



Universidad  
de Alcalá

GUÍA DOCENTE

NARRATIVA INGLESA

BRITISH FICTION

**Grado en Estudios Ingleses**  
**Universidad de Alcalá**

**Curso Académico 2021/2022**  
**Curso 3<sup>o</sup>– 1<sup>er</sup> Cuatrimestre**

## GUÍA DOCENTE

Nombre de la asignatura:	<b>Narrativa Inglesa // British Fiction</b>
Código:	<b>251019</b>
Titulación en la que se imparte:	<b>Grado en Estudios Ingleses</b>
Departamento y Área de Conocimiento:	<b>Filología Moderna Filología Inglesa</b>
Carácter:	<b>Obligatorio</b>
Créditos ECTS:	<b>8</b>
Curso:	<b>Tercero / Primer cuatrimestre</b>
Profesorado:	<b>Alberto Lázaro alberto.lazaro@uah.es</b>
Horario de Tutoría:	<b>Por determinar</b>
Idioma en el que se imparte:	<b>Inglés</b>

### 1. MODULE DESCRIPTION

This is a survey module that covers the development of British prose fiction from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present day. It will enable students to explore how novels and shorter fiction were shaped by and responded to historical and cultural contexts. Selected texts will be studied in order to show the variety of narrative styles, the predominant themes and the contribution of major authors to the tradition of British fiction. It will also require students to engage with a range of critical approaches to these texts. This module privileges the process of making autonomous meaning, encouraging students to understand that multiple interpretations of a text are possible as they develop their own informed personal responses.

#### Course summary:

Through a study of a range of texts, from classical to contemporary, students are provided with opportunities to gain an understanding of the main developments of British prose fiction, from the rise and early development of the novel to the most significant trends of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including discussions of the picaresque tradition, the sentimental novel, the Gothic story, the social novel, satiric narrative, the historical novel, genre fiction, as well as other more experimental modernist and postmodernist texts.

#### Prerequisites:

Since all activities are conducted in English, the module assumes a good working knowledge of English (Common European Framework level B2.2 or above).

## 2. AIMS

### Generic competences:

1. Think in a critical way and be able to learn a set of critical reading skills.
2. Develop skills of comprehension, argument and analysis.
3. Express ideas and arguments with clarity and economy, both in written and spoken English.
4. Use library and research skills to find and organise information.
5. Produce well-organised and well-documented essays and reports.
6. Be able to learn both independently and co-operatively.

### Subject specific competences:

#### Knowledge

1. Display a working knowledge of the novel as a literary genre.
2. Explain the significance of some of the major works of British prose fiction.
3. Identify general cultural and social developments for the periods involved.
4. Outline and characterise the main developments of British prose fiction from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the present day.
5. Describe in outline the principal literary concerns, themes, styles and symbols of the main writers examined.
6. Recognise and discuss the thematic and formal characteristics of selected novels and short stories, and relate them to general cultural and literary movements.

#### Skills

1. Analyse, interpret and discuss the full range of set texts in detail by means of oral presentations, commentaries and essays.
2. Read texts closely to explore how writers use narrative structure, time, place, characterisation and point of view to shape their prose narratives.
3. Compare and make connections across novels from a similar or a different period.
4. Develop an understanding of critical terminology and theoretical perspectives for the analysis of the texts.
5. Articulate informed and personal responses to the selected texts, providing accurate and detailed textual references to support and illustrate interpretations.
6. Place passages or works in precise contexts and consider how contextual factors influence and shape meanings.

#### Attitudes

1. Increase understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of literature.
2. Develop independent thought and response to the literary texts studied.
3. Relate literature to personal experience and to the world around us.
4. Respect and value aesthetic and content differences which may spring from socio-cultural differences among authors.

### 3. MODULE CONTENTS

Units	Hours
<b>1. The nature of fiction</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction: Why is storytelling important?</li> <li>• Some key terms: narrative, fiction, prose, story, discourse, and plot.</li> <li>• Fiction text types.</li> <li>• Discussing plot, narrative viewpoint, character development, setting and atmosphere.</li> <li>• Meaning in fiction.</li> </ul>	5 hours
<b>2. The rise of the novel</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The prehistory of the novel.</li> <li>• English Renaissance prose fiction.</li> <li>• Factors that influenced the development of the British novel.</li> <li>• What made the novel “novel”?</li> <li>• Early British fiction: John Bunyan and Aphra Behn.</li> </ul>	3 hours
<b>3. The development of the novel in the 18th century</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The father of the English novel: Daniel Defoe.</li> <li>• The satire of Jonathan Swift: <i>Gulliver’s Travels</i>.</li> <li>• Samuel Richardson and the early sentimental novel.</li> <li>• Henry Fielding and the picaresque tradition.</li> <li>• Charlotte Lennox’s <i>Female Quixote</i>.</li> <li>• The innovations of Laurence Sterne’s <i>Tristram Shandy</i>.</li> </ul>	4 hours
<b>4. Fiction in the Romantic period</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Gothic Novel: Matthew Gregory Lewis’s <i>The Monk</i>.</li> <li>• The novel of purpose: Mary Wollstonecraft and William Godwin</li> <li>• The Irish novel: Maria Edgeworth and Lady Morgan.</li> <li>• The historical romanticism of Walter Scott.</li> <li>• Studies of English domestic life and manners: Fanny Burney and Jane Austen.</li> <li>• The discussion novel of Thomas Love Peacock.</li> </ul>	3 hours

