The study of literature cannot bring about moral excellence nor prevent moral degeneracy, yet without literature I think that we would find it more difficult to live well and act virtuously. —Wayne C. Booth, The Company We Keep

On late afternoons in the sixth or seventh period, when I am just about ready to collapse, the only thing that can keep me going is a story. There is just nothing quite like a good story. —EFL teacher in an urban high school

INTRODUCTION

The return of literature as a rich and worthwhile source for language study has been observed and appreciated over the last 20 years by the ESL/EFL community (Brumfit & Carter, 1986; Duff & Maley, 1990; Kramsch, 1993; Lazar, 1993; Olson, Torrance, & Hildyards, 1985) as well as by the ELT Journal, which in July 1990 devoted an entire issue to the teaching of literature. In the introduction to that particular issue, Whitney (1990) writes:

It has never occurred to me that learning and teaching literature or even learning and teaching about literature (in any language) should not be a source of enjoyment, or that they should not in some vaguely educational sense, be anything other than beneficial. (p. 171)

I am one of those teachers who, in spite of structuralist admonitions, managed throughout the years to insert literary islands into all my courses, including English for specific purposes (ESP) courses for doctors from Hungary, flight attendants from Japan, and nuclear engineers from China. My students have invariably found both profit and pleasure on such forages and, to my knowledge, have never filed a complaint about lack of language input as a result of literary excursions.

I enjoy teaching every kind of literary genre but find particular pleasure in working with short stories. Storytelling, as Krashen (1981) notes, has long been a compelling human activity. The genre offers endless exploration in a cultural and linguistic minidiscourse that offers entry into a broad universe of shared discourse.

I call my approach to teaching literature the parallel life approach. It is a process through which the understanding of a story brings illumination and self-awareness. It works through a constant dialogue between reader and text, pulling the voice of the individual from a social context. As readers move from intensive to extensive
readings on the premise that every creative writer needs a creative reader, their discussions easily float from text to life and either strengthen or challenge their belief systems.

**CONTEXT**

In this chapter, I describe how I have used the short story in an advanced ESL reading class at the Center for English as a Second Language (CESL) at the University of Arizona in the United States. The class was the typical CESL mix of 18 students heralding from countries as diverse as Mexico, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and Germany. Although the class was labeled *advanced,* it was, as these groups generally are, very multileveled. Some students were excellent speakers but could not write a coherent sentence, whereas others, with a high degree of grammatical and spelling proficiency, were completely tongue-tied. In between these extremes, there were many other variations.

Besides being multileveled, the class was, of course, multilingual and multicultural. It was an interesting and fortuitous mix, and it is because of such heterogeneity that all of my activities have become open ended. There can be no slots to fill, no display questions to be answered, and no worksheets to be completed. Everything in such classes has to be structured so that each student can learn and grow at his or her own level and pace.

Although I locate description of the lesson in this chapter within a particular context, I have taught all levels of EFL/ESL in multiple settings, from large, urban high schools in a country where English was a foreign language to ESL preacademic centers and adult education environments. I have also worked as a teacher educator in six countries. I have used literary islands in all of these settings. There is always a poem, a novel, a play, or a story that sheds light on the world and opens windows to genuine communication. For the group of Hungarian doctors, it was William Carlos Williams's poignant story "The Use of Force" that loosened tongues and stimulated pens. A group of lawyers found much to say after reading the speech of Atticus in Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird.* A group of travel agents were extremely intrigued by Macon's advice to travelers in Anne Tyler's novel *The Accidental Tourist,* whereas a class of business students, looking at the problem of time management, thoroughly enjoyed the discussion and writing surrounding the poem "Leisure" by W. H. Davies. The largely Mexican American group of elementary teachers in my culture class today find much to identify with in Victor Villaseñor's novel *Macho!* as they struggle to find their place in the tension between assimilation and isolation.

**DESCRIPTION**

The particular story that I have chosen for demonstration here is Joyce's (1914/1967) "Eveline" (see the Appendix for the full text of the story). It is a short story that is frequently used by ESL practitioners. It serves the purpose of language learning well because it is intense; universal in message and meaning; and, best of all, truly a very short story, taking up about four pages. Typically, teaching such a story would take three to five 2-hour lessons. For the sake of convenience and because of space restrictions, I have here projected all the material into three lessons, but many of the
exercises can well take considerably more time, and flexibility is the essence of the procedure.

