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Faculty of Arts

**Department of English
and American Studies**

Teaching English Language and Literature for
Secondary Schools

Bc. Eva Mičáková

**Teaching Literature in Secondary
Schools**

Master's Diploma Thesis

Supervisor: Mgr. Linda Nepivodová

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*I declare that I have worked on this thesis independently,
using only the sources listed in the bibliography.*

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Author's signature

I would like to thank my supervisor Mgr. Linda Nepivodová for her advice, guidance and support.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Literature and culture are both inseparable parts of an overall general knowledge of a particular country. Therefore it seems obvious to learn about literature and culture when studying a foreign language. According to Gillian Lazar (1993) "literature is a motivating material. Literature is usually very highly valued and students should be familiar with literature in their own language and therefore reading and interpreting English literature can provide an interesting comparison" (p. 19). Literature is able to provide students with access to another culture of the people whose language they are studying.

The initial part of the thesis will introduce literature as a part of a foreign language lesson as well as it will describe teaching reading and its strategies, so learners are actually able to read authentic texts. Without sufficiently developed reading skills there will not be sufficient teaching of literary texts. Another part of the thesis will focus on the targeted learners whose adolescence might have an impact on their learning.

Reasons for and benefits of teaching literature in secondary schools are one of the major themes of the thesis. One of the subchapters will be dedicated to graded readers, which are books rewritten into simplified English. They are a great source for learners who have not reached a particular level of English when concerning their reading skill. Their possible usage and ways of incorporating them into English classrooms will be discussed as well as the strategies for teaching literature with a great section dedicated to a text selection.

Collected materials are designed for secondary schools; therefore the level of students and their English should be theoretically set. According to the national educational programme, students start learning their first foreign language in their 3rd year of elementary school. Selecting English as the first foreign language is not compulsory but it is highly recommended by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports. Let us assume that students who are entering secondary schools are at the level of A2. The author of this thesis will take the A2 level as an initial point for the further development of the thesis (MŠMT, 2006, p.7).

1.2. Research Aims

It might come as a surprise that most of the secondary schools in the Czech Republic, as well as the majority of course books designed for teaching English, contain very little or no authentic literature in their curriculum. Literature is able to help students understand culture of people whose language they are learning almost every day. It also broadens their minds in terms of a general scope of knowledge.

One of the purposes of the thesis is to map the current situation in Czech secondary schools and to find out whether teachers have any experience with teaching literature. In case of not having experience with teaching literature they will be asked whether they would find it useful and will be willing to incorporate authentic texts into their lesson plans. Also they will be asked to consider whether they are fully satisfied with the range of course books and the texts they offer. Situation mapping will be accomplished by creating a questionnaire which will be given to a number of English teachers of various age and experience. The results will be then analyzed and displayed with the help of different types of graphs and diagrams.

A literary based lesson plan will be created by the author of the thesis and taught at selected secondary school. The aim of the lesson is to teach the students

something new with the help of a literary text and to include all four skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). Another questionnaire will be prepared and given to them at the end of the lesson. These will be later analyzed to see whether the students enjoyed the lesson and the text, what was their general opinion about it, and if they feel as if they have learned something new and whether the lesson encouraged them in further reading.

2. Why Teach Literature

2.1. Theories of Teaching Literature

Teaching literature or methodology of teaching literature is not a new field of study. Many theories and opinions have been shaped throughout the past decades. The next section introduces these theories described in *Teaching Literature to Adolescents* (Richard Beach, Deborah Appleman, Susan Hynds, Jeffrey Wilhelm,

2010) which also correspond to the content of the thesis. They are mostly theories of the so called American school and were introduced during the past 50 years.

- Transmission Theories

Transmission theories are quite strict when it comes to the role of teachers and students. Teachers are always the centre of attention and the source of knowledge which their students are supposed to rely on. Students acquire facts and knowledge about literature but its interpreting is eclipsed. Transmission theories are rather limiting since students must completely rely on the teacher's knowledge about literature, which could be quite difficult since it does not give them many opportunities to think for themselves and make up their own mind about the given piece of literature. Therefore the role of students is very passive and dependent. According to Beach et al., (2010) "One problem with this transmission model is that it focuses simply on a 'knowing that' aspect of learning literature" (p. 7). Transmission theories include facts only, and despite the fact that knowledge about literature can also broaden a student's mind, this theory will not be considered by the author in the thesis as one of the most useful ones.

- Student Centred Theory

When Student Centred Theory is put in practice, students can make their own choices in what they would like to learn and how they would like to learn as Beach et al., (2010) point out "if students have choices, they are the more motivated to want to learn" (p. 7), in this case what they would like to read and how. The theory believes in providing students with choice with which they are given the motivation to learn. Texts should not be assigned to them; they should have the opportunity of choosing which guarantees a certain amount of engagement. The raising question is whether

students should have all the responsibility for learning. A potential failure would then be a student's fault and it is questionable whether should teachers allow it.

- **Socio-cultural Learning Theory**

This particular theory is based on the assumption that learning is primarily a social activity. It claims that through a participation in social groups students learn to acquire practises which are later internalized within the group. Teachers should be able to create a social group among their students in order to form a literary community, and then students only need to learn to be a part of such community. A very key idea in socio-culture learning theory is that "learning occurs within certain developmental boundaries of what Lev Vygotsky called students' zone of proximal development or ZPD" (Beach, 2010, p. 9). Zone of proximal development is a concept which could be shortly described as a zone of "sophistication within which students will be able to employ certain practices without undue struggling on their part given the current level, but still, by stretching to the upper level of the zone, improve on the use of their practices" (Carter, Long, 1991, p. 9). Therefore it seems as if Socio-cultural Learning Theory blended with Student Centred Theory could be a quite suitable starting point for developing literature based lesson plans.

2.2. Reasons and Benefits of Using Literature with the Language Learner

"Books are the treasured wealth of the world and the fit inheritance of generations and nations. Books stand naturally and rightfully on the shelves of every cottage. They have no cause of their own to plead, but while they enlighten and sustain the reader his common sense will not refuse them" (Thoreau, 1854).

As Henry D. Thoreau (1854) stated, books are the wealth of the world and it is books that are understood as literature for the purposes of the thesis and it is these books that should be used in classrooms.

Literary texts are authentic material which has the ability to have an enormous influence on a language learner. They have a great potential to teach them not only about the culture of a certain nation but they are also a source for language teachers. When selecting the right texts, in both cases, when a teacher selects a text or it is a decision of the learner, it is highly engaging and therefore motivational. Through authentic texts students have the opportunity to learn and understand a variety of different cultures which automatically broadens their minds as well as it raises their language awareness. Therefore authentic texts could be considered as a stimulus for language acquisition and in most cases literary texts are able to encourage students to shape and talk about their opinions and feelings. Not to mention that literary education is greatly valued in today's world and it still has a very high status among people of the educated sphere. According to Lazar (1993) "it develops student' interpretative abilities and it educates the whole person" (p. 19). Reading literature in English provides students with the chance to penetrate and become aware of the social, political and historical events which form the background to a particular novel, poem or play. Students are able to gain useful perceptions but they should always treat it critically- they should always evaluate and question it (Lazar, 1993, p. 16).

2.2.1. Cultural Aspects within Literary Texts

When discovering another culture, it is possible to suffer the so called 'culture shock' which is usually developed when somebody finds differences between certain cultures too difficult to overcome (Carter, Long, 1991, p. 153). It is rather unlikely to suffer such shock during reading but readers are encouraged and it seems rather appropriate to think one's way into another culture.

During reading any kind of a literary text, students come across many cultural references. The understanding of these references entirely depends on the extent of

their cultural experience as well as on the author sharing some knowledge with the reader. “In any teaching situation, there are obviously some literary texts, which are likely to present fewer cultural problems for students than others” (Lazar, 1993, p. 62). The background to a certain text is not entirely necessary, but it might leave the reader confused and he or she certainly would not obtain as much as is possible and as Carter and Long (1991) pointed out “it seems certain that it would be an 'incomplete' reading”. Therefore it is desirable to pre-teach the context or select such texts that do not contain cultural differences which would be too difficult for students to understand.

Selection of the text which teachers are willing to use in the classroom must be then very careful in order not to choose a piece of writing which will be completely incomprehensible for students because they will not correspond to any extent to their own culture. As it is described in a further chapter about selecting appropriate materials, the choice must be suitable from many different aspects. An ideal solution would be to choose a text which is not too remote from students' own culture but which also contains new information as “exposing students to literature from other cultures is an enriching and exciting way of increasing their awareness of different values, beliefs, social structures and so on” (Lazar, 1993, p. 62).

2.2.2. Models of Literature Teaching

It seems as if teaching literature had so many advantages that it does not really need any kind of justification. It also seems rather obvious that some pieces from English literature are and always will be taught but little is found about how to teach it. Carter and Long (1991) came up in their work *Teaching Literature* with more reasons to teach literature as they developed models, each containing a set of learning objectives for students of literature (Carter, Long, 1991).

- The Cultural Model

Students are able to accumulate a great wisdom through authentic texts, not to mention that he or she gains the skill of recognizing specific expressions which could be specific for certain culture or historical period. Through reading they also learn more about human perspectives, sentiments and ideas.

- The Language Model

Literature is made from language. Therefore language figures between the learner and the authentic text as an instrument. The questionable aspect of authentic texts is whether literary texts are a good source of correct grammatical structures and vocabulary. Clarification might be needed from teachers in some particular cases.

- The Personal Growth Model

It is a certain kind of a test of the teacher's success in teaching literature to observe the extent to which students carry with them beyond the classroom the enjoyment and love for literature. For students it can be a start of a life long journey.

Teaching literature is clearly very beneficial for students from many aspects. But using authentic texts in the classroom is possible only under the condition that students' reading skills are on such high level, so they are able to understand certain texts without any major difficulties. The following chapter is dedicated to approaches to reading and its strategies so students can easily move to reading literature.

3. Reading in the Classroom

Reading is a receptive skill, which does not necessarily enable learners to produce language since the main purpose of reading is to receive and understand the text. Every learner reads in a different way and most likely at a different speed as well. Students might come across a variety of difficulties when reading in a foreign language. One of the most common difficulties learners might have is the unknown vocabulary appearing throughout the text, which leads to an overuse of dictionaries, which are rather undesirable in ESL classrooms. “In order to make students better readers, we need first of all to raise their awareness that it’s not always essential to understand every word” (Scrivener, 2005, p. 184). Reading is also a very time consuming activity and teachers must manage their time well to be able to consider a reading task effective. Teachers should try to involve as many reading approaches as possible to make sure that their students are able to read a certain text without any major difficulties.

3.1. Approaches to Reading

3.1.1. Top-down and Bottom-up Reading

Top-down reading strategy partially relies on a particular reader's background knowledge. With the help of one's background information, the reader is able to predict the meaning of the piece of reading he or she is about to do and develop an idea which is later, during the actual reading, rejected or confirmed. “Top-down processing is thought to be an effective way of processing language; it makes the most of what the person brings to the situation” (Teaching English, 2013). Top-down reading comes to a great use in a classroom where literature is taught. Teachers can develop many discussions or other activities based on predicting what the authentic text is going to be about from the title or an excerpt. One of the aims of a top-down

strategy is to activate 'content schemata' "which is knowledge relative to the content domain of the text" (Carrell, 1987, p. 461). These schemata are closely connected with the overall background of a particular learner. Background knowledge plays an important role in learning another language not only when it comes to reading literature but also as it has been said "a high degree of background knowledge can overcome linguistic deficiency" (Lee, 2009, p. 182).

During bottom-up reading, the reader is looking at individual meanings and grammatical structures of a certain language. From these individual parts the learner tries to make up the sense of the whole reading text. "Bottom-up processing is not thought to be a very efficient way to approach a text initially, and is often contrasted with top-down processing, which is thought to be more efficient."(Teaching English, 2013) Bottom-up reading strategy focuses on decoding written symbols and therefore it is not as suitable for reading literature as top-down strategy as "the focus is never the meaning of the whole text , but detailed linguistic forms- from phoneme to lexical, syntactic levels" (Lee, 2009, p. 182).

A comparison was made between bottom-up and top-down reading techniques by H. Douglas Brown (2007) in *Teaching by Principles* when he compares "bottom-up processes with the image of a scientist with a magnifying glass or microscope examining all the minute details of some phenomenon, while top-down processing is like taking an eagle's eye view of a landscape below" (Brown, 2007, p. 358). It seems as if top-down reading strategy was more useful when it comes to teaching literature, but to make sure students are on a proficient level of reading it is desirable to combine both strategies (Brown, 2007).

3.1.2. Skimming and Scanning

Skimming is a type of fast reading, when a reader is looking for the overall message of the text. Reading of every word is rather unlikely as the learner is looking quickly throughout the text. "Skimming is mainly concerned with finding key topics, main ideas, overall theme, basic structure, etc" (Scrivener, 2005, p. 185).

Scanning, on the other hand, is a fast reading activity when a reader is looking for specific information. The ability to scan is useful for learners especially when it comes to searching in time tables, or reading in maps.

Both, skimming and scanning are bottom-up reading strategies and therefore they are of a great use in reading hence literary classes. H. Douglas Brown claims that skimming and scanning are the most valuable reading strategies for learners (Brown, 2007, p. 306). When it comes to teaching literature, skimming might seem as if more valuable than scanning, as scanning is mostly used when reading academic texts and schedules, manuals and time tables as it is mentioned above (Brown, 2007).

3.1.3. Intensive Reading

Intensive reading is usually used with short texts; the reader needs to read it very closely, even multiple times to make sure the understanding of detail was gained. Intensive reading is widely used in classrooms since the language is fully processed and all of the vocabulary is understood. As James Scrivener states it is "how a competent language user might read an instruction manual for a piece of flat-pack furniture or a leaflet with guidelines on whether they have to pay income tax or not" (Scrivener, 2005, p. 188). Intensive reading is best checked through a variety of exercises such as true or false because it tests whether learners were able to understand and pick up specific points of the text. Intensive reading stands opposite

to extensive reading, which is best described as reading for pleasure. Intensive reading would not be used when reading magazines or a chapter from a novel (Scrivener, 2005).

3.1.4. Extensive Reading

Reading is an activity which is rarely popular among students in a classroom. One of the reasons for reading not being a favourite part of ESL lessons might be the approach to reading, which teachers usually select. There is an approach to reading for students which is named extensive reading approach, and which is very valuable to literature teachers because among all it encourages students to read for pleasure.

“The principal objective of undertaking an extensive reading approach is to get students reading in English and liking it. An increase in reading fluency should be another objective. Because of this, reading should be a pleasurable activity for the student, promoted as much as possible by the teacher” (Teaching English, 2013).

This approach cannot be used during the classes because it would consume too much time and it is not possible to devote the whole class to teaching and learning only one skill. But if teachers are able to get their students to read outside of the classroom then they should make sure that they have a great range of titles to choose from so the learners might pick whatever they like the best. Teachers can also ask students about the books they have read but rather informally or try to include a mini presentation or summarization of a certain book given by a volunteering student.

Very problematic issue when it comes to extensive reading is the student's level of English. It is not too beneficial to read a text which is lower than the student's proficiency level but it also is not beneficial when they have to stop in every sentence to look up an unknown word. A great way of getting students familiarized with a

number of titles which might not be at their level of English yet are so called simplified readers, to which will be a subsection dedicated.

Reading for pleasure is beneficial for many reasons “Green and Oxford (1995) found that reading for pleasure and reading without looking up all the unknown words were both highly correlated with overall language proficiency”(Brown, 2007, p. 360).

