

# **Patterns Study Guide**

## **Patterns by Amy Lowell**

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# Introduction

Amy Lowell's poem "Patterns" was first published in a monthly magazine called *The Little Review* in August 1915. *The Little Review* had a small circulation, but it attracted the attention of many notable writers of the time. By the time "Patterns" was published, Lowell herself had already become known as a poetic innovator with her second book, *Sword Blades and Poppy Seeds* (1914). She included "Patterns" in her third book, *Men, Women, and Ghosts*, an immediate bestseller published in October 1916. In spite of her popularity during her lifetime, most of Lowell's work was not republished after her death. However, a posthumous collection published in 1926—one year after her death—entitled *What's O'Clock* received the Pulitzer Prize. "Patterns" is one of her best-known poems, probably because it appeared in anthologies throughout the twentieth century. It is included in the most recent volume of Lowell's selected poems.

"Patterns" tells the deceptively simple story of a woman walking through a formal garden just after she has learned that her fiancé has been killed in combat. Lowell describes the woman's formal dress and the formal paths of the garden in vivid detail and in short, occasionally rhyming, lines. However, the formal patterns that encircle this woman's life take on new significance in the light of her lover's death. This poem exemplifies Lowell's adherence to the principles of imagism—expression through the use of vivid images—even though it does not conform to the original ideas of this early twentieth-century literary movement. In 1913 and 1914, Lowell traveled in England and met American expatriate poets Ezra Pound and Hilda Doolittle (known as H. D.). Pound and his fellow imagists wrote poetry composed of short, deliberately musical lines. They tried to describe visual images with firm, clear precise language rather than treating them as symbols for abstract ideas or feelings. These ideas influenced Lowell throughout her life and particularly in her second and third books of poetry. Lowell says in the Preface to *Men, Women, and Ghosts* that she is trying to use "the movement of poetry in somewhat the same way that the musician uses the movement of music." She also used poetry to comment on current events, particularly World War I, which was underway by the time she published "Patterns."

In "Patterns," Lowell presents a woman's perspective on war and on social conventions that keep her parading in her "stiff, brocaded gown" while her lover is on the battlefield. The woman in Lowell's poem has been robbed of her future marriage by the death of her lover, but she speaks most frankly about missing her lover's embraces. Lowell departed from poetic tradition by writing openly as a woman about the physical experience of being in love. By the end of the poem, the woman's frustrated passion has turned into equal frustration with this "pattern called a war." The idea of a pattern is to make something unified and structured, with expected and predictable outcomes. Both she and her fiancé are subject to patterns, though they do not know it until it is too late. Both of their patterns lead to death: his to a physical death, and hers to an emotional one.

## Author Biography

Amy Lowell was born on February 9, 1874, in Brookline, Massachusetts, to a distinguished family. As was common for girls of her class, she never attended college but read as extensively as she could from her father's library. Lowell's father died in 1900, and she took over the family estate, Sevenels, purchasing the house and surrounding gardens from her siblings and learning to manage the various servants. In 1902, she wrote her first poem.

Lowell began writing seriously several years later and was first published in the literary and cultural magazine *Atlantic Monthly*, in 1910. She published her first book of poetry, *A Dome of Many-Coloured Glass*, in 1912. Two years later, Lowell traveled to England and was stranded in London during the first months of World War I. While there, she met poet Ezra Pound and became involved in the imagist movement.

Lowell published nine books of poetry, four books of prose, a biography of poet John Keats, and several edited anthologies. Many of the poems that are considered her best were inspired by her romantic relationship with actress Ada Dwyer Russell. Her posthumous collection *What's O'Clock* (1926) won a Pulitzer Prize. She died May 12, 1925.

### Stanza 5

The image in Stanza 4 of the lovers having a lighthearted frolic in the garden is juxtaposed, or compared, with the news the woman receives in Stanza 5 of Lord Hartwell's death. Lines 60 through 65 explain why the woman began weeping when the flower fell on her chest in Stanza 2. Tucked inside her dress is a letter informing her of his death in battle. She sends no answer in response to the letter. She simply observes rules of courtesy, reminding her servant to offer the messenger "some refreshment." Then she walks into the garden, returning to the setting where the poem began.