The central theme of this story is decision making. The plot involves a young Irish woman who, at the opening of the story, has ostensibly made the decision to leave her family and the responsibilities tied to family life to accompany her sailor boyfriend to a new life in Buenos Aires. The dilemma comes with her misgivings about the decision and her subsequent prevarications.

Teaching the story has allowed me to integrate the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), produce a lot of interesting language activity, stimulate reflection, bring out different opinions, and energize absorbing thought processes.

The following section describes three 2-hour lessons.

Lesson 1, Part 1
Starting With a Content Schema
The first few paragraphs of the story are the port of entry and should be explored slowly and intensively, moving from the life of the students to the life of the text and back to the life of the students. I take my time in investigating those opening paragraphs. Doing such discovery carefully makes the rest of the story much more interesting and accessible for my students. Thus, I dedicate the first two lessons to rigorous exploration of the first four paragraphs.

My immediate task is to enable the students to comfortably enter the literary miniworld that we are about to discover. I do this by creating an appropriate schema, one of the “building blocks of cognition” (Rumelhart, 1980, p. 34) that help us to interpret and arrange new knowledge.

Using Visualization
I begin the story with a visualization to help students enter the first image presented in the story. Students are asked to relax and close their eyes, but I admonish them to stay alert and not fall asleep. Here is what I say:

Imagine a window. Decide how large it is and how it is decorated. Are there curtains? What kind? I want you to see this window very clearly in your mind. Are there flowers in the window? What kind of a house is this window a part of? Is the window open or closed? Is the glass of the window clean or dirty? Do you see anything else? (Pause.) Now I want you to imagine a person who comes and sits at the window. (Pause.) Please see this person very clearly. Is it a man or a woman? How old is your person? How is your person dressed? What is he or she doing at the window? (Pause.) Please nod when this picture is like a movie in your mind and you see it very clearly.

Once I have received nods from everyone, students open their eyes and, in pairs, describe to their partners what they have imagined. When I see that the pair conversation is completed, pairs combine with pairs, and each classmate tells the foursome about his or her partner's vision. The partner corrects when necessary. We follow this with a whole-class, teacher-fronted discussion on how and why windows are often used as symbols. We bring out expressions such as a window of time, a window of opportunity, a window of hope, and the eyes are windows of the soul.
**Building a Language Schema**

We are now ready to move on to the next stage. In this stage, I want to build a language schema for the first paragraph of the story. The first paragraph of most short stories is a significant one because it is here that mood, setting, character, and theme can be established. Joyce (1914/1967) does so masterfully in what has to be one of the shortest of first paragraphs, and I do not want my students to miss the design. Here is the first paragraph of Joyce's “Eveline”:

> She sat at the window watching the evening invade the avenue. Her head was leaned against the window curtains and in her nostrils was the odour of dusty cretonne. She was tired. (p. 25)

Before we look at the paragraph, I dictate its last sentence: “She was tired.” I then ask the students to write a paragraph that ends with this sentence. After the students write their paragraphs, they sit in pairs and read them to each other. We post the paragraphs around the walls of the classroom. Students walk about reading the paragraphs and writing comments. The only instruction I give is that anything written, including suggestions for improvement, should be phrased positively. Here the first part of this lesson generally ends, and students go out for a break.

**Lesson 1, Part 2**

**Continuing Content and Language Schemata**

When students return, we generally choose one or two of the paragraphs that they have produced to be read out loud. The following is a typical example:

> My mother had cleaned house all day. She to wash the windows, bake cake, made me favrite soup, and mend shirt. Now she resting and listen to me read homework in English. It hard to listen because she so tired.

We follow the readings with a discussion of what makes people tired. The suggestions always begin with “hard work,” and it takes a bit of time to get to things such as exercise, boredom, illness, sadness, starvation, and depression. Once these have come up, students are usually willing to provide plenty of examples.

I now present the students with the word *evening* and ask them to produce a verb that might belong together with this noun. They generally produce some of the following combinations:

- The evening came.
- The evening came softly.
- The evening ended.
- The evening went slowly.
- The evening was fun.
- The evening was boring.
- The evening never ended.
- The evening crept.
We then talk about the word *invade* and its military implications. Students produce sentences such as

- The soldiers invaded my country.
- McDonald’s has invaded the world.

Only then do we read Joyce’s first paragraph. I read it three times. The first time students just listen. During the second reading, they follow along in the text, their task being to note how the word *evening* is used. During the third reading, they are to notice how strangely the word *leaned* has been posited.

