

# NARRATIVE TEXTS

## Lecture 2

- 1) **Robinson Crusoe Revisited:  
The Logic of First-Person Narration**
  
- 2) **The Emancipation of Fiction:  
Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* (1749) and the  
Conventions of Authorial Narration**
  
- 3) **The 'Naturalization' of Authorial Narration in 19th Century Realism:  
William Makepeace Thackeray, *Vanity Fair* (1848)**
  
- 4) **Analysing Narrative Fiction: A Systematic Approach**

## 1) Robinson Crusoe Revisited: The Logic of First-Person Narration

### Levels of Narrative Communication in *Robinson Crusoe*:

Daniel Defoe [empirical author]

▼ (posing as editor)

**TEXT:**

Preface:

'Editor' (Daniel Defoe) > 'implied author function'

(implied author > implied reader)

**Discourse:**

Narrator (Robinson Crusoe) > Narratee(s)

**Story:**

Protagonist (Robinson Crusoe) <> other characters (Friday)

▼ ▲  
reader

### The Limits and Dynamics of First-Person Narration:

- overt homodiegetic narrator
- fixed internal focalization
- narrating self (discourse) ↔ experiencing self (story)

**a) continuity**

e.g. *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), *Moll Flanders* (1722)  
*David Copperfield* (1849/50), *Jane Eyre* (1847)  
*Enduring Love* (1997)  
[> the autobiography paradigm]

**b) emphasis on experiencing self**

e.g. *Pamela* (1740), *Clarissa* (1747/51)  
[epistolary novels, "letters, written ... to the *Moment*"]  
*Molloy/Malone Dies/The Unnamable* (1950-52)  
[interior monologue, present tense]

**c) emphasis on narrating self**

e.g. *Tristram Shandy* (1759-67)  
*Midnight's Children* (1981)  
[digressions, metafictional tendency]

## 2) The Emancipation of Fiction

Henry Fielding

### The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling

#### Book I

*Containing as much of the Birth of the Foundling as is necessary or proper to acquaint the Reader with in the Beginning of this History.*

#### Chapter I

*The Introduction to the Work, or Bill of Fare to the Feast.*

An Author ought to consider himself, not as a Gentleman who gives a private or **elemosynary** Treat, but rather as one who keeps a public Ordinary, at which **all Persons are welcome for their Money**. In the former Case, it is well known, that the Entertainer provides what Fare he pleases; and tho' this should be very indifferent, and utterly disagreeable to the Taste of his Company, they must not find any Fault; nay, on the contrary, Good-Breeding forces them outwardly to approve and to commend whatever is set before them. Now the contrary of this happens to the Master of an Ordinary. Men who pay for what they eat, will insist on gratifying their Palates, however nice and whimsical these may prove; and if every Thing is not agreeable to their Taste, will challenge a Right to censure, to abuse, and to d-n their Dinner without Controul.

To prevent therefore giving Offence to their Customers by any such Disappointment, it hath been usual, with the honest and well-meaning Host, to provide a Bill of Fare, which all Persons may peruse at their first Entrance into the House; and, having thence acquainted themselves with the Entertainment which they may expect, may either stay and regale with what is provided for them, or may depart to some other Ordinary better accommodated to their Taste.

**As we do not disdain to borrow Wit or Wisdom from any Man who is capable of lending us either, we have condescended to take a Hint from these honest Victuallers, and shall prefix not only a general Bill of Fare to our whole Entertainment, but shall likewise give the Reader particular Bills to every Course which is to be served up in this and the ensuing Volumes.**

The Provision then which we have here made is no other than **HUMAN NATURE**. Nor do I fear that my **sensible Reader**, though most luxurious in his Taste, will start, cavil, or be offended, because I have named but one Article. The Tortoise, as the Alderman of Bristol, well learned in eating, knows by much Experience, besides the delicious Calibash and Calipee, contains many different Kinds of Food; nor can the learned Reader be ignorant, that in Human Nature, tho' here collected under one general Name, is such prodigious Variety, that a Cook will have sooner gone through all the several Species of animal and vegetable Food in the World, than an Author will be able to exhaust so extensive a Subject.

An Objection may perhaps be apprehended from the more delicate, that this Dish is too common and vulgar; for what else is the Subject of all the Romances, Novels, Plays and Poems, with which the Stalls abound. Many exquisite Viands might be rejected by the Epicure, if it was a sufficient Cause for his contemning of them as common and vulgar, that something was to be found in the most poultry Alleys under the same Name. **In reality, true Nature is as difficult to be met with in Authors, as the Bayonne Ham or Bologna Sausage is to be found in the Shops.**

But the whole, **to continue the same Metaphor**, consists in the Cookery of the Author; for, as Mr. Pope tells us,

True Wit is Nature to Advantage drest,  
What off' was thought, but ne'er so well exprest.