Lines 72 to 75 repeat the images of Stanza 1: paths, stiff brocade, and flowers. Now, however, the flowers stand up "proudly in the sun, / Each one," rather than being blown about with the breeze. The rhyming words, such as "sun" and "one," follow each other quickly. The rhythm of her walking "up and down" in the garden is mimicked by the rhythm of these lines and the equally short, staccato lines that conclude this stanza. Whereas earlier in the poem the woman longed to be like the flowers that "Flutter in the breeze / As they please," now the flowers are upright, reinforcing her own formal display. Still, the flowers stand proud, but there is the sense that the speaker's stance barely contains her emotions. She is "held rigid to the pattern" as she continues walking "up and down." Her repetitive walking pattern combines with the structure of her gown and the orderliness of the garden to keep her feelings at bay.



## Stanza 6

The woman finally reveals the identity of Lord Hartwell in line 82 at the beginning of Stanza 6: "In a month he would have been my husband. / In a month, here, underneath this lime." The sudden fall of the flower from the tree in Stanza 2 imitated the fallen soldier on the field of battle. This is one example of a possible deviation from the strict ideas of imagism. Whereas imagist poets try to avoid symbols, Lowell seems to slip into this poetic convention when the flower serves as a symbol of the soldier. At the same time, in Stanza 6, the rhythm of free verse is obvious because there is almost no rhyme. At the stanza's end, rhyme returns, emphasizing the last two lines. In line 90, the speaker repeats her response to her lover's marriage proposal: "It shall be as you have said." Line 91 concludes the stanza with the simple statement: "Now he is dead."

## Stanza 7

Stanza 7 begins with repetition of the central images of the poem. "Up and down / The patterned garden-paths" the woman walks in her stiff, formal gown. She says that she will do this in "Summer and in Winter," creating a new pattern for herself. The flowers "will give place to pillared roses, and to asters, and to snow," meaning they are not eternal. Yet her knowledge of what they will become indicates another pattern, that of nature. The seasons will pass, and still she will be walking in the garden. Her softness will be "guarded from embrace" because the only one who could have freed her from the pattern of her dress is dead. He was killed "Fighting with the Duke in Flanders, / In a pattern called a war." The patterns repeated in the poem—the garden, the gown, and the language—have been building to this idea about a bigger pattern that can determine life and death. The poem ends with an open-ended question: "What are patterns for?"



# Plot Summary

## Stanza 1

A stanza is a grouping of lines in a poem, often with similar meter, rhythm, or rhyme scheme. The first stanza of "Patterns" includes nine lines and sets the scene for the rest of the poem. Lowell begins the narrative poem with a seemingly obvious comparison between a woman dressed in a formal gown and a garden planted with an intricate design of flowers. Written in the first person, the speaker is walking "down the garden paths" in line 1. She begins to describe the daffodils and "bright blue squills" forming patterns around her. "I too am a rare / Pattern," the speaker declares in lines 7 and 8. Her pattern is the formal clothing of a wealthy eighteenth-century English woman. She wears a "stiff, brocaded gown" with "powdered hair and jewelled fan" in her hand as she ambles through a summer garden.

This stanza introduces Lowell's poetic style, the "flowing, fluctuating rhythm" of free verse, as Lowell calls it in her original Preface to *Men, Women, and Ghosts*, the volume in which "Patterns" was first published. Poets began using the term *free verse* in the early twentieth century to describe many forms of irregular or unrhymed verse. It is a style commonly associated with the literary movement of imagism. Lowell also applies the principles of imagism, attempting to present images unadorned with symbols or sentimentality, but she sometimes slips: the story is unarguably romantic and she uses visual images as symbols for feelings. Imagism as promoted by poet Ezra Pound deliberately avoided poetic conventions such as these. Lowell made her own rules, though. In the first stanza, as the speaker of the poem talks about patterns, the language itself creates patterns. The phrase "walk down" appears in lines 1 and 4, and is repeated with a slight variation as "wander down" in line 8, the next-to-last line of the stanza. The repetition creates a sense of the action—the pattern—repeated by the speaker.