We follow this with a discussion of the exhaustion and passivity that Joyce has created. Eveline does not simply lean her head. It is as if even this action of pure fatigue must be done for her; thus, “her head” is “leaned.” She is at a window, which may imply hope, but what comes to her is a dusty smell that adds to the sense of exhaustion. She is so passive here that even the evening, which my students have seen as coming softly, “invade[s] the avenue.” Does Eveline feel the evening as an invasion because she must do something this evening that she would rather not do?

**Working With Content**

The next paragraph is full of information. I again read it three times. The first time students again only listen. The second time, I ask them to look for all the information that we are given. The third time, they are asked to look for a verb formation that is seen many times over.

In the discussion that follows, we learn that Eveline’s neighborhood has changed because so many people have gone away to other countries. We also learn that Eveline’s mother has died and that her father was the bully of the neighborhood. It was he who, during his daughter’s childhood, was the angry ogre that chased the neighborhood kids with his blackthorn stick. We also learn that Eveline is about to leave her home.

The discussion that follows deals with all the problems presented here: how it must have felt to have a father that all your playmates feared; how difficult it must be to see everyone you know move away and the scene that you have known change; how terrible it must be for a daughter to lose her mother.

The language point in the paragraph also supplies interest. The verb formation that I looked for was *used to*, which Joyce employs five times in this paragraph:

- “there used to be a field there in which they used to play”
- “The children of the avenue used to play together in that field”
- “Her father used often to hunt them in out of the field with his blackthorn stick”
- “little Keogh used to keep nix”

It does not take my students long to see that this form demonstrates actions that happened repeatedly in the past, and they are able to produce sentences about their own lives using this form.

In the third paragraph, we are introduced to three objects that are among those Eveline has dusted weekly always wondering, “where on earth all the dust came from.” The objects—the picture of a priest, the print of a self-sacrificing saint, and a broken harmonica—are all thematically related to religion.
Before we read the paragraph, I ask the students, who are all away from their permanent homes, to recall a significant object from their own homes, visualize the object, and write a paragraph describing it. Later, in pairs, they talk about their remembered objects. As we read, we compare their object with the three objects Eveline is dusting. The religious nature of Eveline's objects brings us to a discussion of the setting of the story. Here, with elicitation and occasional help from students, we weave the cultural and religious background of Ireland. I tell them a bit about the life of Joyce and the love/hate relationship he had with his homeland. We talk about the pull Eveline's religion must have had on her decision.

Moving From Intensive to Extensive Reading

Our first lesson ends. We have been doing some very intensive reading, and it is time that they read extensively on their own. Their assignment is to read the following five paragraphs before our next lesson. I divide the class into three groups, and each group is assigned a different question to be answered in writing. I tell them that the answers are not given directly in the story but that they will have to infer their answers from what is written there. There are usually many questions about the idea of reading between the lines of the story. One of the students pointed out that people tend to do this even when they meet real people. We learn a few facts about a new person, and we make a great many inferences.

The questions for homework are as follows:

- Who is Frank? What kind of a person is he? Why do you think that Eveline has fallen in love with him? Why do you think that she has not talked to him about how confused she is when she thinks about leaving home? Does anything in the relationship between Frank and Eveline remind you of anything in your own life or of anything else you have read about? (to be answered by the first group)

- What kind of a man is Eveline's father? Is he justified in his feelings about Frank? What kinds of memories does Eveline have of him? Why are these memories important to her? Does anything in Eveline's relationship with her father remind you of anything in your own life or anything else that you have read or heard about? (to be answered by the second group)

- What do we learn about Eveline's mother? What kind of relationship do you think that she had with her daughter? How is Eveline both pushed toward her mother and pulled away from her mother? Does anything in Eveline's experience remind you of anything in your own life? (to be answered by the third group)

Lesson 2, Part 1

Beginning With a Jigsaw Activity

We begin this lesson with a jigsaw activity. Students gather in groups with those who have answered the same questions. I tell them that in the next configuration, each student will become a teacher. It is, therefore, their responsibility to make sure that everyone in the group knows and understands the material that each has read. Students then summarize the content of their reading, talk about their answers, and
compare reactions. These answers and reactions are often extremely varied. The groups serve the added purpose of helping those students who have not done their assignment.

Students then form groups of three. In each group there is a representative of each question. Each representative brings his or her own ideas, as well as the ideas that he or she has heard in the previous group, to this new configuration. All students then reread the homework paragraphs to find one sentence that impressed them, that they thought was interesting or important, or that reminded them of something. Volunteers read their sentences out loud and explain their choices.