The same Animal which hath the Honour to have some Part of his Flesh eaten at the Table of a Duke, may perhaps be degraded in another Part, and some of his Limbs gibbeted, as it were, in the vilest Stall in Town. Where then lies the Difference between the Food of the Nobleman and the Porter, if both are at Dinner on the same Ox or Calf, but in the seasoning, the dressing, the garnishing, and the setting forth. Hence the one provokes and incites the most languid Appetite, and the other turns and palls that which is the sharpest and keenest.

**In like manner, the Excellence of the mental Entertainment consists less in the Subject, than in the Author's Skill in well dressing it up.** How pleased therefore will the Reader be to find, that we have, in the following Work, adhered closely to one of the highest Principles of the best Cook which the present Age, or perhaps that of Heliogabalus, hath produced. This great Man, as is well known to all Lovers of polite eating, begins at first by setting plain Things before his hungry Guests, rising afterwards by Degrees, as their Stomachs may be supposed to decrease, to the very Quintessence of Sauce and Spices. **In like manner, we shall represent Human Nature at first to the keen Appetite of our Reader, in that more plain and simple Manner in which it is found in the Country, and shall hereafter hash and ragoo it with all the high French and Italian Seasoning of Affectation and Vice which Courts and Cities afford. By these Means, we doubt not but our Reader may be rendered desirous to read on for ever, as the great Person, just above-mentioned, is supposed to have made some Persons eat.**

Having premised thus much, we will now detain those, who like our Bill of Fare, no longer from their Diet, and shall proceed directly to serve up the first Course of our History, for their Entertainment.

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## Chapter II

### *A short Description of Squire **Allworthy**, and a fuller Account of Miss **Bridget Allworthy** his Sister.*

In that Part of the western Division of this Kingdom, which is commonly called Somersetshire, there lately lived (and perhaps lives still) a Gentleman whose Name was Allworthy, and who might well be called the Favourite of both Nature and Fortune; for both of these seem to have contended which should bless and enrich him most. In this Contention, Nature may seem to some to have come off victorious, as she bestowed on him many Gifts; while Fortune had only one Gift in her Power; but in pouring forth this, she was so very profuse, that others perhaps may think this single Endowment to have been more than equivalent to all the various Blessings which he enjoyed from Nature. From the former of these, he derived an agreeable Person, a sound Constitution, a solid Understanding, and a benevolent Heart; by the latter, he was decreed to the Inheritance of one of the largest Estates in the County.

This Gentleman had, in his Youth, married a very worthy and beautiful Woman, of whom he had been extremely fond: By her he had three Children, all of whom died in their Infancy. He had likewise had the Misfortune of burying this beloved Wife herself, **about five Years before the Time in which this History chuses to set out.** This Loss, however great, he bore like a Man of Sense and Constancy; tho' it must be confest, he would often talk a little whimsically on this Head: For he sometimes said, he looked on himself as still married, and considered his Wife as only gone a little before him, a Journey which he should most certainly, sooner or later, take after her; and that he had not the least Doubt of meeting her again, in a Place where he should never part with her more. Sentiments for which his Sense was arraigned by one Part of his Neighbours, his Religion by a second, and his Sincerity by a third.

He now lived, for the most Part, retired in the Country, with one Sister, for whom he had a very tender Affection. This Lady was now somewhat past the Age of 30, an *Æra*, at which, **in the Opinion of the malicious**, the Title of Old Maid may, with no Impropriety, be assumed. She was of that Species of Women, **whom you commend** rather for good Qualities than Beauty, and **who are generally called** by their own Sex, very good Sort of Women - as good a Sort of Woman, Madam, **as you would wish to know.** Indeed she was so far from regretting Want of Beauty, that she never mention'd that Perfection (if it can be called one) without Contempt; and would often thank God she was not as handsome as Miss such a one, whom perhaps Beauty had led into Errors, which she might have otherwise avoided. Miss Bridget Allworthy (for that was the Name of this Lady) very rightly conceived the Charms of Person in a Woman to be no better than Snares for herself, as well as for others, and yet so discreet was she in her Conduct, that her Prudence was as much on the Guard, as if she had all the Snares to apprehend which were ever laid for her whole Sex. Indeed, **I have observed (tho' it may seem unaccountable to the Reader) that this Guard of Prudence, like the Trained Bands, is always readiest to go on Duty where there is the least Danger.** It often basely and cowardly deserts those Paragons for whom the Men are all wishing, sighing, dying, and spreading every Net in their Power; and constantly attends at the Heels of that higher Order of Women, for whom the other Sex have a more distant and awful Respect, and whom (from Despair, I suppose, of Success) they never venture to attack.