## Stanza 2

The second stanza focuses even more closely on the speaker's "richly figured" dress, picking up the theme of patterns from the first stanza. Then in line 12 the comparison becomes less conventional: the dress makes a "pink and silver stain / On the gravel," thereby altering the original pattern and creating a new one. The speaker describes herself as merely a fashion plate in "high-heeled, ribboned shoes" moving through the borders of the garden. She does not feel the softness of flesh or nature but the coarseness of "whalebone and brocade" when she sinks on a seat in the shade. The whalebone is tightened around her in a corset to keep her waist slim, and the heavy fabric hangs over these underclothes. She is encased by her clothing, which protects her like a fort from the outside world.



Suddenly the poem is not just a simple comparison of pretty things. In lines 20 and 21, the speaker confesses her "passion / Wars against the stiff brocade" of her clothing. She longs to act emotionally and without reason, contrary to the formality of her dress. The flowers in the garden "Flutter in the breeze / As they please," naturally unfettered, while the woman weeps. The words "breeze," "please," and "weep" echo each other. The first two rhyme and the third repeats the rhyme with the vowel sounds, but ends with a different consonant. This slight difference in the rhyme scheme suggests the difference between the imprisoned woman and the free flowers. The woman begins to weep because a single blossom from the lime tree "dropped upon [her] bosom."

## Stanzas 3 and 4

Line 28, which opens Stanza 3, introduces a second sound into this visual description. The "plashing" of water in a fountain follows the sound of weeping. The sound travels down the same paths the speaker has been walking. However, the poem immediately changes from the garden setting to a romantic scene imagined by the speaker. She confesses in lines 32 and 33: "Underneath my stiffened gown / Is the softness of a woman bathing in a marble basin." After all, "What is Summer in a fine brocaded gown!" The speaker imagines that her lover is watching her from behind a thick hedge and that the water slipping against her skin is like his touch. She would like to see the dress in a heap on the ground, to be free from its patterns, to feel the warmth of summer and the cool of water.

The pink and silver brocade gown becomes the pink and silver of her flesh as she runs along the path leading her lover on a chase. The patterned paths become amaze for her "heavy-booted lover" who is slowed by his military uniform. The speaker describes in detail the sun flashing on his sword and the fancy buckles on his shoes. When he catches her in an embrace, the buttons of his jacket press into her, but she is "unafraid." She imagines they are surrounded by the garden and the sound of the fountain. These sights and sounds recall her to the present, and she feels ready to faint from "the weight of this brocade" as the sun shines down on her.

Lowell continues to make this story poetic by rhyming many of the words at the end of lines. "Shoes" rhymes with "choose" in lines 46 and 47, for example. Then neatly concluding the stanza, "afternoon" rhymes with "swoon," and "brocade" rhymes with "shade." However, the rhymes do not follow any regular pattern. Instead, they create a musical rhythm that varies throughout the poem.



# Themes

## Women and War

A woman's perspective of war has, historically, not been that of the battlefield or the front line. Many countries barred women from combat situations until the latter part of the twentieth century. As of 2005 in the United States, women are still excluded from direct ground combat, though they may participate in companies that support combat battalions.

One of the most common ways women have participated in war is as the family breadwinner while the men are away. In wartime, women have maintained family farms and worked in factories, often earning more money than they ever earned before. The flip side of this was their implicit duty to wait for the men—their husbands, their brothers, their sons—to return. The wait, especially before long-distance communication was possible, was fraught with dread, anticipation, and anxiety. Generations of war widows were created when the men did not return home.

"Patterns" explores the aftermath of war—namely death—that many women experienced during the War of Spanish Succession, during which this poem is set, and World War I, during which this poem was written. However, soldiers and their families—perhaps especially their wives—continue to experience the same devastating effects of war today. The death or injury of a soldier during battle profoundly affects his or her loved ones. With Lord Hartwell's death, the narrator's life is changed forever. The patterns they "would have broken" remain intact, imprisoning the woman as strongly as her brocaded dress imprisons her body.