**Incorporating a Walkabout**

We continue the lesson with a walkabout. In this exercise, I have posted a number of statements around the walls of the room. In pairs, students walk about the room, reading and talking about the statements. When they have finished the entire circle of statements with one partner, they switch partners and do the circle again. Possible walkabout statements include the following:

- Eveline's father knows what is good for his daughter.
- Eveline promised her mother to take care of the family. She has no right to leave.
- Eveline can trust Frank.
- Eveline's father is a very prejudiced man.

When the students finish the walkabout, they take down any statement from the wall that they found particularly interesting. These statements serve as a trigger for the ensuing class discussion.

**Sharing Opinions**

This is the moment that lends itself to the introduction of Maslow's (1987) concept of the ladder of human needs—survival, safety, society, status, and self-fulfillment. The concept draws out many interesting questions and reactions. I ask the students to think about how many of these needs are met in Eveline's life. We note that Eveline's fears make her appreciative of bare survival needs: “In her home anyway she had shelter and food; she had those whom she had known all her life about her.” The discussion ends this lesson and spills over to the next period.

**Lesson 2, Part 2**

**Making Decisions**

Once the discussion of the previous lesson has reached a natural conclusion, we move on to the story's central theme: making decisions. This is an example of one way in which my approach calls for an intermingling of life with literature. The students are given ample opportunities to hear the opinions of others, and many do develop the ability to understand different perspectives.

In pairs, students develop a list of important decisions most people have to make during their lives. With class contributions, we compile the following on the board:

- which friends to choose
- what school to attend
• what career to choose
• how to choose a partner
• where to live
• what to buy
• whether or not to have children
• how many children to have
• how to handle money

Students share a good decision that they have made in their own lives and, if they can, a bad decision. I illustrate by choosing from my own life, pointing out that the decisions they choose to tell about should be nontrivial but not so personal that sharing would be too difficult.

A discussion on why decisions are so difficult to make ensues, and students typically express some of the following ideas:

• You never really know what the end result of a decision is going to be.
• You might hurt other people through your decision.
• The decision might change your life for the worse.
• You have to live with your decisions. (Here a student noted that she had spent many years of her life blaming her parents for having made bad decisions concerning her life, until at a certain age, she was forced to make her own decisions and noted that she, too, was quite capable of making the wrong choices.)
• Whenever you choose one thing, you give up other things. (We learn the idiom to have your cake and eat it, too.)

Eveline, in the story, has made a decision to go away with Frank, but she is not at all sure about the wisdom of her decision. I ask students to advise her. Why should she go? What benefits and advantages are there to going/staying, and what are the disadvantages of each?

Students work in groups on the decision-making process, and as we listen to each group, we find that Eveline has very little to keep her at home. Her job offers no satisfaction, and her working life is full of endless petty humiliation. Her family life is full of thankless drudgery, and she seems to have no friends. She works very hard at pulling out the few happy memories that she has of her father and holds on to these as if they were precious gems not to be lost.

Frank, on the other hand, has been kind and generous. He has taken her to the theater, where, for the first time, she sat in an expensive seat and enjoyed the show. He fascinates her with his stories and offers her hope of a better life in Buenos Aires. And yet, she hesitates before the unknown. She knows what she has at home in Ireland. She understands the cultural code. She speaks the language and knows the customs; perhaps her father is right about “these sailor chaps.” Who knows what awaits her in that strange country? Perhaps her prince will desert her. Then how will she manage in completely strange surroundings? Then, of course, there is the deathbed promise that she made to her mother, and she has always been a dutiful
daughter. We spend some time talking about how and why deathbed promises are so much more serious than other promises.

**Reading Closely**
We take a closer look at the fourth paragraph, which gives us a glimpse of Eveline’s situation at work. Before rereading the paragraph, we talk about things people want from their daily work and, again, create a class list that looks something like the following:

- money
- vacations
- nice people to work with
- a chance for advancement
- a chance to be creative
- a sense of security
- good retirement plans
- benefits
- a sense of belonging

We read the paragraph and reach the conclusion that Eveline has very few, if any, of those desires.

**Extending Through Writing**
We finish the lesson with a writing assignment for the next day. Students are to imagine that Eveline has left for Buenos Aires with Frank and that, 5 years later, she writes a letter to her father. Students are to compose that letter.