Reader, I think proper, before we proceed any farther together, to acquaint thee, that I intend to digress, through this whole History, as often as I see Occasion: Of which I am myself a better Judge than any pitiful Critic whatever; and here I must desire all those Critics to mind their own Business, and not to intermeddle with Affairs, or Works, which no ways concern them: For, till they produce the Authority by which they are constituted Judges, I shall plead to their Jurisdiction.

### Chapter III

*An odd Accident which befel Mr. Allworthy, at his Return home. The decent Behaviour of Mrs. Deborah Wilkins, with some proper Animadversions on Bastards.*

I have told my Reader, in the preceding Chapter, that Mr. Allworthy inherited a large Fortune; that he had a good Heart, and no Family. Hence, doubtless, it will be concluded by many, that he lived like an honest Man, owed no one a Shilling, took nothing but what was his own, kept a good House, entertained his Neighbours with a hearty Welcome at his Table, and was charitable to the Poor, i.e. to those who had rather beg than work, by giving them the Offals from it; that he dy'd immensely rich, and built an Hospital.

And true it is, that he did many of these Things; but, had he done nothing more, I should have left him to have recorded his own Merit on some fair Free- Stone over the Door of that Hospital. Matters of a much more extraordinary Kind are to be the Subject of this History, or I should grossly mispend my Time in writing so voluminous a Work; and you, my sagacious Friend, might, with equal Profit and Pleasure, travel through some Pages, which certain **droll Authors have been facetiously pleased to call The History of England.**

Mr. Allworthy had been absent a full Quarter of a Year in London, on some very particular Business, **tho' I know not what it was; but judge of its Importance, by its having detained him so long from home, whence he had not been absent a Month at a Time during the Space of many Years.** He came to his House very late in the Evening, and after a short Supper with his Sister, retired much fatigued to his Chamber. Here, having spent some Minutes on his Knees, a Custom which he never broke through on any Account, he was preparing to step into Bed, when, upon opening the Cloaths, to his great Surprize, he beheld an Infant, wrapt up in some coarse Linnen, in a sweet and profound Sleep, between his Sheets. He stood some Time lost in Astonishment at this Sight; but, as Good-nature had always the Ascendant in his Mind, he soon began to be touched with Sentiments of Compassion for the little Wretch before him. He then rang his Bell, and ordered an elderly Woman Servant to rise immediately and come to him, and in the mean Time was so eager in contemplating the Beauty of Innocence, appearing in those lively Colours with which Infancy and Sleep always display it, that his Thoughts were too much engaged to reflect that he was in his Shirt, when the Matron came in. **She had indeed given her Master sufficient Time to dress himself;** for out of Respect to him, and Regard to Decency, she had spent many Minutes in adjusting her Hair at the Looking- glass, notwithstanding all the Hurry in which she had been summoned by the Servant, and tho' her Master, for ought she knew, lay expiring in an Apoplexy, or in some other Fit.

It will not be wondered at, that a Creature, who had so strict a Regard to Decency in her own Person, should be shocked at the least Deviation from it in another. She therefore no sooner opened the Door, and saw her Master standing by the Bedside in his Shirt, with a Candle in his Hand, than she started back in a most terrible Fright, and might perhaps have swooned away, had he not now recollected his being undrest, and put an End to her Terrors, by desiring her to stay without the Door till he had thrown some Cloaths over his Back, and was become incapable of shocking the pure Eyes of Mrs. Deborah Wilkins, who, tho' in the 52d Year of her Age, vowed she had never beheld a Man without his Coat. Sneerers and prophane Wits may perhaps laugh at her first Fright, yet my graver Reader, when he considers the Time of Night, the Summons from her Bed, and the Situation in which she found her Master, will highly justify and applaud her Conduct; unless the Prudence, which must be supposed to attend Maidens at that Period of Life at which Mrs. Deborah had arrived, should a little lessen his Admiration.

When Mrs. Deborah returned into the Room, and was acquainted by her Master with the finding the little Infant, her Consternation was rather greater than his had been; nor could she refrain from crying out with great Horror of Accent as well as Look, »My good Sir! what's to be done?« Mr. Allworthy answered, she must take care of the Child that Evening, and in the Morning he would give Orders to provide it a Nurse. »Yes, Sir,« says she, »and I hope your Worship will send out your Warrant to take up the Hussy its Mother (for she must be one of the Neighbourhood) and I should be glad to see her committed to Bridewel, and whipt at the Cart's Tail. Indeed such wicked Sluts cannot be too severely punished. I'll warrant 'tis not her first, by her Impudence in laying it to your Worship.« »In laying it to me, Deborah,« answered Allworthy, »I can't think she hath any such Design. I suppose she hath only taken this Method to provide for her Child; and truly I am glad she hath not done worse.« »I don't know what is worse,« cries Deborah, »than for such wicked Strumpets to lay their Sins at honest Men's Doors; and though your Worship knows your own Innocence, yet the World is censorious; and it hath been many an honest Man's Hap to pass for the Father of Children he never begot; and if your Worship should provide for the Child, it may make the People the apter to believe: Besides, why should your Worship provide for what the Parish is obliged to maintain? For my own Part, if it was an honest Man's Child indeed; but for my own part, it goes against me to touch these misbegotten Wretches, whom I don't look upon as my Fellow Creatures. Faugh, how it stinks! It doth not smell like a Christian. If I might be so bold to give my Advice, I would have it put in a Basket, and sent out and laid at the Church-Warden's Door. It is a good Night, only a little rainy and windy; and if it was well wrapt up, and put in a warm Basket, it is two to one but it lives till it is found in the Morning. But if it should not, we have discharged our Duty in taking proper care of it; and it is, perhaps, better for such Creatures to die in a state of Innocence, than to grow up and imitate their Mothers; for nothing better can be expected of them.«

