

TEACHER AND STUDENT PERCEPTIONS REGARDING METHODOLOGY IN  
THE TEACHING OF THE NOVEL IN HIGH SCHOOL

**CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES**

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TEACHER AND STUDENT PERCEPTIONS REGARDING METHODOLOGY IN  
THE TEACHING OF THE NOVEL IN HIGH SCHOOL

A Thesis  
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## ABSTRACT

This study is an investigation of teacher and student perceptions regarding methodology in the teaching of the high school novel. The data for the study were collected from the ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade students and their teachers in the area of Newfoundland designated as the Bonavista peninsula. This study seeks to answer questions related both to the classroom presentation of the novel and the activities preceding and succeeding this exercise.

By means of questionnaires, the basic data for the study were collected from all twenty literature teachers on the Bonavista peninsula and from three hundred and eighty-six students. The students comprised eighteen literature classes which were randomly selected from a total population of forty-six classes. The data are analysed and presented in this report.

The results of the study indicate that lecture and large group discussion were the classroom methods used most extensively to teach the novel. Both students and teachers rated these methods highly. Role-playing was selected by the students as their choice of the most popular method but this finding was partially rejected when additional evidence from the teachers strengthened the impression that role-playing had not been used to teach novels in these schools although it may have been used

to teach plays. Large group discussion was selected by the students as the most helpful classroom method.

In most cases each teacher prepared his unit on the novel individually. In general teachers concentrated solely on the classroom study of selected novels and did not structure a guided reading program to include novels.

For evaluation the students preferred objective tests whereas the teachers indicated that they preferred to use essay tests. Most teachers used both class work and individual work to assess the progress of their students in the study of novels. Assignments were also used by most teachers. However, most teachers did not provide their students with study guides of any kind for the novel.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM

#### INTRODUCTION

Methodology is a crucial problem today in education. A high school teacher must teach his particular subject and his students are expected to gain essential knowledge from the instruction. But "how" should a teacher teach in order that the maximum teaching-learning situation can be established and maintained in the classroom? Should a teacher try a number of possible methods and judge their effectiveness according to a number of variables before deciding which one(s) he will use? Should he develop one specific method and stay with it or should he attempt to institute the old proverb that 'variety is the spice of life'?

The English literature teacher must face this problem for each literary genre which he teaches; and the novel is one such genre. The planning of the unit, the classroom methods to be used, the degree of stress to be placed on reading and reading skills, and the method of evaluation must all be preconceived and carefully planned if the unit on the novel is to have its potential impact and long-lasting effects.

Mary Columbro Rodgers maintained that the problem of methodology is a two-faced problem and that one must distinguish between the method of a discipline and the instructional method related to teaching that discipline.<sup>1</sup> She then related these two types of method to English:

The difference in English is simply that disciplinary method is the distinctive rhetorical mode by which verbal artists make contributions to the accumulation of verbal artifacts. Instructional method, however, is the pedagogical procedure through which the facts and 'know-how' of a discipline are transmitted from master to novice.<sup>2</sup>

Rodgers also maintained that "methodology is the science of pedagogical procedure and it is a science old enough to know that each academic discipline has its unique instructional procedures."<sup>3</sup> This study is concerned with instructional methods rather than pedagogical methods.

Margaret Ryan saw the novel as the crux of the entire English program since

... besides being a vehicle for developing important understandings, skills and attitudes in regard to literature, the novel can also be the means of integrating the various aspects of study undertaken in the English classroom. In this way students may

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<sup>1</sup>Mary Columbro Rodgers, New Design in the Teaching of English (Scranton, Penn.: International Textbook Company, 1968), p. 18.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

see reading, writing, and speaking, not as separate entities but as integral parts of one whole, each part having much in common with the others.<sup>4</sup>

Achieving this unity is a methodological problem in that the unit on the novel possesses all these possibilities but they can only be properly realized if the problem of methodology is successfully tackled first.

According to Mary Elizabeth Fowler, methodology will be an even greater concern in the future than it is today. Fowler was convinced that the crux of the problem in English in future years will be one of methodology:

Tomorrow's teachers will need to explore all the ways and resources through which they can work toward the new goals by the exacting and rewarding profession of teaching English. The years ahead will bring dramatic changes to schools and to the profession. The teachers of tomorrow, better prepared and better educated than those of today, will bring a new sense of dedication to meet the challenge."<sup>5</sup>

The present study is not concerned with either making a case for any one specific method of teaching the unit on the novel or condemning any method now in widespread use. It is concerned with a consideration of the methods now being

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<sup>4</sup>Margaret Ryan, Teaching the Novel in Paperback (New York: Macmillan, 1963), p. 98.

<sup>5</sup>Mary Elizabeth Fowler, Teaching Language, Composition and Literature (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1965), p. 21.

used in the sense of their frequency of use in English classrooms and the attitudes of teachers and students regarding these methods. The specific purpose of the study is stated in section two.

#### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In recent years Newfoundland educators have become increasingly concerned with the novel and its function in the English program. This is because the novel is fast becoming a widespread reading publication which many young people and adults enjoy reading in their leisure time. Since the novel is playing such a prominent role in the reading interests of today's generation, there is a great need for English teachers to use proper methods to introduce their students to the art of fiction, the skills of reading, and careful the discrimination of worthwhile books from trash.

Part of the reason for this interest in novels has been stimulated by two theses, one a Master's thesis written by Betty Marion Brett in 1964 and another, a doctoral thesis, written by O. K. Crocker in 1967.<sup>6</sup> Both studies indicated that high school students like to read and do read far more than their teachers realize although library deficiencies

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<sup>6</sup>Betty Marion Brett, A Survey of the Leisure Reading of Grade Nine Students in Central High Schools of Newfoundland (Unpublished Master's Thesis, The University of Alberta, Edmonton, 1964); O. K. Crocker, The Leisure Reading of High School Students in Newfoundland (Unpublished Doctor's Thesis, Indiana University, 1967).

often limit their choice of books.

The purpose of this study is to examine the presentation of the novel in the classroom setting and the activities preceding and succeeding this exercise. Up until now, there has been no empirical evidence to indicate to what extent English teachers in Newfoundland have been introduced to the novel as a work of art or to the methods of introducing their students to fiction so that these students might acquire a strong taste for good books and a keen critical approach which might enable them to see quite clearly what an author is trying to do in a novel and how well he does it.

The first problem is to get high school students reading books and this can be done best if the methodology which a teacher uses in teaching fiction is effective in getting students involved with books and in developing a taste for reading them. If the methodology is wrong, the student may be "turned off" rather than "turned on" to books.

This study was designed to investigate the use and popularity of the methods used for teaching the novel in Newfoundland high schools by attempting to find answers to the following questions:

1. How often have students been exposed to a variety of teaching methods for the unit on the novel?
2. What are the attitudes of students toward selected teaching methods?

3. Which teaching method for the novel is most popular in the English classroom and which method do students consider most beneficial academically?
4. How familiar are high school students with the novels suggested by the Department of Education?
5. What aspects of the structure of the unit on the novel do students like and what aspects do they dislike?
6. How do students react to a selected number of evaluation procedures used to assess their achievement following completion of a unit on the novel?
7. In the experience of the teachers, how often have they used different teaching methods for the unit on the novel?
8. What are the teachers' attitudes toward these methods?
9. How do teachers plan their unit on the novel? How much help do they get from their university methods course and from curriculum materials supplied by the Department of Education?
10. How much attention do teachers give and how much attention do they think should be given to reading skills in the preparation of the unit on the novel?
11. Are any specific kinds of novels emphasized in the unit on the novel?
12. What methods are used by teachers to evaluate student progress in the study of novels?

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The investigator is familiar with many students and teachers in Newfoundland who have failed in their quest to understand the novel and its purpose in the literature program. The studies conducted by Brett and Crocker clearly point out that the novel should be a part of a reading program called 'literature' and that school libraries should be adequately furnished in order to cater to the reading interests of today's high school students.<sup>7</sup>

Until the Brett study and the Crocker study, however, no empirical data was available since no study of this nature had been made of the reading interests and habits of Newfoundland high school students.

This study must be associated with the preceding two, but its focus is on the classroom situation and on methods of introducing students to fiction and to reading.

The investigator considers teacher and student perceptions regarding methods as major factors in the effective teaching of the unit on the novel. Since it is possible that the reading habits of a student may either begin, end or be developed during the teaching and reading exercises of certain types of novels, it is necessary for English educators to know

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<sup>7</sup>Brett, op. cit.; Crocker, op. cit.

which methods are proposed by modern educational theory and research, which methods are now being used by teachers and what the reactions of the students to these methods are. Knowledge of these reactions should prove helpful to school principals, librarians, literature teachers, curriculum workers, and all educators interested in continued improvement of the English program.

#### DEFINITION OF TERMS

##### Lecture

This is a method whereby the teacher explains to the students everything they need to know about a subject by talking directly to the class. There is little or no teacher-student interaction. The method is also called the expository method and the "telling" method.

##### Large Group Discussion

This is a method whereby the entire class, including the teacher, discuss a particular topic.

##### Small Group Discussion

This is a method whereby a class is divided into small groups and each small group discuss an issue among themselves.

##### Panel Discussion

This is a discussion carried on by a selected number of speakers before an audience. As used in this study, the audience will always be a class composed of the students and



the teacher.

### Individual Oral Presentation

This is a method whereby a person independently presents his findings on a particular topic to the rest of the class.

### Role-Playing

This is a method often used in teaching drama whereby the pupils play the roles of the characters.

### English

The term "English," as used in this study, includes the total school program centered around language study: grammar, composition, literature, reading, listening, and viewing. The term is used here as an equivalent of the term "language arts" which has been restricted in reference to the primary and elementary grades.

### Regional High School

A regional high school is a school established within a designated geographical area, separate from elementary and junior high schools in the area, and accommodating all pupils in grades beyond a designated grade not lower than grade eight.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Government of Newfoundland, An Act Respecting Education, No. 50, 1960, p. 2.

### Central High School

A central high school is a school established within a designated geographical area, and accommodating pupils from grades seven to eleven, inclusive.<sup>9</sup>

### LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The survey is restricted to grade nine, ten and eleven students and their teachers within the area in Newfoundland designated the Bonavista peninsula. From the findings of this study, generalizations may be made only to the grade nine, ten and eleven student population in this type of educational system. The study is also limited in that it considers just two aspects of the problem of teaching the novel in high schools: teacher and student perceptions. Other aspects which should also be studied are: (1) the demands of authorities such as the administrative staff of the school and the Department of Education; (2) the place of the novel in the English curriculum; and (3) the purpose of literature as a part of the school program in English. These factors receive only incidental treatment in this study.

### OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Six chapters are used to report the study. Chapter two provides a review of selected literature directly related

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

to the problems under investigation in the questionnaires.

Chapter three explains the design. The choice of grades and schools for the sample is explained together with a description of the survey instruments, the sampling procedures, and the collection of data.

Chapters four and five are devoted to a presentation and discussion of the results obtained from the two questionnaires. Student responses are analysed in chapter four, and teacher responses are analysed in chapter five.

Chapter six consists of a summary of the findings of the study. These findings are then used as a basis for suggesting answers to the twelve questions identified in the purpose of the study. Implications are also drawn from these findings and suggestions made for improvement.

## CHAPTER II

### RELATED LITERATURE

#### INTRODUCTION


A great deal of "experimenting" has been conducted in the methods of teaching high school literature during the past twenty years, but little of it can be regarded as genuine research.<sup>1</sup> The literature teachers who have been interested in new methods of planning, classroom strategies, teaching reading, and evaluation have usually determined a procedure empirically and proceeded to try it out with one or more of their classes. If the results are reported at all, they are usually given in general terms. Comparisons in such reports are based on pupil responses, teacher opinions, and, in a few cases, standardized tests.<sup>2</sup>

Only a few studies in the area of the high school novel can be called research. These studies are reviewed in section one of this study. A few were experiments in that ideas were tried out and the results reported. Most were merely expressions of opinion. These are reviewed in section two.

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<sup>1</sup>Robert C. Pooley, "Literature," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1940), p. 463.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



## RELATED STUDIES ON LEISURE READING

A study conducted by George Norvell in the state of New York is one of the most prominent studies available on the leisure reading of adolescents.<sup>3</sup> The study lasted twelve years and involved 50,000 high school students in grades seven to twelve, and the 625 teachers who taught these students. Norvell's study was an experiment consisting of 24 paired classes. The control group was subjected to the traditional approach to teaching literature and the experimental group experienced the development of an individual reading program. The students in the experimental group read several times the amount read by those in the control group and also scored higher marks on the Regents' Examination in English. Both the investigator and the teachers involved in the study concluded that the wide reading approach was superior to the traditional method of teaching literature and that the former method could be administered just as easily.

Another study yielding notable results on leisure reading was conducted by Walter J. Scott.<sup>4</sup> Scott's purpose was to determine student interest in books and other media.

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<sup>3</sup>George Norvell, The Reading Interests of Young People (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1950); \_\_\_\_\_, "Some Results of a Twelve-Year Study of Children's Reading Interest," English Journal, XXXV (December, 1946), 531-536.

<sup>4</sup>Walter J. Scott, Reading, Film, and Radio Tastes of High School Boys and Girls (Christchurch, New Zealand: Whitcombe and Tombs, 1947).

His study involved a total of 3,972 students enrolled in 19 selected high schools in New Zealand. These students ranged in age from 12 to 19 years. The average number of books read per pupil in the previous month was 5.4, and according to Crocker, this was considerably higher than that reported in most studies.<sup>5</sup> Fewer than five percent of the students read no books during the month.

A study conducted by Betty Marion Brett concerning the reading interests of grade nine students in the Central High Schools of Newfoundland has special significance for this study.<sup>6</sup> Brett collected her data from 84 percent of the teachers of literature in these central high schools and a sample of 250 students randomly selected from these same schools. She found that a great majority of the students liked to read far more than their teachers realized. Brett also found that the quality as well as the quantity of the students' reading was limited by the availability of good books. Neither the teachers nor the parents influenced students in their selection of books; rather, it was such factors as the title of the book, the illustration on the cover, and the recommendations of friends. Brett also reported that the home had little influence on the

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<sup>5</sup>Crocker, op. cit., p. 39.

<sup>6</sup>Brett, op. cit.

reading choices of the students and that sex was more important as a determiner of reading interest than the age of the student or the type of school attended.

Another study similar to that of Brett but larger and more comprehensive was the one conducted by Oswald K. Crocker in 1967.<sup>7</sup> Crocker not only investigated the leisure reading of high school students in Newfoundland but also surveyed the library facilities in the schools and the influence of the home background on reading. Three hundred and sixty freshman students were randomly selected from the 1,387 enrolled at Memorial University in 1965 to provide the information on leisure reading. The most significant findings were: (1) Less than 25 percent read at least 30 books from the list of 100 selected titles, and less than 50 percent read more than 20 books; (2) Almost 25 percent of the students found 60 or more titles unfamiliar, and slightly less than 50 percent found 50 or more titles unfamiliar, (3) During the last year of school 67.8 percent of the students read not more than five novels; (4) During the last year of school 93 percent of the students read not more than five plays, and 58.1 percent read none; (5) Few students read any other literary type at any time; (6) Less than 25 percent reported reading the novel often; and almost 15 percent reported seldom or never reading novels,

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<sup>7</sup>O. K. Crocker, The Leisure Reading of High School Students in Newfoundland, op cit.

plays, poetry, or nonfiction. The investigator concluded that the reading of high school students and their familiarity with good literature were extremely limited.

These studies have provided evidence to strengthen the impression that the novel is a vital part of the leisure reading interests of high school students. Sex and age were significant factors affecting reading interests but type of school has not been proven to be very significant. The home background has been an influence although in the Brett study it was reported that the home background was not an influence. What was really meant, however, was that the home background was a negative influence.

#### RELATED STUDIES ON THE NOVEL AND ON LITERATURE

In 1954 Richard Sanford Alm conducted a study in Minnesota in which he asked seventeen teachers and librarians to suggest twenty authors of adolescent fiction: ten which they would recommend and ten which they would not recommend for high school students.<sup>8</sup> Two novels were selected for most authors, but for various reasons, six authors were represented by a single novel. The novels were then analysed for basic

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<sup>8</sup>Richard Sanford Alm, A Study of the Assumptions Concerning Human Experience Underlying Certain Works of Fiction Written For and About Adolescents (Doctor's Thesis, University of Minnesota, 1956).



assumptions concerning human experience which their authors held. Two of the most relevant conclusions reported by Alm were that the reduction of a novel to a list of assumptions will not provide the reader with a key to a complete understanding or appreciation of it; and, reading a novel to determine what the author is saying, not just in the narrative but in what is below the surface and between the lines, is a valuable means of broadening one's understanding of literature.

In 1955, James Evard Day conducted a study into the teaching of English in Iowa that has some bearing on the teaching of the high school novel as examined in this study.<sup>9</sup> Day's study was based on personal visitations and interviews with English teachers in fifty-three different Iowa high schools. Day reported that the Iowa teachers organized their literature units by basing their planning on the organization of textbooks. He found that the most commonly used teaching technique was the question-recitation procedure in which the teacher asks the questions and the student attempts to answer them. For evaluation, the teachers preferred to give unit or six week tests. The objective examination was by far the most popular type of test used. Only 13.5 percent of the teachers interviewed preferred the essay test exclusively.

In 1959, Harry Edward Hand did a study to judge the

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<sup>9</sup>James Evard Day, The Teaching of English in Iowa High Schools (Doctor's Thesis, State University of Iowa, 1955).

present trends in teaching modern novels to high school students in Michigan.<sup>10</sup> Two hundred and ninety high schools were included in this study which was designed to represent all Michigan senior high school English teachers and their students. Hand discovered that (1) modern novels were much more frequently used for outside reading than for classroom instruction; (2) the selection of modern novels for student use seldom involved student choices; (3) several modern novelists were commonly used for both classroom and outside reading purposes; (4) teachers believe that the study of novels in high schools provided many values for students; (5) one-fifth of Michigan teachers believed that unfavorable attitudes toward using modern novels existed in their local school or communities; and (6) teachers' attitudes toward using modern novels were affected by some of their own personal and sociological characteristics and by factors in the school and community.

The novel can also be integrated with the other literature forms as a part of continued literature instruction. Robert Milton Boyd of Ohio State University analysed a number of selected approaches to the teaching of literature in high

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<sup>10</sup>Harry Edward Hand, Modern Novels in Senior High School English: A Study Concerning Practices and Opinions of Teachers of High School English in the State of Michigan (Doctor's Thesis, University of Michigan, 1959).

school and proposed a multiple approach.<sup>11</sup> By this approach, the teacher organizes literary materials during any given year by several different methods. By using this approach, Boyd maintained that the teacher may avoid the inherent weaknesses of the exclusive use of any particular type of organizational pattern. Such a multiple approach might be adopted for the teaching of the novel.

In Boyd's report, a program was designed for grades nine through twelve, utilizing the multiple approach.<sup>12</sup> The chronological treatment was to be used when the historical background heightened the understanding and appreciation of the literary study. The literature was to be selected to illumine a theme if significant concepts or events were to be highlighted. At another time, the teacher might choose to demonstrate the development of a type of literature or its basic characteristics. In the multiple approach, the pupil and his reading interests, abilities and maturity were to be studied carefully by the teacher and, as a result of that study, the teacher was to select the approach most conducive to furthering the pupil's growth. The novel could then be integrated into the program by means of such an approach.

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<sup>11</sup>Robert Milton Boyd, An Analysis of Selected Approaches to the Teaching of Literature in the High School (Doctor's Thesis, Ohio State University, 1964).

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

In 1963, Nathan Samuel Blount of Florida State University conducted a study to determine the effect of selected adult novels and selected junior novels on student-held concepts of the ideal novel.<sup>13</sup> Forty-four ninth grade students and forty-two tenth grade students enrolled in the University School at Florida State University read one junior novel every two weeks for a period of six weeks for a total of three junior novels each. Forty-one ninth grade students and thirty-two tenth grade students, also from the University School, read one adult novel every two weeks for a period of six weeks and for a total of three adult novels each. Blount found that the impact of reading three junior novels did bring the attitudes of students toward an ideal novel to a closer congruence with the attitudes of experts toward an ideal novel than did the reading of three adult novels; and that, for this population, certain factors which inhere in the novel (its form, its content of ideas) seemed more important determiners of the impact of the novel than did factors which inhere in the reader himself (sex, scholastic ability) or in the setting of the reading of the novel.

None of these studies considered the whole idea of methodology in the teaching of the high school novel. However,

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<sup>13</sup>Nathan Samuel Blount, The Effect of Selected Junior Novels and Selected Adult Novels on Student Attitudes Toward The "Ideal" Novel (Doctor's Thesis, Florida State University, 1963).

each one analysed some aspect of this problem. The informal experiments reported by teachers in books and articles shed additional light on this issue. These suggestions are reviewed in the next section.

#### RELATED ~~REPORTS~~ REPORTS IN BOOKS AND ARTICLES

The lecture (or expository) method of teaching novels is a method whereby the teacher tells the students all they need to know about the novel by teaching the novel in front of the class. For the lower grades, this method is sometimes called the "telling" method.<sup>14</sup> Ernest Horn maintained that some of the antagonism with this method may be due to attempts to define the lecture too narrowly.<sup>15</sup> In actual practice, the lecture varies from the most formal lecture, read directly from manuscript, to informal talks without notes and interspersed with frequent questions and comments by the students. The extreme types as well as many intermediate forms can serve useful purposes in the teaching of the novel. Horn states that the value of the lecture has probably been greatly underestimated in pedagogical literature for all levels of instruction.<sup>16</sup> The

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<sup>14</sup>Stephen M. Corey and Walter S. Monroe, "Methods of Teaching," Encyclopedia of Educational Research, op. cit., p. 725.

<sup>15</sup>Ernest Horn, Methods of Instruction in the Social Studies (New York: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1937), p. 324.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

major criticisms against lectures center mainly around the idea that the method is too traditional and attempts to immerse students too deeply into novels by analysing every figure and symbol. This sudden immersing of students into classical literature is what G. Hicks has revolted against in his article.<sup>17</sup>

A second method is Role-Playing. Role-Playing is a technique used quite widely in high schools for teaching drama but it can also be used for teaching the novel particularly if the novel presents difficulty in that it is of another age, another setting, or has characters whose values are not too meaningful to most of the students in one's class. Joan Magers saw Great Expectations as posing such problems for her class so she assigned each character in the novel to a student in her class.<sup>18</sup> The mystery roles of Magwitch, Compeyson, Herbert, and Pocket were also assigned in order to prevent any secrets from being given away. The craftiest boys were Jarvises, the kindest were Joe Gargerys. The most sophisticated girls became Miss Havishams and Estellas. The key effect of the novel was felt when Magwitch and Compeyson became one person and the other mystery characters were revealed. Magers

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<sup>17</sup> G. Hicks, "Look at the Novel," Today's Education, LVIII (April, 1969), 12-15.