Critics most often cite works by male authors as examples of war literature: American Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, the famous German novel *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Maria Remarque, the vivid poetry of Wilfred Owen, and other works by men who saw the fighting in Europe. With the rise of the political movement for women's liberation and women's rights in the 1970s, feminist literary criticism began to challenge the idea that war is a topic treated only by men. Feminists argued that women had worked as nurses, journalists, ambulance drivers, volunteers, and even soldiers (while disguised as men) during many wars. As a result, the definition of war literature has expanded to include writing by women, even domestic writing that shows the effect of war at home, such as American novelist Louis May Alcott's *Little Women*, which tells the story of a family of women during the Civil War. "Patterns," written by and about a woman, clearly fits in this new category of feminine war literature. In the Preface to *Men, Women, and Ghosts*, Lowell makes the point that "No one writing today can fail to be affected by the great war raging in Europe at this time. We are too near it to do more than touch upon it. But, obliquely, it is suggested in many of these poems...."





## Coping Mechanisms

When a soldier is killed in war, he or she leaves behind loved ones who must continue to live, though it may be difficult. Survivors often employ coping mechanisms to help them overcome the difficult realities of life without a loved one. The woman in "Patterns" is no exception, and she copes through the use of patterns.

Before readers learn of the woman's sorrow, they are introduced to a series of patterns that govern her life: the pattern of the garden paths, the flower beds, nature, the brocade gown that she is wearing. There is a sense that these patterns are oppressive, holding the woman tightly in place while she yearns to speak and act freely: "my passion / Wars against the stiff brocade." Eighteenth-century social conventions required that women keep their emotions and feelings in check, never showing discomfort or sadness. These emotions in the woman are straining against propriety and the "pattern" of social expectations.

However, once readers learn that Lord Hartwell, the woman's fiancé has been killed, it seems that the woman finds solace in the patterns that govern her life. They offer a familiar routine, one she relies on to help her maintain her composure. Like the flowers in the garden, she stands upright, whereas previously she had desired to "Flutter in the breeze" as they had done. In order to face a future without her love, she establishes a new pattern for herself, walking up and down the garden path, where she will remain throughout the seasons and, one might imagine, years to come. Her dress, which earlier in the poem was confining, will "guard" her body from future embraces, since the man she longs to embrace is dead. She will be safe from hurt, loss, and sorrow as her emotions will be locked tightly within her.

At the end of the poem, however, she wonders how the patterns that have protected and kept her—and that will provide future comfort—have failed to keep her fiancé safe. He

[Image Not Available]

died "In a pattern called a war. / Christ! What are patterns for?"



# Historical Context

## The War of Spanish Succession: 1702–1713

Although "Patterns" was written at the beginning of World War I, it is set two centuries earlier, probably during the events of the first world war of modern times, the War of Spanish Succession. When the woman in the poem reveals her lover's death, she mentions that he died "Fighting with the Duke in Flanders." The precise geographical boundaries of the region of Flanders have changed over the centuries. Now the name mainly refers to parts of the country of Belgium. In the early eighteenth century, Flanders also included parts of northeast France and the southeastern Netherlands.

In 1701, Charles II of Spain, the last of the Habsburg line, died leaving no direct heir. In anticipation of his death, both the French and the Austrian Habsburgs claimed the throne, and in 1697 after a brief war, agreed that Joseph Ferdinand, the grandson of Holy Roman Emperor Leopold I, would become the heir to the Spanish throne. This decision by France and England allowed for the division of Spanish territory between France and Austria, but Spain was not consulted in the decision. When Ferdinand died two years later another arrangement was made, sensitive to territories and the European balance of power.

As agreed upon, Charles II left his possessions to Philip V, the grandson of the French king. However, Leopold I fought to keep Austria's possession of territories. Meanwhile, the French king expanded France's territory, making other countries in Europe, namely England and the Netherlands, nervous about a Spanish-French alliance.

In 1703, English forces began heavy fighting in Flanders, commanded by the Duke of Marlborough. They were joined by the Dutch and other European countries in a Grand Alliance struggling over lands controlled by Spain and France. After a decade of fighting throughout the European continent, the war ended in April of 1713 with a bundle of treaties called the Peace of Utrecht. As a result, Philip V was recognized as the rightful king of Spain, but was removed from the French line of succession to avoid Spanish-French domination. Spain lost its territories in Italy and the Netherlands to Austria, and ceded Gibraltar and the Mediterranean island of Minorca to the British.