**Lesson 3, Part 1**
**Using the Letter**
We begin by having students read their letters to their partners. Later, students nominate letters that should be read out loud to the whole class. All the letters are then posted on the walls, and students circulate writing comments and suggestions about the content of the letters. Again, the instructions are that all comments and suggestions should be put in positive terms. I demonstrate suggestions about what might be written, for example, “I really liked what you wrote about Buenos Aires, but are you sure that you want things to have turned out so happily? Is this realistic?”

**Role-Playing**
We move from the letter to a role-play exercise. Half of my class is assigned the role of the father, while the other half is assigned the role of Frank. All who have been assigned the role of the father sit together in a group, as do all those who have been assigned the role of Frank. I explain that we will soon have conversations between Eveline’s father and her boyfriend. Each father will face a boyfriend. Frank will want to convince the father that his daughter should leave with him, while the father will adamantly refuse and think of all the reasons why she should not go.
In the Father and Frank groups, the students are asked to think of all possible arguments their character might use. I move between the two groups, giving assistance as needed. When I feel that each group has accumulated enough ideas, Father/Frank pairs are created, and they role-play the two characters in what usually turns into a lively conversation.

I circulate, listening in here and there, and take note of any pairs who would not mind showing off a bit. When the activity seems to run itself dry, I stop it and invite one pair to perform before the entire group. As that group performs, any student who wants to come up front to replace an actor simply has to move up to either Father or Frank, touch the actor on the shoulder, take his or her place, and continue the conversation.

**Considering Cultural Concerns**

At this point in the lesson, we consider some of the cultural constraints that influence Eveline's decision making as well as our own. On the board I draw a line, which becomes our continuum. At one end of the line, I write the word individual. At the other end I write the words family and society. I ask students to consider any important decision they have made and to think about what influenced them most—thoughts about themselves as individuals or as members of a family and a society. We spend some time talking about the meaning of the word society (e.g., school, religious institutions, national affiliations, political and social groupings). Students then move to the board and write their name anywhere on the continuum where they feel it belongs.

Once all the names are placed, students explain their placements. They can do this in pairs, in small groups, or with the whole class depending on the mood of the class and time constraints. We contemplate Eveline's placement on the continuum. Students choose different spots and defend their reasoning.

**Lesson 3, Part 2**

We return to a group writing project. We now assume that Eveline has run away with Frank and that the police have posted a missing person announcement in the local press.

**Creating a Missing Person Announcement**

We spend some time talking about how such announcements are phrased. This brings us to a review of physical features, clothing, and “last seen” place possibilities. I share one or two missing person announcements from the local newspaper. (Teachers who do not have access to an English newspaper could easily create such an announcement.) In their groups, students talk about their ideas, agree on the phrasing of the announcement, and have a group recorder write it up.

The interesting aspect of this exercise is that Eveline is never described in the story. Thus, it is up to the students to decide just exactly how she should look. This usually brings about a great deal of discussion and compromise.

Here is a typical missing person announcement, produced by a group of students:
**Missing**

Eveline Hill, 21 years old. She slender and small (5’2”). Has blue eyes and light brown hair and none distinguishing marks. She last see in O’Hara department store. She work as salesclerk. Last see she on blue skirt, and white blouse.

Anyone who knows young woman to contact Mr. James Hill, father.

**Reading and Analyzing the Last Paragraphs**

The last section of the story is filled with signs of distress. Joyce creates the tone of anguish through metaphor, symbol, and literal meaning. Currents of guilt and doubt are unleashed. The black boat becomes a threatening monstrosity. Eveline’s desire for happiness becomes a need to do her duty. She cannot possibly leave the “dust” of her present life to enjoy the metaphorical good air of “Buenos Ayres.” The bell of duty clangs “upon her heart.” The man who, in the previous paragraph, was going to “save her” is now going to “drown her . . . all the seas of the world tumbled about her heart.” She is bewildered and trapped behind an iron railing.

I read the last section three times. The first time, students simply listen. The second and third time, I ask them to underline all the signs of confusion and unhappiness. We follow this with a group discussion that evolves into a full class discussion about why she did not go. Many students see her as paralyzed by cultural restrictions as well as psychic wear and tear. Others think that she did make a decision and the right one at that.

**Looking at the Story as a Whole**

At this point, I provide a few activities in which we look at the story as a whole. The first activity relates to the language of the story. In a chart, I present students with examples of the varieties of language used by Joyce (see Figure 1). Can they see the difference in language use as displayed in the two columns? They usually note that the left side has much simpler language because we are inside Eveline’s head and listen in on her thoughts. The rich metaphorical language on the right belongs to the implied author and narrator.