<sup>18</sup> Joan Magers, "Role-Playing Technique in Teaching a Novel: Great Expectations," English Journal, LVII (October, 1968), 990-991.

reported that these roles became frames of reference whereby these pupils worked out "composition ideas, drama themes and even classroom behavior problems occasionally throughout the rest of the year."<sup>19</sup> Adaptations of a role-playing technique similar to that used by Magers can be made for almost any novel. When using this technique, however, the teacher should probably mimeograph the reading assignments for the whole of the novel and give them to the students when the unit is introduced. If a student is absent for a day, he can participate when he comes back. Students will have to work harder when this method is used than they normally would have worked but if in the process they can become involved in the psychological problems of the main characters and their problems in relationships with others, the experiential effect that all good literature should give will have been achieved.<sup>20</sup>

A third method is to try an Attitude Survey or an informal questionnaire before dealing with the novel in class if such a survey or questionnaire has not been administered earlier. McCalib was thinking of literature generally when he suggested that "attitudes grounded in emotions influence any reader's response to imaginative literature," but this is especially so in the case of the novel.<sup>21</sup> Students often hide

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 991.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>Paul T. McCalib, "Try an Attitude Survey," English Journal, LV (December, 1966), 1175-1179.

their emotions and do not respond to a conflict such as that between Maggie Tulliver and Philip Wakem in The Mill on The Floss. If a teacher wonders why he is not "getting through" to his class, this may be because of unrecognized attitudes. Such attitudes can inhibit a response to a novel because of their deep emotional grounding, or they may, in fact, heighten the response:

The literature teacher must know the attitudes of his class if a novel is to have its greatest possible emotional and intellectual impact. If the school is large, this could be somewhat difficult since attitudes expressed by the student in the presence of the teacher may differ greatly from those that are genuine. The administration of the Thurstone-type attitude scale whereby the student responds on a five-point scale - strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, strongly disagree - will give the teacher a good insight into the attitudes of his students and his teaching of fiction can then be done in the light of these attitudes. Such a scale will provide verbalized attitudes that the student is willing to express; he does not have to act to express these attitudes. But these attitudes may be the crucial clue which the English teacher must have in order to accomplish anything when introducing his students to the world of fiction.

A fourth consideration is how should a teacher have students handle the year's work in the novel? Here there is a considerable amount of controversy. On the one hand, there are



teachers like Kellogg W. Hunt who recently promoted this point of view: "Let the student read one novel, or maybe two and perhaps three or four if he insists. But let him read that one novel hard."<sup>22</sup> On the other side of the controversy, there are teachers who support Margaret Ryan's belief that "instead of reading one novel hard, we recommend reading many just to enjoy them, just hard enough to heighten perceptions that will make reading the next one more rewarding."<sup>23</sup> Ryan's method, however, has more support from leading English teachers than does Hunt's method. A case in point is Mary Elizabeth Fowler who has analysed methods by which novels can be taught and her conclusion is essentially the same as Ryan's:

We can and should help students to gain insight into the writer's craft but the secondary student is not yet ready to do graduate work; he must become a reader with ample experience of many books before he is ready for a course in the New Criticism.<sup>24</sup>

But whether a teacher should use Hunt's method or Ryan's method would depend upon the type of students he is teaching. If he is teaching students who are already readers of novels, then Hunt's method might be more applicable than Ryan's method. However, appreciation for the novel can grow

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<sup>22</sup>Kellogg W. Hunt, "Getting Into The Novel," English Journal, L (December, 1961), 601-606.

<sup>23</sup>Margaret Ryan, Teaching The Novel in Paperback (New York: MacMillan, 1963), p. vi.

<sup>24</sup>Mary Elizabeth Fowler, Teaching Language, Composition, and Literature (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965), p. 240.

only if students have direct experience with an adequate number of different books to become sensitive to the novel as a literary form. Since many courses of study provide only novels which are long and difficult to read, the teacher should take the liberty to go beyond the syllabus if necessary. A number of novels should be provided so that as the student continues to read, he will develop gradually a greater appreciation of the novel form, even if his first reaction is only on the level of following the story.

Another method of handling the novel in high school English was suggested by Frederick J. Masback.<sup>25</sup> His method was a compromise approach between the extreme positions held by Hunt and Ryan. Masback saw the English teacher as one who feels that his students should be encouraged to read both widely and deeply, but the length and complexity of the novel makes this rather difficult. As Masback saw it, one must sacrifice breadth for depth or vice versa and quality for quantity or vice versa: "The teacher who chooses one novel, assigns it to the class, and then proceeds, by one method or another, to "teach" the novel thoroughly sacrifices, in effect, breadth for depth; the teacher who uses one variation or another of the familiar book report, on the one hand, often seems to

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<sup>25</sup>Frederick J. Masback, "Approach to The Novel in High School English," English Journal, L (April, 1961), 278-280.

sacrifice quality for quantity."<sup>26</sup> Teachers often combine these two methods by teaching one novel thoroughly in class and requiring additional novels to be read outside class. Masback suggested, however, that if the teacher does not control the choice, there has been little carry-over from one novel to another.

Masback then suggested a method which can be used by the teacher to insure that students read a variety of teacher-chosen novels under careful supervision and, at the same time, develop certain habits of reading and analysis which will enable them to read any novel more perceptively. The class is divided into four groups of equal size and as equal in ability as the teacher can arrange. Each group is supplied with a set of study and discussion questions for each novel and given one month to work on the novels outside class. However, approximately one half hour is set aside each week for group meetings during class time. At the end of the first month each group then presents a panel discussion to the class on its novel. The novels are then redistributed and the cycle is started again.

By the end of the term each student will have read the four novels, participated in a panel discussion on each one and heard, as well, three other panel discussions on each of the novels by his classmates. Repetition itself is a poor

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 278.

teaching device but, as Masback suggested, the guidance of the teacher in the sets of study and discussion questions provided, can make the program a very successful one. On the first round, each group directs its attention to plot elements, on the second round to setting, on the third round to characterization and on the fourth round to theme. Thus, no one feels that he is ruining a book for anyone else or that any book is being ruined for him; each group sees its function as that of bringing a new and important dimension of the novel to the attention of the rest of the class.

Harold Friedlander, an English teacher in New Jersey, saw the world of fiction as "hidden" and the greatest task facing the English teacher as being that of having the courage "to let insights fall where they may..." because "... how else will the student come to trust his own insights and learn to deal honestly with all the varieties of possibility that life offers?"<sup>27</sup> Insights are necessary but what about the students who are having trouble seeing beneath the surface content of the novel? It is at this point that the method outlined by Geraldine Murphy has special significance.

Murphy maintained that fiction should be represented through the means of both visual and verbal art.<sup>28</sup> The "capacity

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<sup>27</sup>Harold Friedlander, "Hidden World of Fiction," Clearing House, XLII (December, 1967), 238-239.

<sup>28</sup>Geraldine Murphy, "Teaching Fiction Through Visual and Verbal Art," English Journal, LIX (April, 1970), 502-508.

"to see" was regarded as a potential human quality which the English teacher can use. Murphy maintained that as most students undergo the experiences of a piece of fiction, they draw, as required, from their own real life experiences and see these segments of their own lives shaped into a new and meaningful situation. Thus, their past lives are enlightened and they are brought to realize how their present lives are to be felt, perceived, and imagined. Fiction has the maximum power to do this, but what about students who fail to nurture such insights? Murphy suggested that there is an art form right for every student, that is, suited to his individual temperament and to his special perceptual, conceptual, and creative capabilities. She maintained that if the students' "capacity to see" does not come through in fiction, it may well do so in photography, short story, film, drama, painting, or pantomime. The method which Murphy has suggested is for the English teacher to teach issues not literary forms. The first unit would be on a theme such as pariahs (outcasts) and the teacher would make available a number of novels, short stories, photographs, plays, paintings, and films. The student would then use any one or any combination of these forms to help him develop the insight required. Then, successive units on topics such as "lovers" and then "heroes" could follow, each with a variety of visual and verbal art forms available to portray it.

This method may meet the student where his needs are

greatest. The novel would then be conceived not as an end in itself but as the means toward another end. Some students will select it, some will not. Murphy's view was that it will help the students "to see" - a capacity which the school has neglected but which the magazine ad, the popular song, the movie, and the greeting card have all acted upon quite extensively.

A teacher's methodology should also vary depending upon whether he is considering the novel as representative of a literary genre, or whether he is teaching a specific novel. Margaret Ryan has suggested a wide variety of methods to enable the teacher to develop appreciation for novels with his class and at the same time to make the students aware of the greatness of specific novels.<sup>29</sup> She saw the book report, the study guide, the evaluative essay, and the discussion group as instruments which could be used to teach the novel successfully. She carefully described a method whereby four novels could be dealt with concurrently by a high school class by means of three processes working in unison to produce the desired result.<sup>30</sup> Her plan is well developed and well described; it extends over a four-week period at the end of which, students will be made quite familiar with the four novels used. Other writers including Sauer, Loban, Levine, and Burton have outlined, in some detail, similar methods for dealing with the year's work

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<sup>29</sup>Margaret Ryan, Teaching The Novel in Paperback (New York: MacMillan, 1963).

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., pp. 234-245.

in the area of the novel.<sup>31</sup>

Another methodological problem is how to teach students to discriminate between good and poor fiction. Pearl Aldrich outlined a method whereby a teacher can teach high school students to distinguish worthwhile books from trash.<sup>32</sup> She maintained that the opinions "I like" and "I don't like" are not the proper ways to evaluate fiction. When a teacher is faced with the obstacle of getting his students to exercise discrimination, then his traditional teaching equipment may seem as ineffective as a Model T on a Los Angeles Freeway.<sup>33</sup> This is because when students are disallowed to read one book but are allowed to read another, they see their teacher as being in a bad mood and English teachers as having more bad moods than the rest of the faculty together. Aldrich outlined a list of criteria which any conscientious English teacher would find extremely helpful for teaching his students to distinguish good literature from poor literature.

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<sup>31</sup>Edwin H. Sauer, English in the Secondary School (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1961), pp. 165-167; Walter Loban, Margaret Ryan, and James R. Squire, Teaching Language and Literature (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961), pp. 631-646; George Levine, "On Teaching the Novel," On Literature, ed. E. B. Jenkinson (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967), pp. 9-36; Dwight L. Burton, Literature Study in the High School (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1960) pp. 128-139.

<sup>32</sup>Pearl Aldrich, "A New Method in Evaluating Fiction," English Journal, LIV (November, 1965), 744-747.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 744.

Of course many teachers have been concerned with the teaching of individual novels as literary experiences in themselves. Many attempts have been made to revitalize the old standbys. Marion Peters of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, had her students listen to different kinds of radio programs for one week and then had them study Ivanhoe in the context of discussions, news broadcasts, dramatizations, etc. based on the novel.<sup>34</sup> Meda Crawford of Jackson, Mississippi, put her students in charge of a series of lessons on Silas Marner as the students were reading the novel.<sup>35</sup> Each day a different small group of two or three had turns in leading discussions, asking questions, and commenting on sections of the book. Frances Bowyer of Lima, Ohio, employed a similar technique to teach Silas Marner.<sup>36</sup> Each day a topic was assigned that related the book to the everyday life of the students. (One such topic was "How do obligations not faced honestly bring unhappiness to others and ourselves?"). Each student was required to write a paragraph on the daily topic, and in each class each day a

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<sup>34</sup> Marion W. Peters, "A Different Approach to Ivanhoe," English Journal, XXXVIII (April, 1949), 226-227.

<sup>35</sup> Meda Bonne Crawford, "Silas Marner is Fun," English Journal, XL (June, 1951), 338-339.

<sup>36</sup> Frances Bowyer, "Connecting Present Life and Silas Marner," English Journal, XXXV (September, 1946), 399-400.



different student chairman led the discussion. Sister Beda Sullivan in Antonia, Colorado, had her students write letters from various characters to other characters in Silas Marner warning or suggesting against possible courses of action.<sup>37</sup>

For a complicated novel such as A Tale of Two Cities, Isabel Ford of Wichita, Kansas, suggested that the careful study of key passages or chapters, with less intensive reading of others, was a good approach. As an example, she developed a plan for the careful study of "Disappointment," Chapter Three of Book Two.<sup>38</sup> Sister Anna of Chicago reported that it was necessary for her students to do a detailed study on the background of the house in order to understand Hawthorne's The House of Seven Gables. This research led eventually to a radio script.<sup>39</sup>

Marion C. Sheridan in a well-known article on teaching The Return of the Native suggested a number of important points concerning the handling of a novel that a class reads in common.<sup>40</sup> The idea is stressed that although students can read the same novel, they may "go different ways." Teachers should, therefore,

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<sup>37</sup>Sister Beda Sullivan, "Silas Marner Letters," English Journal, XLII (November, 1953), 462-463.

<sup>38</sup>Isabel Oldham Ford, "Teaching a Key Chapter of A Tale of Two Cities," English Journal, XLII (November, 1953), 466-467.

<sup>39</sup>Sister Anna S. H. deNamur, "Eldorado in Salem," English Journal, XXXV (March, 1946), 153-155.

<sup>40</sup>Marion C. Sheridan, "Teaching a Novel," English Journal, XLI (January, 1952), 8-14.

conduct the study of a novel so that students can respond at different levels of awareness. Most good novels permit this fairly well. The teacher should not become frustrated when all students do not respond at the same level. In senior high school it is vital that students learn to see clearly the literal and symbolic levels in fiction simultaneously. It must be realized that some students will have difficulty here. When a novel is read in common, it gives students an opportunity to sharpen their ability to read for meanings beyond the literal. Another important point made by Sheridan was that the study of any novel should lead to further reading of the author's work by the class or by individual students.

Dwight Burton pointed out that many teachers have organized units in which one novel, read in common, has led into a broader context featuring the reading of selections by several groups or by individual students.<sup>41</sup> He reported that one seventh grade group, during a unit on courage, read Armstrong Perry's Call It Courage together, then read widely in short stories and novels that illustrated various kinds of courage. One tenth grade teacher presented Silas Marner in the context of a unit entitled "The Small Town in America."<sup>42</sup> The students started by investigating and reporting on the legends and folklore

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<sup>41</sup>Burton, op cit., p. 138.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

present in their town. The short selections of prose and poetry were read before the George Eliot novel was tackled. Ethan Frome was the key selection in an eleventh grade class developing a unit on the New England tradition in literature.<sup>43</sup> James Michener's The Bridges at Toko-Ri was read in common by another grade eleven class as part of a unit entitled "Youth and War".<sup>44</sup> A twelfth grade class studied Conrad's The Secret Sharer as the final selection in a unit of which the theme was a character testing himself or becoming involved in a crisis which he resolved by being true to his inner self.<sup>45</sup>

Rosemary Stephens suggested a method of introducing Conrad's Lord Jim to high school students by first introducing students to Conrad's short story An Outpost of Progress.<sup>46</sup> Two other teachers outlined methods whereby traditionally used college novels can be successfully dealt with in high school classrooms: Gladys Verdemanis on Lord of the Flies and Pansye H. Powell on The Return of the Native.<sup>47</sup> Other teachers have

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 139.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 139.

<sup>46</sup>Rosemary Stephens, "Students, Mr. Conrad," English Journal, LVII (February, 1968), 188-190.

<sup>47</sup>Gladys Verdemanis, "Lord of the Flies in the Classroom: No Passing Fad," English Journal, LIII (November, 1964), 569-574; Pansye H. Powell, "On Teaching The Return of The Native," English Journal, LIV (March, 1965), 217-222.

discovered that the angle from which certain novels are taught makes all the difference between success and failure. Charles G. Hoffman and Marian C. Powell were convinced that point-of-view is the key issue in teaching Conrad's Secret Sharer and they have each taken pains to prove their point.<sup>48</sup> Many other teachers have also written on methods for teaching such well known novels as Lost Horizon and The Pearl.

However, certain patterns can be seen in the trends of thinking among teachers regarding methodology in the teaching of the novel. Up until 1960, most articles were written by teachers who were concerned with particular novels but after 1960 there seems to have been a definite trend away from too much concentration on specific novels into a greater concern for getting students to read many books and to develop a lasting taste for reading.

The English teacher, then, should be one who knows many methods for teaching the novel and who does not hesitate to try them out. The evidence available to the investigator strengthens the impression that many of Newfoundland's high school teachers, in the past, have known the novel only as a

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<sup>48</sup> Charles G. Hoffmann, "Point of View in The Secret Sharer," College English, XXIII (May, 1962), 651-654; Marian C. Powell, "Approach to Teaching The Secret Sharer," English Journal, LVI (January, 1967), 49-53.

strange form and very few teachers knew very much at all about how to come to grips with it.<sup>49</sup> However, techniques and methods for this purpose are numerous and when coupled with a bit of imagination these can be very successful in the hands of a conscientious teacher. The novel is a literary form which one cannot afford to neglect in this age of best-sellers and big business. High school students should be given professional guidance in how to read and what to read. They should be assisted in developing a taste for reading and in evaluating what books are available to them. A major part of the success of the novel among today's teenagers depends upon the English teacher and his methodology.

#### SUMMARY

The statements and concerns of researchers, English educators, and English teachers reviewed in this chapter provided a theoretical background for the study. Educational research has not, up to the present time, penetrated very deeply into the realm of methodology in the teaching of novels. But the concern of conscientious teachers and their willingness to experiment can be quickly discovered in the articles they write and the points-of-view which they express.

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<sup>49</sup>Evidence here means personal teaching experience and conversations with English teachers.

This study was designed to secure information concerning methodology as a factor affecting the teaching-learning situation. The instruments were developed on the assumption that effective teaching methods will result in an appreciation and enjoyment of novels by high school students; and that the well-taught literature lesson will be instrumental in stimulating students to do widespread reading outside the yearly literature course. These assumptions have been substantiated in this chapter. Chapter three explains the design and procedure of the study.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE DESIGN OF THE STUDY

##### INTRODUCTION

The information concerning methodology in the teaching of the high school novel, presented in the chapters which follow, was obtained from the grade nine, ten, and eleven students in the six high schools on the Bonavista peninsula of Newfoundland. This chapter explains the reason for the selection of these schools, the survey instruments administered, the procedure used to collect the data, and the nature and selection of the sample.

##### CHOICE OF SCHOOL AND GRADE

The population surveyed in this study comprised the ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade students in the six high schools (three central high and three regional high) on the Bonavista peninsula. The three regional high schools resulted from a fairly recent integration scheme which combined several smaller high schools to produce larger ones. The central high schools have also been the result of expansion and each exists as the only large high school in its immediate area. These schools have been chosen because they represent recent attempts to improve education in the province. The establishment of large regional

high schools and the expansion of central high schools represent efforts by the provincial Department of Education to provide better-built and more fully equipped school buildings in which teachers can work more effectively. These schools are typical of the educational expansion program which has been prevalent in the past few years in Newfoundland. Grade nine, ten, and eleven students were chosen for three reasons:

1. Those three grades are presently being exposed to systematic study of the novel in the classroom. There are many reasons why the novel should also be used in junior high school but up to the present time neither the Department of Education nor any of the junior high school teachers questioned by the investigator have made any significant attempt to devise classroom instruction for the novel to correspond with a guided reading program. Grade nine, ten, and eleven students and their teachers are used because they have first-hand experience with the study of the novel in the classroom as part of their literature and/or guided reading program.

2. The drop-out rate in Newfoundland, which is the highest in Canada, reaches a peak at the grade nine level.<sup>1</sup> Thus, to keep students in high school, there is a constant need for the teacher to examine his methodology and classroom instruction. If school is to prove exciting and worthwhile to the

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<sup>1</sup>Brett, op cit., p. 36.



adolescent, the teacher must be prepared and willing to change his methods and teaching strategy for the benefit of his students.

3. Grades nine, ten, and eleven represent the last three years which high school students will spend in school. They are now approaching graduation and are thinking about their futures in the world of tomorrow. The teacher of English must know their attitudes and be prepared to work with them so that they can develop their own reading skills relative to their individual temperaments and interests.

#### THE SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

The questionnaire method was selected to obtain the necessary information from both the students and the teachers. Both questionnaires were developed on the assumption that the unit on the novel constituted a unit of the year's work in literature.

##### Student Questionnaire

In developing the student questionnaire, two principles were aimed at: a questionnaire which would provide the required information and one which at the same time would not pose any major problems of interpretation for the slow student. Toward this end, standard practices in the construction of survey

instruments were adhered to.<sup>2</sup> The procedures of other investigators who had used the normative survey in related studies were carefully examined. Several aspects of the general format of the instruments used by Brett and Crocker were adopted for parts of the student questionnaire.<sup>3</sup> Most questions were supplied with a number of possible responses from which the student could select one. In order to provide opportunity for individual expression the student was supplied with five responses to most questions, and students who had other opinions regarding the novel or their interest in reading were instructed to add them to the last page of the questionnaire.<sup>4</sup>

The major areas of investigation were:

1. Frequency of use and of reaction to a number of selected classroom methods which educational research and experimentation have shown to be useful in teaching the novel.
2. Students' reading within the last year, and their familiarity with the novels available this year from the Department of Education.<sup>5</sup> However, other novels could have been chosen.

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<sup>2</sup>John W. Best, Research in Education (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1959); Walter R. Borg, Educational Research (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1963); Robert M. Travers, An Introduction to Educational Research (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958).

<sup>3</sup>Brett, op cit.; Crocker, op cit.

<sup>4</sup>See Appendix A.

<sup>5</sup>1972 - 1973.

But, since this is not a study in reading as such, only the novels which the student was likely to encounter in the classroom situation were chosen.

3. Students' attitudes toward the structure of the unit on the novel.

4. Their impressions of evaluation methods.

5. Improvements which they might want to suggest.

Students were asked not to write their own names or the names of their schools on the questionnaire unless they wanted to. The purpose for this was to give the student a chance to be objective without fear of discrimination. The questionnaire also required such general information as grade, age, sex, school marks received, type of school ~~attended~~, high school subject liked best and type of literature liked best. The investigator believed that these variables would prove valuable in the analysis of the student responses. The information obtained from the student questionnaire is presented in chapter four.

#### Teacher Questionnaire

The teacher questionnaire was presented in four sections. The first section sought information on the teacher's professional training, teaching experience, degrees currently held, and the classes which he was now teaching. Section two was designed to discover how often teachers used each of six selected classroom methods and what their attitudes toward these methods were.

Section three questioned teachers about their methods of structuring the unit on the novel. Section four provided a list of seven crucial areas of novel study and the teachers were asked to indicate to what extent they had emphasized these areas in their classes. Section five sought information on the teacher's methods of evaluating student progress in studying novels. Two open questions were supplied so that the teachers could express their own ideas and opinions if these ideas and opinions differed from those required in other parts of the questionnaire.