## World War I

In September 1914, Lowell wrote to the publisher of *Poetry* magazine, Harriet Monroe, to gossip about the world of poetry. This letter is among those collected in *Dear Editor: A History of Poetry in Letters*, edited by Joseph Parisi and Stephen Young. "What's the trouble between Ezra [Pound] and the Imagistes?" Lowell wanted to know. She continued with her opinion that "the war should help them to kiss and make up—times are hard enough for poets without quarrels."



The war to which Lowell refers is World War I, which lasted from 1914 until 1918. Though there were multiple economic, social, and balance-of-power factors that led to the war, the event that ignited it was the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife. The archduke and duchess were assassinated by Serbian nationalist Gavrilo Princip on June 28, 1914, in Sarajevo. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia one month later, on July 28. Acting on a pact from 1909, Russia mobilized to protect Serbia.

What followed was a series of declarations of war by countries defending their allies: Germany declared war on Russia (August 1) and Russia's ally France (August 3). On August 4, 1914, Germany invaded Belgium. Great Britain declared war on Germany the same day. On August 10, Austria-Hungary declared war on Russia, and on August 12, France and Britain declared war on Austria-Hungary. World War I had begun. The United States remained neutral and dedicated to the political principle of isolationism, in which nations try not to become involved in foreign conflicts. The American president, Woodrow Wilson, did not want to involve his country in a cause unconnected to American interests.

Pressure on the United States to enter the war increased, and President Wilson finally addressed a special session of Congress on April 2, 1917, to support deployment of U.S. soldiers.

Advances in technology and weaponry made this war particularly savage. Men fought—and lived—in filthy, rat-filled trenches, as tanks, mustard gas, and rockets were used to combat the enemy. As Jennifer Haytock points out in *At Home, At War: Domesticity and World War I in American Literature*:

World War I was fought differently from the way the Civil War was—no hand to hand combat, no direct engagement, no glory to be won by personal valor, only impersonal death by shells fired by an enemy one rarely saw.

The Armistice that ended the war was signed on November 11, 1918. Over nine million people were killed during the Great War, and over twenty-three million were wounded. As a result of the Armistice, Germany was required to pay millions of dollars of war reparations and accept blame for the war. This led to a surge in German nationalism, or intense pride and devotion to the country, and to a rise in anti-Semitism. This atmosphere eventually gave way to fascism, Nazism, and Adolph Hitler.

## Critical Overview

According to Adrienne Munich and Melissa Bradshaw in *Amy Lowell, American Modern*, Lowell's third book of poetry, *Men, Women, and Ghosts* almost sold out before it was published. They quote an October 1916 review in the *Boston Evening Transcript* by William Stanley Braithwaite praising Lowell for "bringing a new force into the world." "Patterns" contributed to that new force and to this volume that established Lowell as a popular poet. One of her early biographers, poet Horace Gregory, points out in *Amy Lowell: Portrait of the Poet in her Time* that Lowell's fame grew from 1916 forward. Of the many poets known during World War I, her name is the first.

However, Gregory concludes that Lowell was "an archetypical American clubwoman"—wealthy, idle, indulgent—and not a poet, a statement that Paul Lauter quotes in his essay "Amy Lowell and Cultural Borders." Lauter gives a glancing review of Lowell's critical reception, then focuses on the fact that "she had been and continues to be marginalized, even in the midst of a feminist revival" of English and American women's literature that took hold in the 1970s.

"Patterns" is one of the notable exceptions to the general disappearance of Lowell's work from circulation. In fact, as Munich and Bradshaw write, Lowell "is known for skillful individual poems, such as 'Patterns' (1915), and, increasingly, her powerful love lyrics, but those works by no means define her poetic talent." Still, "Patterns" has enjoyed past and recent critical attention. "Patterns" was analyzed by critic Rafeeq O. McGiveron's in "Lowell's Patterns," because its poetic techniques are "especially worthy of attention."