<p><b>5. The Victorian novel</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The social novel: Charles Dickens.</li> <li>• The Brontë Sisters.</li> <li>• Three High Victorian novelists: W. M. Thackeray, Anthony Trollope and George Eliot.</li> <li>• Late Victorian novelists: Samuel Butler, Thomas Hardy and Oscar Wilde.</li> <li>• Genre fiction: detectives, vampires, ghosts, children and time travellers.</li> <li>• The “new woman” fiction.</li> </ul>	<p>5 hours</p>
<p><b>6. Modernist fiction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General characteristics of the Modernist novel.</li> <li>• Early modern novelists: Joseph Conrad and Ford Madox Ford.</li> <li>• Three leading exponents: D. H. Lawrence, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf.</li> <li>• Gender politics: Dorothy Richardson and May Sinclair.</li> <li>• Modernism and social issues: E. M. Forster.</li> </ul>	<p>3 hours</p>
<p><b>7. Social and moral concerns in 20th-century fiction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The satiric spirit: Aldous Huxley, Evelyn Waugh and George Orwell.</li> <li>• Social novels: Christopher Isherwood and Graham Greene.</li> <li>• The postwar reaction against Modernism: chronicles and anti-heroes.</li> <li>• Trends towards fantasy: science fiction, the heroic fantasy and the horror story.</li> <li>• Moral issues: William Golding, Iris Murdoch and Anthony Burgess.</li> </ul>	<p>3 hours</p>
<p><b>8. Postmodernist fictions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Radical experimental fictions: Samuel Beckett and B. S. Johnson.</li> <li>• The awareness of fictionality: Doris Lessing and John Fowles.</li> <li>• Fabulation: Salman Rushdie and Angela Carter.</li> <li>• Women novelists and the postmodernist impulse: Jeanette Winterson and A. S. Byatt.</li> <li>• The “Condition of England” novel: Martin Amis and Margaret Drabble.</li> <li>• The academic novel: Malcolm Bradbury and David Lodge.</li> </ul>	<p>3 hours</p>
<p><b>9. Late developments in fiction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The historical turn: Julian Barnes and Hilary Mantel.</li> <li>• British fiction and multiculturalism: Zadie Smith.</li> <li>• National identity and the novel in Ireland and Scotland.</li> <li>• Contemporary Welsh fiction.</li> <li>• New celebrity novelists: the best-seller, the literary prize phenomenon and filmic adaptations of novels.</li> </ul>	<p>4 hours</p>

<b>10. New century fictions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terrorism and fiction: Ian McEwan.</li> <li>• The neo-Victorian novel: Sarah Waters.</li> <li>• The return of the Gothic.</li> <li>• The dystopian impulse.</li> <li>• Brexit fiction</li> <li>• Experimentalism in the contemporary novel.</li> </ul>	2 hours
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A week-by-week schedule of lecture and seminar topics, set readings, workshops and tutorials will be provided at the start of the course.

#### 4. TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

Module time is devoted to lectures, seminars, workshops and tutorials, which include group work, class discussions, critical reading, critical writing and oral presentations. Students are greatly encouraged towards independence, and project work figures large in this module, so they acquire not only academic skills, but learn how to manage time and decision making effectively. During the workshops students will be involved in writing an “Author Report” and will be asked to orally present their findings to the group.

Students are expected to read the set texts before they are discussed in the seminars. There can be no substitute for reading the original work and it is the student's response to and knowledge of those works that mainly matter.

#### Student workload: 200 hours

Class-contact hours: 45	13 lectures, 25 seminars, 4 seminars for oral presentations, 1 final test, 2 workshops.
Guided independent learning: 155	This time includes studying lectures notes, reading literary texts, seminar preparation (reading journal and tasks), researching, working with other students to co-produce a report, and preparing an oral presentation.