Most of the questions involved several alternatives from which the teachers were asked to select one. For question six in section two, however, no such alternatives were provided since teachers were asked to formulate any other methods which they might have been using in their classes. The information provided by the teachers is presented and analysed in chapter five. A copy of the instrument is included in Appendix B.

### Pilot Studies

Student Questionnaire. Thirty-one students at a regional high school in St. John's were chosen for the pilot study. The circumstances were similar to those under which the actual study was to be made except for one difference: the pilot study was conducted in an urban area whereas the actual study was conducted in a rural area. However, it was believed that any basic weaknesses in the wording or design of the questionnaire would be

identified. All questions were answered conscientiously by the students and none reported any difficulty in either reading or understanding the questions asked. The responses appeared valid when checked against the progress of these students in their school. Therefore, it was decided that no major changes were necessary in the format of the test instrument. After only a few minor revisions, the questionnaire was printed and taken by the investigator to the six high schools participating in the study.

Teacher Questionnaire. The teacher questionnaire was studied and evaluated by four graduates, all of whom had been teachers during the previous year. They all read the questionnaire and suggested several minor changes in the wording and format. When these changes were made, the questionnaire was printed and taken by the investigator to the English teachers participating in the study.

#### SAMPLING PROCEDURE AND COLLECTION OF DATA

The annual records at the Newfoundland Department of Education were used to obtain the following information:

1. The names and locations of all the high schools on the Bonavista peninsula.
2. The enrollment, number of rooms, number of teachers, and number of pupils in each grade in each school.
3. The names of the school principals.

The principal in each of the six high schools was then written by the investigator and asked to supply the following information:

1. Number of English literature teachers in their school.
2. Name of each English literature teacher in their school.
3. Number of literature classes.
4. A listing of the literature classes in their school for each grade together with the number of students in each class. e.g. 9A - 25 students, 9B - 30 students, 10C - 40 students, etc.

All of the English literature teachers on the Bonavista peninsula were included in the study. The selection of the student sample was somewhat complicated. The information received from the principals revealed that there were 46 literature classes in grades nine, ten, and eleven on the peninsula. The investigator wanted a sample which would be representative of both schools and students. Therefore, it was decided that 18 classes would be randomly selected from the 46 available. Eighteen was the number chosen because this gave an average of three classes from each school. A table of random numbers was used to select the sample.<sup>6</sup> When the selection was made, it was found

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<sup>6</sup>Gene V. Glass and Julian C. Stanley, Statistical Methods in Education and Psychology (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1970), pp. 510-512.

that all grades and all schools had been adequately represented in the sample. Random sampling was adopted as the best method to insure an unbiased sample.

All principals and all English literature teachers on the peninsula agreed to participate in the study. All of the 18 classes selected for the study also participated.

The completed returns from the student questionnaire totalled 386. Table I shows the number of students who participated in the study arranged by sex.

TABLE I  
NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN THE SAMPLE ARRANGED  
BY SEX OF RESPONDENTS

Sex	Number	Percent
Boys	206	53
Girls	180	47
Totals	386	100

Table II shows the number of students who participated in the study arranged by age:

TABLE II

## AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SUBJECTS

Age	Number	Percent
13	4	1
14	36	9
15	118	31
16	136	35
17	70	18
18	20	5
19	2	1
Totals	386	100

There were 26 more boys than girls participating in the study. The majority of the students were either age 15 or age 16.



## CHAPTER IV

### AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENT RESPONSES

#### INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of a report and discussion of the responses given by three hundred and eighty-six students. The information is considered in the order in which it appeared on the questionnaire except for section two, in which a number of categories were combined for a statistical test of significance.

All of the information in the questionnaire was tabulated by means of frequency tables showing the number of possible responses to each item and the percentage of students selecting each response. Two other statistical techniques, chi-square and weighted frequency, were also used. Both of these techniques are explained later in this chapter.

#### CLASSIFICATION OF DATA

At first, the responses of the students were tabulated in a number of ways: grade, age, sex and type of school. Later, grade was dismissed as a means of classification because it was found that grade was not a factor affecting the responses of the students.

When the information was tabulated by age, it was found that this too was inappropriate. Although it has been shown that age does affect reading interests, there was no indication from this study that age had any significant effect on the students' responses to the questions concerning methodology.<sup>1</sup>

It was then decided that sex would be a significant variable on which to analyse the data. But again boys and girls had responded in similar ways to the questions on methodology, and no significant difference could be observed.

Type of school was ruled out almost immediately as a variable which would affect student opinion of methodology. This was because the two types of schools used in the study, regional (senior) high and central high were quite similar in structure, design, size of classrooms, availability of staff, materials, and space.

Finally, it was decided that the data would be tabulated by means of frequency tables. Each table would contain the responses to each item, the number of times each response was selected, the percentage of students making each selection, and a ranking of the responses. In section two, cross tabulation

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Thorndike, Children's Reading Interests (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1941), p. 39; William Scott Gray, Summary of Investigations Relating to Reading (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1925), p. 166.

by means of a statistical technique called 'chi-square' was administered to determine whether or not there was any significant relationship between the number of times students were exposed to each classroom method and their liking for each method.<sup>2</sup> In section four a weighted frequency was used to determine how familiar students were with the novels supplied by the Department of Education for the current year.<sup>3</sup>

#### CLASSROOM METHODS

In this section, the responses given by students to a number of selected classroom methods for the teaching of the novel are presented.

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<sup>2</sup>Celeste McCollough, Statistical Concepts (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1963).

<sup>3</sup>The school year of September, 1972 - June, 1973.

The Lecture Method

TABLE III.

STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: HOW OFTEN  
HAS THE LECTURE METHOD BEEN USED TO STUDY  
THE NOVEL IN YOUR CLASSES?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Always	66	18	4
Frequently	110	29	1
Occasionally	96	26	2
Rarely	84	23	3
Never	17	4	5
Totals	373	100	

This question was answered by 373 students, out of 386 (97 percent). The students who responded indicated quite clearly that the lecture method has been in widespread use in the teaching of the novel in their classrooms. Seventy-three percent indicated that the method had been used to teach novels either frequently, occasionally or always, whereas only 17 percent indicated that the method had never or had rarely been used in their classes.

TABLE IV.

## STUDENT OPINION OF THE LECTURE METHOD

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Excellent	33	9	4
Good	140	39	1
Average	105	29	2
Fair	61	17	3
Poor	22	6	5
Totals	361	100	

This question was answered by 94 percent of the students, 361 out of 386. The method was regarded by the students who responded as a likeable one. Seventy-seven percent of the students rated lectures as either good, average or excellent. Twenty-three percent of the students regarded lectures as either fair or poor. This indicates that a large proportion of high school students still have a high regard for lectures on the novel. Fowler, however, warned that this method has certain dangers.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Fowler, op cit., p. 240.

The Large Group Discussion

TABLE V

STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: HOW OFTEN HAS THE  
LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION BEEN USED TO STUDY  
THE NOVEL IN YOUR CLASSES?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Always	41	11	4
Frequently	107	29	1
Occasionally	100	27	2
Rarely	84	22	3
Never	41	11	5
Totals	373	100	

Three hundred and seventy-three students out of 386 responded to this question. This was a 97 percent response. Approximately two-thirds (67 percent) of the students who responded indicated that they had been exposed to the large group discussion method for studying novels either frequently, occasionally or always. The remaining one-third (33 percent) indicated non-exposure or rare exposure to the method. This

finding indicates that the "joint effort by a group of people to arrive at an understanding" is a widely used device for the study of fiction in these schools.<sup>5</sup>

TABLE VI

## STUDENT OPINION OF THE LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION METHOD

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Excellent	66	18	3
Good	154	42	1
Average	78	21	2
Fair	43	12	4
Poor	25	7	5
Totals	366	100	

Three hundred and sixty-six students out of 386 responded to this question. This was a 95 percent response. More than two-thirds (81 percent) of the students who responded indicated that they considered large group discussion to be

<sup>5</sup>The Bureau of Current Affairs, Discussion Methods (London: The Bureau, 1950), p. 5.

either a good, average or excellent technique for novel study. Less than one-third (19 percent) considered the method to be fair or poor. This finding indicates that students like to hear other students' responses within their classes, and that interaction is a popular part of the study of novels in the classroom. This backs up Fowler's belief that the use of speaking and listening, operating as a two-way process, can be a very worthwhile and interesting way to study novels.

#### The Small Group Discussion

TABLE VII

STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: HOW OFTEN HAS THE  
SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION BEEN USED TO STUDY  
THE NOVEL IN YOUR CLASSES?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Always	9	3	5
Frequently	44	12	4
Occasionally	69	19	3
Rarely	100	28	2
Never	135	38	1
Totals	357	100	



This question was answered by 92 percent of the students, 357 out of 386. This finding is interesting in that only one-third of the students who responded (34 percent) indicated that the small group discussion had been used either always, frequently, or occasionally for studying the novel in their classes. A sizeable two-thirds (66 percent) indicated that they had never or rarely experienced this method. This indicates that the small group discussion, which is being widely advocated by many leading educators, has not yet been widely used in the schools under study for teaching the high school novel.<sup>6</sup> J. V. Garland found that most small group discussions have no chairman and that each individual in the group is equal to each other in that each one has a point-of-view.<sup>7</sup> This method has potential which, at the moment, is not being fully taken advantage of in English classrooms. A philosophy for using the method was aptly expressed by Charlotte Epstein:

The "now" generation ... want to be interested now; they want to participate now; they are living now and they want to make the most of it. We can no longer sell the idea that school is merely preparation for life. School is living, and now is important.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Fowler, op cit., p. 95; Loban, Ryan and Squire, op cit., pp. 480-81.

<sup>7</sup>J. V. Garland, Discussion Methods (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1951), p. 16.

<sup>8</sup>Charlotte Epstein, Affective Subjects in the Classroom (Scranton: Intext Educational Publishers, 1972), p. 16.

More widespread use of small group discussion would, in Fowler's words, make the English classroom "a forum for ideas rather than a showcase for performance."<sup>9</sup>

A psychologist who has studied small groups quite extensively described their effectiveness in terms of group dynamics:

Group dynamics is the study of the interaction of individuals in small groups. One variable that group dynamicists have studied is group size. In general, a group with several members will solve a problem faster than individuals working alone...<sup>10</sup>

TABLE VIII

STUDENT OPINION OF THE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION METHOD

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Excellent	29	9	5
Good	102	30	1
Average	88	26	2
Fair	75	22	3
Poor	44	13	4
Totals	338	100	

<sup>9</sup>Fowler, op cit., p. 95.

<sup>10</sup>Donald L. Lewis, Scientific Principles of Psychology (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), p. 365.

This question was answered by 88 percent of the students, 338 out of 386. Roughly two-thirds (65 percent) of those who responded indicated that they considered the method good, average or excellent. Approximately one-third (35 percent) rated the method as fair or poor. Comparing Table VIII with Table VII, one can see that two-thirds of the students indicated a liking for small group discussions for the study of fiction but only one-third of them have had the chance to be exposed to this method.

#### The Panel Discussion

TABLE IX

STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: HOW OFTEN HAS  
THE PANEL DISCUSSION BEEN USED TO STUDY  
THE NOVEL IN YOUR CLASSES?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Always	2	1	5
Frequently	15	4	4
Occasionally	30	8	3
Rarely	72	19	2
Never	253	68	1
Totals	372	100	

Three hundred and seventy-two students out of 386 responded to this question. This was a 96 percent response. Of the students who responded, only 13 percent indicated that the panel discussion had been used either occasionally, frequently or always to study the novel in their classes. A sizeable 87 percent indicated that the method had never been used or used only rarely. This finding appears contradictory to that reported by Don Wolfe who concluded:

Panel Discussions are becoming increasingly popular as a means of opening to the class diverse and contradictory opinions about fundamental experience.<sup>11</sup>

TABLE X

## STUDENT OPINION OF THE PANEL DISCUSSION METHOD

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Excellent	20	6	5
Good	35	11	4
Average	86	27	2
Fair	83	26	3
Poor	96	30	1
Totals	320	100	

<sup>11</sup>Don Wolfe, Creative Ways to Teach English (New York: The Odyssey Press, Inc., 1961), p. 94.

Three hundred and twenty students out of 386 responded to this question. This was an 83 percent response. Forty-four percent of those who responded indicated that they considered the panel discussion to be an average, good or excellent method of studying novels in class. Fifty-six percent rated the method as either fair or poor. Don Wolfe's belief that panel discussions are becoming more popular is better illustrated in this finding than it was in the preceding one.<sup>12</sup>

A comparison of Table X with Table IX indicates that students are almost equally divided in their liking for the panel discussion method as a technique that would be favorable for teaching novels, despite the fact that they have had little or no exposure to the method.

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

The Individual Oral Presentation

TABLE XI

STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: HOW OFTEN HAS  
THE INDIVIDUAL ORAL PRESENTATION METHOD BEEN  
USED TO TEACH THE NOVEL IN YOUR CLASSES?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Always	16	4	5
Frequently	50	13	4
Occasionally	72	19	3
Rarely	91	24	2
Never	149	40	1
Totals	378	100	

This question was answered by 98 percent of the students, 378 out of 386. Just over one-third (36 percent) of the students who responded indicated that they had been exposed to the individual oral presentation for studying novels either occasionally, frequently or always. Nearly twice as many (64 percent) indicated that they had experienced little or no exposure to the method. This finding is quite similar to the finding for small group discussions.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup>See Table VII.

TABLE XII  
STUDENT OPINION OF THE INDIVIDUAL  
ORAL PRESENTATION METHOD

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Excellent	15	4	5
Good	75	22	3
Average	85	25	2
Fair	102	30	1
Poor	65	19	4
Totals	342	100	

This question was answered by 89 percent of the students, 342 out of 386. The students who responded were not consistent in their attitudes toward the individual oral presentation for the study of novels. About one-half of them (51 percent) claimed that the method was either average, good, or excellent and about one-half of them (49 percent) claimed that the method was only fair or poor. The reason for these mixed feelings can be attributed to the large percentage of students (64 percent) who had little or no exposure to the method.

As a result of these findings, it is logical to suggest that individual oral presentations be tried more often in high school for teaching novels. This method will not be appropriate for all students but it will be appropriate for some. The main advantage of the oral presentation is that it gives students a chance to experience fiction by working on novels individually and presenting their observations verbally. As Friedlander pointed out, the world of fiction is often "hidden" and students need the exposure which Murphy argues for:

Not only is experiencing fiction the most economical way for students to see, it is also probably the most reliable way of insuring that this capacity will affect their own lives.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Friedlander, op cit., p. 238; Murphy, "Teaching Fiction through Art," op cit., p. 503.



Role-Playing

TABLE XIII

STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: HOW OFTEN HAS  
THE ROLE-PLAYING METHOD BEEN USED TO  
TEACH THE NOVEL IN YOUR CLASSES?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Always	50	13	5
Frequently	83	22	3
Occasionally	93	25	1
Rarely	61	16	4
Never	90	24	2
Totals	377	100	

Three hundred and seventy-seven students out of 386 responded to this question. This was a 98 percent response. Of the students who responded, a surprising 60 percent indicated that they had studied the novel occasionally, frequently or always by the role-playing method. The percentage of students exposed to this method is much higher than the number anticipated. The most logical interpretation for this

result is that the students have studied plays by the role-playing method and have consequently responded to the wrong form here. Further evidence that this response was not a valid one came later when only a small percentage of the teachers indicated that they had used this method for the novel.<sup>15</sup> If such a response were valid, enthusiasts of the method such as Joan Magers and Charlotte Epstein would indeed be well pleased.<sup>16</sup> However, the student response does not appear to be a valid one.

TABLE XI-V

## STUDENT OPINION OF THE ROLE-PLAYING METHOD

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Excellent	58	16	3
Good	151	43	1
Average	75	21	2
Fair	45	13	4
Poor	26	7	5
Totals	355	100	

<sup>15</sup>Table LI.<sup>16</sup>Magers, op cit.; Epstein, op cit.

Three hundred and fifty-five students responded to this question. This was a 92 percent response. Of the students who responded, 80 percent rated the role-playing method as either good, average or excellent for studying novels. Only 20 percent rated the method as fair or poor. This widespread liking for the role-playing method is not unusual. However, it does appear that the students misinterpreted the question in this instance as has already been pointed out. But role-playing has much potential as a classroom method for studying novels as when Joan Magers used the role-playing technique to teach Great Expectations to her class. The results in Table XIV suggest that her recommendation is a good one:

Adaptations of the role-playing method are as unlimited as imagination and material permit. My students' reaction to the whole process was enthusiastic although they had to work harder than they would have wanted. They did become involved in the psychological problems of the main characters and their problems in their relationships to one another, and that's the beauty of it all.<sup>17</sup>

#### The Chi Square Test

For each of the six methods, a chi square test was administered to determine if a significant relationship existed

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<sup>17</sup>Magers, op. cit., p. 991.

between "how often" students had been exposed to each classroom method for studying novels and their liking for the method. In each case a null hypothesis was established that no significant relationship existed between these two variables and in each case a chi square test was used to test this null hypothesis. Calculations were made for each original matrix, each expected matrix, the chi square values, the degrees of freedom, and the probabilities of chi square exceeding the observed values.

For each method, the chi square value was found to be unusually high. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected each time. This indicates that for each of the six methods, a high positive relationship existed between "how often" the students had been exposed to each method and their "liking" for that method. Students who had much exposure to a method usually liked it while those who had little or no exposure to a method usually disliked it.

A Ranking of Classroom Methods on the basis of Student Enjoyment

TABLE XV  
STUDENT CHOICES OF THE MOST ENJOYABLE  
CLASSROOM METHOD

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Lecture	40	10	4
Large Group Discussion	110	29	2
Small Group Discussion	65	17	3
Panel Discussion	19	5	5
Individual Oral Presentation	7	2	6
Role-Playing	141	37	1
Totals	382	100	

This question was answered by 99 percent of the students, 382 out of 386. The most popular classroom method for novel study in the classroom was easily role-playing with 37 percent of the students selecting this method. However, this first choice must be considered with caution since there is no other evidence to suggest that role-playing has been widely used

to teach novels. The second most popular method was large group discussion which was selected by 17 percent of the students. The lecture followed fourth with only ten percent in favor. Panel discussions and individual oral presentations were highly unpopular methods with the former being selected by only five percent of the students and the latter by only two percent.

The popularity of role-playing as a classroom method has already been observed from Tables XIII and XIV. Therefore, it is logical that it should receive first choice here. The second choice, large group discussion, is a logical one in that 67 percent of the students in Table V indicated exposure to large group discussions for the study of novels, and 71 percent in Table VI indicated a liking for the method.

Small group discussion was not popular with the students, possibly because only one-third of them had indicated exposure to the method in their classroom. However, in Table VI, two-thirds of the students indicated a liking for the method. But when the method was ranked with the other methods, it was not so popular as it first appeared to be.

The low ranking given the lecture method is somewhat surprising. Seventy-three percent of the students in Table III had indicated exposure to lectures and 67 percent in Table IV regarded the method as a likeable one. But when the students had a chance to pick their most popular method, the lecture did not receive as many selections. This indicates

that the students preferred three other methods to the lecture for the teaching of novels.

The low ratings of panel discussion and individual oral presentation are logical ones in light of the data in Tables IX, X, XI, XII. The students indicated quite clearly that they had not had much exposure to these methods and were naturally puzzled over whether they liked the method or not. Their low ratings were due to unfamiliarity and possibly 'fear of the unknown' rather than unpopularity after exposure.

A Ranking of Classroom Methods on the basis of their efficiency in Promoting an Understanding and Appreciation of Novels

TABLE XVI

STUDENT CHOICES OF THE CLASSROOM METHOD MOST HELPFUL  
FOR THE UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION OF NOVELS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Lecture	107	28	2
Large Group Discussion	110	29	1
Small Group Discussion	62	16	3
Panel Discussion	24	6	6
Individual Oral Presentation	25	7	5
Role-Playing	56	14	4
Totals	384	100	

This question was answered by 99 percent of the students, 384 out of 386. The method selected as most helpful was large group discussion with 29 percent of the students having made the selection. Twenty-eight percent selected the lecture, thus making it the second most popular choice in this ranking. Small group discussion remained in third place claiming 16 percent of the student choices. Role-playing went down to fourth position having been selected by only 14 percent of the students. Individual oral presentation moved up slightly to 7 percent of the student choices and panel discussion, dropped slightly to 6 percent of the student choices.

Comparing Table XV with Table XVI, the reader can see that students regarded large group discussions as both enjoyable and helpful. Role-playing was regarded as extremely popular in the classroom but also regarded as not too helpful for the understanding and appreciation of novels. The lecture was not considered very popular but helpful for understanding and appreciation. Small group discussion fell in third position for both popularity and helpfulness. Panel discussion and individual oral presentation received a consistently low rank. Individual oral presentation was considered the most unpopular method with panel discussion the second most unpopular method. In terms of helpfulness, the panel discussion received the lowest ranking of all the methods presented and the individual oral presentation received the second lowest ranking.



## THE READING FACTOR

Extent of Students' Leisure Reading of Novels

TABLE XVII

NUMBER OF NOVELS READ BY THE STUDENTS WITHIN  
THE LAST YEAR EXCLUDING NOVELS  
ASSIGNED FOR REGULAR STUDY

Range	Number of Students in this range	Percent	r
None	35	9	4
1 - 2	90	24	3
3 - 5	96	25	2
More than 5	161	42	1
Totals	382	100	

Three hundred and eight-two students out of 386 responded to this question. This was a 99 percent response. Of the students who responded, 42 percent indicated that they had read more than five novels within the last year, 25 percent had read three to five novels, 24 percent had read one to two novels, and 9 percent had read no novels at all.

This finding backs up Brett's finding that students in Newfoundland high schools read more than their teachers give them credit for.<sup>18</sup> If all high school libraries were well furnished with a wide selection of books and materials, students would be able to select five novels of real interest to them instead of the five required by the syllabus.<sup>19</sup> This type of leisurely reading is necessary if the novel is to fulfil its function as a significant part of literature study. As Margaret Ryan put it:

Appreciation for any literary form can grow only when students have direct experience with a sufficient number of examples of that form to become sensitive to that form.<sup>20</sup>

Extent of the Students' Familiarity with the Novels Available  
From the Department of Education

Since the curriculum drawn up by the Department of Education sets the pattern for secondary education in Newfoundland high schools, it was believed that an investigation into students' familiarity with some of the novels which had been set out for this year's work in English was in order. However,

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<sup>18</sup>Brett, op cit.

<sup>19</sup>Crocker, op cit.

<sup>20</sup>Ryan, op cit., p. vi.

the novels which students had read from those which were available were, for the most part, those selected by their teachers. The classroom teacher had the freedom to select whatever novels he wanted to for his unit on the novel. Only in grade eleven did students have to worry about an external examination. But even in grade eleven the provincial examination accounts for only 50 percent of the students' grade in literature.