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## **Introduction**

### **Purpose of the Book**

The purpose of Novels for Students (NfS) is to provide readers with a guide to understanding, enjoying, and studying novels by giving them easy access to information about the work. Part of Gale's "For Students" Literature line, NfS is specifically designed to meet the curricular needs of high school and undergraduate college students and their teachers, as well as the interests of general readers and researchers considering specific novels. While each volume contains entries on "classic" novels frequently



studied in classrooms, there are also entries containing hard-to-find information on contemporary novels, including works by multicultural, international, and women novelists.

The information covered in each entry includes an introduction to the novel and the novel's author; a plot summary, to help readers unravel and understand the events in a novel; descriptions of important characters, including explanation of a given character's role in the novel as well as discussion about that character's relationship to other characters in the novel; analysis of important themes in the novel; and an explanation of important literary techniques and movements as they are demonstrated in the novel.

In addition to this material, which helps the readers analyze the novel itself, students are also provided with important information on the literary and historical background informing each work. This includes a historical context essay, a box comparing the time or place the novel was written to modern Western culture, a critical overview essay, and excerpts from critical essays on the novel. A unique feature of NfS is a specially commissioned critical essay on each novel, targeted toward the student reader.

To further aid the student in studying and enjoying each novel, information on media adaptations is provided, as well as reading suggestions for works of fiction and nonfiction on similar themes and topics. Classroom aids include ideas for research papers and lists of critical sources that provide additional material on the novel.

### Selection Criteria

The titles for each volume of NfS were selected by surveying numerous sources on teaching literature and analyzing course curricula for various school districts. Some of the sources surveyed included: literature anthologies; Reading Lists for College-Bound Students: The Books Most Recommended by America's Top Colleges; textbooks on teaching the novel; a College Board survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; a National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; the NCTE's Teaching Literature in High School: The Novel; and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) list of best books for young adults of the past twenty-five years. Input was also solicited from our advisory board, as well as educators from various areas. From these discussions, it was determined that each volume should have a mix of "classic" novels (those works commonly taught in literature classes) and contemporary novels for which information is often hard to find. Because of the interest in expanding the canon of literature, an emphasis was also placed on including works by international, multicultural, and women authors. Our advisory board members—educational professionals—helped pare down the list for each volume. If a work was not selected for the present volume, it was often noted as a possibility for a future volume. As always, the editor welcomes suggestions for titles to be included in future volumes.

### How Each Entry Is Organized





Each entry, or chapter, in NfS focuses on one novel. Each entry heading lists the full name of the novel, the author's name, and the date of the novel's publication. The following elements are contained in each entry:

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- **Author Biography:** this section includes basic facts about the author's life, and focuses on events and times in the author's life that inspired the novel in question.
- **Plot Summary:** a factual description of the major events in the novel. Lengthy summaries are broken down with subheads.
- **Characters:** an alphabetical listing of major characters in the novel. Each character name is followed by a brief to an extensive description of the character's role in the novel, as well as discussion of the character's actions, relationships, and possible motivation. Characters are listed alphabetically by last name. If a character is unnamed—for instance, the narrator in *Invisible Man*—the character is listed as "The Narrator" and alphabetized as "Narrator." If a character's first name is the only one given, the name will appear alphabetically by that name. • Variant names are also included for each character. Thus, the full name "Jean Louise Finch" would head the listing for the narrator of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, but listed in a separate cross-reference would be the nickname "Scout Finch."
- **Themes:** a thorough overview of how the major topics, themes, and issues are addressed within the novel. Each theme discussed appears in a separate subhead, and is easily accessed through the boldface entries in the Subject/Theme Index.
- **Style:** this section addresses important style elements of the novel, such as setting, point of view, and narration; important literary devices used, such as imagery, foreshadowing, symbolism; and, if applicable, genres to which the work might have belonged, such as Gothicism or Romanticism. Literary terms are explained within the entry, but can also be found in the Glossary.
- **Historical Context:** This section outlines the social, political, and cultural climate in which the author lived and the novel was created. This section may include descriptions of related historical events, pertinent aspects of daily life in the culture, and the artistic and literary sensibilities of the time in which the work was written. If the novel is a historical work, information regarding the time in which the novel is set is also included. Each section is broken down with helpful subheads.
- **Critical Overview:** this section provides background on the critical reputation of the novel, including bannings or any other public controversies surrounding the work. For older works, this section includes a history of how the novel was first received and how perceptions of it may have changed over the years; for more recent novels, direct quotes from early reviews may also be included.
- **Criticism:** an essay commissioned by NfS which specifically deals with the novel and is written specifically for the student audience, as well as excerpts from previously published criticism on the work (if available).