In another exercise, I give students a card on which they can write anything they feel about the story. It can be an interpretation describing how they feel about plot or character. It can also be a question. Once students have completed their cards, they stand and mingle. Each student approaches a partner to read and explain his or her card. Then cards are exchanged, and students find a new partner to whom they talk about their own card as well as the new card that they received in the exchange. The card switching continues as long as there is high interest.

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<td>There used to be a field there.</td>
<td>A bell clanged upon her heart.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tizzie Dunn was dead.</td>
<td>All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart.</td>
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<tr>
<td>They used to play.</td>
<td>passive, like a helpless animal . . .</td>
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**Figure 1.** Language Analysis: Can You See Any Difference?
At this point, students in some classes were eager to reread the entire story. They partner-read, taking one paragraph each and giving each paragraph a name (e.g., “Dreaming About a Better Life,” “Woman at the Window,” “Dust in Her Nostrils”).

As an additional exercise, I give students another chart to rate Eveline, her father, and Frank on a 1–5 scale (5 being the best rating) for the qualities listed (see Figure 2). Once they have completed their rating, they stand up and mingle. They talk with several partners about how and why they rated their characters as they did. I have found this to be an excellent review of the entire story.

Other exercises that work well for general review of the story are Who Would Buy What? and What Would They Say?

In Who Would Buy What? I list a set of objects, for example, a bottle of rum, a Bible, a book of stories, a white dress, and a suitcase. Students are to decide which character in the story might want to buy each object and explain why they think that such an object would be needed by or suited to the character.

In What Would They Say? I list several professionals, for example, a doctor, a teacher, a psychiatrist, and a policeman. Students are to decide what these people might, in today’s context, say about each character in the story.

 DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

Four Skills Incorporated

One important distinguishing feature of the approach is that it incorporates work on all four skills, usually moving from listening and speaking to reading and eventually writing. It is clear that language learning always involves a tremendous amount of repetition. I have tried to avoid the monotony that comes with such repetition by varying some small element in the procedure. For example, a new task is created during the listening to or reading of the same passage so that students listen for something completely different each time the passage is read (as was done with the second paragraph in the story). Another variation is identifying a different audience (group, pair, or individual) for each speaking task.

Structure Used in Meaning-Related Tasks

I have also attempted to use language structure in meaning-related tasks, as when tying the structure of used to with the theme of leave-taking and change in the story. I have found that students are willing to share their thoughts and expand their

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<th>Eveline</th>
<th>Father</th>
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<td>generosity</td>
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Figure 2. Chart for Rating
language when they are asked to speak of a personal idea first in general terms. This is perhaps best seen where the class first talks about decisions generally made by people throughout a lifetime, before moving into a decision in their own lives.

The parallel life approach is greatly enhanced by the technique of visualization, which was used here at the opening of the story but which can enhance student perception at any point in a literary work. Collie and Slater (1987) have noted that the printed page is often a cold and distancing medium. Visualization can help students to convert print into living color.

The notion of open-endedness, which allows students to use the full potential of their present language skill, is crucial to the parallel life approach. There are no right answers; instead there is always a multiplicity of possibilities, which is part of my teaching tactics. Such an assortment of possibilities is, of course, also found in the conundrum of life, and it is here that literature, in its wealth of emotional content and linguistic intricacy, offers expressive potential to the language learner as well as heightened interest for the teacher.

**PRACTICAL IDEAS**

The techniques and activities used in this chapter can be readily applied to any text (including nonliterary texts). The following four ideas are those that I have found to be extremely flexible and useful.

**Use Jigsaw Activities to Practice All Four Skills**

Jigsaw activities allow for both extensive and intensive reading and give students the chance to function as both teachers and learners. As used in Lesson 2, Part 1, a jigsaw activity includes the following steps:

1. Students individually read and work on specific sections of a shared text.
2. In peer groups, students interact with those who have read the same material.
3. In expert groups, students share material with those who have worked on different sections.
4. With the whole class, students discuss the entire shared text.

**Use Walkabout Activities to Maximize Discussion Opportunities**

In the walkabout, students discuss issues from the text with one or several partners as they move about reading short texts posted on the walls of the classroom. The technique was demonstrated in the concluding section of Lesson 2, Part 1, for a review of the story. The activity can also be used very effectively as a prereading strategy.