In the administration of the student questionnaire an opportunity was given to all students, regardless of grade, to respond to each book for each grade. This was done to provide for students who had read books from lower grades which they did not have a chance to read in previous years and for students who had read novels assigned for grades which they had not yet reached. Each item is considered in terms of the number and percentage of students responding to the novels, the maximum possible weighted frequency for each novel and the observed weighted frequency for each novel. All responses are rank-ordered.

TABLE XVIII

STUDENTS' FAMILIARITY WITH THE NOVELS AVAILABLE  
FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
FOR GRADES SEVEN AND EIGHT

Novel	Students Responding	Percentage Responding	Max. f	f	r
The Call of The Wild	366	95	1098	685	1
Big Red	370	96	1110	671	2
Hot Rod	368	95	1104	640	3
The Outsiders	366	95	1098	587	4
The Incredible Journey	370	96	1110	584	5
Old Yeller	366	95	1098	559	6
Karen	370	96	1110	546	7
Seventeenth Summer	365	95	1095	531	8
Lost in the Barrens	365	95	1095	475	9
The Wool Pack	364	94	1092	460	10
A Wrinkle in Time	366	95	1098	441	11
Runner in the Sky	362	94	1086	421	12
Our Exploits at West Poley	364	94	1092	402	13
Shadow of a Bull	365	95	1095	402	14
Master of Ravenspur	366	95	1098	397	15

In Table XVIII are tabulated the answers of students to questions on their reading of the novels provided for grades seven and eight.<sup>21</sup> Three of the novels were familiar to the students who responded: The Call of The Wild, with a weighted frequency of 685, Big Red with a weighted frequency of 671, and Hot Rod with a weighted frequency of 640.<sup>22</sup> Most of the maximum possible weighted frequencies were between 1000 and 1100. Five of the novels received a weighted frequency of between 500 and 600. They were: The Outsiders, The Incredible Journey, Old Yeller, Karen, and Seventeenth Summer. Six of the novels received a weighted frequency between 400 and 500: Lost in the Barrens, The Wool Pack, A Wrinkle in Time, Runner in the Sky, Our Exploits at West Poley, and The Shadow of a Bull. Only one novel received a weighted frequency below 400: Master of Ravenspur, with a weighted frequency of just 397.

Generally, students were not very familiar with the novels available for grades seven and eight. Two interpretations are possible here: some of the novels listed in Table XVIII did not appear in grades seven and eight when the students in

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<sup>21</sup>The weighting of responses involved a very simple mathematical procedure. The total number of first choices was multiplied by three, the total number of second choices by two, and the total number of third choices by one. The three products were then added together to give the weighted frequency for each item. This is the method used by Brett in her study.

<sup>22</sup>Familiarity as used in this section refers to the quantity obtained in a weighted frequency calculation.

this study were in these grades; and none of the junior high schools in the area designated for this study had a well-developed reading program. Since all of the novels in the list are junior novels; appropriate for junior high school students, many more of these or similar books should be made available to students while they are at the junior high school level. Together with the novels, there should be a well-developed reading program which would teach students the skills of reading and how these skills can be implemented into the reading of literature materials such as novels.

TABLE XIX

STUDENTS' FAMILIARITY WITH THE NOVELS AVAILABLE  
FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
FOR GRADE NINE

Novel	Students Responding	Percentage Responding	Max. f	f	n
Captains Courageous	369	96	1107	798	1
The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes	371	96	1113	740	2
Preston John	363	94	1089	700	3
Never Cry Wolf	368	95	1104	681	4
Flight into Danger	367	95	1101	672	5
Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea	361	94	1083	634	6
Shane	362	94	1086	625	7
Diary of a Young Girl	365	95	1095	623	8
Kon-Tiki Expedition	362	94	1086	520	9

The grade nine novels were much more familiar to the students than were the grade seven and eight novels. Again the maximum weighted frequencies for most novels were between 1000 and 1100. Three novels received weighted frequencies of 700 or above: Captains Courageous, The Adventures of Sherlock

Holmes, and Prester John. Five other novels received weighted frequencies between 600 and 700: Never Cry Wolf, Flight into Danger, Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea, Shane, and Diary of a Young Girl. Only one book, received a weighted frequency below 400: Kon-Tiki Expedition.

The grade nine novels were quite familiar to the students because most of these novels were studied in their classrooms. The grade seven and eight novels were used for leisure reading not for classroom study. It is not surprising to see Captains Courageous and Prester John as very familiar novels but The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes in second position was indeed a pleasant surprise. The data in Table XIX provide evidence that grade nine students are reading more fiction than they were at the time of the Brett study.<sup>23</sup> This is probably the result of better teaching, greater emphasis on the need for education, and the desire of students themselves to read more books since books are now more readily available than they once were and, in paperback form, relatively inexpensive.

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<sup>23</sup>1964.



TABLE XX

STUDENTS' FAMILIARITY WITH THE NOVELS AVAILABLE  
FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
FOR GRADE TEN

Novel	Students Responding	Percentage Responding	Max. f	f	r
The Boat Who Wouldn't Float	338	88	1014	764	1
Moonfleet	346	90	1038	708	2
Lost Horizon	341	88	1023	616	3
David Copperfield	342	89	1026	527	4
King Solomon's Mines	342	89	1026	438	5
Pigman	338	88	1014	433	6
The Day of the Triffids	341	88	1023	391	7

The weighted frequencies calculated for the grade ten novels were not nearly as consistent as the ones calculated for the grade nine novels. Again the maximum possible weighted frequencies for all novels were slightly greater than 1000.

Two of the novels received a weighted frequency greater than 700: The Boat Who Wouldn't Float and Moonfleet. Lost Horizon was the only novel that received a weighted frequency between 600 and 700; and David Copperfield was the only novel

that received a weighted frequency between 500 and 600. Two novels received weighted frequencies between 400 and 500: King Solomon's Mines, and Pigman. The Day of the Triffids was quite unfamiliar, receiving a weighted frequency of just 391. This lack of familiarity can probably be explained by the fact that The Day of the Triffids appeared last on the school list and consequently was not read by most of the students.

TABLE XXI

STUDENTS' FAMILIARITY WITH THE NOVELS AVAILABLE  
FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
FOR GRADE ELEVEN

Novel	Students Responding	Percentage Responding	Max. f	f	r
Huckleberry Finn	316	82	948	811	1
The Old Man and the Sea	326	84	978	731	2
Bridge on the River Kwai	313	81	939	554	3
The War of the Worlds	322	83	366	478	4
The Ox-Bow Incident	321	83	963	416	5
Cress Delahanty	317	82	951	341	6

The weighted frequencies calculated for the grade eleven novels were similar to those calculated for the grade ten novels

in that widespread inconsistency exists in the degrees of familiarity from novel to novel. The maximum weighted frequencies for all novels were between 900 and 1000.

One novel, Huckleberry Finn, exceeded the 800 weighted frequency mark, the only novel in any grade to do so. The Old Man and the Sea was the only novel with a weighted frequency between 700 and 800; no novel had a weighted frequency between 600 and 700; and just one book had a weighted frequency between 500 and 600, The Bridge on the River Kwai. Two novels, The War of the Worlds and The Ox-Bow Incident, received weighted frequencies between 400 and 500. Only one novel, Cress Delahanty, received a weighted frequency less than 400.

Huckleberry Finn and The Old Man and the Sea were easily the two most familiar grade eleven novels. Part of the reason for this is that The Old Man and the Sea has been a required novel in Grade eleven for many years. Huckleberry Finn, on the other hand, is found in almost every school library that has any novels at all. It is also a novel which was used for many years in freshman English at Memorial University, so most English teachers are quite familiar with this classic.

#### THE STRUCTURE OF THE UNIT ON THE NOVEL

In this section, the responses given by students to selected aspects of the structure of the unit on the novel are presented.

TABLE XXII

STUDENT OPINION CONCERNING THE NUMBER OF NOVELS  
INCLUDED IN THE UNIT ON THE NOVEL

Response	Students Responding	Percent Responding	r
Too few novels included	205	53	1
The number of novels included in view of time and work-load is about right	175	45	2
Too many novels included	6	2	3
Totals	386	100	

Two hundred and five students out of 386 (53 percent) agreed that their literature program did not include enough novels. One hundred and seventy-five (45 percent) indicated that the number of novels included was about right. Only six (two percent) indicated that too many novels were included. The Department of Education's Programme of Studies for the general level, recommends one novel for grade nine, one novel for grade ten, and one novel for grade eleven.<sup>24</sup> For the

<sup>24</sup>Newfoundland Department of Education, Programme of Studies, (1972-1973), pp. 29-36.

academic level, grade nine students were responsible for one novel in addition to The Pearl which was included in their literature anthology. Grade ten students were also responsible for one novel plus the one in their literature anthology, The Secret Sharer. Grade eleven students were responsible for two novels from the list provided.

The recommendation that students read one or two novels during a year in high school is not, in the investigator's opinion, a good way to help students become good readers, that is, discriminatory readers of many books. Two hundred and five students out of 386 do not like this rigidity. All of the novels listed for each grade should be available and each student should be given a chance to read any or all of these novels and others if he so chooses. Only six students out of 386 indicated that too many novels were included for the unit on the novel. This was further evidence of student discontent with the small number of novels included for the unit on the novel.

What students need may be a change from the Hunt method of reading that one novel "hard" to the Ryan method of

... wider flexibility... Instead of reading one novel hard ... read many just hard enough to enjoy them, just hard enough to heighten perceptions that will make the reading of the next one more rewarding.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>Hunt, op cit., p. 601; Ryan, p. vi.

However, it is probably a combination of both methods that is necessary.

The Time To be Spent on the Unit

TABLE XXIII

STUDENT OPINION CONCERNING THE TIME SPENT ON  
THE UNIT ON THE NOVEL

Response	Students Responding	Percent Responding	r
Class time spent on the unit on the novel is about right	177	46	1
More time should be spent on the unit on the novel	169	44	2
Less time should be spent on the unit on the novel	40	10	3
Totals	386	100	

One hundred and seventy-seven students (46 percent) indicated that they were satisfied with the amount of time spent on the unit on the novel. One hundred and sixty-nine (44 percent) indicated that more time should be spent on the unit while 40 (10 percent) indicated that less time should be spent on the unit.

The results for the length of time are contingent upon each teacher's approach to the novel. Since teachers were, for the most part, teaching just one or two novels each year to each class, the length of time spent on the novel was at a minimum. The unit on the novel need not be longer than the unit on any other literature form but it could be structured in such a way as to give the teacher ample time to instruct his students in what books are available for their grade level, how to select and read such books intelligently and how to derive the maximum amount of pleasure and enjoyment from the reading of many novels. The teacher himself must be knowledgeable about many books and many authors. If he possesses a wide background of knowledge himself, the English teacher should be capable of communicating his love of books and authors to his students in a minimum amount of time.

The Reading of Novels not Prescribed

TABLE XXIV

STUDENT OPINION CONCERNING THE READING  
OF NOVELS NOT PRESCRIBED

Response	Students Responding	Percent Responding	r
Not enough provision is made for the reading of other novels not prescribed	136	35	1
Adequate provision is made for the reading of novels not prescribed	83	22	2
(No response)	167	43	
Totals	386	100	

One hundred and thirty-six students out of 386 (35 percent) agreed that they should be permitted to read novels that were not a part of the prescribed work for the year. Eighty-three (22 percent) agreed that they found adequate provision in their unit on the novel for the reading of books not prescribed. One hundred and sixty-seven students (43 percent) did not respond to either of these two items.



Of the students who responded, a substantial number indicated a desire to read novels on their own. Such students often like to read books of a specific type such as science, fiction and stories of adventure that are not required in the English programme. The interests of these students and others as well should be encouraged and developed. The teacher should give such students careful guidance and advice regarding the type of books they might like to read and discuss with them any specific books which they may have found intriguing. The English teacher should place priority on helping the student read the type of novel that the student wants to read, not the type that the teacher thinks he should read. As Harold Friedlander remarked:

It takes courage to let insights fall where they may, but it is essential. How else will the student come to trust his own insights and learn to deal honestly with all the varieties of possibility that life offers?<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Friedlander, op cit., p. 238.

The Length of Novels

TABLE XXV

STUDENT OPINION CONCERNING THE LENGTH  
OF PRESCRIBED NOVELS

Response	Students Responding	Percent Responding	r
Most novels included are about the right length	215	56	1
Most of the novels included are too long	87	23	2
(No response)	84	21	
Totals	386	100	

Two hundred and fifteen students maintained that in view of time and workload, the novels which were prescribed were about the right length. Eighty-seven students (23 percent) indicated that the novels which they had to read were too long. Here the problem was not with the 215 but with the 87. Two interpretations of their viewpoint was considered: either the novels were indeed too long or else these students were poor readers. Indications point to the second of these two interpretations in that most of the novels which had been prescribed

for high school students were of average length for a novel (200 to 400 pages).

Those 87 students were probably thinking in terms of other literature forms such as short stories, plays, poetry, and essays, all of which are much shorter than the novel. Those students complained about the length of the one or two novels which they were required to read, therefore a problem exists. This should be a concern to any conscientious English teacher. Such students should be given instruction in reading with emphasis on the major aspects of this skill such as using context clues, phonetic clues, structural clues, and the dictionary. In addition, the English teacher should help these students to develop the skills of "vocabulary development, adaptive rates of reading, synthetic thinking in reading and reading for appreciation and pleasure."<sup>27</sup> With a mastery of these skills, the student would then be able to read a novel, regardless of its length, in a reasonable time.

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<sup>27</sup>W. E. Campbell, "Reading Can be Improved," Teaching Reading in High School: Selected Articles ed. Robert Karlin (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969), p. 409.

The Appeal of Prescribed Novels

TABLE XXVI.

STUDENT OPINION CONCERNING THE APPEAL  
OF PRESCRIBED NOVELS

Response	Students Responding	Percent Responding	r
Most of the novels included are interesting	234	61	1
Most of the novels included are boring	136	35	2
(No response)	16	4	
Totals	384	100	

Two hundred and thirty-four students out of 386 (61 percent) maintained that most of the prescribed novels were interesting. One hundred and thirty-six (35 percent) maintained that the novels were boring. These two distinctions were sharp ones; purposely intended, in order to get a clear picture of the appeal of the novels now being used in high school.

Since almost twice as many students enjoy the novels now being taught in grades nine, ten, and eleven as dislike

the novels, there is no legitimate reason for any major changes in the type of novel now being used in Newfoundland high schools. However, since the relevance of many of the older novels, such as David Copperfield and Prester John is now being questioned, such novels should probably be replaced by novels which speak more directly to this generation. Such novels would be those in which the values, attitudes, and behaviors expressed by the characters and the author would be similar to those of today's adolescent.

#### The Overall Structure

TABLE XXVII

#### STUDENT OPINION CONCERNING THE OVERALL STRUCTURE OF THE UNIT ON THE NOVEL

Response	Students Responding	Percent Responding	r
Neither too general nor too rigid	167	43	1
Too rigid	73	19	2
Too general	46	12	3
(No response)	100	26	
Totals	386	100	

The results of this finding were inconclusive. One hundred and nineteen students (31 percent) thought that the unit was poorly structured in that it was either too general or too rigid. One hundred and sixty-seven students (43 percent) thought that the structure of the unit was satisfactory in the light of these two possible weaknesses.

Students expressed very definite opinions on the other aspects of structure but were divided in their opinions when asked to comment on the overall structure. Perhaps this finding, in itself, is a warning that structure is complex and not easy to comment on.

#### EVALUATION FOR THE NOVEL

Evaluation of student progress in studying a unit of fiction can be executed in a variety of ways, as examined in the data to follow. However, it is the investigator's belief that the true value of any work of literature is, in Geraldine Murphy's words, aesthetic, moral, and cognitive, and that the aesthetic and moral dimensions cannot be easily measured.<sup>28</sup>

Certain methods of evaluation can, however, be effective, if used properly. Toward such an end, the unit on the novel should begin with a number of clearly stated objectives

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<sup>28</sup> Geraldine Murphy, The Study of Literature in High School (Toronto: Blaisdell Publishing Co., 1968), pp. 15-55.

and the evaluative instruments should be used in such a way as to measure, to as high a degree as possible, the students' attainment of these objectives. Each evaluative instrument should be valid and reliable, and designed to measure a specific aim. As Murphy put it:

The worth of any method of testing depends upon the extent to which it reveals students' progress toward achieving the aim. We give written questions, quizzes, short and long papers, and tests because we want to know, at many successive points during the teaching of a unit "where students are" in terms of their achievement of the aim.<sup>29</sup>

### Objective Tests

TABLE XXVIII

#### STUDENT OPINION OF OBJECTIVE TESTS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r.
Highly in favor of	121	33	2
In favor of	160	44	1
Disagrees with	37	10	3
Strongly disagrees with	18	5	5
No opinion	31	8	4
Totals	367	100	

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 51.

Ninety-five percent of the students, 367 out of 386, responded to this item. Of the students who responded, 77 percent indicated that they were either in favor of or highly in favor of objective tests. Fifteen percent indicated that they either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this type of instrument. Eight percent indicated that they had no opinion.

A 77 percent response in favor of objective tests for the novel must be considered high. Such a test can be valuable if it is used immediately after the students' reading of a novel to test a certain type of objective, and if the teacher knows how to construct a valid and reliable test. The objective test is most useful in the cognitive realm. However, for a unit on literature, such tests are open to much criticism such as this one:

Too much time may be spent on tests which do not teach, or which do not yield any relevant information about pupil performance except the ability to remember facts, to repeat generalizations the teacher has made, or to guess the kinds of questions the teacher is likely to ask.<sup>30</sup>

Objective tests may be applicable in a number of high school subjects such as mathematics, science and social studies, but they are probably not the type of instrument that is most desirable in literature. The fact that 77 percent of the

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<sup>30</sup>Fowler, op cit., p. 407.



students who responded were in favor of such an instrument may be a reflection upon the evaluation of literature in some of our schools and the type of notions which teachers have regarding the nature and purpose of literature both as a high school subject and as a part of the discipline regarded as English.

### Essay Tests

TABLE XXIX

## STUDENT OPINION OF ESSAY TESTS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Highly in favor of	44	12	5
In favor of	127	35	1
Disagrees with	91	25	2
Strongly disagrees with	55	15	3
No opinion	46	13	4
Totals	363	100	

Ninety-four percent of the students, 363 out of 386, responded to this item. Of the students who responded, 47

percent indicated that they were either in favor of or highly in favor of essay tests. Forty percent indicated that they either disagreed with or strongly disagreed with this type of instrument. Thirteen percent indicated that they had no opinion.

This finding points out that the percentage of students who had opposed the use of the essay test was almost equal to the percentage who were in favor of the test. These mixed feelings among students may, in part, be attributed to the high regard which most students held for objective tests. Many educators place high priority on the adaptive use of essay tests for the evaluation of success after the study of fiction.<sup>31</sup> For the most part, questions which are interpretative, that is, those which require a logical answer are preferred to questions that are factual, testing only for correctness.

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<sup>31</sup>Ryan, op cit., pp. 84-87; Murphy, The Study of Literature in High School, op cit., pp. 468-469.

A Combination of Objective and Essay Questions

TABLE XXX

STUDENT OPINION OF TESTS HAVING A COMBINATION  
OF OBJECTIVE AND ESSAY QUESTIONS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Highly in favor	67	18	2
In favor of	167	46	1
Disagrees with	62	17	3
Strongly disagrees with	24	6	5
No opinion	46	13	4
Totals	366	100	

Ninety-five percent of the students, 366 out of 386, responded to this item. Of the students who responded, 64 percent expressed favor for tests which had a combination of objective and essay questions. Twenty-three percent disagreed with this type of test and 13 percent had no opinion.

This signifies that almost three times as many students were in favor of the test which combined objective and essay questions than there were against this type of test. Such a

test, because of its reasonable amount of popularity with the students can be used by the teacher to test specific objectives toward which he is striving in his unit on the novel. This type of test could be adopted as a compromise in a situation where the students insist on objective tests and leading English educators insist on essay tests. The classroom teacher might listen to these two voices, and attempt to satisfy both, in so far as it is possible to do so. The problem of evaluation can be solved best through the development of a sound philosophy and a flexible attitude on the part of the teachers.

#### Oral Examination

TABLE XXXI

## STUDENT OPINION OF ORAL EXAMINATIONS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Highly in favor of	62	17	4
In favor of	79	21	3
Disagrees with	96	26	1
Strongly disagrees with	85	23	2
No opinion	48	13	5
Totals	370	100	

Ninety-six percent of the students, 370 out of 386, responded to this item. Of the students who responded, 38 percent expressed favor for oral examinations on novels. Forty-nine percent expressed disagreement with this procedure and 13 percent had no opinion.

Since almost half of the students who responded (49 percent) expressed disapproval for oral examinations, it is logical to deduce that this type of examination was not very popular. The students who did indicate that they favored this type of evaluative procedure (38 percent) were possibly thinking in terms of a method of evaluation which would be a change from the methods to which they were being subjected to. Oral examination is a procedure which can, however, be adopted in a variety of ways and used to evaluate student activities in the study of fiction.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Rodgers, op cit., pp. 123-146.

Written Assignments

TABLE XXXII

## STUDENT OPINION OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Highly in favor of	49	13	4
In favor of	149	41	1
Disagrees with	66	19	2
Strongly disagrees with	50	14	3
No opinion	49	13	5
Totals	363	100	

Ninety-four percent of the students, 363 out of 386, responded to this item. Of the students who responded, 54 percent expressed favor for written assignments. Thirty-three percent disagreed with this type of evaluation and 13 percent had no opinion.

This finding indicates that there was a rising popular interest in the use of the written assignment in high school English, a chore traditionally set aside for university students. Such assignments could take the form of book reports, critiques, development of themes and the tracing of ideas.

Group Projects

TABLE XXXIII

## STUDENT OPINION OF GROUP PROJECTS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Highly in favor of	97	26	2
In favor of	175	47	1
Disagrees with	32	9	3
Strongly disagrees with	32	9	4
No opinion	32	9	5
Totals	368	100	

Ninety-five percent of the students, 368 out of 386, responded to this item. Of the students who responded, 73 percent expressed favor for group projects, 18 percent disagreed with evaluation for this type of activity, and 9 percent had no opinion.

Group projects were very popular with the students responding. This was encouraging because English is an area which lends itself remarkably well to this type of activity. Many excellent group projects can be devised by a conscientious

English teacher using one or more novels per group. One example of such a group project is the one proposed by Masback.<sup>33</sup>

### Individual Projects

TABLE XXXIV

#### STUDENTS OPINION OF INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Highly in favor of	46	12	4
In favor of	146	40	1
Disagrees with	72	20	2
Strongly disagrees with	29	8	5
No opinion	72	20	3
Totals	365	100	

Ninety-five percent of the students, 365 out of 386, responded to this item. Of the students who responded, 52

<sup>33</sup>Masback, op cit., pp. 278-280.



percent expressed favor for individual projects. Twenty-eight percent disagreed with evaluation for such projects and 20 percent had no opinion.

