



Introduction

The curriculum units in this volume were written in connection with a seminar entitled ♦Writing About American Fiction.♦ In that seminar we read and responded to a wide variety of fiction♦tales by Nathaniel Hawthorne, stories and novellas by Herman Melville, and novels by Mark Twain, Henry James, John Dos Passos, Henry Roth, William Faulkner, Ralph Ellison, Saul Bellow, and Thomas Pynchon. Our one-page position papers focused upon the nature of ♦self♦ and ♦society♦ as they were interpreted in those works. The curriculum units, however, ranged somewhat more widely in topic and medium. One emphasizes the writing of short stories, another the reading of American short stories♦both finding in that genre a reflection of the lives of the students. A third unit takes one major author, Ernest Hemingway, as the focus for a seminar in which the reading of both short and long fiction and the writing of position papers are central. A fourth relates the American short story of the pre-World War II period to a notable film, Citizen Kane, by way of both thematic and formal analyses and opportunities for creative adaptation. And the fifth unit employs both fiction and poetry asthematic and emotional and imagistic stimulus for a course inprintmaking. Each unit engages in its own way the challenge of responding to American words and images.

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