There were some Strokes in this Speech which, perhaps, would have offended Mr. Allworthy, had he strictly attended to it; but he had now got one of his Fingers into the Infant's Hand, which by its gentle Pressure, seeming to implore his Assistance, had certainly out-pleaded the Eloquence of Mrs. Deborah, had it been ten times greater than it was. He now gave Mrs. Deborah positive Orders to take the Child to her own Bed, and to call up a Maid-servant to provide it Pap and other things against it waked. He likewise ordered that proper Clothes should be procured for it early in the Morning, and that it should be brought to himself as soon as he was stirring.

Such was the Discernment of Mrs. Wilkins, and such the Respect she bore her Master, under whom she enjoyed a most excellent Place, that her Scruples gave way to his peremptory Commands; and she took the Child under her Arms, without any apparent Disgust at the Illegality of its Birth; and declaring it was a sweet little Infant, walked off with it to her own Chamber.

Allworthy here betook himself to those pleasing Slumbers, which a Heart that hungers after Goodness, is apt to enjoy, when thoroughly satisfied. As these are possibly sweeter than what are occasioned by any other hearty Meal, I should take more Pains to display them to the Reader, if I knew any Air to recommend him to for the procuring such an Appetite.

#### Chapter IV

*The Reader's Neck brought into Danger by a Description, his Escape, and the great Condescension of Miss **Bridget Allworthy**.*

The Gothick Stile of Building could produce nothing nobler than Mr. Allworthy's House. There was an Air of Grandeur in it, that struck you with Awe, and rival'd the Beauties of the best Grecian Architecture; and it was as commodious within, as venerable without.

It stood on the South-east Side of a Hill, but nearer the Bottom than the Top of it, so as to be sheltered from the North-east by a Grove of old Oaks, which rose above it in a gradual Ascent of near half a Mile, and yet high enough to enjoy a most charming Prospect of the Valley beneath.

In the midst of the Grove was a fine Lawn sloping down towards the House, near the Summit of which rose a plentiful Spring, gushing out of a Rock covered with Firs, and forming a constant Cascade of about thirty Foot, not carried down a regular Flight of Steps, but tumbling in a natural Fall over the broken and mossy Stones, till it came to the bottom of the Rock; then running off in a pebly Channel, that with many lesser Falls winded along, till it fell into a Lake at the Foot of the Hill, about a quarter of a Mile below the House on the South Side, and which was seen from every Room in the Front. Out of this Lake, which filled the Center of a beautiful Plain, embellished with Groupes of Beeches and Elms, and fed with Sheep, issued a River, that for several Miles was seen to meander through an amazing Variety of Meadows and Woods, till it emptied itself into the Sea, with a large Arm of which, and an Island beyond it, the Prospect was closed.

On the right of this Valley opened another of less Extent, adorned with several Villages, and terminated by one of the Towers of an old ruined Abbey, grown over with Ivy, and Part of the Front which remained still entire.

The left Hand Scene presented the View of a fine Park, composed of very unequal Ground, and agreeably varied with all the Diversity that Hills, Lawns, Wood and Water, laid out with admirable Taste, but owing less to Art than to Nature, could give. Beyond this the Country gradually rose into a Ridge of wild Mountains, the Tops of which were above the Clouds.

It was now the Middle of May, and the Morning was remarkably serene, when Mr. Allworthy walked forth on the Terrace, where the Dawn opened every Minute that lovely Prospect we have before described to his Eye. And now having sent forth Streams of Light, which ascended the blue Firmament before him as Harbingers preceding his Pomp, in the full Blaze of his Majesty, up rose the Sun; than which one Object alone in this lower Creation could be more glorious, and that Mr. Allworthy himself presented; a human Being replete with Benevolence, meditating in what manner he might render himself most acceptable to his Creator, by doing most good to his Creatures.