While the majority of the students have favored the use of projects for evaluation in both Tables XXXIII and XXIV, the liking for group projects was clearly much greater than that for individual projects. Group projects were more popular, probably, because within a group students can interact with each other and the work to be done can be done cooperatively. The individual project is also an excellent technique and may be found to be more applicable for some classes than the group technique.

#### Participation in Class

TABLE XXXV

#### STUDENT OPINION OF CLASS PARTICIPATION

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Highly in favor of	85	23	3
In favor of	149	41	1
Disagrees with	23	6	4
Strongly disagrees with	18	5	5
No opinion	90	25	2
Totals	365	100	

Ninety-five percent of the students, 365 out of 386, responded to this item. Of the students who responded, 64 percent expressed favor for class participation. Only 11 percent expressed disagreement with evaluation for this type of activity. Twenty-five percent had no opinion.

This means that approximately two-thirds of the students were in favor of receiving credit for the participatory activity in class. This point is a good one for any English teacher to know. However, if credit is given for class participation, the credit should not be limited solely to oral expression. If this happens, only a small number of students in the class will, in all probability, dominate the discussions. Class participation for credit should include all the activities which are done in class for the novel, be they oral, written or otherwise. In this way, all students, not just the ones who talk easily, will be considered.

#### OTHER OPINIONS

The final question on the student questionnaire provided students with the opportunity to express any other opinions or feelings which they might have had regarding the novel or their interest in reading generally. Ten percent of the students, 38 out of 386, responded positively to this optional question.

The responses were many and varied. However, they can be roughly grouped together as follows:

1. Eight students suggested that students should have some control over the selection of novels which are required for the year's work in English.
2. Seven students indicated that not enough time was made available in the literature program for the study of novels. One student even remarked that "75 percent of the literature course should be novels."
3. Five students suggested that more novels should be included.
4. Eight students indicated that the novels which they were reading in school were boring and irrelevant. One student suggested that country and western novels be used because of their action and excitement. Other suggestions which might be noted were:
  - a. "We need livelier, realistic novels of the way thing are and far out novels also."
  - b. "Novels should be more modern and by more contemporary writers. Provide novels which are less boring."
  - c. "Novels should be regarded as good books not something to be analysed. This turns many students off."
5. Three students said that they found their prescribed novels interesting.
6. Three students indicated that more facilities were necessary for the teaching of English, such as films, slides and tapes.

7. Two students indicated that they would like to have more group discussions for novels. One of them maintained that "teachers haven't got enough patience for class discussions."
8. Two students remarked that some required novels were too long.
9. One student suggested that novels with attractive titles be chosen and two other students wanted novels with more pictures.
10. One student suggested that high school students should receive more encouragement from their teachers to read more books on their own.
11. One student favored more oral reading of novels in the classroom.
12. Four other relevant points were also made:
  - a. "Most novels done in school tend to be read beforehand. Doing them tends to be a boring exercise."
  - b. "More emphasis should be placed on reading in junior high. Thus students will be better equipped to cope with the readings required in grades nine, ten, and eleven."
  - c. "Students should be given the deeper meanings of novels. To understand them better."
  - d. "There should have been a question on the study of literature in school, whether the student agrees or disagrees with it, and why or why not."

## SUMMARY

In chapter four, the data from three hundred and eighty-six high school students have been presented.


A ranking of the classroom methods most often used to teach novels in the English classrooms of the students surveyed are as follows: lectures, large-group discussions, role-playing, individual oral presentations, small group discussions and panel discussions. The methods most popular with the students in terms of being excellent, good or average, are in rank-order: large-group discussions, role-playing, lectures, small-group discussions, individual oral presentations, and panel discussions. Role-playing was selected by the students as the method which they considered most enjoyable in the classroom. Large-group discussion was selected as the method which students considered most helpful for understanding and appreciating novels.

A chi square test was administered for each classroom method. Each test revealed that a significant relationship existed between 'how often' students were exposed to the classroom method and their liking for the method.

Forty-two percent of the students surveyed had read more than five novels during the past year. Of the novels recommended by the Provincial Department of Education, the best known were: for grades seven and eight: The Call of the Wild; for grade nine: Captains Courageous; for grade ten: The Boat Who Wouldn't Float; and for grade eleven, Huckleberry Finn.

Regarding the structure of the unit on the novel, the majority of students indicated that they considered the class time spent on novels, the reasonable length of prescribed novels, and the interest of prescribed novels as good points about the unit. The aspects of structure which they disliked most were: the small number of novels included in their unit and the lack of adequate provision for the reading of non-prescribed novels. A large number of the students considered their overall unit as good in that it was not too general or too rigid.

A rank-ordering of the methods of evaluation which students most preferred is as follows: objective tests, group projects, a combination of objective and essay questions, class participation, written assignments, individual projects, essay questions, and oral examinations.



## CHAPTER V

### AN ANALYSIS OF TEACHER RESPONSES

#### INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyses and reports the responses given by twenty English teachers in the six high schools on the Bonavista peninsula of Newfoundland. These teachers taught the three hundred and eighty-six students used in the student sample and the rest of the students in their schools as well. The general information regarding these teachers is included in Appendix C.

The rest of the information gathered from the teachers is presented in the order in which it appeared on the teacher questionnaire. In section two, however, a number of categories have been combined in order to apply a statistical test of significance.

#### CLASSIFICATION OF DATA

Frequency tables were used in presenting the data. The tables contain the responses to the various items in the same words that appeared on the teacher questionnaire. The response to each item was also tabulated as a percentage of the total responses for that item. All responses to each item were rank-ordered. In the event of ties, the responses

which were tied were given the same rank, according to proper statistical procedure.<sup>1</sup>

In section two, cross tabulation by means of Fisher's Exact Probability Test was administered to determine whether or not there was any significant difference between the number of times teachers had used each classroom method listed and their rating of that method. This test was used for the teacher questionnaire because the chi-square test is inaccurate for small numbers. The test was applied according to the procedure devised by Russell Langley.<sup>2</sup>

#### CLASSROOM METHODS

In this section, the responses of the teachers to questions concerning classroom methods for teaching the novel are presented by means of frequency tables.

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<sup>1</sup>Glass and Stanley, op. cit., p. 28.

<sup>2</sup>Russell Langley, Practical Statistics Simply Explained (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1970), pp. 292-315.

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The Lecture

TABLE XXXVI

TEACHER RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: TO WHAT EXTENT  
DO YOU USE THE LECTURE AS A CLASSROOM METHOD  
FOR TEACHING THE NOVEL?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Always	2	10	2.5
Frequently	14	70	1
Occasionally	1	5	4.5
Rarely	2	10	2.5
Never	1	5	4.5
Totals	20	100	

— All 20 teachers responded to this question. Eighty-five percent indicated that they had used the method either frequently, occasionally or always. Fifteen percent indicated that they had never or rarely used the method.

This finding reinforces the student responses whereby seventy-three percent indicated exposure to the method. Only

17 percent indicated no exposure to the method.<sup>3</sup> This finding for the teachers is directly contrary to the finding in the Squire and Applebee study in which the lecture, as a classroom method of teaching English, was used by only 14 percent of the teachers.<sup>4</sup> However, in the Squire and Applebee study, the 158 schools used were especially selected, mainly on the basis of successful English programs. In the present study the schools were selected solely on the basis of location.

TABLE XXXVII  
TEACHER OPINION OF THE LECTURE METHOD AS A  
TECHNIQUE FOR TEACHING THE NOVEL

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	f
Excellent	1	5	4
Good	14	70	1
Average	3	15	2
Fair	1	5	4
Poor	1	5	4
Totals	20	100	

<sup>3</sup>Table III.

<sup>4</sup>James R. Squire and Roger K. Applebee, High School English Instruction Today (New York: Appleton-Century Crofts, 1968), p. 299.

All 20 teachers responded to this question. Ninety percent of these teachers indicated that they considered the method to be either good, average or excellent for teaching the novel in high school. Only ten percent indicated that the method was either fair or poor.

The student rating of the lecture method was lower than that of the teachers but still quite high: seventy-seven percent rated lectures in the favorable categories whereas twenty-three percent rated lectures in the unfavorable categories.<sup>5</sup>

These findings indicate that the lecture method was a widely used classroom method for teaching novels in high school English. They also indicate that the method was highly esteemed by both teachers and students. However, there are indications of student dissatisfaction with lectures, and this may spell 'hope' for many of the new English programs in which the lecture has little or no part of the classroom activities. As David Kives observed:

... English teachers must change many of their traditional roles. But most important, they must become agents of change.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Table IV.

<sup>6</sup>David Kives, "Planning for Changes in English Education," The Growing Edges of Secondary English, ed. Charles Suhor, J. S. Mayher, and Frank J. D. Angelo (Champaign, Ill.: NCTE, 1968), p. 157.

A Fisher Exact Probability Test was then administered to the data to determine if a significant relationship existed between 'how often' teachers has used the lecture method and their 'rating' of the method. Since the Fisher Test can only be used for a 2 x 2 table, the following categories were combined:

Always + Frequently + Occasionally = Used  
 Rarely + Never = Not Used  
 Excellent + Good + Average = Acceptable (Acc.)  
 Fair + Poor = Not Acceptable (Not Acc.)

A null hypothesis was established that no significant difference existed in the two sets of data. The two tables below show the original cross-tabulated data and the data after it had been adjusted to satisfy the two criteria necessary for the use of Fisher's Test:<sup>7</sup>

	used	not used	
acc	17	1	18
not acc	0	2	2
	17	3	20

	not used	used	
not acc	2	0	2
acc	1	17	18
	3	17	20

In the Tables for Fisher's Test the critical value of  $d$  at the .05 level of significance for  $a = 2$ ,  $b = 0$ , and  $c = 1$

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<sup>7</sup>See section two of this chapter.

was found to be 9.<sup>8</sup> The observed value was 17. Since the observed value of  $d$  exceeded the critical value of  $d$ , at which a significant difference would exist, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, a significant difference exists between the teacher responses to 'how often' they had used the lecture method and their 'rating' of the method.

TABLE XXXVIII

TEACHER RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: WITH WHICH GROUPING  
OF STUDENTS WOULD YOU BE MOST INCLINED TO USE  
THE LECTURE METHOD?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Superior	2	10	4
Above average	2	10	4
Average	10	50	1
Below average	4	20	2
Retarded	0	0	6.5
All of these	2	10	4
None of these	0	0	6.5
Totals	20	100	

<sup>8</sup> Langley, p. 298.

All of the teachers replied to this question. Four teachers (20 percent) indicated that they were most inclined to use the method with superior and above average students. Ten teachers (50 percent) indicated that they favored the method for average students. Four teachers (20 percent) would use lectures for below average or retarded students, and two teachers (10 percent) would use the method for all of the aforesaid groups. No teachers indicated that they would not be inclined to use the lecture for any of these groups.

The Large Group Discussion

TABLE XXXIX

TEACHER RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: TO WHAT EXTENT  
DO YOU USE THE LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION AS A  
CLASSROOM METHOD FOR TEACHING THE NOVEL?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Always	4	20	3
Frequently	9	45	1
Occasionally	5	25	2
Rarely	1	5	4.5
Never	1	5	4.5
Totals	20	100	

All 20 teachers responded to this question. Ninety percent of the respondents indicated that they used the method either frequently, occasionally or always. Only ten percent indicated that they never or rarely used the method.

Since a high percentage of the teachers indicated that they used the large group discussion, the student responses have been verified. Two-thirds of the students indicated that they were well accustomed to the use of the large group discussion method for novels whereas just one-third indicated rare or no exposure to the method.<sup>9</sup> In the Squire and Applebee study, 54 percent of the teachers reported that they used the discussion method more often than any other classroom method for the teaching of English.

TABLE XL

TEACHER OPINION OF THE LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION  
AS A TECHNIQUE FOR TEACHING THE NOVEL

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Excellent	6	30	2
Good	8	40	1
Average	3	15	3.5
Fair	3	15	3.5
Poor	0	0	5
Totals	20	100	

<sup>9</sup>Table V.

All 20 teachers responded to this question. Eighty-five percent of the teachers had high esteem for large group discussions and rated the method as ~~good~~, excellent or average. Only 15 percent of the teachers considered the method to be fair or poor.

This finding closely parallels the information provided by the students whereby eighty-one percent of them considered large group discussions to be a favorable method and only 19 percent considered the method to be fair or poor.<sup>10</sup> Large group discussion is thus a widely used and well liked method by both teachers and students for the teaching of high school fiction.

A Fisher Exact Probability Test was then performed to determine if a significant difference existed between 'how often' teachers had used the large group discussion method and their 'rating' of the method. The categories were combined in the usual manner to obtain the required 2 x 2 data table.<sup>11</sup> The tentative null hypothesis stated that no significant difference existed in the two sets of data.

The two tables below show the original cross-tabulated data, and the data after it had been adjusted to satisfy the two criteria necessary for the use of Fisher's Test:<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Table VI.

<sup>11</sup>See the test which was performed for the lecture method.

<sup>12</sup>See section two of this chapter.



	used	not used	
acc	16	1	17
not acc	2	1	3
	18	2	20

	not acc	acc	
not used	1	1	2
used	2	16	18
	3	17	20

In the Tables for Fisher's Test the critical value of  $d$  at the .05 level of significance for  $a = 1$ ,  $b = 1$ , and  $c = 2$  was found to be 115.<sup>13</sup> The observed value of  $d$  was 16. Since the observed value of  $d$  did not exceed the critical value of  $d$ , the null hypothesis was accepted. No significant difference has been shown to exist between the teacher responses to 'how often' they had used the large group discussion method and their 'rating' of the method.

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<sup>13</sup> Langley, p. 297.

TABLE XLI

TEACHER RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: WITH WHICH  
GROUPING OF STUDENTS WOULD YOU BE MOST INCLINED  
TO USE THE LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION METHOD?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Superior	2	11	3
Above average	2	11	3
Average	11	61	1
Below average	1	6	5
Retarded	0	0	6.5
All of these	2	11	3
None of these	0	0	6.5
Totals	18	100	

Ninety percent of the teachers, 18 out of 20, indicated the grouping of students which they would be most inclined to use the large group discussion with. Of the teachers who responded, four (22 percent) indicated that they preferred to use the method with superior and above average students. Eleven teachers (61 percent) preferred the method for average students. Only one teacher (6 percent) preferred the method for

below average or retarded students. Two teachers (11 percent) signified that they preferred large group discussions for all of the aforesaid groups whereas no teachers indicated that the method was inappropriate for any of the aforesaid groups.

The Small Group Discussion

TABLE XLII

TEACHER RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: TO WHAT EXTENT  
DO YOU USE THE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION AS A  
CLASSROOM METHOD FOR TEACHING THE NOVEL?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	n
Always	0	0	5
Frequently	2	10	3
Occasionally	11	55	1
Rarely	6	30	2
Never	1	5	4
Totals	20	100	

All 20 teachers indicated the extent to which they used the small group discussion method for teaching novels.

Sixty-five percent indicated that they used the method occasionally or frequently, while no teachers indicated that they used the method at all times. Thirty-five percent indicated that they used small group discussions only rarely or never.

The percentages are interesting when compared with the responses of the students. Only one-third of the students (34 percent) indicated that they had been exposed to the method whereas approximately two-thirds (65 percent) of the teachers indicated that they used this method.<sup>14</sup> The difference in the responses may be attributed to many factors, the most notable being that these students had not always, during their high school experience, been in the English classrooms of the teachers questioned for this study. In the Squire and Applebee study, an amazingly low percentage of teachers (less than one percent) reported that they used the small group discussion to teach English.<sup>15</sup> Small group discussions can serve a vital part of the process of English. As Loban, Ryan and Squire observed:

Even the slow and inarticulate has demonstrated repeatedly that, given subjects on his own level and interested listeners, he can learn to discuss with enthusiasm and a fair degree of skill.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Table VII.

<sup>15</sup>Squire and Applebee, op cit., p. 299.

<sup>16</sup>Loban, Ryan, and Squire, op cit., p. 425.

TABLE XLIII

TEACHER OPINION OF THE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION  
AS A TECHNIQUE FOR TEACHING NOVELS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Excellent	1	5	4.5
Good	14	70	1
Average	1	5	4.5
Fair	2	10	2.5
Poor	2	10	2.5
Totals	20	100	

All 20 teachers expressed their opinions concerning their impressions of the small group discussion as a technique for teaching novels. A sizeable 80 percent of the teachers had high regard for the method and indicated its status to be either good, excellent, or average for the teaching of novels. Only 20 percent graded the method as fair or poor.

The data in Table XLIII indicate that teachers valued small group discussions more than their students did. Sixty-five percent of the students rated small group discussions as average or better as compared with thirty-five percent who

condemned the method as being only fair or poor.<sup>17</sup>

A Fisher Exact Probability Test was then applied to the data to find out if a significant difference existed between 'how often' teachers had used the small group discussion method and their 'rating' of the method. The tentative null hypothesis stated that no significant difference existed in the two sets of data.

The two tables below contain the original cross-tabulated data, and the data after it had been adjusted to satisfy the two criteria essential for the use of Fisher's Test:<sup>18</sup>

	used	not used	
acc	13	3	16
not acc	0	4	4
	13	7	20

	not used	used	
not acc	4	0	4
acc	3	13	16
	7	13	20

In the Tables for Fisher's Test the critical value of  $d$  at the .05 level of significance for  $a = 4$ ,  $b = 0$ , and  $c = 3$  was found to be 8.<sup>19</sup> The observed value of  $d$  was 13. Since the observed value of  $d$  exceeded the critical value of  $d$ , the null hypothesis was rejected. A significant difference has been shown to exist between the teachers' response to 'how

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<sup>17</sup>Table VIII.

<sup>18</sup>See section two of this chapter.

<sup>19</sup>Langley, p. 300.

'often' they had used the small group discussion method and their 'rating' of the method.

TABLE XLIV

TEACHER RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: WITH WHICH GROUPING  
OF STUDENTS WOULD YOU BE MOST INCLINED TO USE  
THE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION METHOD?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Superior	2	11	3.5
Above average	10	52	1
Average	4	21	2
Below average	2	11	3.5
Retarded	0	0	6.5
All of these	1	5	5
None of these	0	0	6.5
Totals	19	100	

Nineteen teachers (95 percent) responded to this question. Of the teachers who responded, twelve (63 percent) indicated that they considered small group discussions on novels best for the above average and superior students. Four teachers (21 percent) considered the method best for average students.

Two teachers (11 percent) were most inclined to use the method with below average or retarded students. One teacher (five percent) maintained that he would be inclined to use the method for all of the aforesaid groups. No teacher indicated that he would not use the method for any of these groups.

The fact that 63 percent of the teachers preferred small group discussions for above average and superior students is interesting. The above average and superior would be the students most likely to participate rather well in such groups. An aversion from this method for less successful students is not entirely justified, however. As Loban, Ryan, and Squire pointed out, the "slow and inarticulate" can also participate, given good teaching and a favorable group atmosphere.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Loban, Ryan, and Squire, op cit., p. 425.



The Panel Discussion.

TABLE XLV

TEACHER RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: TO WHAT EXTENT  
DO YOU USE THE PANEL DISCUSSION AS A CLASSROOM  
METHOD FOR TEACHING THE NOVEL?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Always	0	0	4.5
Frequently	0	0	4.5
Occasionally	2	10	3
Rarely	6	32	2
Never	11	58	1
Totals	19	100	

Nineteen teachers responded to this question. Only a small number of the teachers who responded indicated that they had used the panel discussion method to teach novels: two teachers used the method occasionally, and no teachers used the method always or even frequently. The large proportion of the teachers, seventeen (90 percent), indicated rare or no usage of this method.

This finding is similar to the one for the students. Only 13 percent of the students indicated exposure to panel discussions and 87 percent indicated no or rare exposure to the method.<sup>21</sup>

TABLE XLVI

TEACHER OPINION OF THE PANEL DISCUSSION METHOD  
AS A TECHNIQUE FOR TEACHING NOVELS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Excellent	0	0	5
Good	4	23	2
Average	9	53	1
Fair	2	12	3.5
Poor	2	12	3.5
Totals	17	100	

Seventeen teachers (85 percent) responded to this question. Surprisingly enough, 13 teachers (76 percent) indicated that they considered panel discussions to be average

<sup>21</sup>Table IX.

or good. No teacher went to the positive extreme to claim that the method was excellent and only four teachers (24 percent) chose to rate the method in the negative categories of fair and poor.

The students did not like panel discussions as well as their teachers. Forty-four percent of them rated the method as average, good or excellent whereas fifty-six percent rated the method as fair or poor.<sup>22</sup>

A Fisher Exact Probability Test was then performed on the data to determine if a significant difference existed between 'how often' teachers had used the panel discussion method and their 'rating' of the method. The tentative null hypothesis maintained that no significant difference existed in the two sets of data.

The two tables below contain the original cross-tabulated data, and the data after it had been adjusted to satisfy the two criteria necessary for the administration of Fisher's Test:<sup>23</sup>

	used	not used	
acc	1	13	14
not acc	1	3	4
	2	16	18

	not acc	acc	
not used	1	1	2
used	3	13	16
	4	14	18

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<sup>22</sup>Table X.

<sup>23</sup>See section two of this chapter.

The Tables for Fisher's Test were then consulted.<sup>24</sup> The critical value of  $d$  at the .05 level of significance was found to be 154. The observed value of  $d$  was 13. Since the observed value of  $d$  did not exceed the critical value of  $d$ , no significant difference was shown to exist between the teachers' responses to 'how often' they had used the panel discussion and their 'rating' of the method.

TABLE XLVII

TEACHER RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: WITH WHICH GROUPING  
OF STUDENTS WOULD YOU BE MOST INCLINED TO USE  
THE PANEL DISCUSSION METHOD?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Superior	4	27	2.5
Above average	4	27	2.5
Average	7	46	1
Below average	0	0	5.5
Retarded	0	0	5.5
All of the above	0	0	5.5
None of the above	0	0	5.5
Totals	15	100	

<sup>24</sup>Langley, p. 297.

Fifteen teachers responded to this question. Eight indicated that they would use the method with superior or above average students. The other seven teachers indicated that they would use the method with average students. No teacher indicated that he would use the method for below average, retarded, all of the groups listed, or none of the groups listed.