In the introduction of the chapter the author of the thesis mentioned that every student uses different reading strategy and that most of students’ reading speed differs as well. It is not only these factors that show differences between students. Teachers must be aware of who their students are and approach them as individually as possible. Because the thesis focuses on teaching literature in secondary schools, the following chapter will analyse who the students are and what is the best possible way of approaching them.

4. Focus on the Learner

Today's generation of teenagers is different from any of the previous ones. Secondary school students of these days grew up using Facebook, Youtube, smart phones and a variety of other technical devices. "Multiplayer gaming, computer simulations, and social networks are some of their favourite environments" (Sweeney, 2006, p. 3). Therefore there must be a great distinction between their attitude towards printed literary texts and between the attitudes that teachers are used to.

Secondary school students are a very specific category. Teachers should not treat them as children anymore but they also should not apply strategies for teaching adults on them yet. The thesis will consider secondary students to be young learners between the age of 14 to 19 since 14 is usually the age of finishing elementary and entering secondary school and 19 is the age of finishing secondary school with maturita exam.

4.1. Adolescents

Adolescence is a very significant time of a young person's life. It is a time when a primary school learner slowly turns to a college level student. If a teacher¹ wants the learning process to be effective she needs to make sure that the information she gives to her students is meaningful and that it raises some kind of emotional response because it catches their attention.

Teachers must be aware of the fact that their students are at a stage, when they are still mentally developing and therefore they must be very careful in order not

¹ Throughout the thesis teachers will be referred to as females in order to unify the text since the word 'teacher' and its forms appear in the thesis very frequently.

to influence their students in any sort of a negative way. “Current research states that the brain undergoes two main periods of increased production of grey-matter: the first begins during fetal development and lasts until around 18 months of age and the second occurs during adolescence” (Learning Strategies, p. 7). The development of the brain is very complicated and therefore teenage learners should be approached by teachers differently than children or adult learners. The centre for language development and decision making is temporarily located in other parts of the brain than in the frontal lobe because of its maturation (Lenroot, Giedd, 2006).

During adolescence young learners often lack impulse control as well as their sometimes irrational behaviour is often displayed, they also “often make decisions based on their feelings rather than logical thought processing. All of these characteristics affect their ability to learn” (Learning Strategies, 8). Considering the fact that it is brain that filters the information coming from the outside, the message passed on students should be valuable for the brain. There are two factors that make the information useful, whether it has any sort of a meaning and whether it causes an emotional response. It is then a responsibility of teachers to make sure that the given data contain these two factors. The aim is to gain brain’s attention which is a starting point for the beginning of a learning process. Adolescent brain is not fully developed to be able to keep information which was gained through an abstract learning process. Therefore “the most effective teaching styles encompass methods that create concrete experiences within the boundaries of the school setting” (Learning Strategies, p. 7).

4.2. Teaching Adolescents

As H. Douglas Brown states “The 'terrible teens' are an age of transition, confusion, self-consciousness, growing and changing bodies and minds. What a

challenge for the teacher!” (Brown, 2007, p. 92). There are many aspects characteristic of teenage students which teachers need to bear in mind. They are presented in *Teaching by Principles* (2007) in a form of several simple reminders which will be introduced in a shortened version below. Learner's attention is a key factor when completing intellectual tasks, since they are able to split their attention between many aspects “if a learner is attending to self, to appearance, to being accepted, to sexual thoughts, to a weekend party, or whatever, the intellectual task at hand may suffer” (Brown, 2007, p. 92).

Another result of intellectual maturation is the lengthening of attention spans, but as Brown points out “with many diversions present in a teenager's life, those potential attention spans can easily be shortened” (Brown, 2007, p. 92).

Students are becoming aware of their individual qualities; their ego and self esteem are beginning to play a remarkable role. With self-awareness often comes self-consciousness and teachers must be more careful when treating their students in order not to lower their self esteem in a regrettable way. Brown (2007) offers some useful tips on how to keep the above mentioned self esteem high:

- embarrassment of the students should be avoided at all means
- each person's talents and strengths should be affirmed frequently
- mistakes and errors should be allowed and accepted
- competition between classmates should be de-emphasized
- small group work should be encouraged, it makes learners to feel more comfortable and they allow themselves to take more risks

One of the last notices that Brown (2007) mentions in his *Teaching by Principles* is for teachers to be aware that with her students becoming more intellectually mature, they might dwell on some language issues, grammar difficulties or

vocabulary ambiguity. Teachers must be ready to elicit or explain but “care must be taken not to insult them with stilted language or to bore them with overanalyses” (Brown, 2007, p. 92).

4.2.1. Teacher’s Meta-language

When growing up, learners are developing not only their intellectual abilities but also the capacity of absorbing during the lesson is becoming greater. Teacher's meta-language is starting to be more important because it has a larger impact on the learners.

Meta-language is a type of language, which is used in a classroom every day. It is a language that teachers and their students use to talk about English in between certain tasks and activities. According to Ruth Wajnryb’s (1992) *Classroom Observation Tasks: A Resource Book for Language Teachers and Trainers* teacher’s meta-language mostly includes responses to questions, instructions and explanations, correction, praising, setting and collection of homework (Wajnryb, 1992). One of the main aims of teachers should be reducing teacher talking time (TTT) to a minimum and raising student talking time (STT) to a maximum (Brown, 2007). Despite this fact the use of meta-language is a very important source for students as it is a representation of communicative language. “When a teacher praises a student or asks another one to be quiet, or sets up a task, the language used is genuinely contextualised, purposeful and communicative, and therefore potentially rich source of input” (Wajnryb, 1992, p. 43).

4.2.2. Facts to be Remembered by Teachers

According to the studies done by George A. Miller (1956) there is a limited capacity of working memory in learners’ brains. It is said that they can hold only up to seven new information items in their short term memory so it can be transferred into

their long term memory. Therefore teachers should plan their lessons according to this fact and there should not be more than seven of new items in every lesson. (Miller, 1956)

As it is mentioned above, emotional responses to what is being taught are crucial for the learning process but teachers should be very careful not to invoke any kind of negative feelings such as threat, embarrassment or insecurity. Humour in a class is recommended but attention must be paid so it does not slide towards sarcasm and irony which could cause students' unwillingness to learn and a very probable dislike of the particular teacher.

"We are also social creatures, the most social on earth. The ways we deal with each other, from personal to international relationships, can have as much an influence on our behaviour as our instinctive reactions" (Taflinger, 1996, para. 2). Therefore teachers should be encouraged to involve as many group activities in their lessons as possible because the brain obviously needs interaction to develop itself and to take the information in (Learning Strategies).

Every teacher should be familiar with the Latin saying *Repetitio est mater studiorum* which simply emphasizes the importance of repeating and rehearsing already gained knowledge in order for it to integrate into the long term memory. It might seem pointless to students that teachers ask them clarifying questions but the result is highly beneficial.

Teaching adolescents might be the most challenging task for teachers. They must be very careful when approaching them and therefore careful selection of what is going to be taught is needed. The following chapter will focus on approaches and strategies of teaching literature to adolescent students.

5. How to teach Literature: Approaches to texts

Teaching literature might seem as a very challenging activity for many teachers as the danger of using too much TTT is very high. Authentic texts might be approached from many different ways, but it is essential to ask questions when teaching literature so the perfect balance between talking time of students and teachers can be found. As Carter and Long (1991) point out in their *Teaching Literature* “such questions could be answered individually, as a group activity, or interactively with the teacher” (Carter, Long, 1991, p. 36).

5.1. Types of Questions

Every question asked in a literature classroom serves a certain purpose. The main purpose of any kind of asking is to help students understand a particular text as well as the nature of literature in general.

There are many ways of how particular questions could be divided, the thesis will follow a division made by Carter and Long (1991) in their *Teaching Literature*. Teachers should be aware of the distinction between low-order and high-order questions. Low-order questions are a type of questions which are trying to retrieve factual information, literal meanings, or content of a text. They are particularly useful when setting preliminary orientation to a text. On the other side of the spectrum stand high-order questions, which are not oriented to obtain factual content or literal meanings. They have more to do with “involving the learner’s own responses, inferences, knowledge and experience of the world. They are of a ‘higher’ interpretive order and seldom have a ‘right’ answer” (Carter, Long, 1991, p. 37). They usually tend to be ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions which are able to encourage students to think more deeply about reasons for an answer.

A subgroup called closed questions comes under the category of lower-order questions. Closed questions usually require a very accurate response which is based on the acquired information. Their main focus is on the content of a particular text. Whereas open; higher-order questions have a tendency to support any kind of a student's exploration and investigation. Their focus is on "the imaginative or symbolic content of a text or the context of a meaning which it generates" (Carter, Long, 1991, p. 37).

All of the above mentioned questions should be asked in order to raise interest and cause any kind of an emotional response from students. Questions, higher-order questions in particular, should be used because they offer many possibilities of answering and students are therefore intellectually challenged and unknowingly forced to think and connect their ideas and opinions.

5.2. Responses

The preceding section introduced a variety of questions which are all designed to help learners with understanding an authentic text better. It is not only questions, which matter in a literary classroom, students' responses are equally important.

The field of literature has been studied by many educated people and it might seem as if there were not any more new or innovative answers that could possibly come from students. But as Derrida (as cited in Lima, 2010) states "reading and interpretation are not merely acts of reproducing what writers express in texts" (p. 112). Therefore teachers should not require one correct response because it has been stated in a valid source. Of course the support of these materials is needed but as Carter and Long (1991) point out in their *Teaching Literature* "it is only fair to add that much of this material is well thought-out and can provide useful support to one's literary studies" (p. 43). Teachers should avoid being influenced by the works of other

authors and literary critics, they might help them to make their work easier but at the same time it does not give many opportunities for creativity. Learners should not be restricted and their inventiveness is a factor to be supported as predicted answers are not desirable in a literature classroom “one’s own responses are stifled and the text itself given only an equal share with what other people, such as literary critics and commentators, have said about it” (Carter, Long. 1991, p. 43).

The starting point of getting students to think and respond constructively is again in careful selection of texts. Further development of the lesson could involve activities for deeper understanding of the text. Types of activities which support students’ thinking about literature vary and should not be omitted.

5.3. Follow-up Tasks

As it has been mentioned previously, using literature in ESL classrooms is a great source for students’ personal growth and development. It helps them understand the language better, as well as they gain “greater understanding of the world around us” (Carter, Long, 1991, p. 3). Besides these factors, reading authentic texts enables teachers to create a variety of follow-up tasks.

5.3.1. Creating a Discussion

Creating a successful discussion might be a very challenging task for teachers as they must take into consideration a number of factors that might influence the task. Careful lesson planning is essential and as it is mentioned in Gower, Phillips, Walters (2005) *Teaching Practice* “discussions take a lot of preparation if the teacher is not going to dominate” (Gower et al., 2005, p. 107). It is assumed that students will have the language to be able to participate in a discussion since they are able to read authentic texts. Also they should be given a text which they would be interested in and which would support them when developing an opinion. Discussions are great

opportunities for learners to improve their speaking skill and therefore it might be favourable to group students as “group discussion is a better choice, for more students could open their mouth and state their own ideas” (Huang, 2009, p. 140). To avoid teachers ending up doing all the talking themselves, they need to make sure that their students had enough of time to read and think about the text. Students also need to have time for organizing their thoughts so they are able to present them sufficiently. In order for the discussion not to fail, it needs to be thought through well and attention must be paid so it is not dominated by one or two strong students (Gower et al., 2007).

5.3.2. Writing Activities

Any kind of a writing activity seems like an ideal follow-up task after reading a literary text. There are many options as teachers can ask their students to simply sum up what they have read about, write a review or they might encourage them to try to write their own piece, which is suitable especially when reading short stories. Also writing activities do not necessarily need to be assigned after the reading is entirely completed. With the use of higher-order questions students are “motivated to express themselves and incorporate the textual information to their knowledge base, and get their background knowledge strengthened” (Huang, 2009, p. 140).

5.3.3. Background Comparisons

After reading a literary text, which showed some cultural aspects students might not be familiar with from their own experience, teachers might create tasks where the comparisons of particular backgrounds will be made. These tasks could be oral as well as written. Comparisons are a useful method and as Huang (2009) points out “comparison impresses students deeply and inspires a good memory” (Huang, 2009, p. 141).

5.4. Taking Students on a Journey

Richard Beach et al., (2010) in *Teaching Literature to Adolescents* has suggested a view point of teaching literature as taking students on a journey which might be helpful for teachers when they are planning the curriculum or particular lessons.

One of the initial metaphorical questions teachers should ask is 'where am I going' as what is the goal of the lesson. Since it can hardly be a decision of one teacher, because of the above mentioned educational programme, teachers of the particular school should agree on and formulate objectives which “will be useful in defining specific learning activities” (Beach et al., 2010, p. 48). Once this has been settled it is up to the individual teachers to select their materials which would lead to the chosen objectives. When the objectives are determined, teachers ought to decide on the teaching techniques they will use to fulfil the objectives. There are many teaching techniques; the suitable ones for the purposes of the thesis are to be found in Beach et al., (2010) *Teaching Literature to Adolescents* as he and his colleagues created a chart which includes five teaching techniques alongside with the metaphorical questions designed for lesson planning.

Selecting/sequencing <i>Who am I going there with?</i> <i>How will I get there?</i>	Immersing/facilitating <i>How will I get there?</i>
Reflecting	Reflecting
Modelling/Scaffolding <i>How will I show them where to</i>	Orienting/socializing <i>How will I show them where to</i>

go?	go?
-----	-----

(Beach et al., 2010).

Selecting/sequencing is a teaching technique which relies on the knowledge of teacher's students and their reading skills as well as their overall learning abilities. When teachers are aware of all these factors, they can start selecting approaches and strategies that will help them to achieve selected objectives. From this point onward the selecting becomes more practical as she can start selecting the right material that is appropriate not only from the language point of view but also from the point of view of the usefulness of selected texts and their further possible use. Sequencing then stands for organizing tasks so that teachers are able to always build on the following one. As James Scrivener (2005) mentions in his *Learning Teaching* “one straightforward way of it is to think of parts (or stages) of a lesson as 'building brick' components. We can build different lessons by putting the bricks together in various sequences” (Scrivener, 2005, p. 115).

Immersing and Facilitating has very much to do with getting students engaged in selected activities and to be able to personalize the tasks so they “link their lives to the classroom” (Beach et al., 2010, p. 51). Their experience could be used as a variety of lead-in exercises which involves them in the activities and teachers “can provide them with concepts, critical lenses, or frameworks in a more deductive manner that serve to help illuminate those experiences” (Beach et al., 2010, p. 51). Students show high level of engagement when involved in activities which require their vigorous participation. Teachers must also always bear in mind that when explaining a certain task it is favourable to mention the purpose of given activity.

Modelling is an activity or anything that is going on in the classroom which stands on the opposite side from simply telling students what to do. Demonstrating plays an important role especially when it comes to giving instructions.

Demonstrating also involves showing students how to participate in a certain task which is ideally within their ZPD. It is not only the tasks that should be modelled or demonstrated, teachers should model their techniques, approaches and strategies as well “By modelling your own uses of strategies or approaches, you are providing students with assistance in how to employ new, unfamiliar ways of thinking or responding. You are building on students’ familiar knowledge to help them understand the unfamiliar” (Beach et al., 2010, p. 52).