**Reader, take care, I have unadvisedly led thee to the Top of as high a Hill as Mr. Allworthy's, and how to get thee down without breaking thy Neck, I do not well know. However, let us e'en venture to slide down together, for Miss Bridget rings her Bell, and Mr. Allworthy is summoned to Breakfast, where I must attend, and, if you please, shall be glad of your Company.**

The usual Compliments having past between Mr. Allworthy and Miss Bridget, and the Tea being poured out, he summoned Mrs. Wilkins, and told his Sister he had a Present for her; for which she thanked him, imagining, I suppose, it had been a Gown or some Ornament for her Person. Indeed, he very often made her such Presents, and she in Complacence to him spent much time in adorning herself. I say, in Complacence to him, because she always express the greatest Contempt for Dress, and for those Ladies who made it their Study.

But if such was her Expectation, how was she disappointed, when Mrs. Wilkins, according to the Order she had receiv'd from her Master, produced the little Infant. Great Surprises, as hath been observed, are apt to be silent, and so was Miss Bridget, till her Brother began and told her the whole Story, which as the Reader knows it already, we shall not repeat.

Miss Bridget had always express so great a regard for what the Ladies are pleased to call Virtue, and had herself maintained such a Severity of Character, that it was expected, especially by Wilkins, that she would have vented much Bitterness on this Occasion, and would have voted for sending the Child, as a kind of noxious Animal, immediately out of the House; but on the contrary, she rather took the good-natur'd side of the question, intimated some Compassion for the helpless little Creature, and commended her Brother's Charity in what he had done.

Perhaps the Reader may account for this Behaviour from her Condescension to Mr. Allworthy, when we have informed him, that the good Man had ended his Narrative with owning a Resolution to take care of the Child, and to breed him up as his own; for, to acknowledge the Truth, she was always ready to oblige her Brother, and very seldom, if ever, contradicted his Sentiments; she would indeed sometimes make a few Observations, as, that Men were headstrong and must have their own way, and would wish she had been blest with an independent Fortune; but these were always vented in a low Voice, and at the most amounted only to what is called Muttering.

However, what she withheld from the Infant, she bestowed with the utmost Profuseness on the poor unknown Mother, whom she called an impudent Slut, a wanton Hussy, an audacious Harlot, a wicked Jade, a vile Strumpet, with every other Appellation with which the Tongue of Virtue never fails to lash those who bring a Disgrace on the Sex.

A Consultation was now entered into, how to proceed in order to discover the Mother. A Scrutiny was first made into the Characters of the female Servants of the House, who were all acquitted by Mrs. Wilkins, and with apparent Merit; for she had collected them herself, and perhaps it would be difficult to find such another Set of Scarecrows.

The next Step was to examine among the Inhabitants of the Parish; and this was referred to Mrs. Wilkins, who was to enquire with all imaginable Diligence, and to make her Report in the Afternoon.

Matters being thus settled, Mr. Allworthy withdrew to his Study, as was his Custom, and left the Child to his Sister, who, at his Desire, had undertaken the Care of it.

### **Third-Person Narration: (Stanzel: Authorial Narrative Situation)**

- **heterodiegetic narrator**  
(overt/personalized ↔ covert/withdrawn)
- **combination of**
  - **external focalization** (narrator-focalizer)
  - and
  - **internal focalization** (character-focalizers)
  - ▶ **zero (= flexible) focalization**
- **omniscience/omnipresence**
- **narratorial functions:**
  1. presentation of story world
  2. direct commentary
  3. generalizing commentary
  4. reflexive functions

### 3) The 'Naturalization' of Authorial Narration in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Realism

**William Makepeace Thackeray**

**Vanity Fair**

or

**A Novel without a Hero**

**Chapter I**

**Chiswick Mall.**

While the present century was in its teens, and on one **sunshiny morning** in June, there drove up to the great iron gate of Miss Pinkerton's academy for young ladies, on Chiswick Mall, a large family coach, with two **fat** horses in blazing harness, driven by a **fat** coachman in a three-cornered hat and wig, **at the rate of four miles an hour**. A black servant, who reposed on the box beside the fat coachman, uncurled his bandy legs as soon as the equipage drew up opposite Miss Pinkerton's shining brass plate, and as he pulled the bell, at least a score of young heads **were seen** peering out of the narrow windows of the stately old brick house. Nay, **the acute observer might have recognized** the little red nose of good-natured Miss Jemima Pinkerton herself, rising over some geranium pots in the window of that lady's own drawing-room.

