

1	14.9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of course setup and assessment • Choosing a novel • “Top of the Food Chain” by T.C. Boyle: Listening and responding to literature 	<p>Get a copy of your novel as soon as possible.</p> <p>Write a short letter to the editor about the events discussed in “Top of the Food Chain” OR write a short personal letter to the narrator (the scientist responsible for the events), telling him what you think of his plan. (150 – 200 words max.)</p> <p>Read “Filthy With Things” + write a 10-minute response. Highlight interesting passages in the text and select 5 new phrases for your vocab collection.</p>
2	21.9.	T.C. Boyle: “Filthy With Things” discussion of story and author Style improvement exercises	<p><u>Write a short-story</u> from one of the story openings. <u>Organize written feedback</u> from a classmate and revise your story.</p> <p>Hand in your <u>story package</u> by October 5th.</p>
	28.9.	No class, in-service training	Read ¹ “Dead As They Come” + write response.
3	5.10.	Ian Mc Ewan: “Dead As They Come” and language work	Read “The Pension Grillparzer” + write a response. Finish and polish the language work and text tasks started in class.
4	12.10.	John Irving: “The Pension Grillparzer”	Clean up your vocab collection and LP book, we’ll use it in class in session 5. Finish and polish the language work and text tasks started in class.
5	19.10.	Language and Style exercises	Finish reading your novel and write lots of questions and comments about the author’s style, the theme, the characters and settings... into your reading diary. Bring your RD and your novel to class in session 6.
	26.10.	No class, National holiday	
	2.11.	No class, All Saints	
6	9.11.	Deadline for short-story packages Planning presentations for all groups. <u>Reading diaries due</u>	Prepare your part of the presentation carefully.
7	16.11.	Test: Writing a short story	
8	23.11.	Presentations and further discussion of authors: Finding similarities between their works.	Correct your test carefully and fill in your assessment form. On the back of the form write me a short formal letter explaining what grade you think you have earned. Print your letter and use correct letter-formatting and layout.
9		Round-up of the quarter and intro to quarter 2	

¹ In this context READING a text means reading, taking notes in the margin, highlighting interesting passages, collecting new phrases and writing a short response (not a summary!!!)

Course Assessment:

Tasks	Criteria					
<p>Reading Diary: Write a 10-minute response to every story. Write at least two entries about the novel of your choice</p>	<p>Show that you have read the texts critically. Show your awareness of themes, symbols, style and tone. Make connections to your own experience. Ask questions, express your emotional reactions to the texts...</p>	v	f	a	w	e
		e	a	v	e	x
		r	r	e	l	c
		y	a	r	e	e
			r	a	d	n
		p	a	g	o	e
		o	e	e	n	t
		r				
<p>Presentation: Present your chosen author and novel in your group.</p>	<p>Make your presentation interesting for your classmates. Keep plot summaries as short as possible. Use visual aids to help your classmates follow the different plots. (Plot diagrams, Plot mountains, Setting maps, character portraits...) Introduce the main characters vividly. Concentrate mainly on similarities and typical features of the author:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common themes • Character traits that reappear in several works • Typical settings • Style and tone • Symbols? <p>Present only <u>relevant</u> facts from the author's biography.</p>					
<p>Short story</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose one of the story openings on your sheet and continue the story in the same style. Plan your story well. Concentrate on a short but important moment in the main character's life. Do NOT write life stories or soap operas. 2. Give your 1st draft to a friend and ask him/her to give you feedback and tips for improvements. Be VERY critical with your friend's story. This is your chance to help each other improve the stories. Write a detailed, respectful feedback for your friend (the quality of your comments will be assessed). 3. When you get your story back, revise it carefully. Edit your text carefully (using your spelling checker and grammar book) and rewrite any weak parts. Hand in your story package for final assessment. Staple your materials together in the following order: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2nd draft (top) • a short, informal reflection about your peer's comments and the changes you have made (or refused to make). • peer comments • 1st draft (bottom) <p><u>WARNING: no late copies or incomplete packages will be accepted.</u></p>					
<p>Language work and effort</p>	<p>You will be given several small assignments that should help you improve your language and style. Do them VERY carefully. Revise them whenever you get feedback from a peer, your teacher or co-teacher. Your revisions and corrections should HELP YOU!!! Do them carefully. Use your dictionaries, your grammar books or ask your teacher...</p> <p>New regulations concerning text corrections: This year you will have to take more responsibility for improving your language and vocabulary mistakes. I will underline mistakes of language and vocabulary in your work, but will not give you the correct solutions. Some serious mistakes will be marked with an exclamation mark in the margin. This means that you HAVE to correct them carefully in your LP book. In addition you must correct at least 3 other mistakes of your choice. Use your grammar book and your dictionary to correct and revise your work. You will also have the opportunity to work with Mr. Wardell and me in class and ask us to help you rephrase unidiomatic passages. Use this chance regularly and write the improved phrases or grammar examples into your LP book. Do this carefully and keep in mind that you are doing it for your own benefit.</p>					
<p>Vocabulary work:</p>	<p>Collect five new phrases for each of the text samples and 20 phrases from your novel. Use an A4 vocab. book (ruled, no margin and fold the pages to make 2 columns). Do NOT use loose sheets or computer printouts!!!!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highlight the chosen phrases in your text!!! 2. Write each new phrase as you found it in the text, then find a second example of its usage (use your MLDs) and a German translation. Leave plenty of space between the phrases and layout the pages clearly in order to remember the new vocab. easily. Use colors and doodles to help you remember the phrases. 3. Always bring your vocab book to class. We will use it for language activities. I will test your knowledge of the chosen phrases regularly and without prior notice!!! 					
<p>TEST</p>	<p>Short story:</p>					