**Use Card Exchange as Another Technique for Exchanging Ideas**

As illustrated in Lesson 3, Part 2, the ideas can also be created by the students, as well as reacted to, thus adding greater flexibility and possibility for expression.
Use the Continuum With Cultural Focus Activities

This type of activity, illustrated in Lesson, 3 Part 1 (under the section Cultural Concerns), is a strategy that works well for any text that calls for cultural examination. By placing themselves on a continuum that moves from individual to family to society, students are encouraged to see themselves within a cultural framework and to analyze literary characters and situations within such a framework. It is a technique that I have applied to historical, sociological, and psychology-based readings as well as to literature.

CONCLUSION

The short story is a rich source for language development that goes far beyond the written page. Students talk and write a great deal about themselves as they vicariously inhabit literary lives. A good story offers elasticity for evocative stretching that moves students toward interesting language use.

But teaching the short story is an exciting and fruitful process for other reasons, too. In my work with other teachers, I have noted that most of us entered the profession because we were inspired by a role model—a significant teacher in our own lives. When teachers recall these significant educators, they will often not recall the lessons or the classroom organization of their mentors but refer to how these teachers made them feel. Emotion is a powerful motivator, and literature helps teachers spur such motivation. Thus good literature, while promoting language learning, also inspires emotion, provides models and materials for cultural understanding, and opens student voices to issues of relevance and to expanding horizons.

CONTRIBUTOR

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APPENDIX: “EVELINE” (Joyce, 1914/1967, pp. 25–29)

SHE sat at the window watching the evening invade the avenue. Her head was leaned against the window curtains and in her nostrils was the odour of dusty cretonne. She was tired.

Few people passed. The man out of the last house passed on his way home; she heard his footsteps clacking along the concrete pavement and afterwards crunching on the cinder path before the new red houses. One time there used to be a field there in which they used to play every evening with other people's children. Then a man from Belfast bought the field and built houses in it—not like their little brown houses but bright brick houses with shining roofs. The children of the avenue used to play together in that field—the Devines, the Waters, the Dunns, little Keogh the cripple, she and her brothers and sisters. Ernest, however, never played: he was too grown up. Her father used often to hunt them in out of the field with his blackthorn stick;
but usually little Keogh used to keep nix and call out when he saw her father coming. Still they seemed to have been rather happy then. Her father was not so bad then; and besides, her mother was alive. That was a long time ago; she and her brothers and sisters were all grown up; her mother was dead. Tizzie Dunn was dead, too, and the Waters had gone back to England. Everything changes. Now she was going to go away like the others, to leave her home.

Home! She looked round the room, reviewing all its familiar objects which she had dusted once a week for so many years, wondering where on earth all the dust came from. Perhaps she would never see again those familiar objects from which she had never dreamed of being divided. And yet during all those years she had never found out the name of the priest whose yellowing photograph hung on the wall above the broken harmonium beside the coloured print of the promises made to Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque. He had been a school friend of her father. Whenever he showed the photograph to a visitor her father used to pass it with a casual word:

—He is in Melbourne now.

She had consented to go away, to leave her home. Was that wise? She tried to weigh each side of the question. In her home anyway she had shelter and food; she had those whom she had known all her life about her. Of course she had to work hard, both in the house and at business. What would they say of her in the Stores when they found out that she had run away with a fellow? Say she was a fool, perhaps; and her place would be filled up by advertisement. Miss Gavan would be glad. She had always had an edge on her, especially whenever there were people listening.

—Miss Hill, don't you see these ladies are waiting?

—Look lively, Miss Hill, please.

She would not cry many tears at leaving the Stores.

But in her new home, in a distant unknown country, it would not be like that. Then she would be married—she, Eveline. People would treat her with respect then. She would not be treated as her mother had been. Even now, though she was over nineteen, she sometimes felt herself in danger of her father’s violence. She knew it was that that had given her the palpitations. When they were growing up he had never gone for her, like he used to go for Harry and Ernest, because she was a girl; but latterly he had begun to threaten her and say what he would do to her only for her dead mother’s sake. And now she had nobody to protect her. Ernest was dead and Harry, who was in the church decorating business, was nearly always down somewhere in the country. Besides, the invariable squabble for money on Saturday nights had begun to weary her unspeakably. She always gave her entire wages—seven shillings—and Harry always sent up what he could but the trouble was to get any money from her father. He said she used to squander the money, that she had no head, that he wasn’t going to give her his hard-earned money to throw about the streets, and much more, for he was usually fairly bad of a Saturday night. In the end he would give her the money and ask her had she any intention of buying Sunday’s dinner. Then she had to rush out as quickly as she could and do her marketing, holding her black leather purse tightly in her hand as she elbowed her way through the crowds and returning home late under her load of provisions. She had hard work to keep the house together and to see that the two young children who had been left
to her charge went to school regularly and got their meals regularly. It was hard work—a hard life—but now that she was about to leave it she did not find it a wholly undesirable life.