»It is Mrs. Sedley's coach, sister,« said Miss Jemima. »Sambo, the black servant, has just rung the bell; and the coachman has a new red waistcoat.«

»Have you completed all the necessary preparations incident to Miss Sedley's departure, Miss Jemima?« asked Miss Pinkerton herself, **that majestic lady - the Semiramis of Hammersmith, the friend of Dr. Johnson, the correspondent of Mrs. Chapone herself.**

»The girls were up at four this morning, packing her trunks, sister,« replied Miss Jemima; »we have made her a bow-pot.«

»Say a bouquet, sister Jemima - 'tis more genteel.«

»Well, a booky as big almost as a haystack. I have put up two bottles of the gillyflower-water for Mrs. Sedley, and the **receipt** for making it, in Amelia's box.«

»And I trust, Miss Jemima, you have made a copy of Miss Sedley's **account**. This is it, is it? Very good - ninety-three pounds, four shillings. Be kind enough to address it to John Sedley, Esquire, and to seal this billet which I have written to his lady.«

**In Miss Jemima's eyes** an autograph letter of her sister, Miss Pinkerton, was an object of as deep veneration as would have been a letter from a sovereign. Only when her pupils quitted the establishment, or when they were about to be married, and once, when poor Miss Birch died of the scarlet fever, was Miss Pinkerton known to write personally to the parents of her pupils; and it was Jemima's opinion that if anything could console Mrs. Birch for her daughter's loss, it would be that pious and eloquent composition in which Miss Pinkerton announced the event.

In the present instance Miss Pinkerton's 'billet' was to the following effect: -

»The Mall, Chiswick, June 15, 18-

Madam, - After her six years' residence at the Mall, I have the honour and happiness of presenting Miss Amelia Sedley to her parents, as a young lady not unworthy to occupy a fitting position in their polished and refined circle. Those virtues which characterize the young English gentlewoman, those accomplishments which become her birth and station, will not be found wanting in the amiable Miss Sedley, whose industry and obedience have endeared her to her instructors, and whose delightful sweetness of temper has charmed her aged and her youthful companions.

In music, in dancing, in orthography, in every variety of embroidery and needlework, she will be found to have realized her friends' fondest wishes. In geography there is still much to be desired; and a careful and undeviating use of the backboard, for four hours daily during the next three years, is recommended as necessary to the acquirement of that dignified deportment and carriage, so requisite for every young lady of fashion.

In the principles of religion and morality, Miss Sedley will be found worthy of an establishment which has been honoured by the presence of The Great Lexicographer, and the patronage of the admirable Mrs. Chapone. In leaving the Mall, Miss Amelia carries with her the hearts of her companions, and the affectionate regards of her mistress, who has the honour to subscribe herself,

Madam, your most obliged humble servant,  
BARBARA PINKERTON.

P.S. - Miss Sharp accompanies Miss Sedley. It is particularly requested that Miss Sharp's stay in Russell Square may not exceed ten days. The family of distinction with whom she is engaged desire to avail themselves of her services as soon as possible.«

This letter completed, Miss Pinkerton proceeded to write her own name and Miss Sedley's in the fly-leaf of a Johnson's Dictionary - the interesting work which she invariably presented to her scholars on their departure from the Mall. On the cover was inserted a copy of »Lines addressed to a young lady on quitting Miss Pinkerton's school, at the Mall; by the late revered Doctor Samuel Johnson.« In fact, the Lexicographer's name was always on the lips of this majestic woman, and a visit he had paid to her was the cause of her reputation and her fortune.

Being commanded by her elder sister to get 'the Dictionary' from the cupboard, Miss Jemima had extracted two copies of the book from the receptacle in question. When Miss Pinkerton had finished the inscription in the first, Jemima, with rather a dubious and timid air, handed her the second.

»For whom is this, Miss Jemima?« said Miss Pinkerton, with awful coldness.

»For Becky Sharp,« answered Jemima, trembling very much, and blushing over her withered face and neck, as she turned her back on her sister. »For Becky Sharp: she's going too.«

»**MISS JEMIMA!**« exclaimed Miss Pinkerton, in the largest capitals; »are you in your senses? Replace the **Dixonary** in the closet, and never venture to take such a liberty in future.«

»Well, sister, it's only two and ninepence, and poor Becky will be miserable if she don't get one.«

»Send Miss Sedley instantly to me,« said Miss Pinkerton. And so, venturing not to say another word, poor Jemima trotted off, exceedingly flurried and nervous.

Miss Sedley's papa was a merchant in London, and a man of some wealth; whereas Miss Sharp was an articled pupil, for whom Miss Pinkerton had done, as she thought, quite enough, without conferring upon her at parting the high honour of the **Dixonary**.

Although schoolmistresses' letters are to be trusted no more nor less than churchyard epitaphs; yet, as it sometimes happens that a person departs this life who is really deserving of all the praises the stonecutter carves over his bones; who is a good Christian, a good parent, child, wife, or husband; who actually does leave a disconsolate family to mourn his loss; so in academies of the male and female sex it occurs every now and then that the pupil is fully worthy of the praises bestowed by the disinterested instructor. **Now**, Miss Amelia Sedley was a young lady of this singular species, and deserved not only all that Miss Pinkerton said in her praise, but had many charming qualities which that pompous old Minerva of a woman could not see, from the differences of rank and age between her pupil and herself.