- Sources: an alphabetical list of critical material quoted in the entry, with full bibliographical information.
- Further Reading: an alphabetical list of other critical sources which may prove useful for the student. Includes full bibliographical information and a brief annotation.

In addition, each entry contains the following highlighted sections, set apart from the main text as sidebars:

- Media Adaptations: a list of important film and television adaptations of the novel, including source information. The list also includes stage adaptations, audio recordings, musical adaptations, etc.
- Topics for Further Study: a list of potential study questions or research topics dealing with the novel. This section includes questions related to other disciplines the student may be studying, such as American history, world history, science, math, government, business, geography, economics, psychology, etc.
- Compare and Contrast Box: an “at-a-glance” comparison of the cultural and historical differences between the author’s time and culture and late twentieth century/early twenty-first century Western culture. This box includes pertinent parallels between the major scientific, political, and cultural movements of the time or place the novel was written, the time or place the novel was set (if a historical work), and modern Western culture. Works written after 1990 may not have this box.
- What Do I Read Next?: a list of works that might complement the featured novel or serve as a contrast to it. This includes works by the same author and others, works of fiction and nonfiction, and works from various genres, cultures, and eras.

### Other Features

NfS includes “The Informed Dialogue: Interacting with Literature,” a foreword by Anne Devereaux Jordan, Senior Editor for Teaching and Learning Literature (TALL), and a founder of the Children’s Literature Association. This essay provides an enlightening look at how readers interact with literature and how Novels for Students can help teachers show students how to enrich their own reading experiences.

A Cumulative Author/Title Index lists the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series.

A Cumulative Nationality/Ethnicity Index breaks down the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series by nationality and ethnicity.

A Subject/Theme Index, specific to each volume, provides easy reference for users who may be studying a particular subject or theme rather than a single work. Significant subjects from events to broad themes are included, and the entries pointing to the specific theme discussions in each entry are indicated in boldface.



Each entry has several illustrations, including photos of the author, stills from film adaptations (if available), maps, and/or photos of key historical events.

### Citing Novels for Students

When writing papers, students who quote directly from any volume of Novels for Students may use the following general forms. These examples are based on MLA style; teachers may request that students adhere to a different style, so the following examples may be adapted as needed. When citing text from NfS that is not attributed to a particular author (i.e., the Themes, Style, Historical Context sections, etc.), the following format should be used in the bibliography section:

“Night.” Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 234–35.

When quoting the specially commissioned essay from NfS (usually the first piece under the “Criticism” subhead), the following format should be used:

Miller, Tyrus. Critical Essay on “Winesburg, Ohio.” Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 335–39.

When quoting a journal or newspaper essay that is reprinted in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Malak, Amin. “Margaret Atwood’s “The Handmaid’s Tale and the Dystopian Tradition,” Canadian Literature No. 112 (Spring, 1987), 9–16; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 4, ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski (Detroit: Gale, 1998), pp. 133–36.

When quoting material reprinted from a book that appears in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Adams, Timothy Dow. “Richard Wright: “Wearing the Mask,” in *Telling Lies in Modern American Autobiography* (University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 69–83; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 1, ed. Diane Telgen (Detroit: Gale, 1997), pp. 59–61.

### We Welcome Your Suggestions

The editor of Novels for Students welcomes your comments and ideas. Readers who wish to suggest novels to appear in future volumes, or who have other suggestions, are cordially invited to contact the editor. You may contact the editor via email at: [ForStudentsEditors@gale.com](mailto:ForStudentsEditors@gale.com). Or write to the editor at:

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