This finding was a rather decisive one. The teachers agreed that the panel discussion was a method to be used with only the best high school students. Furthermore, this finding conflicts with the opinions of the authorities quoted in this study.<sup>25</sup>

#### The Individual Oral Presentation

TABLE XLVIII

TEACHER RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: TO WHAT EXTENT  
DO YOU USE THE INDIVIDUAL ORAL PRESENTATION AS  
A CLASSROOM METHOD FOR TEACHING THE NOVEL?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Always	0	0	5
Frequently	3	16	4
Occasionally	7	37	1
Rarely	5	26	2
Never	4	21	3
Totals	19	100	

<sup>25</sup>See especially: Wolfe, op cit., p. 94.

Nineteen teachers indicated the extent to which they used the individual oral presentation as a classroom method for teaching novels. None of the teachers had always used this method. Ten teachers (53 percent) indicated that they had used the method occasionally or frequently, and nine teachers (47 percent) indicated that they had never or rarely used the method.

The student responses were slightly different. Only thirty-six percent of the students indicated that they had been exposed to the method, while the remaining 64 percent indicated little or no exposure to the method.<sup>26</sup>

TABLE XLIX

TEACHER OPINION OF THE INDIVIDUAL ORAL PRESENTATION  
METHOD AS A TECHNIQUE FOR TEACHING NOVELS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Excellent	3	16	3
Good	9	47	1
Average	2	11	4
Fair	4	21	2
Poor	1	5	5
Totals	19	100	

<sup>26</sup>Table XI.

Nineteen teachers responded to this question. Of the teachers who responded, 74 percent indicated that they considered individual oral presentation for novels to be either good, excellent or average. Twenty-six percent considered the method to be fair or poor.

Thus, more than two-thirds of the teachers had high regard for individual oral presentations. The students, in contrast, were not so one-sided in their opinions as were their teachers. One half of them (51 percent) rated the method in the favorable categories whereas the other half (49 percent) rated the method in the unfavorable categories.<sup>27</sup>

A Fisher Exact Probability Test was then administered to the data to find out if a significant difference existed between 'how often' teachers had used individual oral presentations in their classes and their 'rating' of the method. Again, the tentative null hypothesis assumed that no significant difference existed in the two sets of data.

The two tables below contain the original cross-tabulated data, and the data after it had been adjusted to satisfy the two criteria necessary for the use of Fisher's Test:

	used	not used	
acc	11	3	14
not acc	0	5	5
	11	8	19

	not used	used	
not acc	5	0	5
acc	3	11	14
	8	11	19

<sup>27</sup>Table XII.

In the Tables for Fisher's Test the critical value of  $d$  at the .05 level of significance for  $a = 5$ ,  $b = 0$ , and  $c = 3$  was found to be 6.<sup>28</sup> The observed value of  $d$  exceeded the critical value of  $d$ , so the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, a significant difference has been shown to exist between the teachers' responses to 'how often' they had used the individual oral presentation method and their 'rating' of the method.

TABLE L

TEACHER RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: WITH WHICH GROUPING OF STUDENTS WOULD YOU BE MOST INCLINED TO USE THE INDIVIDUAL ORAL PRESENTATION METHOD?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Superior	1	6	3.5
Above average	5	32	2
Average	9	56	1
Below average	0	0	6
Retarded	0	0	6
All of these	1	6	3.5
None of these	0	0	6
Totals	16	100	

<sup>28</sup> Langley, p. 301.



Sixteen teachers out of twenty responded to this question. Six of the respondents indicated that they would use the individual oral presentation method with above average or superior students, nine would use the method with average students, and no one would use the method with below average or retarded students. One teacher would use the method with all these groups whereas no teacher would use the method with none of these groups.

The teachers agreed that the individual oral presentation is best suited for the intellectually talented: the average, above average, and superior. But all students need some degree of help in mastering these aspects of oral language: "articulation, diction, usage, tone of voice, and tempo of speech."<sup>29</sup> The individual oral presentation is one such way by which to provide students with this opportunity for improvement.

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<sup>29</sup>Mary Elizabeth Fowler, op cit., p. 91.

Role-Playing

TABLE LI

TEACHER RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: TO WHAT EXTENT  
DO YOU USE ROLE-PLAYING AS A CLASSROOM METHOD  
FOR TEACHING THE NOVEL?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Always	0	0	5
Frequently	3	15	3.5
Occasionally	5	25	2
Rarely	3	15	3.5
Never	9	45	1
Totals	20	100	

All of the teachers replied to this question. No teacher indicated that he always used role-playing as a method by which to teach novels. Forty percent indicated that they frequently or occasionally used the method, and sixty percent indicated that they have never or rarely used the method.

A comparison of teacher and student responses shows a marked difference. Among the teachers, forty percent had

used the method for novels and sixty percent had not used it. Among the students, sixty percent had been exposed to the method for novels and forty percent had not.<sup>30</sup> The proportions were reversed. This difference may be attributed to at least two factors: These students have been exposed to other teachers during their high school experience, and all the teachers of literature responded whereas only some of the students answered this question. The question of validity is also a factor here.

TABLE LII  
TEACHER OPINION OF THE ROLE-PLAYING METHOD  
AS A TECHNIQUE FOR TEACHING NOVELS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Excellent	2	10	4
Good	4	20	3
Average	8	40	1
Fair	5	25	2
Poor	1	5	5
Totals	20	100	

All 20 teachers responded to this question. Seventy percent of the teachers agreed that role-playing was either

<sup>30</sup>Table XIII.

average, good or excellent for teaching novels. Thirty percent scored the method as fair or poor.

Although a large percentage of the teachers (70 percent) ranked the method highly, an even larger proportion of the students (80 percent) gave the method the same high ranking. The responses of the teachers reinforced the opinions of the students and the enthusiasm of writers such as Joan Magers and Charlotte Epstein.<sup>31</sup> The method was a popular one on all fronts.

A Fisher Exact Probability Test was then applied to the data in order to determine if a significant difference existed between 'how often' teachers had used the role-playing method and their 'rating' of the method. The tentative null hypothesis assumed that no significant difference existed in the two sets of data.

The two tables below contain the original cross-tabulated data, and the data after it had been adjusted to satisfy the two criteria essential for the use of Fisher's Test:<sup>32</sup>

	used	not used	
acc	5	9	14
not acc	2	4	6
	7	13	20

	not used	used	
not acc	4	2	6
acc	9	5	14
	13	7	20

<sup>31</sup>Table XIV; Magers, op. cit.; Epstein, op. cit.

<sup>32</sup>See section two of this chapter.

In the Tables for Fisher's Test the critical value of  $d$  at the .05 level of significance for  $a = 4$ ,  $b = 2$ , and  $c = 9$  was found to be 30.<sup>33</sup> The observed value of  $d$  was 5. Since the observed value of  $d$  did not exceed the critical value of  $d$ , the null hypothesis was accepted. No significant difference has been shown to exist between the teacher responses to 'how often' they had used the role-playing method and their 'rating' of the method.

TABLE LIII

TEACHER RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: WITH WHICH GROUPING  
OF STUDENTS WOULD YOU BE MOST INCLINED TO USE  
THE ROLE-PLAYING METHOD?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Superior	0	0	6
Above average	4	21	3.5
Average	6	32	1
Below average	5	26	2
Retarded	0	0	6
All of these	4	21	3.5
None of these	0	0	6
Totals	19	100	

<sup>33</sup> Langley, p. 300.

Nineteen teachers out of twenty indicated the grouping of students which they would be most inclined to use the role-playing method with. No teacher indicated the use of this method with students at either extreme end of the educational ladder: the superior or the retarded. The teachers felt that the method was appropriate for the middle group of students: four teachers would use it with the above average, six teachers would use it with the average, and five teachers would use it with the below average. Four teachers would use role-playing with all of these groups whereas no teachers would be inclined to use the method with none of these groups.

#### The Past Use of Classroom Methods

TABLE LIV

TEACHER RESPONSES WHEN ASKED: IF YOU ARE NOT USING  
THESE METHODS NOW, HAVE YOU USED  
ANY OF THEM IN THE PAST?

Method	Yes	No	No. Res.	Percent Res.	r
Lecture	13	0	13	65	5
Large Group Discussion	13	0	13	65	5
Small Group Discussion	13	0	13	65	5
Panel Discussion	7	10	17	85	1
Individual Oral Presentation	14	2	16	80	2
Role-Playing	8	6	14	60	3

The teachers were then asked to identify any of the classroom methods which they had used in the past but were not using now. No single method elicited a 100 percent response from the teachers. When they reminisced about their past experience with teaching novels, they recalled the individual oral presentation, the lecture, the large group discussion, and the small group discussion as methods which they had used mostly but were not using now. Role-playing was used slightly more often than not used. The most unpopular method of all, panel discussion, drew a 'no' from eighty-five percent of the teachers.

TABLE LV  
TEACHER RESPONSES CONCERNING THEIR REASON FOR  
DISCONTINUING THE USE OF ANY OF  
THESE CLASSROOM METHODS

Response	LECT	LGD	SGD	PD	IOP	RP
a. Student participation low	3	0	0	4	2	2
b. High failure rate in literature	0	0	0	0	0	0
c. Method too mechanical	2	0	0	2	0	0
d. Further education changed my philosophy	1	0	3	0	0	0
e. Further experience	1	3	1	0	0	2
f. Both (d) and (e)	0	0	0	0	0	0
g. Favors flexibility	0	1	0	0	2	0
h. All of these	0	0	0	0	0	0
i. None of these	0	0	1	1	0	4

Most teachers were reluctant to indicate a reason for discontinuing the use of certain classroom methods. A possible explanation may be that many teachers had not used some of the methods listed for the novel. It is also possible that the teachers using certain methods, found them successful and did not change them. The most notable figures indicate that lectures and panel discussions were discontinued by some teachers because of low student participation; large group discussions were disregarded because of change in philosophy as a result of more experience; and role-playing was not utilized for reasons not specified. Since the teacher response was low, accurate observations cannot be legitimately made on this data.

#### THE STRUCTURE OF THE UNIT ON THE NOVEL

##### An English Methods Course as a Guide

TABLE LVI

TEACHER RESPONSES WHEN ASKED: HOW HELPFUL DID YOU  
FIND YOUR METHODS COURSE IN ENGLISH EDUCATION  
FOR STRUCTURING THE UNIT ON THE NOVEL?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Extremely helpful	3	21	3
Of some help	7	50	1
Of very little help	4	29	2
Of no help at all	0	0	4
Totals	14	100	



The methods course has always been regarded as a 'guiding light' in the preparation of high school teachers for the task of teaching their subject to teenage boys and girls. When the English teachers involved in this study were asked to assess their methods course, 14 of them responded. The other teachers did not respond since not all of them had done a methods course in English Education. Ten teachers found their course either of some help or extremely helpful. Four teachers felt that their course was of very little help. All teachers felt that their course was helpful to some degree.

Since 71 percent of the teachers who responded had found their methods course helpful for the novel, it is logical to deduce that a methods course is a necessary part of the preparation of high school English teachers at the university level. Some teachers will use the ideas presented, some will not. However, it would seem logical to assume that an exposure to the ideas of professionals in one's specialization is a luxury which no teacher ought to miss. The methods course in English Education should be regarded by the English teacher as the first step on a continuum leading towards professionalism. As Hook remarked:

The capable teacher is also a professional in his outlook. That means he wants to improve the profession, help others who are in it, bring other capable persons into it.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>J. N. Hook, The Teaching Of High School English (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1965), p. 44.

Curriculum Guides and Materials

TABLE LVII

TEACHER REACTIONS TO CURRICULUM GUIDES AND MATERIALS  
FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FOR  
STRUCTURING THE UNIT ON THE NOVEL

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Extremely helpful	1	5	
Of some help	10	50	
Of very little help	8	40	
Of no help at all	1	5	
Totals	20	100	

The Newfoundland Department of Education has, for many years, provided all high school teachers in the province with curriculum guides and materials for the teaching of various high school subjects. Some of these guides have been helpful, others quite elaborate and not too helpful. All 20 teachers in this study reacted to this issue. However, no major consensus was reached. Eleven teachers (55 percent) regarded the curriculum materials in English as helpful to some degree. Nine teachers (45 percent) considered these materials to be of very little help or of no help at all.

These data indicate that teachers were not overly happy about receiving detailed teaching materials telling them all about their subject and how it should be taught. As teachers become more professional, even more disenchantment can be expected toward this view of what a teacher should know in order to teach his subject. These materials were designed to serve the poorly trained teacher and will, in all probability, be used differently by the professional English teacher.

The Unit in Comparison with other Literature Forms

TABLE LVIII

TEACHER OPINIONS REGARDING THE DIFFICULTY OF ORGANIZING  
A UNIT ON THE NOVEL IN COMPARISON  
WITH OTHER LITERATURE FORMS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Much more difficult	1	5	3.5
Slightly more difficult	6	32	2
About the same	11	58	1
Easier	1	5	3.5
Totals	19	100	

The unit on the novel is only one part of an entire literature program which an English teacher must prepare each year. It was thought relevant at this point to find out how difficult it was for an English teacher to structure the unit on the novel in comparison with the other literature forms.

Nineteen teachers offered opinions concerning this issue. A majority of the respondents (58 percent) agreed that the chore of structuring the unit for the novel was about the same as that for any other literary form. Thirty-two percent considered the task to be slightly more difficult, five percent much more difficult, and five percent easier.

### The Reading Factor

TABLE LIX

THE AMOUNT OF ATTENTION GIVEN BY TEACHERS  
TO READING SKILLS IN PREPARING THE  
UNIT ON THE NOVEL

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
A great deal	8	40	2
Some	10	50	1
Very little	1	5	3.5
None	1	5	3.5
Totals	20	100	

The unit on the novel, like all other units in literature, should be concerned with the further development of the skill of reading. A novel is usually longer than most literary forms and in order to read one quickly and perceptively, a student must have a reasonable amount of control over the reading process. To be able to read with speed and comprehension is essential if a student is to become a good reader, that is, one who reads many books and reads them with discrimination. However, a teacher need not be a specialist to teach these skills. As Stanley E. Davis once remarked:

An instructor does not need to be an expert in the teaching of reading in order to help students to read better at the same time that he is covering course content.<sup>35</sup>

All teachers, 20 out of 20, indicated the amount of attention which they gave to reading skills in their preparation of the unit on the novel. Only ten percent taught very little or nothing about reading. The result may be attributed to the rising awareness of the reading problem among many of today's high school students and the efforts exerted by educators in this province to provide teachers with a basic understanding of the reading problem, and how to overcome many such problems by teaching reading in conjunction with the various content areas.

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<sup>35</sup> Stanley E. Davis, "High School and College Instructors Can't Teach Reading? Nonsense!" Teaching Reading in High School ed. Robert Karlin, (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964), p. 320.

TABLE LX

THE AMOUNT OF ATTENTION WHICH TEACHERS THINK SHOULD  
BE GIVEN TO READING SKILLS IN PREPARING  
THE UNIT ON THE NOVEL

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
A great deal	14	70	1
Some	6	30	2
None	0	0	3.5°
Don't know	0	0	3.5
Totals	20	100	

Again, 100 percent of the teachers responded to this question. The result was decisive. All 20 teachers agreed that some degree of attention should be given to reading skills in preparing the unit. Seventy percent maintained that considerable emphasis should be placed on improving reading while 30 percent agreed that some attention is necessary.

A Fisher Exact Probability Test was then applied to the data to determine whether there was any significant difference between the amount of attention which the teachers gave to reading and the amount which they thought should be given to reading. The categories in Table LIX were combined

for the test. 'A great deal' and 'some' became  $X_1$  and 'very little' and 'none' became  $Y_1$ . The categories in Table LX were also combined. 'A great deal' and 'some' became  $X_2$  and 'none' and 'don't know' became  $Y_2$ . The tentative null hypothesis assumed that no significant difference existed in the two sets of data.

The first table below contains the original data, and the second table contains the data after it had been adjusted to satisfy the first criterion for Fisher's Test:<sup>36</sup>

	$X_1$	$Y_1$	
$X_2$	17	2	19
$Y_2$	0	0	0
	17	2	19

	$X_2$	$Y_2$	
$Y_1$	2	0	2
$X_1$	17	0	17
	19	0	19

However, the second criterion cannot be satisfied.<sup>37</sup>

This is because  $a \times d = 0$  and  $b \times c = 0$ . Therefore  $a \times d = b \times c$ . One of the rules for Fisher's Test maintains that if  $a \times d = b \times c$ , the table shows no difference or association between the two sets of observations. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. No significant difference exists between the teachers' responses in Tables LIX and LX.

<sup>36</sup> See section two of this chapter.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

Student Needs, Aspirations, and Interests

TABLE LXI

TEACHERS' METHODS OF CONSIDERING THE PARTICULAR NEEDS,  
ASPIRATIONS, AND INTERESTS OF INDIVIDUAL  
STUDENTS BEFORE SELECTING NOVELS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Attitude Test	1	5	4.5
Personal friendship with the students	9	45	1
Cumulative Records	1	5	4.5
Questionnaire	0	0	6
All of these	4	20	3
None of these	5	25	2
Totals	20	100	

All 20 teachers responded to this item. Forty-five percent indicated that they determined the particular needs, aspirations, and interests of their students by means of personal friendship with the students. Just one teacher (five percent) used attitude tests and one teacher (five percent) used cumulative records. No teacher used only the questionnaire. Four teachers (25 percent) used all these methods and five teachers



(20 percent) used none of these methods.

The Newfoundland Department of Education supplies a number of novels which are required for regular study for each high school grade each year. However, a fair degree of scope exists for the individual English teacher to select novels appropriate to the students in his or her class. Brett and Crocker have gathered much relevant data which would assist any English literature teachers in making such selections.<sup>38</sup>

### The Flexibility of the Literature Syllabus

TABLE LXII

TEACHER OPINION REGARDING THE FLEXIBILITY OF THE  
LITERATURE SYLLABUS FOR PERMITTING THE  
INDIVIDUAL TEACHER TO ORGANIZE THE  
UNIT ON THE NOVEL

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Very flexible	3	16	3
Flexible	12	63	1
Partly flexible	4	21	2
Rigid	0	0	4.5
Very rigid	0	0	4.5
Totals	19	100	

<sup>38</sup>Brett, op. cit., Crocker, op. cit.

A total of 19 teachers offered opinions on this issue. Twelve of those teachers described the unit as flexible, four as partly flexible, and three as very flexible.

Teachers generally were satisfied that the amount of scope provided in the literature syllabus enabled them to select other novels if they chose to do so. No more than two novels were prescribed for the school year 1972-1973 by the Department of Education. Plenty of scope thus existed for the initiation and development of a guided reading program which could include the novels prescribed and a wide range of others.

#### The Planning of Literature Units

TABLE LXIII

HOW THE TEACHERS DESCRIBED THE PLANNING OF LITERATURE  
UNITS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE SCHOOLS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Individually by each teacher	16	84	1
Cooperatively by all teachers of literature	0	0	3.5
Individually but in consultation with the other teachers of literature	3	16	2
No planning as such	0	0	3.5
Totals	19	100	

Nineteen teachers indicated the manner by which literature units are planned in their respective schools. A sizeable 84 percent of the teachers prepared their own units in literature individually. Three other teachers (16 percent) prepared their units individually but in consultation with the other literature teachers in their school. In no cases did all the literature teachers in a school prepare the units together. Also, all the teachers indicated that some planning was done for their literature units.

Individual effort in this area is in the investigator's opinion a good thing. However, there is a definite need for English teachers to get together more and talk more in terms of the English Curriculum for their high schools. Literature units can then be developed by the teachers utilizing fully both individual and cooperative effort. This would be especially good for the unit on the novel since there are many issues and questions which teachers must work out cooperatively, and many tasks which the one teacher working individually can do best.

Time Devoted to The Novel

TABLE LXIV

THE AMOUNT OF CLASS TIME WHICH TEACHERS DEVOTE  
TO THE UNIT ON THE NOVEL EACH YEAR

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Less than a month	3	15	3
About one month	6	30	2
One - two months	9	45	1
More than two months	2	10	4
Totals	20	100	

All 20 teachers indicated the amount of class time which they devoted to the novel each year. Nine teachers (45 percent) signified that they used between one and two months of class time which they devoted to the novel each year. Only two teachers (10 percent) used more than two months. Six teachers (30 percent) spent about one month and three teachers (15 percent) spent less than one month.

This finding indicates that 75 percent of the teachers spent either one month, two months, or somewhere between one and two months of class time for novels. Their students also

gave a number of interesting answers to the question of time.<sup>39</sup>

Forty-six percent of the students were satisfied with the amount of time which their teachers had devoted to novels whereas close to forty percent decided that more time should be spent on novels. Only ten percent of the students wanted less time spent on novels. As indicated earlier, one student even remarked that "75 percent of the literature course should be novels."<sup>40</sup>

#### The Reading of Novels Not Prescribed

TABLE LXV

TEACHER RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION: IN YOUR UNIT ON THE NOVEL, IS PROVISION MADE FOR STUDENTS TO READ CERTAIN NOVELS OF THEIR OWN CHOICE?

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	n
Always	7	35	2
Frequently	10	50	1
Rarely	1	5	4
Never	2	10	3

<sup>39</sup>Table XXIII.

<sup>40</sup>See section seven of chapter four.

All 20 teachers responded to this issue. Eighty-five percent indicated that their students were given this freedom frequently or always. Only fifteen percent indicated that they never give students this type of freedom.

The students, of course, disagreed with their teachers. Thirty-five percent of them maintained that not enough provision is made for them to read other novels not prescribed. Only 22 percent agreed that adequate provision for this extra reading was available. A large number, 43 percent, did not respond to this issue.

Here, then, is a crucial problem in the structuring of the unit on the novel. The teacher must, in one way or another, account for the many, many novels which are applicable to the student age-group which he teaches each school day. Should he include some of these novels? many of them? or none of them? Should he make such decisions himself or should he let his students decide?

Whatever his decisions, he cannot avoid the fact that today's adolescents are being confronted with many social, emotional, psychological, and similar problems, most of which are thoroughly explored in young adult novels. As Tom Finn observed:

Abortion, premarital sex, homosexuality, draft resistance, "ripping off," use of drugs, and all sorts of anti-establishment behavior are taking place between the covers of, would you believe it, the young adult novel?<sup>41</sup>

<sup>41</sup>Tom Finn, "New Young Adult Novel: How Will the Schools Handle It?" Phi Delta Kappan, LII (April, 1971), 470-472.

Today's students are often looking for this type of material whether it is underground or straight and they will give utmost attention to it with or without their teacher's approval. It is probably time for English teachers to take fiction for what it is not for what it should be. This would mean structuring the unit on novels to cover fiction of all kinds. However, the need for discrimination still exists but the teacher should not neglect to expose both the good and the bad in fiction. Then the student will not feel that certain types of fiction are being withheld from him for reasons which are not made clear to him. This problem is not an easy one to solve when one is planning to teach novels. But it is one which every teacher must, in one way or another, come to grips with.