For she could not only sing like a lark, or a Mrs. Billington, and dance like Hillisberg or Parisot; and embroider beautifully; and spell as well as a Dixonary itself; but she had such a kindly, smiling, tender, gentle, generous heart of her own, as won the love of everybody who came near her, from Minerva herself down to the poor girl in the scullery and the one-eyed tart-woman's daughter, who was permitted to vend her wares once a week to the young ladies in the Mall. She had twelve intimate and bosom friends out of the twenty-four young ladies. Even envious Miss Briggs never spoke ill of her; high and mighty Miss Saltire (Lord Dexter's grand-daughter) allowed that her figure was genteel; and as for Miss Swartz, the rich woolly-haired mulatto from St. Kitts, on the day Amelia went away, she was in such a passion of tears, that they were obliged to send for Dr. Floss, and half tipsify her with sal volatile. Miss Pinkerton's attachment was, as may be supposed, from the high position and eminent virtues of that lady, calm and dignified; but Miss Jemima had already whimpered several times at the idea of Amelia's departure; and, but for fear of her sister, would have gone off in downright hysterics, like the heiress (**who paid double**) of St. Kitts. Such luxury of grief, however, is only allowed to parlour-boarders. Honest Jemima had all the bills, and the washing, and the mending, and the puddings, and the plate and crockery, and the servants to superintend. **But why speak about her? It is probable that we shall not hear of her again from this moment to the end of time, and that when the great filigree iron gates are once closed on her, she and her awful sister will never issue therefrom into this little world of history.**

**But as we are to see a great deal of Amelia, there is no harm in saying, at the outset of our acquaintance, that she was a dear little creature; and a great mercy it is, both in life and in novels, which (and the latter especially) abound in villains of the most sombre sort, that we are to have for a constant companion so guileless and good-natured a person. As she is not a heroine, there is no need to describe her person; indeed I am afraid that her nose was rather short than otherwise, and her cheeks a great deal too round and red for a heroine; but her face blushed with rosy health, and her lips with the freshest**

of smiles, and she had a pair of eyes which sparkled with the brightest and honestest good-humour, except indeed when they filled with tears, and that was a great deal too often; for the silly thing would cry over a dead canary-bird; or over a mouse, that the cat haply had seized upon; or over the end of a novel, were it ever so stupid; and as for saying an unkind word to her, were any persons hard-hearted enough to do so - why, so much the worse for them. Even Miss Pinkerton, that austere and godlike woman, ceased scolding her after the first time, and though she no more comprehended sensibility than she did Algebra, gave all masters and teachers particular orders to treat Miss Sedley with the utmost gentleness, as harsh treatment was injurious to her.

So that when the day of departure came, between her two customs of laughing and crying, Miss Sedley was greatly puzzled how to act. She was glad to go home, and yet most woefully sad at leaving school. For three days before, little Laura Martin, the orphan, followed her about, like a little dog. She had to make and receive at least fourteen presents - to make fourteen solemn promises of writing every week: »Send my letters under cover to my grandpapa, the Earl of Dexter,« said Miss Saltire (who, by the way, was rather shabby): »Never mind the postage, but write every day, you dear darling,« said the impetuous and woolly-headed, but generous and affectionate, Miss Swartz; and the orphan little Laura Martin (who was just in round-hand), took her friend's hand and said, looking up in her face wistfully, »Amelia, when I write to you I shall call you Mamma.« **All which details, I have no doubt, JONES, who reads this book at his Club, will pronounce to be excessively foolish, trivial, twaddling, and ultra-sentimental. Yes; I can see Jones at this minute (rather flushed with his joint of mutton and half-pint of wine) taking out his pencil and scoring under the words »foolish, twaddling,« etc., and adding to them his own remark of »quite true.« Well, he is a lofty man of genius, and admires the great and heroic in life and novels; and so had better take warning and go elsewhere.**

**Well, then.** The flowers, and the presents, and the trunks, and bonnet-boxes of Miss Sedley having been arranged by Mr. Sambo in the carriage, together with a very small and weather-beaten old cow's-skin trunk with Miss Sharp's card neatly nailed upon it, which was delivered by Sambo with a grin, and packed by the coachman with a corresponding sneer - the hour for parting came; and the grief of that moment was considerably lessened **by the admirable discourse** which Miss Pinkerton addressed to her pupil. Not that the parting speech caused Amelia to philosophize, or that it armed her in any way with a calmness, the result of argument; but **it was intolerably dull, pompous, and tedious;** and having the fear of her schoolmistress greatly before her eyes, Miss Sedley did not venture, in her presence, to give way to any ebullitions of private grief. A seed-cake and a bottle of wine were produced in the drawing-room, as on the solemn occasions of the visits of parents, and these refreshments being partaken of, Miss Sedley was at liberty to depart.