When using orienting techniques on students in the classroom teachers should take on a role of an organizer, or better to say, when considering the purposes of the thesis and the above mentioned metaphor with taking students on a journey, a tour guide. Orienting is very much connected with modelling since through demonstrating the teacher is able to orient her students. According to John Dewey (as cited in Beach et al., 2010, p. 326) “It is not too much to say that the most important thing for the teacher to consider, as regards his present relations to his pupils, is the attitudes and habits which his own modes of being, saying, and doing are fostering or discouraging in others”. David Hansen identifies in his *Teaching is a Moral Activity* three aspects that should be present in every classroom and they are manner, tact, and style. Under the term manner comes teacher's particular behaviour which she shows in class. There are many character qualities that an ideal teacher should have, but among all it is suitable to mention flexibility, patience and tolerance and the ability to establish good relationship with her students. Tact is a necessary quality that teachers must use in everyday situations that can happen during classes

and especially when their students are of an adolescent age. Style is a permanent virtue that has to do with the way teachers are interacting with students and which mirror individual teacher's attitudes and beliefs.

Every individual has its personal taste when it comes to writers and literature which especially applies on teachers who are teaching literature. Orienting students appears also when demonstrating in the classroom the passion and love for literature which is assumed to be something that all literature teachers have in common. Expressing passion and enthusiasm for a given subject has a great appeal on students who might not feel the same way but it is possible that it will raise their interest in literature and if it does not happen at least they might appreciate having a teacher who is able to show love for the subject she is teaching as it is suggested by Beach (2010) "As in teaching any subject, exuding your own passion or interest in the classroom may do more than anything to foster student interest in literature" (Beach et al., 2010, p. 54).

6. What to Teach

An assumption has been made that learners have reached required level of English when entering secondary school, which predicts their reading skills to be at a point so they can be introduced to literary focused lessons. One of the cornerstones of the thesis is the belief that teaching literature, when done effectively, is purposeful but it must come as a result of careful planning and a selection of suitable and engaging texts. Teachers must be aware of their goals and what exactly they would like to accomplish while teaching literature.

6.1. Materials According to the Law

According to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports every secondary school should create their own curriculum for each subject, which is taught at the particular school (MŠMT, 2006). There are not any obligatory materials assigned by the ministry, only recommended ones. Therefore the curriculum for a particular subject, English when considering the objective of the thesis, should be a creation of a teacher herself or more likely of a group of teachers, who teach at the same secondary school as it is a requirement for the school to follow their general educational programme.

Teachers who are determined to teach literature might face many difficulties because it is likely to happen, that some of the teachers from the pedagogical body of the particular school will not be familiar with teaching literature. Therefore all of the literature teaching strategies must be clearly defined and justified in order to make the above mentioned strategies easily adoptable. Clear and well defined ideas are essential when one is willing to teach in a non traditional way “teachers who have a strong, well defined set of beliefs were less likely to conform to the traditional teaching practices operating in the schools than those teachers who do not have a

well-defined set of beliefs and attitudes” (Smagorinsky as cited in Beach, 2010, p. 47).

6.2. Materials Used in Class

There is a large number of materials that could be used in a language classroom. According to Gower et al., (2005) and their *Teaching Practice* these materials could be divided into two sections which are published materials and authentic materials. Published materials are mostly those specially designed for ESL classes, which include outlines and their content is primarily oriented to suit large numbers of students (Gower et al., 2005, p. 77).

6.2.1. Published Materials

There are many types of published materials and they play an important role in a language classroom but because they do not correspond with objectives of the thesis, only a few short sections will be dedicated to them.

6.2.1.1. Coursebooks

Coursebooks are published materials that are used the most by teachers in the classrooms. Coursebooks are great helpers, especially when they come in sets with teacher's book, student's book and workbook as well, most of the time a CD is involved and sometimes a vocabulary book. When leaving out the polemics about quality of particular coursebooks, there are general advantages and disadvantages of using them.

Coursebooks are usually put together by a collective of professionals who have many experiences with teaching, therefore should be use of the materials safe and effective since it has probably been tested before. Another great advantage of course books is that they are saving time and teachers do not have to spend hours of

planning every lesson. Also they come in a variety of levels and it is not difficult to select particular coursebook which is suitable for most of the students in the classroom according to their level of English. Coursebooks are usually required by the school and the educational programme, and in most cases students and their parents expect their use (Scrivener, 2005).

Despite the fact that coursebooks have many advantages, there are also disadvantages of using them when teaching. They might limit teachers as well as students' creativity since most of the materials are simply given and therefore might the activities become boring and predictable. One of the serious disadvantages is the fact that following a coursebook is easier than coming up with a variety of self made materials. Inexperienced teachers are then likely to rely on a coursebook which stops them from further development of their creative skills. And finally as Gower et al., (2005) state "A coursebook is nearly always a compromise. There are too many things to be fitted into too small a pot" (Gower et al., 2005, p. 78).

6.2.1.2. Graded Readers

Other published materials that are a useful source are graded readers, also called simplified readers. They are a great way to motivate students because even a student with a lower level of English is able to read a whole book and understand most of it. Graded readers are usually adjusted by ELT specialists, who make sure that there is a book for everyone. According to Oxford University Press the books are graded by selected core structures "Core structures provide the easiest means to select an appropriately graded reader, because the structural content reflect the grammar syllabuses of most English language course books" (Oxford UP).

Most of the vocabulary is controlled and the text is provided with easier options of given vocabulary. Only if there is a case of a single word which has an

essential meaning it is then preserved and explained in a glossary or through illustrations. A large number of graded readers have a friendly number of pages which also motivates the reader to read the whole book. The chart below is supposed to help readers to select the right level of graded reader according to their level of English.

Selected Core Structures	Hotshots	Bookworms	Storylines	OPER*	Headway**
Present simple imperative can/cannot	Level 1	Stage 1	Level 1	Grade 1	Headstart
present continuous going to future					Headway Elementary
past simple simple gerunds must/must not	Level 2	Stage 2	Level 2	Grade 1	Headway Elementary
present perfect comparison of adjectives					
will (future) (don't) have to, could simple time clauses	Level 3	Stage 2	Level 2	Grade 1	Headway Pre-Intermediate
past continuous					
ask/tell + infinitive infinitive of purpose should, may	Level 4	Stage 3	Level 3	Grade 2	Headway Pre-Intermediate
present perfect continuous used to					
past perfect causative relative clauses indirect statements	Level 4	Stage 4	Level 4	Grade 3	Headway Intermediate
passive (simple forms) would conditional clauses indirect questions relatives with where/when clauses of purpose, reason, contrast					
past perfect continuous gerunds after prepositions/phrases	Level 5	Stage 5	Level 5	Grade 4	Headway Upper-Intermediate
passive (modals, continuous forms) future continuous future perfect modals + perfect infinitive so/such... that result clauses					
would have conditional clauses passive (infinitives, gerunds) advanced modal meanings clauses of concession, condition	Level 6	Stage 6	Level 6	Grade 5	Headway Advanced

* Oxford Progressive English Readers
** approximate guide only

(Oxford University Press)

6.2.1.3. Use of Graded Readers in the Classroom

There are many ways of using graded readers in a classroom. Assuming that teachers are able to create a learning environment where students actually enjoy what they are reading or listening to, a graded reader is a great help when extending the curriculum beyond coursebooks. According to Oxford University Press article about graded readers “From a vocabulary perspective ideally 98% of the running words in the input material should already be known by the learners, so 2% or 1 word in 50 is unknown and could be learned from context”(OUP). Therefore graded readers are a perfect solution since they can offer the desirable 98% in most of the proficiency levels. Using graded readers in a classroom can lead not only to reading tasks, or to listening tasks considering the option of having an audio reader, but it can also lead to a variety of speaking and writing exercises. Students can write or speak about what they have read; they can retell the stories or discuss them in class. When a teacher needs to create a task which would concern more aspects, such as vocabulary or pronunciation, she can use the readers as well because they contain right amount of unknown vocabulary and the texts might be used for intensive reading in the class when students work together on a shorter piece of a reading text and they are able to go through a variety of language features.

6.2.1.4. Reference Books

Reference books such as dictionaries or grammar handbooks can be very helpful and it is only to a students' advantage to teach them how to work with a dictionary. According to Gower (2005) “Other reference books that can be used in the ESL classroom include specialized reference books on particular aspects of the language such as prepositions, phrasal verbs, idioms, slang, etc” (Gower et al., 2005,

p. 80). Also, many other authentic English reference books can be used, such as encyclopaedias or thesaurus.

6.2.1.5. Technical Devices

There are many types of technical devices which can be used while teaching, but teachers should always remember that any activity which uses a video, computer or IWB should serve its purposes (Gower et al., 2005, p. 79). The use of CALL, which is “the search for and study of applications of the computer in language teaching and learning” (Levy, 1997, p. 3), might not be as significant while teaching literature as in other segments of the language. But as it is mentioned in the section about selecting texts below, computer might be needed in case there are not enough of printed sources for students to use.

Any kind of a reading activity could be equipped with multimedia, such as slide show or video. When inputs are combined there is always a higher chance that students will keep the information they have just read, heard, or seen. “An active and creative teacher would exert multimedia as a main approach to display background knowledge directly and vividly” (Huang, 2009, p. 141).

The IWB has a great potential to help teachers in the classroom not really depending on what segment of language they are teaching. Teacher training is necessary in order to master the IWB and “the importance of teacher training, practice and development time, teacher confidence, and teacher support is often realizes” (Digregorio, Sobel-Lojeski, 2009, p. 258). The IWB has many advantages and engaging students into particular topics is one of them, also it has an influence on other aspects “the extent to which there is interaction with the IWB influences the effects of the IWB on motivation, attention and behaviour” (Digregorio, Sobel-Lojeski, 2009, p. 263).

6.2.2. Authentic Materials

Authentic texts and materials are all of the materials written in English language that were not published for purposes of teaching English. Considering the objectives of the thesis, the author will focus on literary texts only.

According to the MŠMT there are no syllabuses set in stone and therefore it is up to teachers to decide whether authentic texts belong to the classroom. If this decision is positive, teachers must cover many areas when selecting the right texts.

6.3. Creating a Lesson Plan

By the term lesson, according to H. Douglas Brown (2007) in *Teaching by Principles*, is generally understood “a unified set of activities that cover a period of classroom time, usually ranging from forty to ninety minutes” (Brown, 2007, p. 149). Czech secondary school lessons are mostly 45 minutes long and therefore teachers must consider their planning well in order to practice as many skills as possible within a rather short time.

It might seem that making a lesson plan should be the concern of beginning teachers only, but having the lesson planned and thought well through helps experienced teachers as well. When creating a lesson plan teachers must take into consideration all of the things they do not have control over, such as the standards they have to meet or satisfying the employer. What teachers have control over is the way of approaching it (Jensen, 2009) and they should aim to meet the given requirements as well as their objectives.

Teachers should be aware of the fact that it is not only the lesson plan which is able to create a successful lesson “A good lesson plan will not make a poor teacher into a star. But a poor lesson plan can make even well-intentioned teacher look bad” (Jensen, 2009, p. 26). There are many factors which need to be thought about when

planning a lesson. Jim Scrivener (2005) in *Learning Teaching* made a list of essential aspects which teachers must take into consideration if they wish to deliver an effective lesson. Learners are on the top of the list and teachers should be able to plan a lesson from which the learners will benefit and in addition it would be enjoyable for them. Teachers also need to specify the aims, especially what she wants for the learners to achieve and what she hopes to achieve for herself. Another aspect that Jim Scrivener (2005) refers to is a teaching point, when teachers should ask “What is the subject matter of the lesson- the skills or language areas that will be studied and the topics you will deal with?” (Scrivener, 2005, p. 44). Alongside with the teaching point go teaching procedures which involve task and activities that will be used in order to achieve the teaching point. Teachers also need to select appropriate materials and decide, what texts, pictures, exercises etc will be used. Last aspect of a lesson planning according to Jim Scrivener (2005) is a classroom management which does not only concern what will teachers say but also the seating arrangements, staging, timing and monitoring (Scrivener, 2005, p. 44). H. Douglas Brown (2007) in his *Teaching by Principles* adds evaluation as one of the aspects of a lesson plan, since evaluation “is an assessment, formal or informal, that you make after students have sufficient opportunities for learning” (Brown, 2007, p. 150). Without evaluation teachers might have problems with “accessing the success of your students or making adjustments in your lesson plan” (Brown, 2007, p. 150).

6.3.1. Anticipated Problems

Teachers should anticipate problems within all of the sections of the lesson plan and as Roger Gower et al., (2005) suggests in *Teaching Practice* “be flexible in class, to be able to think on your feet and adapt your lesson plan according to circumstances” (Gower et al., 2005, p. 177). Giving a thought of what can go wrong

either in terms of language or in terms of classroom management prepares teachers for a variety of situations.

When it comes to problems that students might have with the language it might be useful to “Anticipate what students will find difficult in a particular language item by thoroughly researching the language you are planning to teach” (Gower et al., 2005, p. 178). Then, when difficulties appear teachers might have to turn away from their original plan but they will not be surprised by the situation.

Considering classroom management, there are many problems that might appear throughout the whole lesson. As it is suggested in *Teaching Practice* (2005) teachers should think of a solution to situations such as underestimating or overestimating the time limits students are given to complete a certain task. Also difficulties might arise because of slight differences in the level of English in particular students. For some of them the task might seem easy but another student might need more time and support from to teacher in order to complete it successfully. There are also some minor problems which should be anticipated and that is an odd number of students when planning a pair-work activity or students being already familiar with given materials. Solutions to these problems differ, depending on a particular situation, but being ready for it brings teachers one step closer to them (Gower et al., 2005).

6.3.2. Following a Lesson Plan

As Jim Scrivener (2005) points out in *Learning Teaching* teachers “can’t ever completely predict how learners will respond to anything” (Scrivener, 2005, p. 44). According to that statement teachers need to be prepared for everything, so they will be able to cope with any situation that might appear.

Despite that fact that teachers spent a great amount of time preparing a lesson plan, it is essential to be aware of the fact that in a classroom they teach the learners and not the plan. They need to be ready to throw the lesson plan away as soon as it is needed because “following a lesson plan to the letter is unlikely to be responding to what is actually happening in class” (Scrivener, 2005. p. 44).

Creating a lesson plan, selecting appropriate materials and well considered anticipated problems are of a significant help when actually teaching in a classroom. On the other hand, teachers must be prepared to abandon all of their plans in order to teach a successful lesson. But as Gower et al., (2005) points out in *Teaching Practice* “with some well planned and well set-up activities you might need to do very little in the classroom” (Gower et al., 2005, p. 178).

6.4. Selecting texts

There are many aspects which must be considered when selecting authentic texts. First of all, teachers should be aware of who their students are and also of many factors that are connected with the text.

Age of students, their hobbies, and cultural and ethnic background should be always taken into consideration as well as students’ intellectual maturity, their emotional understanding, linguistic proficiency and literature background and previous experience. Teachers do not necessarily need to take all of the above mentioned into account. “Most teachers find that when selecting texts for their learners they generally proceed on an intuitive basis. With a good knowledge of, and rapport with, a group of learners this usually works well” (Lazar, 1993, p. 52). Despite that it might be useful to look at the scales and select a particular text according to them.

One of the unfortunate aspects of teaching a secondary school class is, that the authentic text will not be always suitable for every single student, but only for most of them. When considering students' cultural background, their linguistic proficiency and literary background, the number of students who could be possible omitted because the text is out of their range decreases greatly.

