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Using novels in the language-learning classroom

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Abstract

Using a novel with the English language learner provides a rich source of pedagogic activities. At the same time, it gives rise to its own set of difficulties—both practical

and literary. In this article, I begin by attempting to identify some features of novels which provide unusual educational and linguistic opportunities for the learner. I then examine some of the difficulties both teachers and students may experience in using novels in the classroom and provide sample materials that I have devised in an attempt to overcome these problems. These activities were produced for one particular novel. The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald, but I hope the principles underlying them would be applicable to most other novels as well.

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