Choose one of the following novels for this quarter

Ian McEwan,	The Comfort of Strangers Atonement Enduring Love The Cement Garden
T.C. Boyle,	Drop City The Tortilla Curtain
John Irving,	The World According to Garp A Prayer For Owen Meany
Paul Auster:	The Music of Chance Mr. Vertigo The Book of Illusions
Kurt Vonnegut:	Cat's Cradle Slaughterhouse Five
Barbara Kingsolver:	Animal Dreams The Bean Trees The Poisonwood Bible

My Notes and Tasks for...

Ideas for language work

Vocab activities with cards
Toss out tired verbs, show don't tell
Text market
Gap filling, gap finding
New Taj Mahal
Settings
Add 10 lines in the same style
Characters
Word fields, mind maps

.....
Kingsolver, Blueprints

... in stress situations they fall into old patterns.
Brainstorm in groups:

Think of such a stress situation in your own life (family, friends, school)
How do the people involved react? What is the problem?

1. Introduce the situation and problem briefly (notes, 1-2 sentences)
2. describe the scene in detail. Show – don't tell!!! (200 words)
3. swap texts with a partner
4. suggest an alternative solution to the problem (notes only, a few sentences)
5. rewrite the scene (200 words), show – don't tell!!!

The Foster Portfolio (Vonnegut)

Values in life: rank values (list in Moskovitz??)

Or rank job prestige?

Writing: Imagine a totally fulfilling job or role for yourself (as an adult)

From an omniscient narrator's point of view describe this character (yourself at 40) in a typical situation. (like p. 68 of story)

Irving: Pension Grillparzer

Vienna, Bears, Circus people, Family-3 generations, extraordinary characters and events – objective correlative for everyday life,

First of all, Irving is known for his strange, evocative and surreal sensibilities; witness the bee sting killing in "Setting Free the Bears" or the ritual tongue-surgeries in "The World According to Garp". Criticizing him on that level means the reviewer is really not too familiar with the corpus of Irving's work, so probably doesn't "get" what it is Irving is saying. Also, it is in the face of such absurdities that all of us must, at least according to Irving, try to find the meaning and purpose of our own lives, like Garp or any of the other figures on the proverbial journeys he sets them on. Finally, Irving's duty isn't to just entertain the reader in a predictable way, but rather to play artfully with the notion that he can create a surreal world that in its own fashion represents a truer & more understandable world than the one we so drunkenly and absent-mindedly habituate every day. That's what some folks call art.