6.4.1. Cultural Background

For a long time it was thought that reading a literary text is comprehensible for a learner if "such factors as vocabulary and grammar are not beyond his knowledge" (Huang, 2009, p.138). However, these components of language are not the only factors that make the text comprehensible. Learners of all ages were misled into believing, that their reading can be effective only when they master all of the grammatical rules and enlarge their vocabulary. It has been a matter of researchers during the past thirty years to show the doubts about grammar and vocabulary being the only essential factors and the background knowledge was included between these factors (Huang, 2009). Students' cultural background can be a great advantage when reading an authentic literary text, and when choosing, teachers should consider how far their background can help them to understand this specific text. Students' cultural background goes hand in hand with how much of a background do teachers need to provide before their students start to read. It does not necessarily need to be a text which shows many similarities with the life of students. "It is also true that texts which may appear to be very remote in time and place from the world today may still have appeal for students in different countries around the world" (Lazar, 1993, p. 52). Students might find parallels in the texts and in an ideal literature teacher's world, they should also be curious about the society in which people, whose language they

are trying to master, are living as “literature reveals key insights about that society“(Lazar, 1993, p. 53).

6.4.2. Students’ Linguistic Proficiency

Spoken English differs greatly from the written one, especially the one used in literary texts, which are usually full of metaphors, idioms, archaisms and structures, that students might not be familiar with. Into consideration should be taken all the texts that are written in any kind of a dialect or show a large number of slang words. Teachers must then ask “are students sufficiently familiar with the usual norms of language use to recognise when these are subverted?” (Lazar, 1993, p. 53). Students could get easily discouraged when they come across a text which is too difficult for them. It might be helpful to provide them with texts which were later transformed into films and therefore there is a chance that students will be familiar with the content. The essential question a teacher needs to respond to is, whether the text is helpful to her students’ English in any way.

6.4.3. Literary Background

“There is an interesting relationship between the literary backgrounds of the students and their literary competence since the two do not necessarily go together” (Lazar, 1993, p. 54). Students at Czech secondary schools have a great literary background in their mother language since it is mostly literature which is taught during Czech lessons. Students’ linguistic competence might be on a very high level, and they might be able to understand every single word they are reading, but it does not mean that they will be able to make out the literary sense. Teachers must then select not only graded texts but they need to look at the language and “at its specific qualities and whether our students can navigate their own way through” (Lazar, 1993,

p. 54). A great example of such case is texts written by Ernest Hemingway, who used either simple language but the literary meaning of his work was very deep (Lazar, 1993). Therefore, in order to make the reading effective, it needs to be a combination of “the non-visual information already stored and organized in the brain and the present visual information printed on the page” (Huang, 2009, p. 139).

6.4.4. Other Criteria for selecting Texts

One of the great disadvantages of the use of authentic texts in an ESL classroom is their general availability. Selecting an appropriate text might be quite restricted and therefore challenging for teachers when they would like to use them in a classroom. One of the solutions to this problem might be scanning and uploading the text for students, but having to read a book from a computer screen lowers the pleasure from reading. This problem leads to a dilemma whether to teach complete works or extracts only which could be more available than whole books. Teaching excerpts might have a certain advantage as “the non-native learner is presented with a far wider range of texts than would otherwise be possible, and may hopefully read several of them in complete form because he or she wants to” (Carter, Long, 1991, p. 144).

Teachers must be aware of the fact that English literature is not only literature which originated in Great Britain and as the editors of *Cambridge History of English Literature* stated in the early 20th century (as cited in Thomas, 2009, p. 1) “the literature of the British Colonies and of the United States are, in the main, the literature of the mother-country, produced under other skies”. The selection of authentic texts should include the USA, Canada, and Australia as well as former colonies where English literature was written such as West Indies, India or Singapore and it needs to be viewed within the particular nation’s culture. Also the choice of

themes and periods is recommended to vary as a too narrow selection can become quite risky as students might find it not appealing and therefore discouraging from further reading.

A rather questionable topic is whether to teach only well known authors and their work or whether to use texts which are completely unfamiliar to students. "The student of a secondary literature needs, certainly, to know the names of established writers and works in that literature" (Carter, Long, 1991, p. 142), but sometimes not as commonly known texts might be more beneficial because they can contain features more suitable for the class or they are more appealing to students as well as canonical texts can be found as boring which is a reason for not including them. Therefore the best solution would be to find a perfect balance between using famous or well known texts and texts which are rather unfamiliar. Making a survey among students and ask their opinion in the beginning of a school year might also be helpful since they will get the idea that their views matter.

A reasonable selection of texts is desirable especially in the beginning of the course as the first few lessons decide whether students will participate or simply sit through. The language of chosen texts is one of the aspects as "literature of much earlier period, although otherwise appealing, may be unsuitable because of differences from modern English" (Carter, Long, 1991, p. 143). Even though there are many canonical texts learners should be familiar with as they represent cultural background of given English speaking country, the priority is whether the text helps improve their language skills. If a large amount of pre-teaching of any kind of a special language that appears throughout the texts, teachers should consider it and it might be a wise solution to omit such texts (Carter, Long, 1991).

Text selection seems to be crucial all of the above mentioned points should be reconciled, but the appeal the text will have on the learner might be considered by teachers as the deciding factor.

7. Research: Teachers' Point of View

7.1. Research Design

The main aim of the investigation is to find out to what extent today's teachers of secondary schools are familiar with teaching literature, whether they include authentic texts into their lesson plans and what possible benefits they see when teaching literature. Subsidiary aims of the research are to see what teachers concentrate the most on during their lessons and what they believe is the most important skill to be taught. From these general aims a variety of specific questions emerged and the responses to them will be evaluate in a further subsection.

Author of the thesis followed Fink's *The Survey Kit: How to Ask Survey Questions* (2002) in order to be able to create valid questions which would be concrete and written in easily comprehensible language, and which would make sense to the respondents and were of an appropriate length (Fink, 2002). Ten out of eleven questions were made to be answered by using a rating scale, semantic differential scale in particular. On one side of the scale stood agreement with the statement, on the other disagreement or the extent to which are teachers concerned with the content of a certain question. One end of the scale always began with number 1; the opposite side was numbered 7. The last question, number eleven, was an open question where every respondent could express her or his opinion.

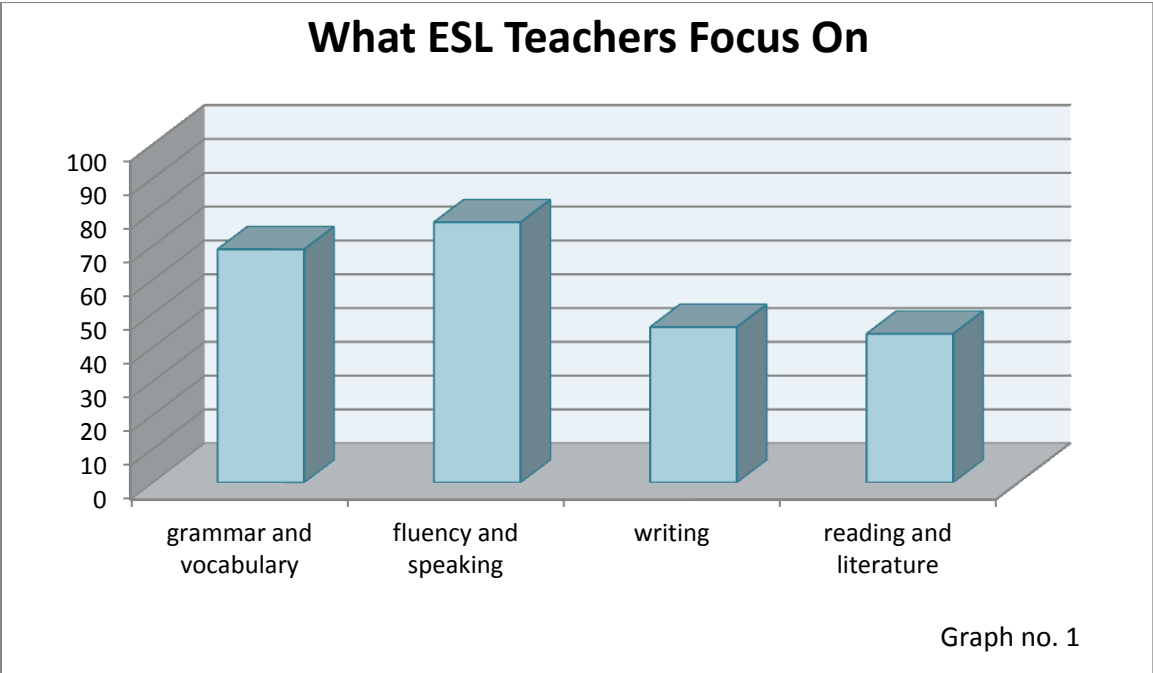
7.2. Respondents

Targeted respondents were mostly secondary school teachers. Author of the thesis addressed over fifty teachers of English. Up to the date of evaluating the survey, thirty-two respondents have filled in the questionnaire. Out of this number twenty were women and twelve men, average age of thirty-nine years, the youngest

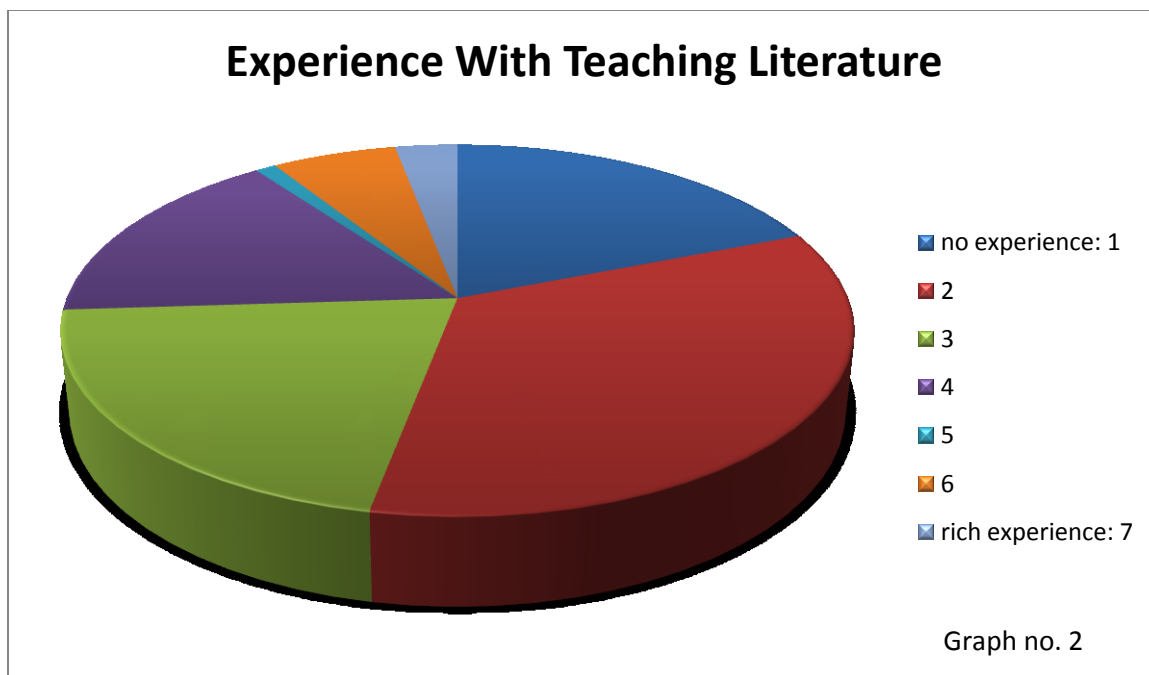
being twenty-four years old, the eldest being fifty-nine years old. The average of years of teaching experience was approximately twelve and a half years.

7.3. Research Evaluation

The first four questions were asked in order to find out the main focus of English lessons of responding teachers. The teachers marked to what extent they focus on grammar and vocabulary, fluency and speaking, writing, and reading and literature in their lessons. The questionnaire, as it is showed in a graph no. 1, confirmed anticipated results of reading and literature being taught the least.

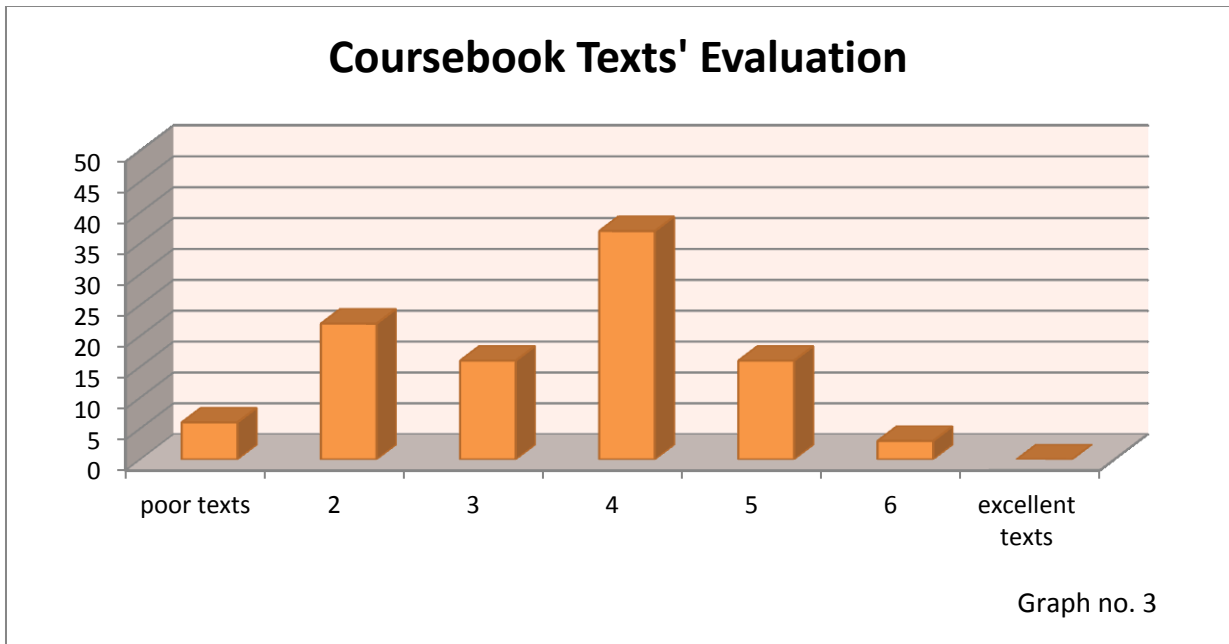


Even though the results were not very positive for the category of reading and literature, following questions were mostly aimed in a direction to serve purposes of the thesis. One of the major issues was to find out whether teachers of English have any kind of experience with teaching literature. The results were rather negative as the diagram below displays.



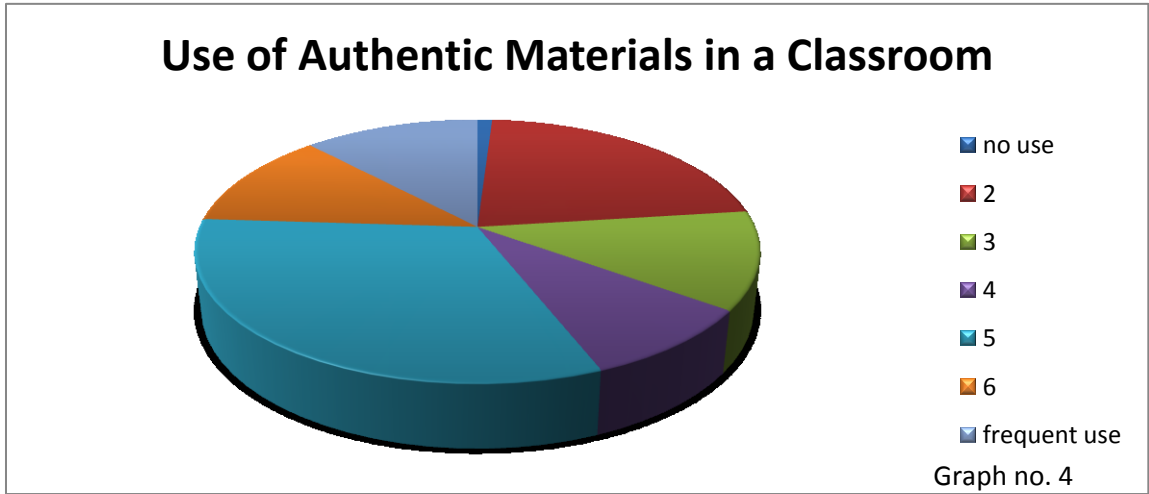
Almost exactly three quarters of respondents placed their answers on the first half of the scale which inclines to the option of having none, or very little experience with teaching literature.

