

Teaching
Literature

Elaine Showalter

Teaching Literature

By Elaine Showalter

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Teaching Literature By Elaine Showalter

Teaching Literature is an inspirational guidebook for all teachers of English and American literature in higher education.

- Written by leading academic, prolific author and cultural journalist, Elaine Showalter
- Original and provocative reflections on teaching literature in higher education
- Encourages teachers to make their classroom practice intellectually exciting
- Wide-ranging - covers the practical, theoretical, and methodological aspects of teaching literature
- Highly practical - employs real examples from real classes and careers throughout
- Draws on 40 years of international teaching experience

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Showalter's distillation of her half-century of teaching (along with the experience of scores of other teachers) in this jargon-free blend of manual and memoir will appeal to readers with a general interest in education as well as to professionals. Provocative, evocative, spirited in tone and lucid in structure, the volume offers everything readers might want to know about teaching undergraduates. Showalter, an English professor at Princeton University, opens with practical matters (e.g., the anxieties that can plague teachers, lack of training, isolation, performance, evaluation) and then moves to the theoretical, exploring subject-centered, teacher-centered and student-centered teaching theories. Throughout, she addresses nitty-gritty matters, from preparing syllabi and lectures and leading discussions to grading and "housekeeping." On teaching literature classes (including poetry, drama, fiction and theory), Showalter offers a cornucopia of approaches, peppered with brief reflections from teachers about actual practice. She addresses the teaching of teachers, the issues raised in "dangerous subjects" (freshly, not the usual race and gender, but suicide and explicit sexual language) and "teaching literature in dark times." Differences and disagreements flourish, and the chorus of voices Showalter shares with readers, along with her own expertise and knowledge, makes this book particularly appealing as well as useful.

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Review

"It is to Showalter's great credit that she has written a book that exemplifies many of the virtues she associates with literature: curiosity, empathy, compassion. It is also a deeply personal work. People say that reading literature does not make you a better person. True. But reading this book will make you a better teacher. And maybe make you think better of literature too." *Times Higher Education Supplement*

"Grounded equally in narrative anecdotes and in published scholarship, *Teaching Literature* is admirably accessible and reader-friendly... I'd recommend it to anyone looking to enliven his or her classroom".

Literature and History

From the Back Cover

Teaching Literature is an indispensable guidebook for all teachers of English and American literature in higher education. Drawing on 40 years of international teaching experience, author Elaine Showalter inspires instructors to make their classroom practice as intellectually exciting as their research.

Showalter's wide-ranging reflections address practical, theoretical, and methodological issues. She starts out by describing the anxieties of teaching literature and by outlining the major theories and methods circulating in the field. She then goes on to look separately at teaching drama, fiction, poetry, and theory, and to explore ways to teach teaching. Finally, she investigates the moral issues involved in teaching, and the practical ethics of handling touchy subjects, from sexuality to suicide.

Examples from real classes and careers are cited throughout, generating an unusual degree of authenticity and immediacy.

Users Review

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Lela Koehn:

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