#### Learning activities

<b>Scheduled face-to-face instruction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lectures provide an introduction and overview of the topic under discussion.</li> <li>• Seminars explore the issues in more detail through analysis and discussion of selected works.</li> <li>• Workshops: students will have two workshop sessions in small groups over the semester. The purpose of these workshops will be to assist students to prepare the “Author Report”.           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Workshop 1 (up to ten students): Introducing the research project / Decisions on research topic</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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	<p>- Workshop 2 (up to six students): Checking the progress of the Author Report / Presentation of first results / Solving problems and making decisions; this workshop will also include training activities in oral and written presentation of research results.</p>
<p>Reading and Writing Portfolio</p>	<p>This portfolio is a compilation of academic work assembled to show evidence of the students' learning progress and to help them reflect on their academic growth over the semester. It will include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entries from a reading journal that identify and develop specific responses to guided reading of the set texts.</li> <li>• One book review.</li> </ul>
<p>Author Report</p>	<p>The Author Report consists of gathering information and reflecting about a novelist from the periods covered in this module: his life, historical and cultural background, major works, outstanding literary features, writing philosophy, etc. This author should not be someone students have read extensively for other classes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All this information should be organised into sections which define the author's main literary characteristics.</li> <li>• Once students have done research on the writer, they will prepare an oral presentation and a written report.</li> </ul>
<p>Individual tutorials</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tutorials provide a valuable opportunity for individualized teaching and learning.</li> <li>• Interested students can attend individual tutorials by appointment to explore issues they find particularly challenging or interesting, and to discuss problems with either course material or study strategy.</li> </ul>

## Materials and resources

A variety of novels and short fiction will form the basis of the literary analysis and discussions in the seminars. Among others, we shall discuss literary texts by Aphra Behn, Daniel Defoe, Laurence Sterne, Matthew Lewis, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, Emily Brontë, Virginia Woolf, E. M. Forster, William Golding, Anthony Burgess, John Fowles, Angela Carter, Julian Barnes, Zadie Smith and Sara Waters.

Copies of the short stories and extracts of novels will be provided by the teacher. In addition, the following full texts will be studied, and students will be asked to provide these for themselves: Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*.

Students will be supported through the University Virtual Learning Environment (Aula Virtual), which will be used as a supplement to the module, as a tool for self-study activities and independent revisions of module materials, as well as for class communication.

## 5. ASSESSMENT

### Assessment procedures

In accordance with the University regulations, assessment should be conducted by continuous assessment or a final examination. During the first two weeks of the semester, students may request from the Dean of the Faculty approval to be assessed by means of a final exam, specifying the reasons that justify this request. Students who do not request or are not granted this option will be assessed by means of the continuous assessment of work performed during the semester.

Final exam:

For those students who are not able to follow the continuous assessment scheme there will be one final summative two-hour written exam over the material covered during the module. This exam may include objective test questions, short answer questions and discussion questions.

Reassessment (“convocatoria extraordinaria”):

There will be a reassessment opportunity at the end of the second semester. This will also take the form of a two-hour written exam, with a similar format to the above-mentioned final examination, which will constitute 100% of the reassessment mark.

### Assessment criteria

Students will be assessed on their ability to:

- show thorough knowledge of the authors and the content of the texts studied;
- recognise and appreciate the ways in which novelists use language, structure and form to create meanings and effects, considering different approaches to texts and alternative interpretations;
- respond to literary texts critically, sensitively and in detail, using appropriate terminology and textual evidence;
- present a position, construct an argument and discuss issues, using coherent, accurate oral and written expression;
- understand the significance and influence of the social, cultural and historical contexts in which literary texts are written and received;
- participate consistently and effectively in all learning activities;
- use library and research skills.

Following the guidelines issued by the Department of Modern Philology, students are expected to have a good working knowledge of English (Common European Framework level B2.2 or above). This will be taken into account in the assessment of exams, written assignments and presentations.



Students are warned that plagiarism will not be tolerated. Plagiarism consists of using someone else's ideas without acknowledging the author. The ideas from other sources, regardless of whether they are quoted, summarized or paraphrased, must be documented adequately. It is the students' responsibility to make themselves aware of the University regulation on evaluation and plagiarism (see article 34 of *Normativa de evaluación de los aprendizajes*). The teacher will provide students with assessment cover sheets for written work, which certifies that their submitted work is entirely their own or appropriately referenced.

### Assessment instruments

The assessment of students' achieved learning outcomes will be based on the following components:

- Class participation
- Reading and Writing Portfolio
- Author Report and oral presentation
- Final test

Students are required to attend all the lectures, seminars and workshops. Attendance will be monitored and repeated absence without good reason (such as illness) may result in failure. A minimum of 80% attendance at teaching sessions will be required to achieve a pass in this module. The class participation component will be assessed in terms of the level of students' engagement in the seminars, the quality of their contributions, their preparation for class activities and their attitude. A detailed rubric for participation in class and self-assessment activities will be provided by the teacher.