Next two questions in the research were aimed at the materials that the teachers use in their classrooms. They were asked their opinion about the quality of texts in coursebooks they are using as well as they were supposed to mark to what extent they are using authentic materials during their classes. There was no space in the questionnaire to ask about every particular coursebook as the range of their use is very wide. The result is then influenced by differences of certain books and texts the teachers had on their mind when filling in the questionnaire.



The majority of respondents placed their answer exactly in the middle of the rating scale which signalizes a quite neutral or unshaped opinion when it comes to evaluating texts in coursebooks. Overall were the answers placed towards the 'poor texts' end and therefore an assumption can be made that majority of the responding teachers is rather unsatisfied with the texts they are teaching. They also have the option of teaching authentic texts and graph no. 4 shows the percentage of teachers who

incline to their usage.

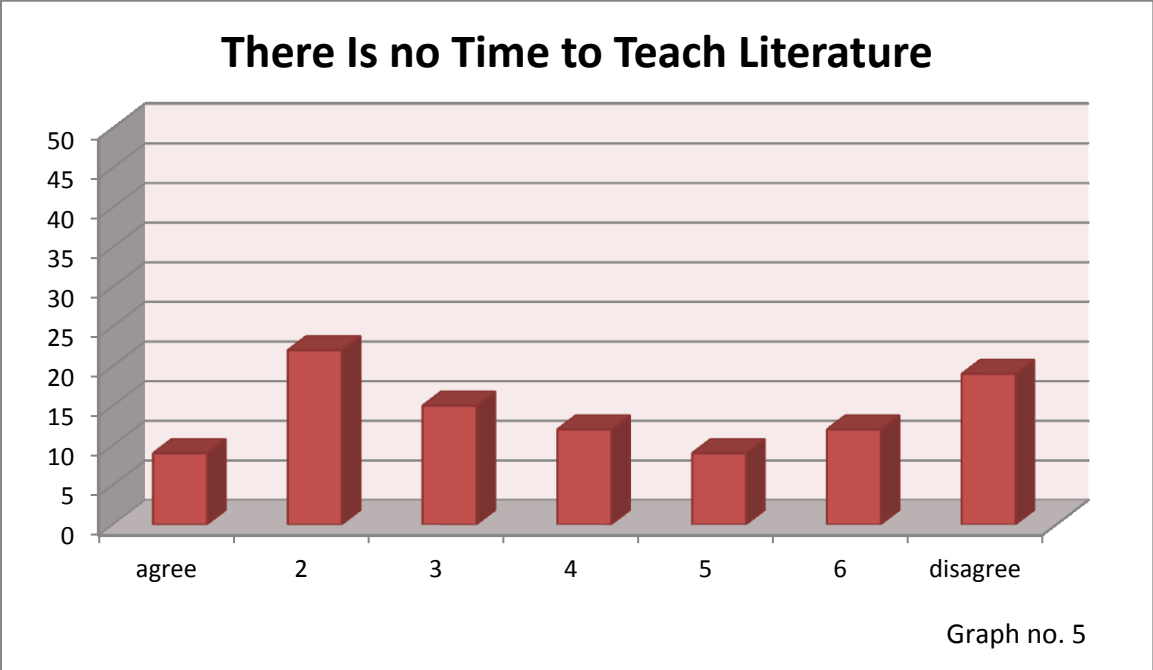


All of the responses were counted and the final out coming number which signaled in how many situations teachers would use authentic texts stopped at 62.5%, which is only slightly above average.

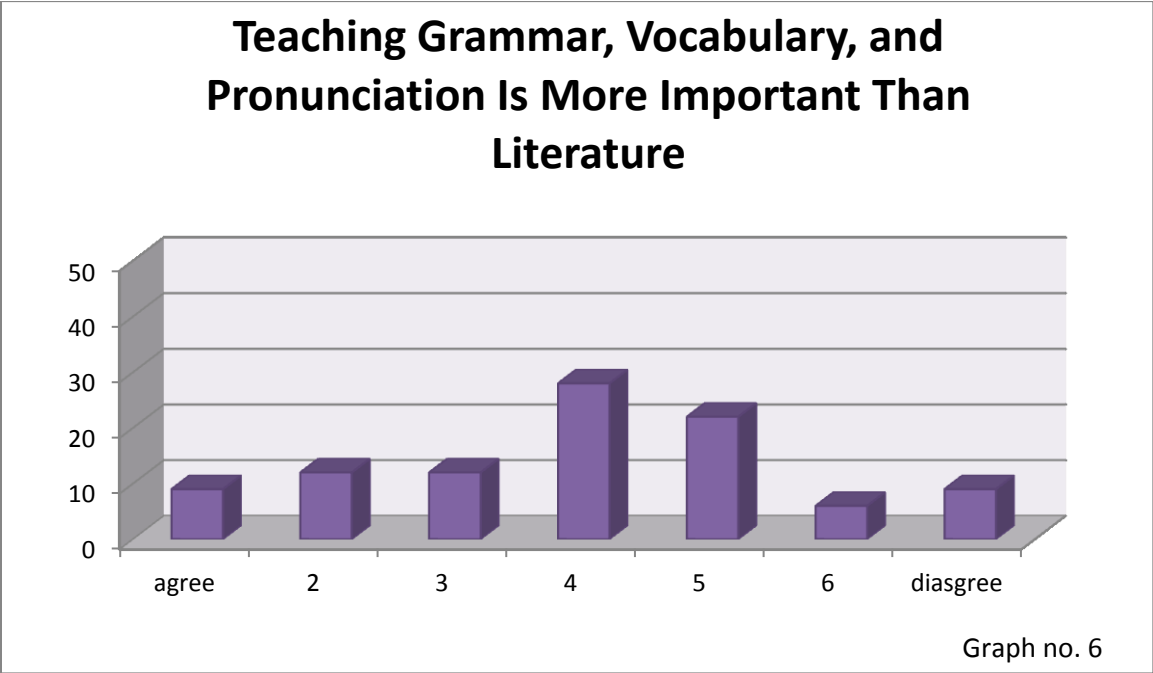
One of the research questions about graded readers was whether the teachers believe that graded readers are a great source and therefore should be used in classrooms. 71.9% answers were placed on the first three places of the scale which was pointing towards the 'agree' directions.

The last two rating scale questions were focused on the place of literature in the classroom. Whether there is the time to teach it and it should be therefore included in lesson plans and finally literature was compared to other aspects of English language such as grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation to find out the importance of teaching these particular segments of language.

The answers of the question whether there is time to teach literature differed greatly and it showed that all of the respondents were in a disagreement.



Similar answers were given to the question about importance of particular language segments. Most of the answers were placed in the middle which showed that the teachers were not fully decided. As the graph below shows, the rest of the respondents divided their answers approximately in a half and put them on both sides of the scales confirming the divergence of opinions.



The very last question was an open question where the respondents could comment and state whether they see any benefits in teaching literature. Seven of the teachers simply answered yes and did not clarify their answer any further but the rest of the respondents had some very interesting and inspiring comments.

Exactly eight respondents out of the remaining twenty-five, who specified their answer, mentioned enhancing vocabulary in some way as a benefit of reading or being taught literature. Alongside with vocabulary, widening the knowledge of grammatical structures was stated in many cases, as one of the respondents thought of teaching literature as of “it is a good way to extend the students' vocabulary and

knowledge of grammar structures, which they pick up naturally” (Questionnaire Response).

Some of the respondents stated in their answers the authenticity of English language in literary texts. They saw a benefit in students getting familiarized with what one of them called “real English” (Questionnaire Response). The usage of collocations in authentic texts was also mentioned as a way for students to realize their meaning and above all “the student sees for himself how the language works in context” (Questionnaire Response).

Usage of literature in the classroom was also seen by many respondents as a starter for further task development “literature can be used as a basis for many interesting follow up activities” (Questionnaire Response). They mentioned that literature is a highly motivating material and therefore it creates “excellent discussion opportunities” (Questionnaire Response).

Graded readers were mentioned only by two respondents, when one of them lends them to her students as a complementary material and the other actually uses them in class as she stated “graded readers are excellent extra material. I always encourage my students to start reading in English as soon as possible. They read at home and then we talk about the book at the beginning of the lesson” (Questionnaire Response).

The topic that the respondents were commenting most frequently on was the cultural aspect of literary texts. Large number of the respondents stated that literature helps students to understand the culture of the country their language they are learning better. “Teaching literature would provide more background knowledge of the culture, generally, literature broadens your views, let’s you enjoy the language” (Questionnaire Response). Many of the teachers saw benefits in literature introducing

certain culture to their students, but as one of the respondents mentioned, the demand for teaching literature is not very high when it comes to teaching in language schools or companies and therefore “If literature is to be introduced to ESL students, it almost definitely needs be done in a secondary school environment. Students there have the time and study focus to be able to engage with it” (Questionnaire Response).

Despite the fact that almost all of the respondents mentioned a variety of benefits, they also pointed up a few negatives that teaching literature involves. The time factor was remarked as many of the responding teachers thought that there is not enough of time to be concerned with literature in the lessons. Also the problem with creating new lesson plans or curriculum was brought up and one of the teachers summed the majority of negatives in her answer “books we use at school do not offer real literature. We would have to prepare a lot of new materials, which is very time consuming and nobody pays us for extra work” (Questionnaire Response).

7.4. Research Conclusion

There were a few negative aspects of teaching literature mentioned in the research, when time being the issue the teachers were concerned the most about. Also they thought the importance of teaching other aspects of English language is greater than teaching literature. Despite these responses and comments the majority of the respondents saw many benefits of including authentic literary texts in ESL lessons. Among all it was the fact that students are provided with an excerpt of a language which is, in most cases, used for actual communication. Also many of the responding teachers mentioned that through authentic texts their students would be able to enhance their vocabulary and see the use of grammatical structures. The teachers were also thinking of the range of follow-up tasks which literature teaching is

able to provide them with. Seeing these benefits it might help the teachers to realize that literature should not be omitted and they might try to work with literary texts more than they do now.

8. Research: Literature Lesson

8.1. Lesson Planning

The literary lesson was carefully planned in order to include as many skills as possible. A great help during this process was given by Mgr. Michaela Čaňková who is an expert in the field of teaching English literature as well as in teaching culture. Mrs Čaňková had a number of helpful suggestions when creating the lesson plan as it was developed under her supervision.

The final text selection was Sue Townsend's *The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole aged 13 ¾* because the main protagonist is easily relatable to secondary school students as well as it provides an inside look in the English society of the Thatcher era. One of the initial worries was that the students will not look at it as at a piece of classical literature since it is written in a quite informal style and therefore it might not be taken seriously by the students. But the decision was final and supported by Mrs Čaňková as well as by many literary experts who value Adrian Mole highly "It was probably the biggest phenomenon of my youth after 'Star Wars' and 'Star Wars was bigger than God (David Williams)" (Guardian).

8.2. The Lesson

Four literary focused lessons were delivered in order to do a survey among students of secondary schools. Because all of the lessons were taught according to the same lesson plan only one of them will be described in detail and it will be the lesson taught in 3.B. The students in 3.B were a perfect sample of secondary schools students and they cooperated well since the author of the thesis was already familiar with them from teaching external practice in their class.

At first the students were explained the purpose of the lesson and they were kindly asked to fill in an online questionnaire afterwards.

The lead-in to the lesson was in a form of brainstorming, when students had to think of description and everything that would be connected with the word 'diary'. They came to a desirable conclusion that diaries are sometimes kept by people who feel lonely or who somehow differ from the society they live in. The students were then given an excerpt from Sue Townsend's *Secret Diary of Adrian Mole* and they read it in silence before they brainstormed again in order to find out the most about the author of the diary. The whole class voted when they could not decide if it was a boy or a girl who wrote the diary and all together they were able to put together a rough portrait of Adrian Mole. When they got familiar with the text there was a vocabulary exercise ready for them since there was an unknown expression 'dead good' in the very first sentence. The meaning was quite easily elicited from the students and they were asked to think of more expressions of both, similar meaning and opposite meaning. When they have brainstormed enough of these expressions they were given an exercise with a scale and in pairs they filled in these words or phrases according to their opinion. Class check with a discussion about particular vocabulary followed. Students were then divided into three groups and together they were supposed to come up with an idea what might have happened to Adrian before he wrote the given excerpt. They came with very interesting ideas and together they voted for the most possible option. Then they received an excerpt which revealed what really happened to Adrian and the class discussed how close they were with their suggestions. Together the students analyzed the language Adrian uses when he writes into his diary and they put it on the board. In the same group the students wrote another entry of Adrian's diary aiming to make it as similar to his style as possible. Their entries turned out extremely well and they the students seemed to have fun while writing them. In the end of the lesson the students exchanged their

diary entries and they were asked to do an error check. They were monitored and help was given when needed. The forty-five minutes long lesson did not allow the students to complete anymore tasks.

8.3. Research Design

The questionnaire for the students was created in a similar way as the questionnaire for teachers. An online form was used and the students were given the link so they can complete it after the lesson was over and after they had some time to think about the impact the lesson had on them.

The lesson was delivered in 3rd and 4th years of a secondary school, Gymnázium Vítězslava Nováka in Jindřichův Hradec in particular. Author of the thesis had an advantage since she already taught a few lessons to these students during her external practice and therefore they were familiar with her and vice versa.

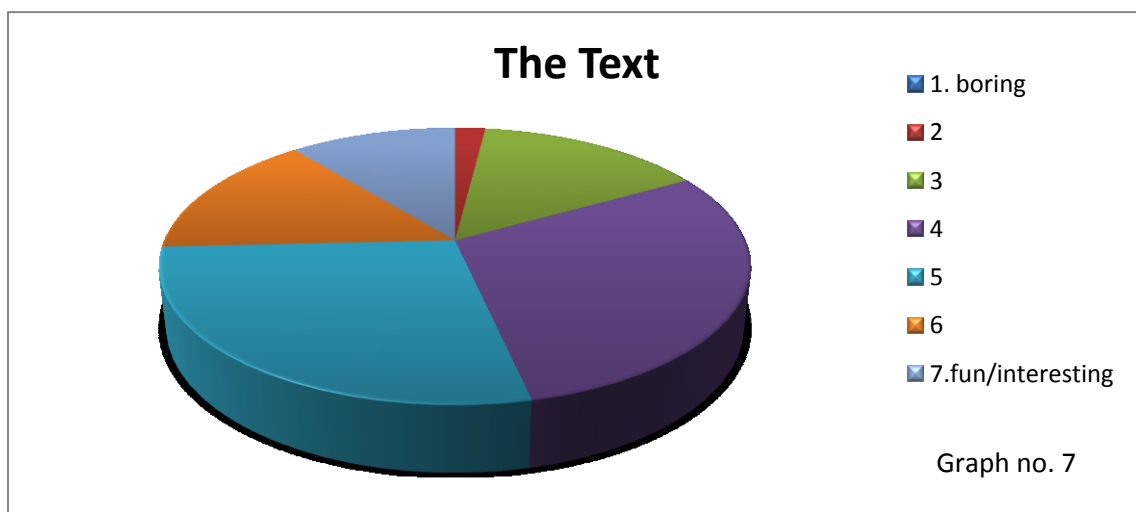
The students were told about the purpose of the lesson in advance and they were kindly asked to fill in the questionnaire within a few days after the lesson was delivered so the author of the thesis had time to analyze and evaluate their answers. The questionnaires were composed of twelve questions when ten of them, as in the questionnaire for teachers, were rating scale based. One of the questions particularly asked about the skills that were integrated into the lesson and the students were given a few options to decide what they feel they have practiced the most during the lesson. The last question was an open question where the students could express their opinion about the lesson or any further comments. The students were given the permission to write these comments in Czech if they were not comfortable with writing them in English. Therefore are some of their responses translated into English by the author of the thesis.