John Irving writes about people. And whether he writes about Owen Meany, Dhar or The Watermethod Man, he writes about life. All his characters are in a way eccentric and bizarre, but always understandable and just normal people. Irving describes their lives, their thoughts, their emotions and so tries to find the meaning and purpose of our own lives.

Irving's books are in that way portraits, but not just portraits. It are portraits of colorful people, absurd, but still in a way being like us. We can see ourselves in the eyes of Irving's main characters. And that's, beside his wonderful writing style and humor, what I like about Irving and especially about "The Hotel New Hampshire", a fresh and imaginative dive in the wonderful world of John Irving.

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Filthy with Things (T.C. Boyle)

Nowhere is Boyle's talent more evident than in "Filthy with Things," wherein sleek con woman Susan Certaine takes advantage of a couple's preoccupation with white, middle-class guilt over having too many possessions. It's gut-wrenching to watch Certaine work her black magic on bourgeois Julian Laxner, promising that taming his Western acquisitiveness will lead to fitness of the soul. "I am the purifying stream, Mr. Laxner," she tells him, "that's who I am. The cleansing torrent, the baptismal font. I'll make a new man out of you."

... he can't make any independent steps, needs help/master/program/group/healers...

reminds me of weight loss clinics where people pay a lot of money for eating milk and breadrolls...

Most effective of the 16 technically ingenious and rudely funny, satirical stories in Boyle's fourth collection are the sketches of disaffected individuals who take refuge in hermetic surroundings, self-help programs, political causes and conspicuous consumption to hold at bay the banal world of convention and compromise. In "Filthy with Things," a pathological couple whose home is sinking under the weight of their "collectibles" enlists the services of an evangelical professional organizer who banishes them to a "nonacquisitive environment" while she takes inventory of their astounding clutter ("three hundred and nine bookends, forty-seven rocking chairs and over two thousand plates, cups and saucers").

These stories find Boyle partying like it's 1999. He zeroes in on our age's most uncomfortable obsessions, its late-capitalist fetishes and millenarian fears: nervous Los Angelenos suckered into buying a Montana survivalist's retreat ('On for the Long Haul'); a hygienically obsessed girlfriend who insists on wearing a full-body condom ('Modern Love'); a rich, guilty couple suffocating under the weight of a lifetime's possessions ('Filthy with Things').. Boyle's comic range is unparalleled, his timing razor-sharp as he skewers everyone from burglar alarm salesmen to the Beats. Like all tricksters, the author uses our own vanity and hypocrisy against us--but with barbs as witty as those found in *T.C. Boyle Stories*, not even his victims will mind. --Mary Park

Q: The search for the American dream is a theme that resounds throughout *The Tortilla Curtain*. Do you think there is such a thing as the American dream?

A: I've addressed this throughout all of my work, our material obsession, all the stuff I've written about eating and how much we have and the surfeit of things; my story "Filthy with Things," for instance. What is the American dream? Well, the American dream is, "you pull yourself up by your bootstraps, you make it, you have a house, you live in the suburbs, and you drive a new car." What is that? That is a material dream. If you have nothing, then you have material dreams. Presumably, if you have an education and you have enough to eat, then you can have aesthetic dreams or humanistic dreams. Easy for me to say. I have every material thing I could want. I didn't become a writer to make money. I became a writer because that is my obsession and that's how I view the world. As a novelist, my job is to try to inhabit people of any culture, to be a person of another sex, or another race, or another ethnic group. I think it helps me to understand them, and it helps the reader to understand them, too.

Dead As They Come (Ian McEwan)

McEwan's short story collection *In Between the Sheets* (1978) featuring "Reflections of a Kept Ape," "Dead as They Come," and "Psychopolis," explores the darkest corners of desire and obsession, and helped earn him the nickname "Ian Macabre."

