCOhost-

com.cenproxy.mnpals.net/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=363596&site=ehost-live. (Accessible through the Century College Library, unlimited user license.)

Cisneros, Sandra. *The House on Mango Street*. Vol. 2nd Vintage Contemporaries ed., 25th anniversary ed, Vintage, 2009. *EBSCOhost*, search-ebSCOhost-com.cenproxy.mnpals.net/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=736045&site=ehost-live. (Accessible through the Century College Library, three user license.)

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*. *Project Gutenberg*, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/64317/64317-h/64317-h.htm>.

Hathorne, Nathaniel. *The Scarlet Letter*. *Project Gutenberg*, [www.gutenberg.org/files/25344/25344-h/25344-h.htm](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/25344/25344-h/25344-h.htm).

Kafka, Franz, and Ian Johnston. *The Metamorphosis*. The Floating Press, 2008. *EBSCOhost*, search-ebSCOhost-com.cenproxy.mnpals.net/login.aspx?direct=true&db=e000xna&AN=313562&site=ehost-live. (Accessible through the Century College Library, unlimited user license.)

Tolstoy, Leo. *The Death of Ivan Ilych*. Generic NL Freebook Publisher, 2000. *EBSCOhost*, search-ebSCOhost-com.cenproxy.mnpals.net/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=2009015&site=ehost-live. (Accessible through the Century College Library, unlimited user license.)

These books are somewhat representative of what is available currently regarding OER literature texts. Because a short novel has certain features it must meet in addition to OER criteria, these books are not as diverse as one would hope. This is true in regard to author identity, subject matter, and also publication date. I have added an assignment where students can select their own short novel text to read and report on it. This way, they can read a text that interests them, and other students can see what they chose. This opens up the range of texts and authors available while keeping the library's costs for licenses reasonable.

Nevertheless, the books do represent many of the classic works of literature that students in an introduction to literary studies should be expected to encounter. They also present various perspectives on the characteristics of a short novel. They provide a range of lengths from nearly a short story all the way to just barely a short novel. In general, this list with the added assignment can provide a good range of reading for students.