8.3.1. The Respondents

The lesson was taught in four groups of students, every group being a half of the class and therefore there were approximately fifteen students in each group. The number of girls slightly prevailed and the questionnaire was filled in by thirty-six girls and twenty-five boys and therefore the questionnaire was completed by sixty-one students. Because the lesson was taught in the 3rd and 4th years of secondary school the age ranged from seventeen to twenty years and as the results showed the average age of the respondents was 18.2 years.

8.4. Research Evaluation

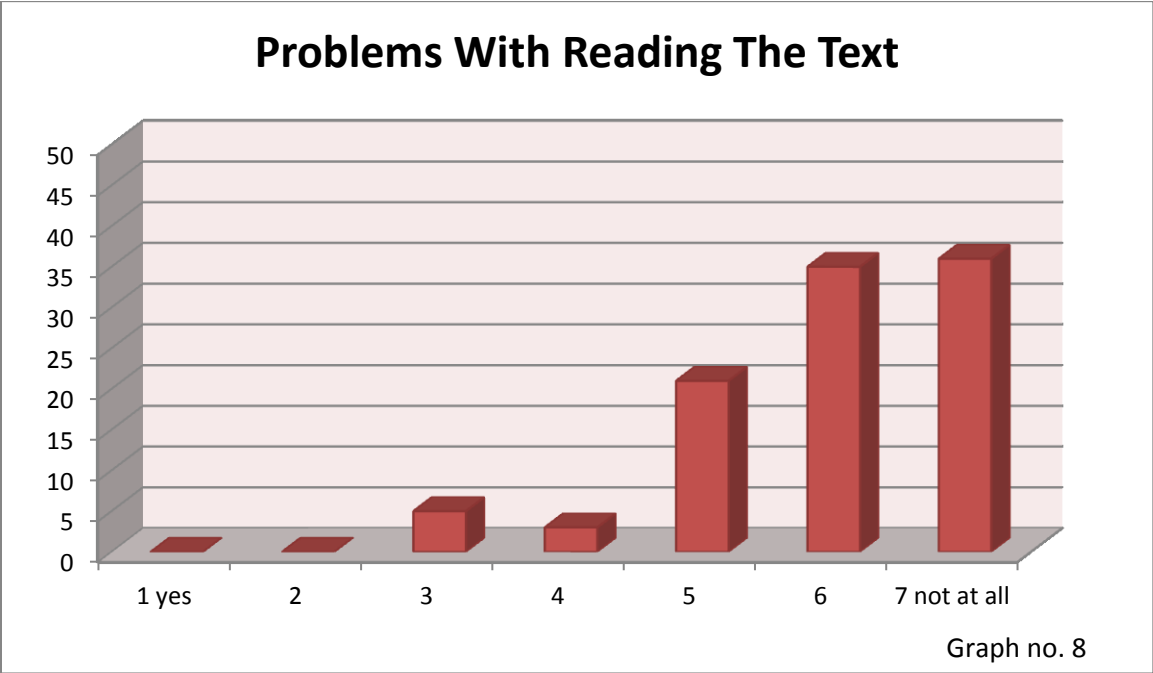
First few questions in the survey were concerning the text and the students were asked, whether they found it boring or interesting. The following diagram shows their answers



Exactly 83.8% responses were placed on number four or higher on the rating scale which indicates that the majority of the students thought of the text as of a rather interesting or fun text.

The students' reading skills were tested because they were given an authentic text which was not graded in any way. Reading skill of the students was one of the

initial worries of the author of the thesis because it was only an assumption supported by theory that students should be on such level that they will be able to read the text without any major difficulties. Therefore one of the questions in the survey was aimed to find out whether the assumption was correct or not.

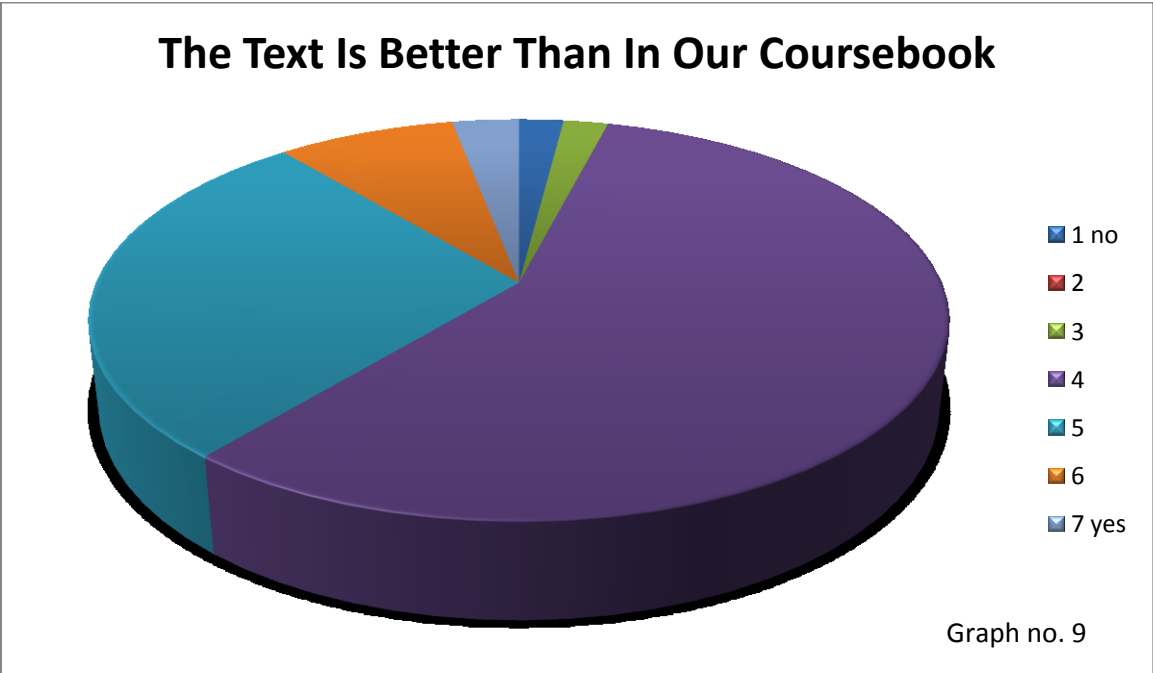


The graph above confirms the assumption that students of 3rd and 4th years of secondary schools are able to read authentic texts without any problems and therefore their reading skills do not stand in the way when it comes to teaching literature.

To support the results which are seen in the previous graph another question concerning the text was asked. Because the students were filling in the questionnaire after the lesson it was desirable to find out how much of the text do they actually remember. Only 1.7% of the respondents placed their answer on the first three options which were on the scale leaning towards the situation that the students did not remember what they have read about. 88.7% respondents placed their answer on number five and further towards the end which signaled that the students

remembered well what the text was about which also confirmed the fact that they understood the text while reading it. Although a majority of the students thought the text was interesting and fun they placed their answers on the negative part of the rating scale when asked if they would like to read the whole book. Almost 40% of the respondents selected number four as their final answer which is exactly in the middle of the rating scale and the remaining 60% was unequally divided. 42% of the responses were on the negative part of the scale and only 18% of the responses took place on the positive part of the scale.

One of the survey questions was aimed to make a comparison between the given text and the texts students usually have in their coursebooks. They were simply asked whether they think the authentic text was generally better than the coursebook texts. The results are presented in graph no. 9.

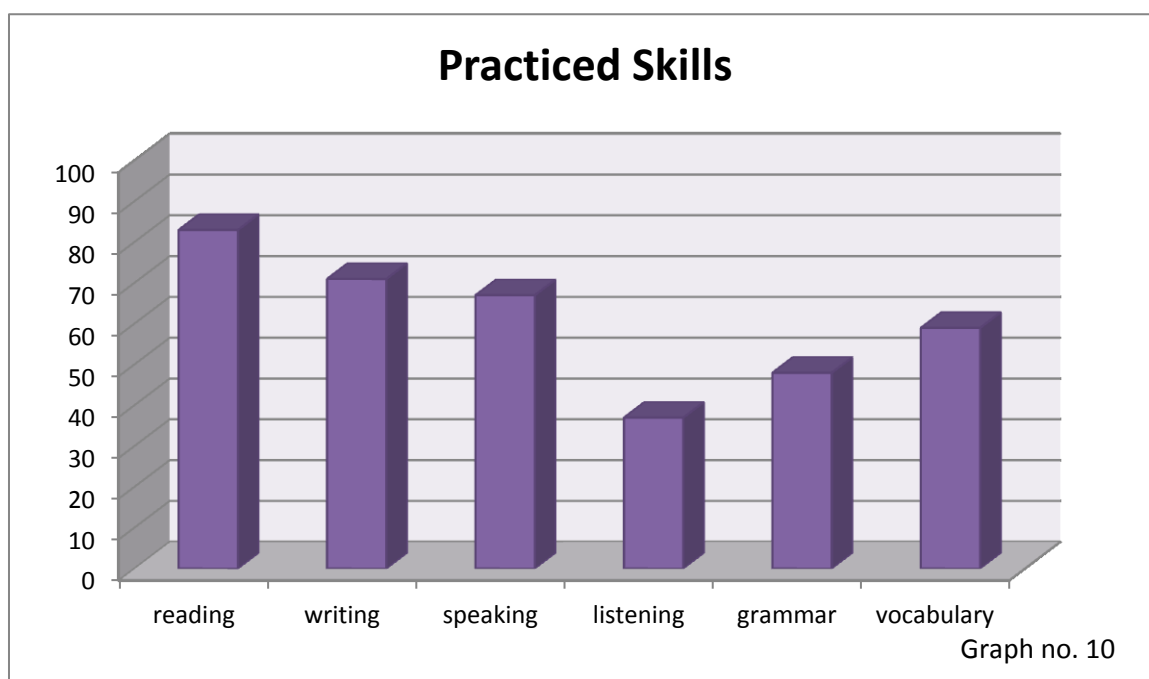


Over a half of the respondents selected the answer which is exactly in the middle of the rating scale which could mean, that they were not decided, or that some texts are better, some worse. Slightly over 39% of the respondents placed then their answer toward the positive end of the scale which indicates that a large group of

students thought the literary text was somehow better than the texts they have in their coursebooks.

Next two questions were asked to find out whether the students felt as if they have learnt something new and what have they practiced the most during the lesson. 82.1% of the respondents placed their answer on number four and further on the rating scale towards the positive end. The students were given a chart in the following question and they were supposed to give points to the skills they felt they have practiced the most when 1 being no practice at all and 7 practiced a lot. The answers were then summarized and averaged.

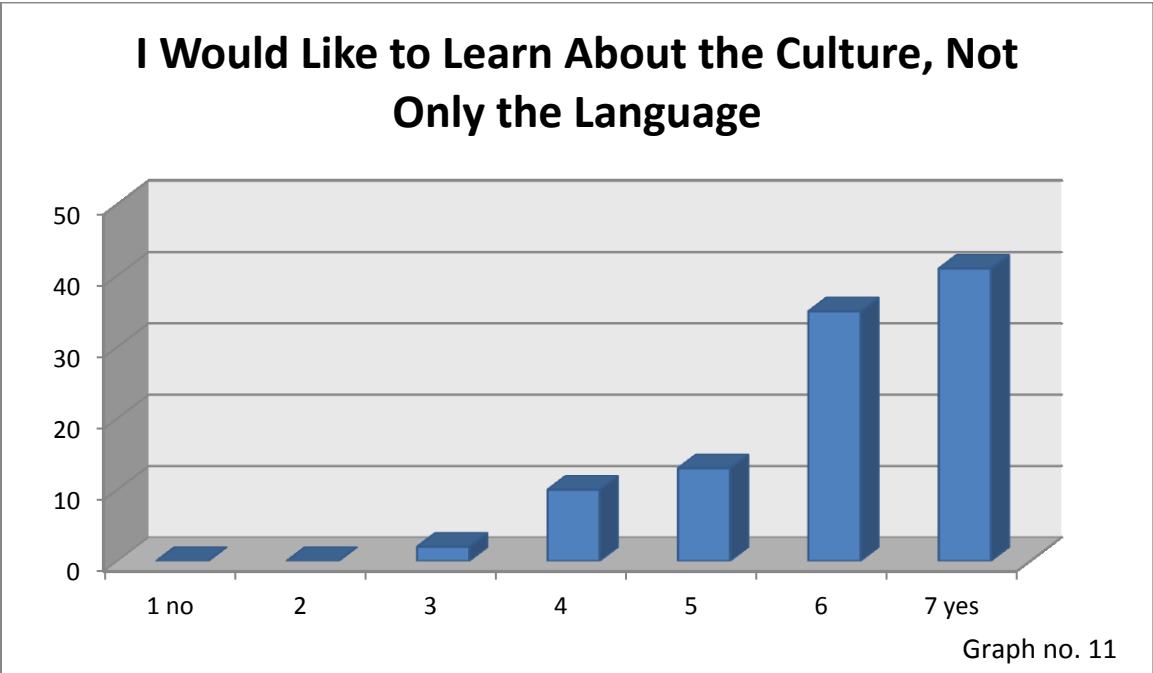
Following graph shows what skills have the students marked they have practiced.



As it is visible from the graph students marked that they practiced reading the most. Writing and speaking was practiced quite well. The graph shows that the students felt as if they have practiced all of the above mentioned skills, some more and some less but the results are satisfactory as including more skills into the lesson was one of the initial aims of the lesson.

Almost half of the respondents expressed their wish to continue working with the text during next lesson, another 44% of the respondents were undecided on this question and only 10% of the responding students did not wish to carry the text on any further.

Two following questions were aimed to find out whether the students will be interested in learning more of literary texts. Then a statement ‘I want to learn about the culture of English speaking countries as well, not only the language’ was presented and the students were supposed to express to what extent they agree with it. Over three quarters of the students, exactly 77.2%, placed their answer on the positive side of the rating scale and therefore they were in favour of having more literature in their lessons. The following graph shows quite clearly the students’ opinion about learning more about cultures of English speaking countries.



The two above mentioned questions and the results explicitly signaled that the interest in literature and culture of English speaking countries is there and that the students would be happy to have more of it in their lessons.

The last rating scale based question was quite general and the students were asked their opinion about the lesson. They could have chosen one side of the rating scale which said it was boring or the other which considered the lesson to be fun and interesting. Despite initial worries of the author of the thesis the lesson turned out to be quite successful among the students as approximately 69% of the responses were placed on number 5 and higher on the positive side of the rating scale.