A jaded millionaire buys himself the perfect mistress and plunges into a hell of jealousy and despair.

His stories are so resonant and frightening because they are totally original. They are about the recognizable world of private fantasy and nightmare -- a world, despite our protestations to the contrary, we are all involved in." -- *The Times*

Kurt Vonnegut, "Thomas Edison's Shaggy Dog"

The “point” of the shaggy dog: 3 levels!

Level 3: (the story within the story)

Don't let people know that you are too clever, or you'll suffer (even die)!

Level 2: (the story)

The old man creates the shaggy dog story just to “fool” Bullard (taking revenge because he has been harassed by Bullard and Bullard's dog) & to poke fun at his dog, too (Hey, don't you know that you are clever than your master!)

Level 1: (for readers)

Try to entertain, even fascinate, the reader by the “magic” of turning a rather trivial and boring tale into an extremely witty story. There's a great sense of surprise & humor toward the end.

Writing a Short story (teacher version)

- Choose one of the following short story openings and continue the story. (Please copy or paste the opening of your choice on your sheet.)
- Concentrate on an important moment in your character's life – don't tell a life story. Try to continue the story in the same style and tone. Find a fitting title.
- Ask a friend to read your story very critically and give you feedback.
- Revise your story carefully. Check spelling and grammar and use your dictionary to polish the style.
- Hand your story in by
- Ask your teacher for a copy of the original story. Read it and write a 10 minute response into your reading diary.

A (Vonnegut, "Long Walk to Forever")

They had grown up next door to each other, on the fringe of a city, near fields and woods and orchards, within sight of a lovely bell tower that belonged to a school for the blind.

Now they were twenty, had not seen each other for nearly a year. There had always been playful, comfortable warmth between them, but never any talk of love.

His name was Newt. Her name was Catharine. In the early afternoon, Newt knocked on Catherine's front door.

Catherine came to the door. She was carrying a fat, glossy magazine she had been reading. The magazine was devoted entirely to brides. "Newt!" she said. She was surprised to see him.

B (Vonnegut, "Next Door")

The old house was divided into two dwellings by a thin wall that passed on, with high fidelity, sounds on either side. On the north side were the Leonards. On the south side were the Hargers.

The Leonards – husband, wife, and eight-year-old son – had just moved in. And, aware of the wall, they kept their voices down as they argued in a friendly way as to whether or not the boy, Paul, was old enough to be left alone for the evening.

...

C (Irving, "Tom Edison's Shaggy Dog")

Two old men sat on a park bench one morning in the sunshine of Tampa, Florida – one trying doggedly to read a book he was plainly enjoying while the other, Harold K. Bullard, told him the story of his life in the full, round, head tones of a public address system. At their feet lay Bullard's Labrador retriever, who further tormented the aged listener by probing his ankles with a large, wet nose.

Bullard, who had been, before he retired, successful in many fields, enjoyed reviewing his important past. But he faced the problem that complicates the lives of cannibals – namely: that a single victim cannot be used over and over. Anyone who had passed the time of day with him and his dog refused to share a bench with them again.

So Bullard and his dog set out through the park each day in quest of new faces. They had had good luck this morning, for they had found this stranger right away, clearly a new arrival in Florida, still buttoned up tight in heavy serge, stiff collar and necktie, and with nothing better to do than read.

D (T.C. Boyle, "A Women's Restaurant")

It is a women's restaurant. Men are not permitted. Women go there to be in the company of other women, to sit in the tasteful rooms beneath the ancient revolving fans and the cool green of spilling plants, to cross or uncross their legs as they like, to chat, sip liqueurs, eat. At the door, the first time they enter, they are asked to donate twenty-five cents and they are issued a lifetime membership card. Thus the women's restaurant has the legal appearance of a private club, and its proprietors, Grace and Rubie, avoid running afoul of the antidiscrimination laws. A women's restaurant. What goes on there, precisely, no man knows. I am a man. I am burning to find out....

Writing a Short story:

- Choose one of the following short story openings and continue the story. (Please copy or paste the opening of your choice on your sheet.)
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