She was about to explore another life with Frank. Frank was very kind, manly, open-hearted. She was to go away with him by the night-boat to be his wife and to live with him in Buenos Ayres where he had a home waiting for her. How well she remembered the first time she had seen him; he was lodging in a house on the main road where she used to visit. It seemed a few weeks ago. He was standing at the gate, his peaked cap pushed back on his head and his hair tumbled forward over a face of bronze. Then they had come to know each other. He used to meet her outside the Stores every evening and see her home. He took her to see *The Bohemian Girl* and she felt elated as she sat in an unaccustomed part of the theatre with him. He was awfully fond of music and sang a little. People knew that they were courting and, when he sang about the lass that loves a sailor, she always felt pleasantly confused. He used to call her Poppens out of fun. First of all it had been an excitement for her to have a fellow and then she had begun to like him. He had tales of distant countries. He had started as a deck boy at a pound a month on a ship of the Allan Line going out to Canada. He had told her the names of the ships he had been on and the names of the different services. He had sailed through the Straits of Magellan and he told her stories of the terrible Patagonians. He had fallen on his feet in Buenos Ayres, he said, and had come over to the old country just for a holiday. Of course, her father had found out the affair and had forbidden her to have anything to say to him.

—I know these sailor chaps, he said.

One day he had quarrelled with Frank and after that she had to meet her lover secretly.

The evening deepened in the avenue. The white of two letters in her lap grew indistinct. One was to Harry; the other was to her father. Ernest had been her favourite but she liked Harry too. Her father was becoming old lately, she noticed; he would miss her. Sometimes he could be very nice. Not long before, when she had been laid up for a day, he had read her out a ghost story and made toast for her at the fire. Another day, when their mother was alive, they had all gone for a picnic to the Hill of Howth. She remembered her father putting on her mother's bonnet to make the children laugh.

Her time was running out but she continued to sit by the window, leaning her head against the window curtain, inhaling the odour of dusty cretonne. Down far in the avenue she could hear a street organ playing. She knew the air. Strange that it should come that very night to remind her of the promise to her mother, her promise to keep the home together as long as she could. She remembered the last night of her mother's illness; she was again in the close dark room at the other side of the hall and outside she heard a melancholy air of Italy. The organ-player had been ordered to go away and given sixpence. She remembered her father strutting back into the sickroom saying:

—I damned Italians! coming over here!

As she mused the pitiful vision of her mother's life laid its spell on the very quick of her being—that life of commonplace sacrifices closing in final craziness. She trembled as she heard again her mother's voice saying constantly with foolish insistence:

—Derevaun Seraun! Derevaun Seraun!
She stood up in a sudden impulse of terror. Escape! She must escape! Frank would save her. He would give her life, perhaps love, too. But she wanted to live. Why should she be unhappy? She had a right to happiness. Frank would take her in his arms, fold her in his arms. He would save her.

She stood among the swaying crowd in the station at the North Wall. He held her hand and she knew that he was speaking to her, saying something about the passage over and over again. The station was full of soldiers with brown baggages. Through the wide doors of the sheds she caught a glimpse of the black mass of the boat, lying in beside the quay wall, with illumined portholes. She answered nothing. She felt her cheek pale and cold and, out of a maze of distress, she prayed to God to direct her, to show her what was her duty. The boat blew a long mournful whistle into the mist. If she went, to-morrow she would be on the sea with Frank, steaming towards Buenos Ayres. Their passage had been booked. Could she still draw back after all he had done for her? Her distress awoke a nausea in her body and she kept moving her lips in silent fervent prayer.

A bell clanged upon her heart. She felt him seize her hand:
—Come!

All the seas of the world tumbled about her heart. He was drawing her into them: he would drown her. She gripped with both hands at the iron railing.
—Come!

No! No! No! It was impossible. Her hands clutched the iron in frenzy. Amid the seas she sent a cry of anguish!
—Eveline! Evvy!

He rushed beyond the barrier and called to her to follow. He was shouted at to go on but he still called to her. She set her white face to him, passive, like a helpless animal. Her eyes gave him no sign of love or farewell or recognition.