The very last question was an open question where the students could express their opinion or commenting on anything they wanted. Ten out of sixty-one respondents either did not want to comment or they have written a comment useless for the purposes of the thesis. Eighteen of the responding students mentioned in their comments that they liked the lesson or thought of it as of a fun and interesting lesson. To the surprise of the author of the thesis not many negative comments were received and if they were not concerning the content of the lesson although two students mentioned that “the text was more for girls than boys” (Questionnaire Response) and also “I didn’t like the text too much but I was happy it was not Shakespeare or Poe again” (Questionnaire Response) which also showed that the range of the actually taught texts is not very wide.

A few comments were made about the text itself who the students were not familiar with. One of the respondents was interested in literature but the genre of selected text was obviously nothing she would have chosen as she stated “I would be interested in more literature in the lessons but with some classic books such as *Pride and Prejudice*, *Oliver Twist* and other books from English authors” (Questionnaire Response). On the other hand there were students who looked up the text and commented on what they have found out “I didn't know that *Adrian Mole* was famous. When I went home I read about in on the internet” (Questionnaire Response)

as well as “a lot of my classmates looked it up on Google and we talked about it the next day. We didn’t know the book was this famous” (Questionnaire Response).

The students’ contributions were quite beneficial for the purposes of the thesis when they made a number of suggestions of how to improve their lessons. Some of the students were not able to imagine having every lesson like the one that was delivered but they thought it would be nice to include some of it as one of the students wrote “I can’t imagine having every lesson like this, but once a week it could be good. Have one more grammar lesson, one speaking, one literature” (Questionnaire Response). Also teaching literature was viewed as a help when selecting a text in their free time “I would like to have more lessons like this. I don’t have time for reading but like this I would read something because I would have an idea what it is about from school” (Questionnaire Response).

The author of the thesis sees a great accomplishment in the comments of the students when they mentioned they went home and looked it up or thought about it. Because of one of the questions in the survey concerning texts in coursebooks one of the students took the time to see the texts in their book “I was curious so I looked in our book, some texts were ok, but some were really stupid and not good for anything” (Questionnaire Response). The very same student also commented on the text and came to a very valuable conclusion for the purposes of the thesis “The text from you was ok, but I found it on the internet and I think if I read the book it will tell me a lot about English tradition and people” (Questionnaire Response).

Many of the comments were useful and encouraging and it was great to see that this generation is still able to see benefits in literature. One of the most valued comments regarding the theme of the thesis showed that some of the students understood the purpose of the literature lesson to an extent the author of the thesis

was not daring to hope for “I have never felt like I’m missing these information about English speaking countries in any way, but now ... I think I would love to just replace some less interesting topics from our books for some information about those countries” (Questionnaire Response).

8.5. Research Conclusion

The questionnaire showed a number of facts, which are very helpful regarding the purpose of the thesis. The lesson was successful in terms of realizing that the students’ reading skills are on such level that they are able to read authentic texts without any major problems. Also when a right text is selected students are able to enjoy the lesson and learn something new, or practice, as the results have shown, many skills or segments of language. The students are also aware of the fact that literary texts could not only help them improve their language skills but they are also able to learn more about culture and traditions of a particular English speaking country as well as students might find themselves gaining pleasure from reading. The research has proven that students are interested in literature and they see what it has to offer and therefore teachers should be encouraged to use literary texts in the ESL classrooms as much as possible.

9. Conclusion

Literature in ESL classrooms is able to provide students not only with all of the segments of English language but it also helps learners to discover cultures of foreign countries whose language they are trying to acquire. Selected texts are then capable of being a perfect model of language which is used among people in order to communicate. Therefore literature has a great potential to teach authentic language to its readers.

Reading is a skill which does not necessarily need to be mastered before learners decide to read a book in English. There is a large number of graded readers offered even for learners whose level of English is not at a high level of proficiency. Although the authenticity of the language in graded readers might be debatable because they are rewritten into simplified English, they still offer cultural background of a particular country. Graded readers also seemed as if they were great sources to the majority of the teachers who were responding to the questionnaire and a number of them stated that they are already using them during their ESL lessons. The survey also showed that learners of the last two years of secondary school are at such level with their reading that they are able to read, understand and work with the authentic text in the same way they would work with a text printed in their coursebooks.

As it has been described, teachers in secondary schools are mostly in contact with adolescents who are a rather specific learning group as their brain development is not entirely a completed process. Therefore the attitude teachers maintain towards them should be carefully thought through as the influence teachers might have on their learners is enormous. In order to encourage and motivate students to speak their mind it is particularly useful to use high-order questions as they are aimed to involve learner's own response and opinion. Getting students to talk about their view

of a particular text is a great basis for a wide range of follow-up tasks which could be all connected with the reading text but the tasks are able to provide students with practice of other skills, such as speaking, or writing.

The range of materials that are used in the class plays an essential role when it comes to teaching literature. Teachers must be aware of the fact that their lessons should be synchronized with other English teachers from their school in order to follow the school's educational programme. The most valuable sources for teachers of literature are clearly literary texts and graded readers although a very careful text selection must be made in order for the teaching to be effective. When creating a lesson plan texts should be selected in order to be useful not only for reading tasks but also for a variety of follow-up tasks. The selection must take into account a number of aspects so that the students are able to understand it not only from the linguistic, but also from the cultural and literary background point of view. Selected texts should ideally cover all of the above mentioned aspects as well as its language should be beneficial in terms of communicativeness.

The survey focusing on ESL teachers showed that the responding teachers have little experience with teaching literature and they mainly concentrate on teaching speaking and fluency. The use of authentic literature in their classrooms was quite limited, although the majority of the teachers agreed that the texts which are found in the coursebooks they are using are rather poor. The teachers came to a disagreement when answering the question about having or not having time for literature in the classroom and time also became a problematic issue when discussing benefits of teaching literature in ESL classrooms. Despite the fact that they saw many reasons for teaching literature, such as enhancing vocabulary of learners, familiarizing them with grammatical structures and introducing the specific

culture of given English speaking country to them, they reported that time wise it is unfavourable to dedicate the whole lesson to teaching literature.

The lesson delivered at a secondary school and the questionnaire which followed showed that it is possible for the teacher to combine authentic text and teach more than reading only. An important revelation was made concerning the reading skill of the students. In the introduction to the thesis an assumption was made about students and the level of English they should be at according to the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport. When teaching the 3rd and 4th year secondary school students it became quite clear that the assumed level was set properly and in many cases it was even higher. Therefore initial worries about students not being able to understand the authentic text were pointless. Although students are seldom in contact with literary or any other kind of authentic texts and they only read what the coursebook has to offer, the text was easily comprehensible for a vast majority of them which prevented the lesson from being unsuccessful due to the insufficient reading skill.

The survey among the students showed that the opinion about the text and the lesson in general was rather positive and the students thought of the text as being fun and interesting with the benefit that a large number of them remembered what the text was about even days after reading it. Although not many of the students wanted to read the whole book in their free time, they were given an insight into a literary text which exists and is reachable beyond the classroom. It was very satisfactory for the purposes of the thesis to see in the open question comments that the students were looking the text up and they were discussing it with each other the following day.

The objective of the thesis was met in terms of mapping the current situation of teaching literature at secondary schools, which is rather unsatisfactory as far as

the purpose of the thesis is concerned. The main obstacle seems to be the time but it is believed that if lesson plans which include more skills than just reading were developed and shared between teachers, then teaching literature could be given a more substantial role in school curriculums.

Another aim of the thesis was to find out whether students are interested in literature and its cultural aspects and whether they would like to learn more about it and not only the foreign language itself. Judging from the lessons taught and the responses of the students in the survey they are definitely interested in cultures of English speaking countries. The students were introduced to one of the well-known books of the past three decades and if they decide to read the whole book they will certainly gain knowledge of a particular part of English society as well as their culture. Considering the fact that many skills were integrated to the lesson in which authentic text was used, it seemed highly beneficial for them.

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Appendix

i. List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
MŠMT	Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy
ZPD	Zone of proximal development
ESL	English as a second language
TTT	Teacher talking time
STT	Student talking time
ELT	English language teaching
IWB	Interactive white board
CALL	Computer-Assisted language learning

FORM

No problems with form are expected.

.....

PRONUNCIATION

rotten /ɹɒt(ə)n/

struggle /stɹʌg(ə)l/

vocabulary (if unknown) will be practiced by choral drilling

Stage and Aims	Time	Procedure	Interaction	Comments
Introduction Setting context to the lesson	5 min	I will greet the students and ask them if something interesting happened to them the day before or over the weekend, if they went to see a movie, met with friends, read or heard something that caught their attention. After they answer I will ask whether some of them noted it down, if they keep a diary or journal of any kind and let them chat about keeping a diary for a minute or two.	T-Ss S-S	
Reading task Introduction of the text	3 min	Every student will get an excerpt no. 1 from Sue Townsend's <i>The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole Aged 13 ¾</i> . Then they will read it for themselves and think what was happening in Adrian's life before he wrote in his diary that day.	Ss	
Vocabulary Vocabulary extension	7 min	I will ask the students whether they are familiar with the expressions 'dead good'. I assume they will not, but they will be able to make up the sense from the excerpt. I will then ask them if they know any other expressions (adjectives) that will express their opinion. I will write their ideas on the board. I will give them an exercise with a scale and a few expressions which they will fill in the scale depending on its meaning.	T-Ss Ss-T S-S	
Speaking task Speaking practice, making suggestion	8 min	Students in pairs or in groups will discuss their opinions and together they will settle on one option which they would then present to the whole class. Then the class votes the option they think is the best or the closest to what might have happened to Adrian.	Ss-Ss	
Reading and speaking continued	7 min	The excerpt no. 2 of what happened to Adrian before will be handed to students and they will read it and discuss how close they were with their suggestions.	T-Ss Ss-Ss	
Writing task Writing practice Error correction stage	12 min	Before the students write another diary entry, in Adrian's style, we will discuss what language he uses. I will elicit the tenses from the students (usually past simple, past continuous and a variety of present tenses). I will ask them to take a look at the excerpts and tell me if he writes in long or short sentences and whether he uses complicated words. From what they say they will try to predict and write in similar style what might happen next. They will exchange their entries and make an error check. If there is time left we will read a few more entries from Adrian's diary, so they know how close they were.	T-Ss Ss-T S-S	

The end of the lesson Homework	3 min	I will tell the students where they can find the book if they are interested in reading it. I will give them homework to write their own diary entry.	T-Ss	
---------------------------------------	--------------	---	------	--

Excerpt 1.

Tuesday January 27th

Art was dead good today. I painted a lonely boy standing on a bridge. The boy had just lost his first love to his ex-best friend. The ex-best friend was struggling in the torrential river. The boy was watching his ex-best friend drown. The ex-best friend looked a bit like Nigel. The boy looked a bit like me. Ms Fossington-Gore said my picture 'had depth', so did the river. Ha! Ha! Ha.

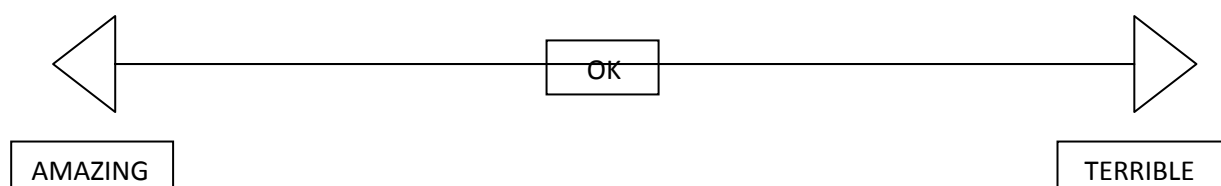
Excerpt 2.

Saturday January 24th

Today was the most terrible day of my life. My mother has a job doing her rotten typing in an insurance office! She starts on Monday! Mr Lucas works at the same place. He is going to give her a lift every day. And my father is in a bad mood- he thinks his big-end is going. But worst of all, Bert Baxter is not a nice old age pensioner! He drinks and smokes and he has an Alsatian dog called Sabre. Sabre was locked up in the kitchen while I was cutting the massive hedge, but he didn't stop growling once. But even worse than that! Pandora is going out with Nigel!!!! I think I will never get over this shock.

Vocabulary exercise:

PRETTY GOOD	LAME	DEAD GOOD	
LOUSY	HOT	PAINFUL	
NEAT	MEDIOCRE	COOL	SOLID



iii. Questionnaire for Teachers

1. Blank Survey

Teaching Literature in Secondary Schools

The goal of this questionnaire is to find out if and how is literature taught in English lessons.

Please enter your information:

Gender	<input type="text" value="----"/>
Age	<input type="text" value="----"/>
years of experience	<input type="text"/>
I teach at	<input type="text"/>

1. In my lessons I usually focus on grammar and vocabulary

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
not at all very much

2. In my lessons I usually focus on fluency and speaking

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
not at all very much

3. In my lessons I usually focus on writing

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
not at all very much

4. In my lessons I usually focus on reading and literature

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
not at all very much

5. I have experience with teaching literature

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
none many

6. I find texts in course books

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
poor excellent

7. I use authentic texts in the classroom

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
never every time it is suitable

8. There is no time for literature in the lessons

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
agree disagree

9. It is more important to teach grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation than literature

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
agree disagree

10. Graded readers are a great source for students and should be used in lessons

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
agree disagree

11. Do you see any benefits in teaching literature?

2. Results

Statistiky respondentů:

Celkem respondentů	32	Filtr výsledků: (změnit) (?)
Muž:	12	Muži a Ženy
Žena:	20	Věk: 24 - 59
Průměrný věk:	39 let	

Shrnutí výsledků

1. In my lessons I usually focus on grammar and vocabulary



Mezi 32 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 4.81 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 2, nejvyšší je 7.



2. In my lessons I usually focus on fluency and speaking



Mezi 32 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 5.41 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 3, nejvyšší je 7.



3. In my lessons I usually focus on writing



Mezi 32 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 3.25 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 2, nejvyšší je 7.



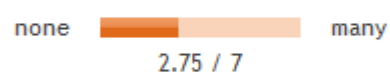
4. In my lessons I usually focus on reading and literature



Mezi 32 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 3.09 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 1, nejvyšší je 7.



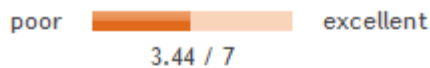
5. I have experience with teaching literature



Mezi 32 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 2.75 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 1, nejvyšší je 7.



6. I find texts in course books



Mezi 32 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 3.44 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 1, nejvyšší je 6.



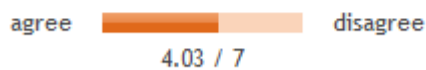
7. I use authentic texts in the classroom



Mezi 32 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 4.38 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 2, nejvyšší je 7.



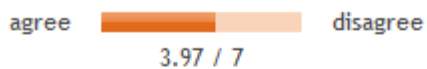
8. There is no time for literature in the lessons



Mezi 32 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 4.03 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 1, nejvyšší je 7.



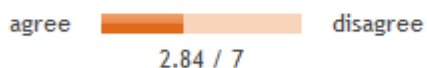
9. It is more important to teach grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation than literature



Mezi 32 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 3.97 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 1, nejvyšší je 7.



10. Graded readers are a great source for students and should be used in lessons



Mezi 32 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 2.84 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 1, nejvyšší je 6.



