# Teaching the Novel
## Before, **DURING**, & After

A. Model a close reading of a narrative passage early in the novel [to signal what elements students should be attending to]

1. the setting
2. in time [year, season, and the like]
3. in place [country, city or country, and the like]
4. social and historical environment
5. the characters
6. who they are and how the relate to the others
7. techniques the writer uses to reveal them

B. Annotating

1. Work out a system to offer students for marking the text. At the least, they should indicate:
   - the entrance of new characters
   - shifts in setting (place or time) or mood
   - changes in characters (softening, hardening, epiphanies) or changes in relationships between or among characters
   - patterns, including repetition or echoing
   - plot elements (complications, crises, climaxes, reversals)
   - predictions
   - questions
   - memorable lines or passages
2. Stop to review the annotations frequently, using the questions students bring in to start discussion, constructing a class-wide set of "memorable lines," and the like

C. Some Activities

Make a list of a character's actions in one column and the consequences of those actions in the other.

Stop in the middle, or at the end of each third, to identify and discuss the "big issues" to that point. How can they be identified? How will the author have the characters work them out?

Find a poem (or a song) that echoes or can be said to comment on a part or passage of the novel. Explain how the two are related.

Decide to what extent the names of the characters seem to suggest meanings.

In a complex novel, keep a family tree.

Trace graphically the conflicts in the novel. Which pit characters against their environment, natural or social? Which set characters against each other? Which create a clash within a character? Which characters want what they wish they did *not* want?

For one chapter/section of the novel, write a review of the analysis given at one of the popular "literature help" web sites: Enotes, SparkNotes, BookRags, or the like. Explain what is included, what is left out, any special insights the site offers, any questionable readings, and anything else that helps evaluate the site.