#### The Schools' Supply of Junior and Teenage Novels

TABLE LXVI

HOW THE TEACHERS DESCRIBED THEIR SCHOOLS' SUPPLY OF  
JUNIOR AND TEENAGE NOVELS IN RELATION TO THE  
READING INTERESTS AND NEEDS OF TODAY'S  
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	n
Excellent	3	15	3
Adequate	8	40	1
Unsatisfactory	7	35	2
Poor	2	10	4
Totals	20	100	

Again, all 20 teachers answered this question. Fifty-five percent of the teachers maintained that their school had either an excellent or adequate supply of junior and teenage novels. Forty-five percent considered their school's supply to be satisfactory or poor.

As implied in the question, a school's supply of junior and teenage novels should provide for the reading interests and needs of today's adolescents. This means that a wide variety of novels should be available to students on a wide range of topics and issues, past, present, and future. The old artists and the new, the great ones and the lesser ones, and writers from many different countries should be available. Ideally, there should be science fiction, mystery, adventure, romance, and whatever other novel type which a student might have in mind. Since 45 percent of the teachers considered their schools' supply to be unsatisfactory or poor, there is a definite need to get novels into high schools for students to read. This privilege should not be denied any high school student.

#### AREAS OF EMPHASIS

The university English courses on the novel as an art form explore a number of distinct categories into which the greatest novels of all time have been carefully fitted. It was of interest to the investigator to determine to what extent these classifications of novels were being pursued in the high



schools selected for this study. Table LXVII shows the responses given by the teachers concerning this question. The columns in the table may be read by means of the following key:

a = dealt with in class in some detail.

b = dealt with in class briefly.

c = given in assignment topics.

d = mentioned for individual reading.

e = not considered at all.

TABLE LXVII

AREAS OF EMPHASIS IN THE TEACHING OF HIGH SCHOOL NOVELS

Novel Classification	a	b	c	d	e	Total Res.	Percent Res.
The history of the English novel	1	6	0	1	10	18	90
The history of the American novel	0	4	0	1	13	18	90
Canadian novels	1	5	0	2	10	18	90
Newfoundland novels	5	2	0	5	7	19	95
The Romantic novel	3	0	0	4	11	18	90
The Victorian novel	1	1	0	3	13	18	90
The Gothic novel	0	0	0	3	15	18	90
Foreign novels in translation	1	0	0	3	14	18	90
The psychological novel	5	5	0	2	7	19	95
The stream-of-consciousness novel	1	6	1	1	9	18	90
The history of the junior novel	0	2	0	0	16	18	90

It is obvious from the data in Table LXVII that none of these classifications of the novel was being pursued to any great extent by the high school teachers. The majority of the teachers selected the 'not considered at all' category for each item. Only Newfoundland novels and the psychological novel were dealt with in class in some detail by five or more teachers. The history of the English novel, Canadian novels, the psychological novel, and the stream-of-consciousness novel were dealt with briefly in class by five or more teachers. Of these aspects of the novel, one only was considered in assignment topics. One teacher assigned the stream-of-consciousness novel as a possible topic. Only Newfoundland novels were mentioned to the students by five or more teachers for individual reading.

Most teachers gave little or no attention to these eleven basic classifications of novels. It is the investigator's opinion that all English literature teachers should be thoroughly familiar with all of these topics and by some means make his students aware of such classifications. This does not mean that the high school student should be made to do university work. It does mean, however, that English teachers have a professional responsibility to make students aware of the possibilities for individual reading open to them in the area of the novel.

## EVALUATION FOR THE NOVEL

Nearly all writers of textbooks for English education continue to emphasize the difficulty of evaluation in literature. This difficulty is extremely great for the novel. When a student reads a novel and undergoes with the characters the psychological, emotional and social experiences which they undergo, he is deriving from the novel the very best type of experience that any literature can provide. If an English teacher could assess this experience which the student undergoes while he is reading, then evaluation in literature would be an easy task. Since this type of evaluation is almost impossible, English teachers can evaluate only manifestations of this experience by means of tests, assignments, book reports, and similar devices. Such evaluation can never be as good as it should be for the simple reason that it cannot measure what ought to be measured: the real impact of the novel on the students.

The Experience Which Cannot be Measured

TABLE LXVIII

TEACHER REACTIONS TO THE STATEMENT: WHEN A STUDENT  
HAS COMPLETED A UNIT ON THE NOVEL, THE ESSENTIAL  
PART OF HIS EXPERIENCE CANNOT BE EVALUATED

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	n
Strongly agree	4	20	3
Agree	8	40	1
Disagree	5	25	2
Strongly disagree	1	5	5
No opinion	2	10	4
Totals	20	100	

All 20 teachers reacted to the statement proposed in Table LXVIII. Twelve teachers indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed with the idea that the essential part of a student's experience in novel study cannot be evaluated. Six teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. Two teachers offered no opinion.

This finding indicates that 60 percent of the teachers were aware of the major difficulty in evaluating student progress

for the novel as a form of literature. It also indicates that 40 percent of the teachers did not agree with this statement. These teachers constitute a group with philosophies which differ from those of leading English teachers and educators. Their view of evaluation constitutes an educational problem which exists in the area of English education and which will, in all probability, continue to exist until further training, experience, or careful counselling changes their perceptions of what is involved in evaluation in English literature.

#### The Basis for Evaluation

TABLE LXIX

TEACHER OPINIONS REGARDING THE BASIS ON WHICH  
EVALUATION FOR THE NOVEL SHOULD BE DONE

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Partly on class work, partly on individual work	19	100	1
Class work only	0	0	2.5
Individual work only	0	0	2.5
Totals	19	100	

Nineteen teachers offered their opinions regarding the basis on which evaluation for the novel should be done. The

response was decisive. All nineteen teachers agreed that evaluation on the novel should be done partly on class work and partly on individual work (i.e. tests and assignments). No teachers preferred evaluation on the basis of class work only or evaluation on the basis of individual work only.

### Tests

TABLE LXX

#### THE TYPE OF TESTS USED BY TEACHERS FOR EVALUATING NOVELS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
Objective tests	1	4	4
Essay tests	13	54	1
Both objective and essay tests	6	25	2
Oral examination	4	17	3
Totals	24	100	

Some teachers checked more than one response for this item. Consequently, a total of 24 responses were given. The teachers indicated that the essay test was the type of test which they most often used. It claimed 54 percent of the total response. The students were less in favor of this test than

their teachers. Forty-seven percent of the students indicated that they were in favor of or highly in favor of essay tests.<sup>42</sup>

A combination of objective and essay tests was used by six teachers to evaluate novels. The students were much more optimistic about this method of testing than their teachers were. Sixty-four percent of them expressed favor for such a testing procedure.<sup>43</sup>

Only four teachers favored the use of oral examinations. The students were also disenchanted with this type of evaluation. Only 38 percent of them indicated that they were either in favor or or highly in favor of being evaluated by means of oral examination.<sup>44</sup>

Objective tests only were used by just one teacher. This is the type of test that was most favored by the students with 77 percent of them indicating a favorable attitude.<sup>45</sup> The most logical deduction to be drawn from this data, then, is that the literature teachers were not evaluating student progress in the study of fiction by means of objective tests but the students were strong in their demands for this type of evaluation. The most likely explanation for this result is that objective tests were in widespread use for most other high school subjects but not for English. This, together with the

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<sup>42</sup>Table XXIX.

<sup>43</sup>Table XXX.

<sup>44</sup>Table XXXI.

<sup>45</sup>Table XXVIII.

many misinformed notions about the purpose and nature of English as a high school subject has, in all probability, contributed to the result indicated in this study. Both teachers and students need a philosophy regarding English as a high school subject. Without such a philosophy, evaluation cannot be systematic in terms of aims, purposes, or expectations.

### Assignments

TABLE LXXI

TEACHER REACTIONS REGARDING THE TYPE OF  
ASSIGNMENT QUESTIONS WHICH THEY  
MOST OFTEN USE FOR THE NOVEL

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	r
General questions on 'the novel'	2	10	3.5
General questions on each novel	6	30	2
Specific questions on each novel	2	10	3.5
All of the above	10	50	1
No assignments given on the novel	0	0	5

All 20 teachers responded to this question. Thirty percent used general questions on each novel and 10 percent used general questions on 'the novel' as a literature form. Another



ten percent used specific questions on each novel. A sizeable 50 percent, 10 out of 20 teachers, used all of these three types of questions.<sup>47</sup> All teachers indicated that they gave some type of assignment on the novel.

Since 54 percent of the students expressed favor for assignments on novels, English teachers have a responsibility to provide good questions which permit students to explore challenging areas within the boundaries of this literary form.<sup>46</sup> The teachers agreed that such questions could be either general or specific, on the unit or on individual novels. It is likely that all these types of questions should be provided for assignment topics and the student given the option to answer the type of questions which he most prefers.

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<sup>46</sup>Table XXXII.

Study Guides

TABLE LXXII

TEACHER RESPONSES REGARDING HOW OFTEN THEY  
 PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH A STUDY GUIDE  
 FOR REQUIRED NOVELS

Response	Number of Responses	Percent	n
Always	1	5	5
Frequently	4	20	3
Occasionally	3	15	4
Rarely	6	30	1.5
Never	6	30	1.5
Totals	20	100	

And 20 teachers reacted to this question. Two-fifths of the teachers provided students with study guides frequently, occasionally, or always. The other three-fifths of the teachers rarely or never provided their students with study guides.

The evidence here indicates that more teachers were not providing their students with study guides for novels than there were teachers providing such study guides. A major advantage of a study guide is that it helps the student

understand a novel as he reads it by asking him specific questions at the end of each chapter or subsection of the book. Margaret Ryan, a strong promoter of the study guide for novels, maintained that such a guide should serve two purposes for the students:

... to help them read with greater understanding or to help them organize perceptions gained from reading.<sup>47</sup>

### SUMMARY

The information analysed in this chapter was given by the 20 English literature teachers on the Bonavista peninsula of Newfoundland. These teachers taught the students who supplied the information given in chapter four.

The classroom methods on which teachers were asked to comment were, in rank-order: large group discussion, lecture, small group discussion, individual oral presentation, role-playing, and panel discussion. The methods most popular with the teachers for teaching the novel in terms of being excellent, good, or average, are in rank-order: lecture, large group discussion and panel discussion, small group discussion, individual oral presentation, and role-playing.

The responses for each classroom method were then cross-tabulated in order to determine if any significant

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<sup>47</sup>Margaret Ryan, op cit., p. 88.

difference existed between 'how often' teachers had used each classroom method and their 'rating' of the method. A Fisher Exact Probability Test was used to find out this information. For the lecture, the small group discussion, and the individual oral presentation, a significant difference was found to exist. For large group discussion, panel discussion, and role-playing, no significant difference was proven.

Most teachers agreed that their 'methods course' in English education was helpful for structuring the unit on the novel. However, only about half of them agreed that curriculum guides and similar materials were of any value. In comparison with preparing units on other literature forms, most teachers indicated that preparing a unit on the novel was about the same. Reading skills were emphasized in the unit by most teachers, and all teachers agreed that such skills should be taught in conjunction with the unit. Personal friendship with the students was the method by which most teachers determined the particular needs, aspirations, and interests of their individual students.

A large majority of the students regarded the literature syllabus as quite flexible in terms of permitting the individual teacher to organize a unit on the novel. In most cases, the teachers prepared the unit individually, and in only a few instances was cooperative effort involved.

One to two months was the usual amount of time spent on the novel. Provision was made by nearly all teachers for students to read novels of their own choice. Only about half of the teachers were satisfied with their schools' supply of junior and teenage novels.

The teachers were also questioned concerning their use of the aspects of the novel commonly emphasized in university courses on the novel. Most of these aspects received little or no emphasis in the schools.

In terms of evaluation, most teachers agreed that the essential part of a student's experience in novel study cannot be measured. All teachers agreed that evaluation should be based partly on class work and partly on individual work. The essay test was the type of test which most teachers used. Both general and specific questions were used by the teachers for assignments.

Most teachers indicated that they did not provide students with a study guide for required novels.

Most teachers were quite aware of the major problems in teaching a unit on the novel: selecting a suitable classroom method, structuring the unit, the amount of time to be spent on novels, the amount of attention to be given to reading, the aspects of the novel to be emphasized, and the type of evaluation to be used. The teachers had many different notions, however, regarding each of these issues. Unanimous consent was obtained on just one issue; that was, the basis on which evaluation for the novel should be made.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### INTRODUCTION

This study was designed to investigate teacher and student perceptions regarding methodology in the teaching of the novel in high school English. Attempts were made to answer questions related both to the classroom presentation of the novel and the activities preceding and succeeding this exercise. Three hundred and eighty-six students randomly selected from the six high schools on the Bonavista peninsula and twenty English literature teachers from the same schools were chosen for the study. By means of two questionnaires, developed and taken to the various schools by the investigator, the essential information was gathered.

The information from the questionnaires was presented in chapters four and five. In this chapter the most notable findings have been consolidated in order to answer questions, discuss implications, and recommend improvements.

#### QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

The twelve questions stated in the purpose of the study are discussed in this section. The answers are based directly on the data which were presented and analysed in

greater detail in the previous two chapters. All of the answers reflect the perceptions and opinions of the students and teachers.

1. How often have students been exposed to a variety of teaching methods for the unit on the novel?

This study has been partly successful in answering this question.<sup>1</sup> Generally, most students have been exposed to several but not all of the selected classroom methods for the presentation of the unit on the novel. The majority of the students were exposed mainly to lectures and large group discussions in their high school years. They also indicated some familiarity with role-playing, but this information seems a bit unreliable since most of the teachers indicated that they did not use the method. The students appeared to be thinking in terms of plays when they were responding to role-playing. Methods such as panel discussions and individual oral presentations were almost ~~unknown~~. Even small group discussions had been used for only one-third of the students.

2. What are the attitudes of students toward selected teaching methods?

Generally, the students liked best the classroom methods

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<sup>1</sup>Tables III, V, VII, IX, XI, XIII.

to which they had had the most exposure.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, lectures, large group discussions, and role-playing were easily more popular than any of the other classroom methods except small group discussions for which two-thirds of the students expressed a liking. Panel discussions were frowned upon by most students although individual oral presentations were considered favorably by about half of the students.

Overall the students seemed to be satisfied with the methods which they had experienced: lectures and large group discussions. Their attitudes toward small group discussions, panel discussions, and individual oral presentations seemed to be merely attempts to evaluate conditions which had never been used in their classes.

3. Which teaching method for the novel is most popular in the English classroom and which method do students consider most beneficial academically?

Role-playing was quite easily the most popular classroom method with the students. Large group discussion was the second most popular method.<sup>3</sup>

However, the finding for role-playing must be regarded with caution. According to the teachers, role-playing had not been used very often in these schools. It seems to be in connection with drama not with novels that role-playing

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<sup>2</sup>Tables IV, VI, VIII, X, XII, XIV.

<sup>3</sup>Table XV.



had been used. Thus it appears that the students were responding to the wrong form here.

Large group discussion was considered the most helpful classroom method in terms of helping students understand and appreciate novels. The lecture was considered the second most helpful method.<sup>4</sup>

4. What aspects of the structure of the unit on the novel do students like and what aspects do they dislike?<sup>5</sup>

The amount of class time spent on novels, the average length of novels selected, and the interest of prescribed novels were the aspects of the unit on the novel that satisfied most of the students.

According to the teachers, the amount of class time spent on novels was, on the average, one to two months.<sup>6</sup> About one-half of the students indicated satisfaction with this time period whereas the other half felt that more time was necessary for novels. During this period the general classes dealt with one novel and the academic classes dealt with two novels.

The length of prescribed novels was considered reasonable by over half of the students. This meant that the novels that were required for the literature course could be

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<sup>4</sup>Table XVI.

<sup>5</sup>Tables XXVIII-XXXV.

<sup>6</sup>Table LXIV.

read within a reasonable time by most students and length was not a hindrance.

The appeal of most of the novels was also a factor which satisfied a large number of the students. While some students found some of the novels boring and uninteresting, most of the students indicated that the majority of the novels prescribed were quite interesting.

The students, however, were not too happy with two other elements: the small number of novels included in the unit, and the lack of adequate provision for the reading of non-prescribed novels.

The Department of Education's 1972-73 Programme of Studies for the general level recommended one novel for each grade in grades nine, ten, and eleven. For the academic level, two novels were required in each grade. The teacher, of course, could add other novels if he so desired. Yet over half the students agreed that too few novels were included in their unit on the novel.

A large number of students also wanted to read non-prescribed novels. Such novels could be a part of the unit on the novel, or the core of a guided reading program.

Generally, most students considered the overall unit to be good in that it was not too general or too rigid.

6. How do students react to a selected number of evaluation procedures used to assess their achievement following completion

of a unit on the novel?<sup>7</sup>

The objective test was preferred more often than any other evaluative device by the students. This may be attributed to the widespread use of such tests in other school subjects. Most students were also in favor of having tests with a combination of objective and essay questions. Written assignments, group projects, and class participation were also methods of evaluation held in high regard by most of the students. Essay questions and oral examinations were not favored too well.

The students' liking for objective tests is not a legitimate reason for using objective tests to evaluate achievement regarding the understanding of novels. The students' opinions here do not appear to be dependable and this impression is reinforced by the fact that only one teacher in the 20 questioned indicated that he had used this type of test.<sup>8</sup> The students, however, were justified in wanting to be evaluated for activities which could form part of the unit on the novel: written assignments, group projects, and class participation.

7. In the experience of the teachers, how often have they used different teaching methods for the unit on the novel?<sup>9</sup>

This study was partly successful in answering this.

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<sup>7</sup>Tables XXVIII-XXXV.

<sup>8</sup>Table LXX.

<sup>9</sup>Tables XXXVI, XXXIX, XLII, XLV, XLVIII, LI.

question. Generally, teachers did not use a variety of classroom methods to teach the novel. Either lecture or large group discussion dominated the classrooms of most of the teachers. Individual oral presentations were used by some teachers whereas panel discussions were not even considered by most teachers.

Variety in classroom teaching is lacking for the novel, possibly for all of literature. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to become more acquainted with different methods of classroom teaching and to try them in their classes.

8. What are the teachers' attitudes toward these methods?<sup>10</sup>

In terms of being good, average, or excellent, lectures were favored more than any other classroom method by the teachers. After lectures they liked large group discussions and panel discussions, small group discussions, individual oral presentations, and role-playing. The teachers, like the students, rated highly the classroom methods which they had most often used to teach the novel.

The attitudes of some of the teachers toward the selected classroom methods proposed to them were affected by the fact that they had never used, or in some cases, never experimented with such methods. Therefore, they were in a

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<sup>10</sup>Tables XXXVII, XL, XLIII, XLVI, XLIX, LII.

difficult position when they had to evaluate techniques of which they had little or no first-hand knowledge.

In the area of literature, it is important that teachers be openminded and willing to use many methods and teaching strategies. The lecture may be good in certain instances for certain tasks but it has too many deficiencies to be expected to be appropriate for all classes at all times. The type of literature teacher envisioned by the investigator is one who has a good background in his subject area and in the methods of teaching it, and enough training in psychology, sociology, and education to be able to understand his students and be able to open up ideas for them in a variety of ways. He must be knowledgeable regarding many classroom methods and be able to select the proper classroom method for this particular class in the light of their motivation, interest, reading ability, and academic status. Flexibility and open-mindedness would seem to be essential qualities for such a teacher.

9. How do teachers plan their unit on the novel?

In this study, an attempt was made to answer this question by asking teachers specific questions.<sup>11</sup>

Most of the teachers who had taken<sup>8</sup> a course in English Education pointed out that they had found the ideas presented

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<sup>11</sup>Tables LVI-LVIII, LXI-LXVI.

in the course to be helpful in the preparation of the unit on the novel. As for curriculum guides and materials received from the Department of Education, the teachers were not so agreeable. About one-half of them looked upon these materials as helpful to an extent whereas the other half did not consider the materials to be helpful. It is not possible to discuss in detail here the merits or demerits of such material. Nevertheless, it would seem reasonable to suggest that this material should be consulted as guides to educational problems in the teaching of the novel and used where appropriate in this context.

As compared to other literature units, the preparation of the unit on the novel was regarded by most teachers to be about the same. Despite the fact that a fair number also considered the task to be slightly more difficult, it should be about the same. The unit on the novel should not be given priority over other literature units, but it should be carefully planned and carefully presented even if more time than originally designated is necessary.

The teachers were then reminded that in order to properly organize a unit on the novel, it is important for the teacher to know the particular needs, aspirations, and interests of his individual students. When asked how they obtained this information, the teachers maintained that personal friendship with the students was the method which they used mostly. The method is appropriate and good in the

sense that it has a personal element. Yet this is not a systematic approach to the problem.

Next the concept of flexibility was presented to the teachers. A majority of the teachers considered their literature syllabus to be flexible for permitting the individual teacher to organize a unit on the novel. This type of flexibility is necessary in English because it provides the teacher with an opportunity to develop his own ideas and talents. It is also necessary for the betterment of the act of teaching a particular class in a certain place at a certain time.

Regarding time, it is necessary that a unit on the novel be allotted an adequate time period for initiation, development, and if necessary, refinement. Most teachers found one to two months adequate for this task. Many others spent about one month on the unit.

All but one teacher indicated that the unit on the novel was structured in such a way that the students could read novels of their own choice. The necessity for this provision cannot be overemphasized. In fact, one of the major purposes of teaching a unit on the novel in literature must be to nurture the leisure reading interests of high school students.

Regarding the manner of planning a unit on the novel, most teachers planned their own. Only in a few instances did the teacher consult with other teachers during the actual

preparation of the unit. This is probably a weakness on the part of the teachers. Since there are other literature teachers in the same school, it would be to the advantage of instruction in literature for these teachers to discuss with each other the planning of the units in literature. Such a cross-section of ideas should serve to improve the unit.

Regarding the availability of novels, most teachers were dissatisfied with their school's supply of junior and teenage novels in relation to the reading interests and needs of today's high school students. If a school is not adequately served with a good selection of such novels, the English teacher should take the initiative to see that it is. An English Resource Center would be best for this purpose; however, a good library is adequate. When the unit on the novel is being developed in class, there can be no substitute for having plenty of novels around so that the students may see, observe, and as a result read some of them.

10. How much attention do teachers give and how much attention do they think should be given to reading skills in the preparation of the unit on the novel?<sup>12</sup>

All but two teachers attended to reading skills while they were teaching the unit on the novel. No unit on the novel can be complete without relating it to the process of reading. The skills of speed reading, comprehension, and the use of context clues are of utmost importance here. If

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<sup>12</sup>Tables LIX, LX.



students cannot master these skills, the English teacher has a special responsibility to help his students overcome such problems.