11. Do you see any benefits in teaching literature?

- 1) Absolutely!
- 2) Yes
- 3) Yes -- creates excellent discussion opportunities.
- 4) Yes, I do
- 5) not so much in basic schools where I teach

- 6) Students learn a wide range of vocabulary. Authentic texts might motivate students more
- 7) authentic texts, sometimes movies based on them
- 8) Yes I do as literature integrate all aspects of language that should be taught.
- 9) It helps the students with learning the language, the vocab and the grammar structures are recycled and above all the student sees for himself how the language works in context. As a product, you can get pleasure from the reading process.
- 10) Students encounter authentic English and books where the writers share their views of life. Teaching literature is to teach students understand their culture.
- 11) yes, you are teaching culture as well that way and help the students understand the language better
- 12) wider general knowledge, use of collocations
- 13) All 'real' English has it's place in lessons
- 14) Personally, yes, but I think it is not a subject of interest for every student. I lend graded readers to students, with some we read for HW. But I am afraid that teaching real literature would not be appreciated by my language school students.

P.S. as for the benefits - teaching literature would provide more background knowledge of the culture, generally, literature broadens your views, lets you enjoy the language and broadens your vocabulary.

- 15) brings better overall knowledge and education; enhances vocabulary and writing skills
- 16) yes
- 17) not all students benefit from it, but those who are interested can gain a lot.
- 18) Yes, it is a good way to extend the students' vocabulary and knowledge of grammar structures, which they pick up naturally. Moreover, literature can be used as a basis for many interesting follow up activities. Literature should not be omitted.
- 19) I believe literature helps people come in contact with a deeper self, hopefully making each person become more aware of his own actions and hence better citizens (but its not always the case). Unfortunately it is not as requested as grammar and vocabulary. All my lessons are focused on grammar and vocabulary, I never get the chance to teach literature.
- 20) I originally qualified as a teacher of language and literature for secondary schools and colleges in England. I see huge benefits in the teaching of literature, it is after all

how most native-speakers gain vocabulary and fluency. Literature, and the study thereof, also enables students to think, learn and imagine in English, as well as introducing them to the thoughts and phrasing of great writers. I honestly wish there were more time to teach it. However, literature is becoming increasingly less important in people's everyday lives. In the instance of ESL, the vast majority of students learn English only as a tool for communication, an extension of their basic job skills if you like. Most of my teaching now takes place in a company environment, where there is almost no place, time, or interest in literature. The main focus here is on business communication and competency.

If literature is to be introduced to ESL students, it almost definitely needs to be done in a secondary school environment. Students there have the time and study focus to be able to engage with it, without questioning its importance in relation to their daily communication, as students in companies typically do.

In conclusion, I see vast and obvious benefits in teaching literature, or at least teaching students through literature, but the whole system, approach and attitude towards ESL and literature need to change before it can be considered truly relevant in today's ESL classrooms.

I hope that is of some help to you.

21) vocabulary, general overview

22) I think reading books in English is very useful and important part of learning process and graded readers are excellent extra material. I always encourage my students to start reading in English as soon as possible. They read at home and then we talk about the book at the beginning of the lesson (max. 10mins)

It is highly motivating to be able to read in foreign language and it helps Ss to understand how the language works.

23) It all depends. In my university courses, I teach specific content areas: sometimes writing, sometimes reading, sometimes listening-speaking, and occasionally grammar. Only in my TOEFL courses do I teach all the content areas at once. In upper-level reading courses, I definitely recommend literature and authentic texts. However, in other courses, there is simply no time to include authentic

literature in my lessons.

24) yes, but there is not so much time. Also books we use at school do not offer real literature. We would have to prepare a lot of new materials, which is every time consuming and nobody pays us for extra work.

25) yes, but teachers would have to follow different books than they are used to. Many of us don't know how to teach literature which is a shame. Students at school could benefit from it because the language in the books is very close to the one used in real life.

26) Many, it widens students vocabulary and teaches them when to use which grammatical structures

27) many, vocabulary, reading skills. But students must be on a very high level to read books

28) yes, some texts in coursebooks are good for nothing, it would be good to alter these texts

29) yes

30) yes

31) students should have an overall knowledge wider vocabulary

32) yes

iv. Questionnaire for Students

1. Blank Survey

Literature Lesson

The aim of the survey is to find out how students felt about a literature lesson delivered at a particular secondary school.

Vložte text:

Pohlaví

Věk

1. The lesson was generally

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
boring fun/interesting

2. The text we have read was

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
boring fun/interesting

3. I had no problem understanding the text

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
problem no problem

4. The text was generally better than texts we have in our coursebook/textbook

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
no yes

5. I still remember now what the text was about

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
not at all yes

6. I would like to read the whole book

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
no yes

7. I have learned something new

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
not at all yes

8. During the lesson I have practiced

	not at all	2	3	4	5	6	a lot
Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. I wish we would continue with it next lesson

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
no yes

10. I want to learn about the culture of English speaking countries as well, not only the language

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
no yes

11. I wish we had more literature in the lessons

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
no yes

12. Comments

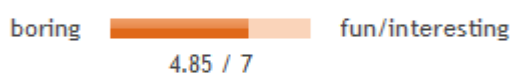
2. Results

Statistiky respondentů:

Celkem respondentů	61	Filtr výsledků: změnit (?)
Muž:	25	Muži a Ženy
Žena:	36	Věk: 17 - 20
Průměrný věk:	18.2 let	

Shrnutí výsledků

1. The lesson was generally



Mezi 61 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 4.85 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 2, nejvyšší je 7.



2. The text we have read was



Mezi 61 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 4.74 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 2, nejvyšší je 7.



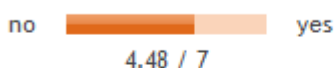
3. I had no problem understanding the text



Mezi 61 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 5.93 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 3, nejvyšší je 7.



4. The text was generally better than texts we have in our coursebook/textbook



Mezi 61 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 4.48 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 1, nejvyšší je 7.



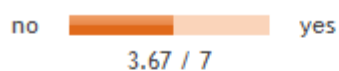
5. I still remember now what the text was about



Mezi 61 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 5.28 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 3, nejvyšší je 7.



6. I would like to read the whole book



Mezi 61 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 3.67 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 1, nejvyšší je 7.

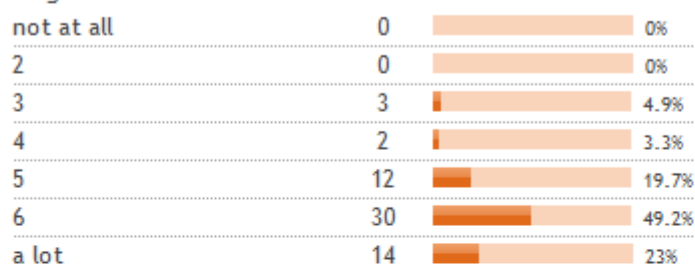
7. I have learned something new



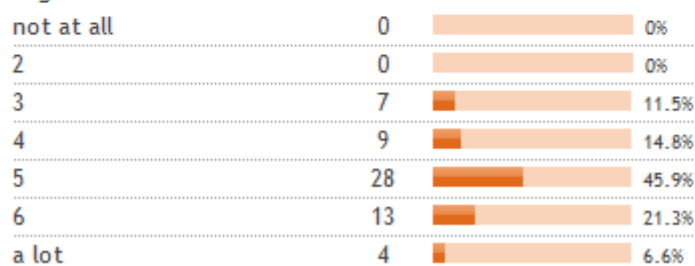
Mezi 61 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 4.33 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 1, nejvyšší je 7.

8. During the lesson I have practiced

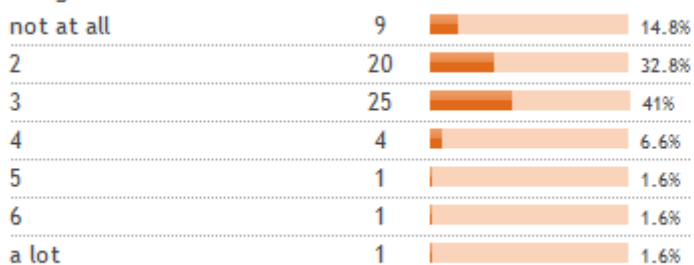
Reading



Writing



Listening



Grammar

not at all	1		1.6%
2	6		9.8%
3	31		50.8%
4	15		24.6%
5	4		6.6%
6	4		6.6%
a lot	0		0%

Vocabulary

not at all	0		0%
2	1		1.6%
3	9		14.8%
4	36		59%
5	9		14.8%
6	6		9.8%
a lot	0		0%

"Reading" nejčastější odpověď je: "6". Nejméně časté odpovědi jsou "not at all"; "2".

"Writing" nejčastější odpověď je: "5". Nejméně časté odpovědi jsou "not at all"; "2".

"Speaking" nejčastější odpovědi jsou: "5"; "4". Nejméně časté odpovědi jsou "not at all"; "3".

"Listening" nejčastější odpověď je: "3". Nejméně časté odpovědi jsou "6"; "a lot".

"Grammar" nejčastější odpověď je: "3". Nejméně častá odpověď je: "a lot".

"Vocabulary" nejčastější odpověď je: "4". Nejméně časté odpovědi jsou "not at all"; "a lot".

9. I wish we would continue with it next lesson

no yes
4.36 / 7

Mezi 61 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 4.36 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 1, nejvyšší je 7.

10. I want to learn about the culture of English speaking countries as well, not only the language

no yes
6.03 / 7

Mezi 61 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 6.03 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 3, nejvyšší je 7.

11. I wish we had more literature in the lessons

no yes
5.25 / 7

Mezi 61 respondenty je průměrná odpověď 5.25 (na stupnici od 1 do 7).
Nejméně označovaná odpověď je 2, nejvyšší je 7.

12. Comments:

1) (I would appreciate if had less games (generally in the lessons with you) and did more English. I understand that the point of the games is to start speaking English, but most of my classmates speak even less in these games.)

Literature: I would be interested in more literature in the lessons but with some classic books such as Pride and Prejudice, Oliver Twist and other books from English authors.

2) Doufám, že vám diplomová práce vyjde, a už nebudete muset přijít do naší třídy. Neberte to ve zlém! To vůbec ne! Ne že byste byla špatná, to ne. Ale když k nám přijdete takhle na jednu hodinu tak ta hodina je jako vytržená z kontextu a moc nám toho nepřinese. Něco jiného by bylo kdybychom vás měli třeba čtvrt roku to by pak určitě za něco stálo. Proto to neberte osobně, stejné by to bylo i s jinou praktikantkou. Prostě žáci s učitelem se musí nejdříve lépe poznat a na to ty čtyři hodiny co jsme vás měli opravdu nestačí. Ale byla to alespoň změna od běžné rutiny. Určitě z vás bude dobrá učitelka, ale až budete mít vlastní třídu, studenty které budete vídat prakticky denně. :D

Takže ať vám to stou prací a vysokou vyjde! :)

3) Thank you, Eva. I'll miss you. :)

And good luck with your dissertation!

4) very good

5) Hellů

10. * I have never felt like I'm missing these informations about English speaking countries in any way, but now ... I think I would love to just replace some less interesting topics from our books for some informations about those countries and their folklore.

I hope we will do that - during your next visit in our class or with Mr. Přerovský

Ok, that's all, bye :)

- 6) no Comments
- 7) Hodiny s vámi byly velmi zajímavé. Hlavně praktické.
- 8) Hodiny s vámi byly velmi zajímavé. Hlavně praktické. Naučily jsme se praktické věci do života..
- 9) The lesson was very fun! Thanks.
- 10) The lesson was a lot of fun.
- 11) I didn't know that Adrian Mole was famous. When I went home I read about in on the internet. Thank you for showing us this book.
- 12) I don't have time for reading. So it is good read at school.
- 13) no comments
- 14) hodina byla zábavná, líbilo se mi, jak jsme pracovali ve skupinách
- 15) úryvky byly zajímavé, něčemu jsem nrozumněla, ale dalo se to poznat z kontextu. Jsem ráda, že jsme dělali taky něco nového, ne jen pořád z knížky.
- 16) thank you
- 17) líbilo se mi, že stačil kousek z knížky aby jsme měli představu o čem to je.
- 18) it was fun
- 19) It was nice to do something new. But it was only one lesson, it would be good to do it for more lessons
- 20) no thanks
- 21) we learn about literature in czech lessons but I would like to read more text in original
- 22) good
- 23) Literatura zní jako dobrý nápad, jak se dovědět víc o kultuře jiných zemí, nejenom Anglie.
- 24) Some texts in our book are boring. This text was new. They didn't write it for a school book but we could still work with it. It was interesting
- 25) something new
- 26) no comment
- 27) When you said you will teach us about literature I thought you will just talk to us. I was suprised we did a lot of things with it.
- 28) hello Eva, it was fun, thank you
- 29) Vadilo mi, že na nás pořád mluvíte anglicky, i když vám rozumím, musel sem spolužákovi některé věci překládat.
- 30) Dobrý den, hodina byla zajímavá, já bych byla ráda, kdyby jsme měli víc

takových hodin. Nemám moc času na čtení, protože toho mám po škole hodně, ale takhle bych si něco přečetla protože bych už z hodiny měla představu, o čem to je.

nashledanou

31) I didnt like the text too much but I was happy it was not Shakespeare or Poe again.

32) good luck with your work

33) it was funny, I like work with my friends

34) vážená paní praktikantko, hodina s vámi byla dobrám líbilo se mi, že s textem se dá očividně dělat víc než to jenomčíst a pak k tomu mít otázky. Procvičili jsme hodně věcí. ale nevím, jestli by šlo mít takovou každou hodinu. hodně štěstí s diplomkou.

Lukáš

35) good

36) doufám, že ještě přijdete

37) some of my classmates were slow, so mayb it will be better if I worked by myself. but te lesson was ok, someting new, not just the book all the time

38) vaše hodiny byli zajímavé, hlavně jsme pořád něco dělali. ten text se mi líbil, i když jsem všemu nerozuměla. bylo zábavný vymýšlet, co se tomu klukovi mohlo stát. děkuju a nashledanou

39) maybe the text was more for girls than boys. But it was better than what we do everyday.

40) mě to moc nebavilo protože většinou čtu jiné žánry, ale aspoň jsme četli něco v originále. Kdyby taková výuka probíhala pořád, možná by jsme si mohli smi zvolit, co by jsme četli, třeba i moderní literaturu. To by se mi líbilo. Hodně štěstí se školou!

41) good job

42) Hello, the lesson was ok. I can't imagine to have every lesson like this, but once a week it could be good. Have one more grammar lesson, one speaking, one literature. good bye

43) it was interesting and fun.

hodně z mých spolužáků si to našlo na googlu a druhý den jsme se o tom bavili.

Nikdo z nás nevěděl, že ta knížka je tak slavná, protože my se učíme jen o klasikách. Bylo by fajn se učit i o takových knihách.

44) no comments

45) dobrý den, hodina s vámi byla zajímavá, jen nevím, jestli je moje angličtina tak dobrá, abych mohl číst knížky v originále. Možná jo, kdyby nás k tomu vedli od začátku, k větší samostatnosti. Přeju hodně štěstí s VŠ!!!

46) I liked: you speak English all the time, you help when we need in a good way, we did a lot of things with that text- reading, writing, speaking, some new words, we repeated grammar, it was good for people who want to do something in class

I didn't like: work in groups, speaking in front of everybody

thank you, good bye

47) hellou :)

48) nice lesson

49) i liked it

50) thanks

51) interesting lesson, good luck

52) I was curious so I looked in our book, some texts were ok, but some were really stupid and not good for anything. The text from you was ok, but I found it on the internet and I think if I read the book it will tell me a lot about English tradition and people. Maybe we could read LOTR or HP too :D :D

53) miss youuu

54) thank you, byee

a přijďte nám na ples 24.1.

55) good lesson

56) we could also watch some english movies or go to theatres and cinemas.

57) 11. but literature we will chose, somethign interesting and fun

58) it was O.K.

59) nc

60) I dont like speaking aloud

61) bye bye