»You'll go in and say good-bye to Miss Pinkerton, Becky!« said Miss Jemima to a young lady of whom nobody took any notice, and who was coming downstairs with her own hand-box.

»I suppose I must,« said Miss Sharp calmly, and much to the wonder of Miss Jemima; and the latter having knocked at the door, and receiving permission to come in, Miss Sharp advanced in a very unconcerned manner, and said in French, and with a perfect accent, »Mademoiselle, je viens vous faire mes adieux.«

Miss Pinkerton did not understand French; she only directed those who did; but biting her lips and throwing up her venerable and Roman-nosed head (on the top of which figured a large and solemn turban), she said, »Miss Sharp, I wish you a good-morning.« **As the Hammersmith Semiramis** spoke she waved one hand, both by way of adieu, and to give Miss Sharp an opportunity of shaking one of the fingers of the hand which was left out for that purpose.

Miss Sharp only folded her own hands with a very frigid smile and bow, and quite declined to accept the proffered honour; on which Semiramis tossed up her turban more indignantly **than ever. In fact, it was a little battle between the young lady and the old one, and the latter was worsted.** »Heaven bless you, my child,« said she, embracing Amelia, and scowling the while over the girl's shoulder at Miss Sharp. »Come away, Becky,« said Miss Jemima, pulling the young woman away in great alarm, and the drawing-room door closed upon them for ever.

Then came the struggle and parting below. **Words refuse to tell it.** All the servants were there in the hall - all the dear friends - all the young ladies - the dancing-master who had just arrived; and there was such a scuffling, and hugging, and kissing, and crying, with the hysterical yoops of Miss Swartz, the parlour-boarder, from her room, **as no pen can depict**, and as the tender heart would fain pass over. The embracing was over; they parted - that is, Miss Sedley parted from her friends. Miss Sharp had demurely entered the carriage some minutes before. Nobody cried for leaving her.

Sambo of the bandy legs slammed the carriage- door on his young weeping mistress. He sprang up behind the carriage. »Stop!« cried Miss Jemima, rushing to the gate with a parcel.

»It's some sandwiches, my dear,« said she to Amelia. »You may be hungry, you know; and Becky, Becky Sharp, here's a book for you that my sister - that is, I - Johnson's Dixonary, you know; you mustn't leave us without that. Good-bye. Drive on, coachman. God bless you!«

And the kind creature retreated into the garden, overcome with emotion.

But, lo! and just as the coach drove off, Miss Sharp put her pale face out of the window and actually flung the book back into the garden.

This almost caused Jemima to faint with terror. »Well, I never!« - said she - »what an audacious -« Emotion prevented her from completing either sentence. The carriage rolled away; the great gates were closed; the bell rang for the dancing lesson. **The world is before the two young ladies; and so, farewell to Chiswick Mall.**

## 4) Analysing Narrative Fiction: A Systematic Approach

### Step 1: Analysing Narrative

- A.** How is the story related? (>**DISCOURSE**)
- 1) What type(s) of narrator(s) can be found?
    - ▶ heterodiegetic vs. homodiegetic narration
  - 2) Whose perspective(s), emotions, thoughts etc. dominate the story?
    - ▶ zero (= flexible!) focalization mediated by narrator;  
fixed, variable or multiple internal focalization by character(s);  
strict external focalization
- B.** What are the main features of the story world? (>**STORY**)
- 1) When and where does the story take place? ▶ **setting**
  - 2) Who is involved in the action? ▶ **characters**
  - 3) What are the main events in chronological order?
- C.** How does the act of telling affect the presentation of the story world? (>**PLOT**)
- 1) What functions do setting and characters fulfil in/for this particular story?
    - ▶ representative/typical vs. extraordinary setting
    - ▶ flat (representative/functional/static) characters  
round (individualized/dynamic) characters
  - 2) Does the presentation of events follow their chronological order or are there striking deviations?
    - ▶ flashbacks, flashforwards (anticipations)
  - 3) How does the narrative handle the relation between story time and discourse time?
    - ▶ summary ↔ scene
    - ▶ special cases: ellipsis, stretch/pause

### Step 2: Interpreting Narrative as Literary Fiction

What are the most striking features of the text's overall organization as a piece of literature/a work of art?  
[>**STRUCTURE**; 'implied author function']

- literary strategies (imagery, leitmotifs, intertextual references...)?
- beginning/ending?
- constellation of characters?
- irony/satire? (reliable vs. unreliable narration)
- Does the text appear to be predominantly discourse-centred, story-centred, plot-centred or structure-centred?

[+ whatever else appears to be important!]