Teaching the Novel
BEFORE, During & After

A. Select the novels and place them appropriately in the school calendar.

1. Select the novels
   a. Two summer novels, both accessible
   b. Four in-class novels: two pre-WW I, two post-WW I
   c. Most of the novels should be "of literary merit"
      [rich language / reward rereading / multiplicity of interpretation]
2. Place the novels in the syllabus
   a. Consider putting the novels in order of accessibility.
   b. Consider the 'traps' in your school's calendar.
   c. Know what your students will be doing in other classes and activities.
3. Use a planning page or the like to set the learning outcomes for each novel.
4. Search the novel on line.
   a. Find what resources offer ideas for teaching the novel.
   b. Find what resources can help your students; know what sites are available for them.

B. Model a "way into the novel," a pre-reading strategy.

1. Look carefully at the title—one word at a time.
2. Look at the organization.
   a. Is the novel divided into chapters?
   b. How many are there? Are they about equal length?
   c. Are they numbered? grouped into sections?
   d. Do they have epigraphs? titles?
   e. Watch to see what design the writer is using, what logical reasons underlie the structural organization: patterns of repetition that establish a narrative rhythm
3. Devise a reasonable strategy for reading the novel, including a schedule. Leave some "elbow room."

C. Model a close reading of the opening passage of the novel—the writer uses this piece to separate the real world we live in from the world of the novel. Include the title.

1. Read at least the first page or two aloud, signaling students what kinds of notes they can be making as they read. Be sure they can pronounce the proper nouns.
2. Help students identify the setting and the point of view.