Reading Journal entries and the Book Review will be assessed taking into account the following aspects: content, illustration, organisation and expression. Similarly, the Author Report will include a short oral presentation, which will be marked for content, organisation, expression and delivery. Further details about the characteristics and the marking of the Reading and Writing Portfolio and the Author Report will be provided at the start of the course.

At the semester's end there will be a test covering the content of the above-mentioned competences listed under the heading "Knowledge". This test may include objective questions (multiple choice, true/false, matching, etc.) and short answer questions (definitions, identifications, examples, relationships, etc.).

### Marking criteria

Criteria	Instruments	Weighting
A considerable level of consistent and effective class participation and completion of the self-assessment tasks.	Participation and self-assessment rubrics	20%
An ability - to respond to literary texts critically, sensitively and in detail, using appropriate terminology and textual evidence; - recognise and appreciate the ways in which novelists use language, structure and form to create meanings and effects, considering different approaches to texts and alternative interpretations;	Reading and Writing Portfolio	40%

- understand the significance and influence of the social, cultural and historical contexts in which literary texts are written and received.			
An ability to: - present a position, construct an argument and discuss issues, using coherent, accurate oral and written expression; - use library and research skills.		Author Report and oral presentation	20%
A thorough knowledge of the authors and the content of the texts studied.	T e s t	Final test	20%

## 6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

In addition to the books recommended here, a detailed bibliography of literary histories, reference books, anthologies and literary criticism on the authors discussed could also be provided.

- Acheson, James and Sarah C. E. Ross, ed. (2005) *The Contemporary British Novel since 1980*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Backscheider, Paula R., and Catherine Ingrassia, ed. (2005) *A Companion to the Eighteenth-century English Novel and Culture*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Bentley, Nick (2008) *Contemporary British Fiction*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP.
- Bradbury, Malcolm (1993) *The Modern British Novel*. London: Secker and Warburg.
- Bradford, Richard (2007) *The Novel Now: Contemporary British Fiction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Bratlinger, Patrick and William B. Thesing (2002) *A Companion to the Victorian Novel*. Malden, Mass: Blackwell Publishers.
- Childs, Peter (2005) *Contemporary Novelists: British Fiction since 1970*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cobley, Paul (2014) [2001] *Narrative*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. London: Routledge.
- Da Sousa Correa, Delia (2000) *The Nineteenth-Century Novel: Realisms*. London: Routledge.
- David, Deirdre (2001) *The Cambridge Companion to the Victorian Novel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Eaglestone, Robert (2013) *Contemporary Fiction: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford UP.
- English, James F., ed. (2006) *A Concise Companion to Contemporary British Fiction*. London: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Hawthorn, Jeremy (1984) *The Nineteenth-century British Novel*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Kelly, Gary (1989) *English Fiction of the Romantic period, 1789-1830*. London / New York: Longman.
- Johnson, Clifford R. (1977-1978) *Plots and Characters in the Fiction of Eighteenth-century English Authors*. 2 Vols. Connecticut: Archon Books.
- Lázaro, Alberto (2005) *El Modernismo en la novela inglesa*. Madrid: Editorial Síntesis.
- Lodge, David, ed. (1971) *The Novelist at the Crossroads and other Essays on Fiction and Criticism*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- McKeon, Michael (2002) [1987]. *The Origins of the English Novel 1600-1740*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.

- Richetti, John (1996) *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth-century Novel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Probyn, Clive T. (1987) *English Fiction of the Eighteenth Century 1700-1789*. London: Longman.
- Rennison, Nick (2005) *Contemporary British Novelists*. London/New York: Routledge.
- Tew, Philip (2004) *The Contemporary British Novel*. London: Continuum.
- Walder, Dennis (2001) *The Nineteenth-Century Novel: Identities*. London: Routledge.

Most of these books can be found in our library catalogue. See the following link:  
[https://bibliobuscador.uah.es/prim-explore/search?query=lsr02,contains,Narrativa%20Inglesa%22,AND&query=lsr08,contains,ESTUDIOS%20INGLESES,AND&query=any,contains,251019,AND&tab=tab1&search\\_scope=TAB1\\_SCOPE1&sortby=author&vid=34UAH\\_VU1&lang=es\\_ES&mode=advanced&offset=0](https://bibliobuscador.uah.es/prim-explore/search?query=lsr02,contains,Narrativa%20Inglesa%22,AND&query=lsr08,contains,ESTUDIOS%20INGLESES,AND&query=any,contains,251019,AND&tab=tab1&search_scope=TAB1_SCOPE1&sortby=author&vid=34UAH_VU1&lang=es_ES&mode=advanced&offset=0)

## 7. ADDITIONAL PROVISION

The University of Alcalá guarantees that if, due to health requirements, competent authorities prevent face-to-face teaching activities, totally or partially, this module descriptor's objectives will be met through an online teaching and assessment methodology. The UAH commits to return to face-to-face teaching as soon as said impediments cease.