11. Are any specific kinds of novels emphasized in the unit on the novel?<sup>13</sup>

The teachers were presented with eleven classifications of the novel commonly emphasized in university courses on the novel. None of these classifications was pursued to any great extent by the teachers. Some teachers gave detailed attention to Newfoundland novels and the psychological novel whereas some other teachers gave brief attention to the history of the English novel, Canadian novels, the psychological novel, and the stream-of-consciousness novel. The stream-of-consciousness novel was the only type of novel ever assigned as an assignment topic by a teacher. Newfoundland novels received the most suggestions from the teachers for purposes of individual reading.

Overall, little or no attention was given by the teachers to the eleven basic classifications of the novel. It would be an improvement to any unit on the novel if students were made aware of these classifications. The areas of emphasis are especially good for the bright student who is eager to learn and likes to investigate. The English teacher should provide such students with topics of this nature.

12. What methods are used by teachers to evaluate student progress in the study of novels?<sup>14</sup>

Here the total process of evaluation for the novel from the point of view of the teachers was analysed. At first it was suggested to the teachers that total evaluation for the novel is not possible since the experience which a student undergoes during the reading exercises of a novel cannot be accurately assessed. Most teachers agreed with this statement.

As for the basis on which evaluation should be done, most teachers felt that both class work and individual work should be used. Here we get variety and this is a desirable quality in evaluation.

Regarding tests, most teachers used essay tests. Such tests are probably the best type for evaluation in literature. The essay test permits a great deal of scope and is an excellent way to get at achievement in the study of novels.

Assignments can also be used. Of course, the type of questions to be used should be carefully considered. In this study, both specific questions and general questions were used by the teachers. Questions of both types are desirable. The student should be given this choice and also be provided with

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<sup>14</sup> Tables LXVIII-LXXII.

an opportunity to choose his own topic if he wants to. Such a topic, however, should be approved by the teacher first.

A study guide can be of assistance to many students while they are reading particular novels. It would not be used for the purposes of grading but it would be an excellent addition to the unit in that it would provide questions for students to answer while they were reading the chapters. Most teachers in this study did not provide their students with study guides for novels. If a study guide were made available, some students would use it, some would not. Nevertheless, it should be available.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the foregoing questions, answers, and implications.

1. Almost no information about the use of classroom methods for the study of the novel is available but in this study both teachers and students indicated that, in most cases, the same methods were being used year by year to teach novels. There is clear evidence that lectures and large group discussions are the dominant methods used. It is therefore recommended that in the training of teachers at the university level, increased emphasis be placed on a variety of classroom methods which teachers can use in the high school situation; that experience in using these methods be provided during the

teacher training period; that English teachers in the local districts of the province get together at regular intervals during the school year to discuss classroom methodology in literature; that the government provide assistance to schools to obtain materials for English Resource Centers which would contain essential materials for the use of certain classroom methods; that the Department of Education or Memorial University of Newfoundland undertake a study to determine the types of classroom instruction being used for literature throughout the province and that the results of the study be assessed and made available to each English literature teacher in the province.

2. There is strong evidence that a large number of teachers have problems planning instruction for the novel. Evidence of such problems exists in the dissatisfaction expressed by many of the students regarding structure and the many conflicting opinions expressed by the teachers toward structure. To make sure that units in literature such as the novel are well planned and well taught, it is recommended that the Department of Education make clear to the superintendents of all school districts that only teachers adequately trained in university English, linguistics, and English education be hired for the job of teaching English in high school; that a full time English Committee be elected or appointed for the province to plan the yearly curriculum in English and to revise it year by year in the light of the latest trends in

English education; that each school district in the province have at least one English consultant whose services could be available to teachers who are planning new programs and to teachers looking for new ideas concerning the teaching of units in English.

3. The unit on the novel was, in most high schools, centered around the study of one or two of the novels suggested by the Department of Education. Novels not studied in class were relatively unknown. It is recommended that no set number of novels be designated by the Department of Education for any high school grade but rather that a number of novels should be available for each grade and each student given a chance to read any or all of the novels provided; that the teacher be the one who would decide whether his class will study one or two novels closely or instead treat the novel as part of a guided reading program; that high schools be furnished with as many teenage and junior novels as possible.

4. It is evident from this study that most English teachers have not studied the courses on the novel provided by the Faculty of English at the university level. Such systematic treatment of the novel as a literary form in terms of its origin, history, and modern development is excellent background knowledge for the conscientious English teacher teaching this literary form. It is recommended that these courses in English be required in the training of English teachers; that the same courses be available during summer school each year;

and that teachers be encouraged to stress to the high school student that many possibilities for individual reading in the different types of novels are open to him.

5. Both teachers and students had many strange and widely differing notions regarding the purposes and manner of evaluation for the novel. Therefore, it is recommended that the Department of Education supply teachers with suggested aims and objectives for each unit in the literature program; that teachers be encouraged to test for the achievement of these objectives in the evaluation of a literature unit; that teachers make clear to the students early in the year the aims and objectives of each literature unit and that their evaluation will be based on a measurement of the achievement of these aims and objectives.

6. The new curriculum in English, prepared by the province's English Committee and scheduled to be initiated in the high schools of the province in 1973-74, is characterized by a combination of language and literature into one subject called English. It is recommended that all phases of this new approach be thoroughly explained to English teachers and provisions made for them to acquire the necessary teaching materials such as mass media if their schools do not have such hardware; that units such as the unit on the novel be taught in conjunction with reading and that developmental and remedial reading be taught as part of the English program.

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APPENDIX A  
STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

## MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND

## STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS: It is not necessary to write either your name or the name of your school on this questionnaire, but this information can be supplied if you wish. (In the analysis of the data included here, no school, teacher, or pupil will be mentioned in any way). It is important, however, that you answer all questions as accurately as possible. Your cooperation is necessary to the success of this study.

## SECTION I

## GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Your present grade \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Age \_\_\_\_\_. Sex \_\_\_\_\_. (male or female).
3. Indicate the marks which you have received in your English subjects so far in high school. Use letter grades as follows:

A - 80 or above	D - 50-45
B - 65-79	E - 45-49
C - 55-64	F - below 45

	ENGLISH	ENGLISH	ENGLISH (ANSWER ONLY IF LANG. AND LIT. ARE TAUGHT AS ONE SUBJECT).
Grade 7			
Grade 8			
Grade 9			
Grade 10			
Grade 11			

4. Type of school presently attended \_\_\_\_\_  
(junior high, senior high, or central high)
5. Which high school subject do you like best? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Which type of literature do you like best:  
novels, short stories, poetry, plays, biog-  
raphies, or essays? \_\_\_\_\_

## SECTION II

### CLASSROOM METHODS

The questions in this section concern a number of teaching methods which educational research has shown to be used in English classrooms. Select the most appropriate answer to each of the following questions and place the letter of the answer in the parenthesis at the right.

1. The Lecture (or expository) method of teaching novels is a method whereby the teacher tells you everything you need to know about the novel by teaching the novel in front of the class. In your experience so far in high school, how often has the lecture method been used to study the novel in your classes? ..... ( )  
(a) always (b) frequently (c) occasionally  
(d) rarely (e) never
2. What is your reaction to the lecture method as a technique for teaching novels? ..... ( )  
(a) excellent (b) good (c) average (d) fair  
(e) poor
3. Large Group Discussion is a method whereby the entire class, including the teacher, discuss the novel. In your high school experience so far, how often has this method been used to study the novels in your classes? ..... ( )  
(a) always (b) frequently (c) occasionally  
(d) rarely (e) never
4. What is your reaction to the large group discussion method as a technique for teaching novels? ..... ( )  
(a) excellent (b) good (c) average (d) fair  
(e) poor



5. Small Group Discussion is a method whereby a class is divided into small groups and each small group discuss aspects of the novel among themselves. In your high school experience so far, how often has the small group discussion method been used to study the novel in your classes? ..... ( )  
(a) always (b) frequently (c) occasionally  
(d) rarely (e) never
6. What is your reaction to the small group discussion method as a technique for teaching novels? ..... ( )  
(a) excellent (b) good (c) average (d) fair  
(e) poor
7. Panel Discussion is a method whereby a selected number of pupils discuss a particular novel in the presence of the rest of the class. In your high school experience so far, how often has this method been used to study the novel in your classes? ..... ( )  
(a) always (b) frequently (c) occasionally  
(d) rarely (e) never
8. What is your reaction to the panel discussion method as a technique for teaching novels? ..... ( )  
(a) excellent (b) good (c) average (d) fair  
(e) poor
9. Individual Oral Presentation is a method whereby each student independently studies an aspect of the novel and presents his findings to the rest of the class. In your high school experience so far, how often has the oral presentation method been used to teach the novel in your classes? ..... ( )  
(a) always (b) frequently (c) occasionally  
(d) rarely (e) never
10. What is your reaction to the oral presentation method as a technique for teaching novels? ..... ( )  
(a) excellent (b) good (c) average (d) fair  
(e) poor
11. Role-Playing is a method often used in teaching drama whereby the pupils play the roles of the characters. In your high school experience so far, how often has this method been used to teach the novel in your classes? ..... ( )  
(a) always (b) frequently (c) occasionally  
(d) rarely (e) never

12. What is your reaction to the role-playing method as a technique for teaching novels? ..... ( )  
 (a) excellent (b) good (c) average (d) fair  
 (e) poor
13. Which of these methods do you find (or think you would find) most enjoyable in the classroom? ..... ( )  
 (a) lecture (d) panel discussion  
 (b) large group discussion (e) individual oral  
 (c) small group discussion presentation  
 (f) role-playing
14. Which of these methods do you find (or think you would find) best for helping you understand and appreciate novels? ..... ( )  
 (a) lecture (d) panel discussion  
 (b) large group discussion (e) individual oral  
 (c) small group discussion presentation  
 (f) role-playing

## SECTION III

## THE READING FACTOR

1. How many novels have you read within the last year, excluding the ones assigned for regular study? ..... ( )  
 (a) none (b) 1-2 (c) 3-5 (d) more than 5
2. Listed on this and the next page are the novels available this year from the Department of Education. Place one of the following numbers in front of each title:
1. if you have read the novel
  2. if you have heard of the novel but have never read it
  3. if you have never heard of the novel

GRADE VII & VIII

<u>      </u> The Incredible Journey	<u>      </u> The Outsiders
<u>      </u> Lost in the Barrens	<u>      </u> Master of Ravenspur
<u>      </u> Karen	<u>      </u> Shadow of a Bull
<u>      </u> The Call of the Wild	<u>      </u> A Wrinkle in Time
<u>      </u> Runner in the Sky	<u>      </u> Hot Rod
<u>      </u> Big Red	<u>      </u> The Wool Pack
<u>      </u> Seventeenth Summer	<u>      </u> Our Exploits at
<u>      </u> Old Yeller	<u>      </u> West Poley

GRADE IX

- \_\_\_\_\_ Buchan, Prester John
- \_\_\_\_\_ Doyle, The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes
- \_\_\_\_\_ Frask, Diary of a Young Girl
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hailey, Flight into Danger
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hyderdahl, Kon-Tiki Expedition
- \_\_\_\_\_ Kipling, Captain Courageous
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mowat, Never Cry Wolf
- \_\_\_\_\_ Schyer, Shane
- \_\_\_\_\_ Verne, Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea

GRADE X

- \_\_\_\_\_ Dickens, David Copperfield
- \_\_\_\_\_ Faulkner, Moonfleet
- \_\_\_\_\_ Haggard, King Solomon's Mines
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hilton, Lost Horizon
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mowat, The Boat Who Wouldn't Float
- \_\_\_\_\_ Wyndham, The Day of the Triffids
- \_\_\_\_\_ Zindel, Pigman

GRADE XI

- \_\_\_\_\_ Boulle, Bridge on the River Kwai
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clark, The Ox-Bow Incident
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hemmingway, The Old Man and the Sea
- \_\_\_\_\_ Twain, Huckleberry Finn
- \_\_\_\_\_ Wells, The War of the Worlds
- \_\_\_\_\_ West, Cress Delahanty

## SECTION IV

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE UNIT ON THE NOVEL

1. Check ( ☒ ) what you consider weaknesses in the structure of this year's unit on the novel.

- ☐ too many novels included
- ☐ too few novels included
- ☐ the unit is too general
- ☐ the unit is too rigid
- ☐ most of the novels included are boring
- ☐ most of the novels included are too long
- ☐ not enough provision is made for the reading of other novels not prescribed
- ☐ more time should be spent on the unit on the novel
- ☐ less time should be spent on the unit on the novel

2. Check ( ☒ ) what you consider strengths in the structure of this year's unit on the novel.

- ☐ the number of novels included in view of time and workload is about right
- ☐ the unit is neither too general nor too rigid
- ☐ most of the novels included are interesting
- ☐ class time spent on the unit on the novel is about right
- ☐ most of the novels included are about the right length
- ☐ adequate provision is made for the reading of novels not prescribed

## SECTION V

## EVALUATION FOR THE NOVEL


Give your opinion of the following procedure for evaluating your reading and understanding of novels by placing the letter of your response in the blank provided.

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> objective test                                 | a. highly in favor of      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> essay tests                                    | b. in favor of             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a combination of objective and essay questions | c. disagrees with          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> oral examination                               | d. strongly disagrees with |
| <input type="checkbox"/> written assignments                            | e. no opinion              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> group projects                                 |                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> individual projects                            |                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> participation in class                         |                            |

Is there anything else which you would like to say regarding the novel or your interest in reading generally which may be of some benefit to this study? \_\_\_\_\_. If yes, give details below.

## APPENDIX B

## TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

A handwritten mark, possibly a signature or a stylized symbol, consisting of a loop and a tail.


## MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND

## TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS: It is not necessary to write either your name or the name of your school on this questionnaire, but this information can be supplied if you wish. (In the analysis of the data included here, no school or teacher will be mentioned in any way). It is important, however, that you answer all questions as accurately as possible. Your cooperation is necessary to the success of this study.

## SECTION I

## GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Name of teacher training institution(s) attended \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Number of semesters completed at each institution \_\_\_\_\_
  3. Number of semester credits obtained in English \_\_\_\_\_
  4. Number of semester credits obtained in English Education \_\_\_\_\_
  5. Names of English Education courses completed \_\_\_\_\_
  6. Number of years of teaching experience \_\_\_\_\_
  7. Number of years teaching English in high school \_\_\_\_\_
  8. Degrees, if any, currently held \_\_\_\_\_
  9. Check the English subjects which you are now teaching and give the number of classes which you teach in each subject.
- 

	Language	Number of Classes	Literature	Number of Classes	English*	Number of Classes
Grade 7						
Grade 8						
Grade 9						
Grade 10						
Grade 11						

\* Answer only if Language and Literature are taught as one subject.

## SECTION II

### CLASSROOM METHODS

Listed below are a number of classroom methods which educational research has shown to be used by English teachers. In the blank provided in front of each method, place the letter of the answer for each question that best indicates your response. Any response may be used any number of times.

1. Indicate to what extent you use each of the following methods in teaching the novel in the classroom:

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| _____ The Lecture (or expository) method                       | a. always       |
| _____ Large Group Discussion                                   | b. frequently   |
| _____ Small Group Discussion                                   | c. occasionally |
| _____ Panel Discussion   | d. rarely       |
| _____ Individual Oral Presentation                             | e. never        |
| _____ Role-Playing (Students play the roles of the characters) |                 |



2. What is your opinion of each method as a technique for teaching the novel?

<input type="checkbox"/> The Lecture	a. excellent
<input type="checkbox"/> Large Group Discussion	b. good
<input type="checkbox"/> Small Group Discussion	c. average
<input type="checkbox"/> Panel Discussion	d. fair
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Oral Presentation	e. poor
<input type="checkbox"/> Role-Playing	

3. Which grouping of students would you be most inclined to use each teaching method with?

<input type="checkbox"/> The Lecture	a. superior
<input type="checkbox"/> Large Group Discussion	b. above average
<input type="checkbox"/> Small Group Discussion	c. average
<input type="checkbox"/> Panel Discussion	d. below average
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Oral Presentation	e. retarded
<input type="checkbox"/> Role-Playing	f. all of these
	g. none of these

4. If you are not using these methods in the classroom now, have you used any of them in the past? Answer each individually.

<input type="checkbox"/> The Lecture	a. yes
<input type="checkbox"/> Large Group Discussion	b. no
<input type="checkbox"/> Small Group Discussion	
<input type="checkbox"/> Panel Discussion	
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Oral Presentation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Role-Playing	

5. For each of these methods which you once used but now no longer use, indicate your reason for discontinuing the method.

_____ The Lecture	a. student participation low
_____ Large Group Discussion	b. high failure rate in literature
_____ Small Group Discussion	c. method too mechanical
_____ Panel Discussion	d. further education changed my philosophy
_____ Individual Oral Presentation	e. further experience changed my philosophy
_____ Role-Playing	f. both (d) and (e)
	g. favors flexibility of method
	h. all of these
	i. none of these

6. Are there any of your classes using another method for teaching the novel which is not identified in this questionnaire? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, identify it and give a brief description of it below.

### SECTION III

#### THE STRUCTURE OF THE UNIT ON THE NOVEL

Select the most appropriate answer to each of the following questions and place the letter of your answer in the parenthesis at the right.

1. How helpful do you find your 'methods course' in English Education for structuring the unit on the novel? .....( )  
 (a) extremely helpful (b) of some help (c) of very little help (d) of no help at all

2. How helpful do you find curriculum guides and materials from the Department of Education for structuring the unit on the novel? .....( )  
(a) extremely helpful (b) of some help (c) of very little help (d) of no help at all
3. From a teaching point-of-view, how difficult is it to organize a unit on the novel in comparison with other literature forms? .....( )  
(a) much more difficult (b) slightly more difficult (c) about the same (d) easier
4. How much attention do you give to reading skills in preparing the unit on the novel? .....( )  
(a) a great deal (b) some (c) very little (d) none
5. How much attention do you think should be given to improving reading skills when one is teaching English?....( )  
(a) a great deal (b) some (c) very little (d) none
6. In the selection of novels for a particular class, it is helpful to know the particular needs, aspirations and interests of the individual students before the selection is made. Which of the following best describes your way of considering these particular qualities? .....( )  
(a) attitude test (e.g. Thurstone)  
(b) personal friendship with the students  
(c) cumulative records  
(d) questionnaire  
(e) all of these  
(f) none of these
7. How flexible, in your opinion, is the literature syllabus for permitting the individual teacher to organize the unit on the novel? .....( )  
(a) very flexible (b) flexible (c) partly flexible (d) rigid (e) very rigid
8. How are the literature units planned by the English teachers in your school? .....( )  
(a) individually by each teacher  
(b) cooperatively by all teachers of literature  
(c) individually but in consultation with the other teachers of literature  
(d) no planning as such
9. How much time do you devote to the unit on the novel in your classes? .....( )  
(a) less than a month (b) about one month  
(c) one - two months (d) more than two months

10. In your unit on the novel, is provision made for students to read certain novels of their own choice?... ( )  
 (a) always (b) frequently (c) rarely (d) never
11. How would you describe your school's supply of junior and teenage novels in relation to the reading interests and needs of today's high school students? ..... ( )  
 (a) excellent (b) adequate (c) unsatisfactory (d) poor

#### SECTION IV

#### AREAS OF EMPHASIS

Listed below are a number of specific kinds of novels and approaches to the novel that you may have been spending some time with in some of your classes. In the space to the left of each item, place the letter of the phrase which best describes your efforts.

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| _____ the history of the English novel  | a. dealt with in class in some detail |
| _____ the history of the American novel | b. dealt with in class briefly        |
| _____ the Canadian novel                | c. given in assignment topics         |
| _____ the Newfoundland novel            | d. mentioned for individual reading   |
| _____ the Romantic novel                | e. not considered at all              |
| _____ the Victorian novel               |                                       |
| _____ the Gothic novel                  |                                       |
| _____ foreign novels in translation     |                                       |
| _____ the psychological novel           |                                       |
| _____ the stream-of-consciousness novel |                                       |
| _____ the history of the junior novel   |                                       |

## SECTION V

## EVALUATION FOR THE NOVEL

Select the most appropriate answer to each of the following questions and place the letter of the answer in the parenthesis at the right.

1. When a student has completed a unit on the novel, the essential part of his experience cannot be evaluated. How do you react to this statement? .....( )  
(a) strongly agree (b) agree (c) disagree  
(d) strongly disagree (e) no opinion
2. Evaluation for the novel should be done on what basis?..( )  
(a) class work only  
(b) partly on class work; partly on individual work  
(tests & assignments)  
(c) individual work only
3. Regarding tests on novels, which kind do you use? .....( )  
(a) objective tests (b) essay tests  
(c) both (a) and (b) (d) oral examination
4. Regarding assignments on novels, which type of questions do you use mostly? .....( )  
(a) general questions on 'the novel'  
(b) general questions on each novel  
(c) specific questions on each novel  
(d) all of the above  
(e) no assignments given on the novel
5. How often do you provide students with a study guide for the novels which they are required to read? .....( )  
(a) always  
(b) frequently  
(c) occasionally  
(d) rarely  
(e) never

Is there anything else about the novel which is being done in your school and which you think would benefit this study? \_\_\_\_\_. If yes, give details either below or if necessary on another sheet of paper.

APPENDIX C  
GENERAL INFORMATION FOR  
TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

Teacher's training Institution Attended	No. of Semesters	No. of semester credits in English	No. of credits in English Education	No. of yrs. of teach- ing exper.	No. of yrs. teaching H.S. Engl.	Degrees
A. M. U. N.	9	12	-	-	-	-
B. Mount Allison	8	16	-	2	2	B.A.
C. M. U. N.	12	16	4	6	6	B.A., B.A.(ed.)
D. M. U. N.	10	8	-	7	1	B.A., B.A.(ed.)
E. M. U. N.	10	16	2	2	2	B.A., B.ed.
F. M. U. N.	12	4	1	4	3	B.A., B.A.(ed.)
G. M. U. N.	10	14	3	3	3	B.A., B.ed.
H. M. U. N.	6	6	2	15	10	-
I. M. U. N.	4	7	1	8	8	-
J. M. U. N.	9	12	0	-	-	-
K. M. U. N.	6	5	2	10	10	-
L. M. U. N.	8	8	0	6	6	B.A.(ed.)
M. Sir George Williams	8	12	1	2	2	B.A.
M. U. N.	1					
N. York University	8	22	-	2	2	B.A. (Hons.)
M. U. N.						
O. Mount St. Vincent Dalhousie	12	26	2	1	1	B.A., B.ed. M.A. in Engl.

Teacher's training Institution Attended	No. of Semesters	No. of semester credits in English	No. of credits in English Education	No. of yrs. of teach- ing exper.	No. of yrs. teaching H.S. Engl.	Degrees
P. M. U. N.	12	8	1	9	8	B.A., B.A.(ed.)
Q. M. U. N.	8	8	-	20	8	-
R. M. U. N.	-	8	0	1	-	B.A. (Hons.)
S. M. U. N.	12	20	6	1	1	B.A., B.ed.
T. M. U. N.	9	12	-	5	3	B.A. (ed.)







