

Choosing a Teaching Text: James Joyce's Ulysses: Problem Handouts



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Choosing a Teaching Text: James Joyce's *Ulysses*

Problem Statement

When preparing to teach a class, one of the most important decisions an instructor makes involves the choice of the best available scholarly edition of a book. James Joyce's *Ulysses* presents interesting challenges for an instructor. Coming to terms with these challenges can enable instructors to learn methods for evaluating texts. Specifically, which is the best version of a text for your class? Why are you choosing that particular version? What criteria do you use when choosing a text? Many scholars feel that the most authoritative version is the last one approved by the author in his/her lifetime. However, many of those "final" versions contain obvious errors or misprints. Moreover, many "final" versions of texts represent a compromise between the author and the publisher. With these issues in mind, respond to all of the following questions:

1. How do scholars produce a "definitive version" of a literary text?
 - a. What are the stages that a text goes through on its way to publication? What is meant by the following terms: foul papers; fair copy; proof (author's proof, galley proof, press proof), revise (press revise, author's revise), and gathering (cut/uncut)?
 - a. Which stage of the process should concern an editor when making decisions about a definitive version of a text? What do editors mean by the following: last authorized-published edition, genetic research, continuous manuscript text, isotext? Should the editor be concerned with the physical appearance/makeup of the text (print culture)?
2. What should instructors look for when evaluating which version of a text to use for a class?
 - a. Where can an instructor locate the editorial policies of a version of a text?
 - b. How should an instructor evaluate those policies and, subsequently, the quality of the version of the text the editor(s) produced? To what extent should the instructor rely on reviews of the text? How does an instructor evaluate the authority of the reviews?
 - c. Should the instructor consider the physical appearance of a text?
 - d. Should the instructor consider which version of a text would be most appealing to students?
3. Based on the above, which version of James Joyce's *Ulysses* would you order for your class? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each edition? Why did you recommend the edition you choose?
 - a. Danis Rose's "Reader's Edition," Picador, 1997
 - b. Hans Walter Gabler's edition, Vintage, 1986
 - c. The Random House Reset Text, 1961
 - d. The Orchises Press facsimile edition, 1998



4. What should an instructor tell students about the process of choosing a version of a text for a class?



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Guide to the Problem

The group projects give you the opportunity not only to investigate a particular problem, but also to investigate issues you will confront as teachers and as scholars. Specifically, this project involves research into editions of James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Your group will recommend a text for a class on *Ulysses*, offer a rationale for your choice, and offer reasons why you did not choose the other texts. In the process of investigating this particular problem, you will grow to understand many of the complex issues surrounding the production of texts, the choices authors and scholars make in bringing a text to print, and the choices college-level instructors must make in order to choose the most authoritative texts for a class. Solving the problem will also help you to practice and to develop problem-solving, critical thinking, and research skills. You should use your judgment, informed by your research, in order to develop a comprehensive and well-informed answer. You should be ready to learn from the process and from each other.

You will be working in groups in order to respond to the problem. As a group, your task is to respond to all parts of the problem and to utilize the scholarly sources listed below to help develop your answers. Although you may use internet sources to direct and focus your research, you should not rely on the information you find on the web, unless you can also verify it through a scholarly source. Because the problem asks that you develop your answers not only to arrive at a conclusion but also to learn from the process, your group should not attempt to contact scholars, faculty, or other students (outside of your group) for answers to the problem; such contact will have a deleterious effect on your grade. FINAL NOTE: Although price and availability will almost certainly affect your choice of a text when you do choose one for your classes, do not take those factors into consideration for this problem because these factors would distract from the objectives of this particular assignment.

Your group will submit a cover sheet and six worksheets at the conclusion of the assignment (templates available below):

1. The cover sheet should provide a facsimile of the cover of the edition your group has chosen, the title of your presentation, and the names of the group members who should receive credit for the assignment.
2. The first worksheet will lay out the criteria for choosing the best available scholarly edition. You should present the criteria in a general way, without specific reference to *Ulysses*. The criteria would be applicable to any text for any class. The first worksheet will also briefly state your team's choice and reasons for the choice of the *Ulysses* text. Finally, the first workshop will offer clear and succinct answer the questions in the "Problem Statement" section of the assignment.
3. The next four worksheets will detail the strengths and weaknesses of each of the texts, offer a rationale for choosing or for not choosing each text, and provide an annotated bibliography of the sources that your group found most useful in obtaining information about each text.



4. The final worksheet will offer a bibliography of all the works your group consulted in preparation for the assignment. The worksheet will simply be a more concise and non-annotated compilation of the annotated bibliographic sections of the previous worksheets.

NOTE: Citations must adhere to MLA guidelines. Please supply both a hardcopy and electronic version of your group response. The electronic version should be saved in Microsoft Word on either a disk or CD.

A note regarding group work: Each member of your group, listed on the cover sheet, will receive the same grade for the assignment. If a member of the group does not participate, please, notify me as soon as possible and do not include that group member's name on the project. Group members whose names do not appear on the assignment will not receive credit for the assignment and must make an appointment to speak with me to explain reasons for not participating. If I determine the lack of participation occurred for an unexcused reason, then that individual or those individuals will receive no points for the assignment. If I determine that the reason(s) for not participating are excused, then the student will be required to complete an additional and different assignment in order to receive credit. Excused absences are those for medical reasons (with verification) or for reasons covered in the Emergency Medical Leave Act.



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Cover Sheet

[INSERT PROJECT TITLE]

[INSERT COVER OF CHOSEN TEXT]

[INSERT TEAM MEMBERS NAMES
WHO SHOULD RECEIVE CREDIT]



Choosing a Teaching Text: James Joyce's Ulysses

Worksheet I



Choosing a Teaching Text: James Joyce's Ulysses

Worksheet I

CRITERIA FOR CHOOSING SCHOLARLY EDITIONS:

(The section will detail a point-by-point outline not only of the issues instructors must consider when determining the best text to order for a class but also must explain the reasons for each point)

RECOMMENDED EDITION OF JAMES JOYCE'S ULYSSES:

(The section will first give the editor and publication details of the edition and will then briefly, from 100-150 words, explain why this edition is the best edition)

ISSUES:

- How do scholars produce a “definitive version” of a literary text? Offer a citation and a definition for each of the terms listed below.
 - What are the stages that a text goes through on its way to publication? What is meant by the following terms: foul papers; fair copy; proof (author's proof, galley proof, press proof), revise (press revise, author's revise), and gathering (cut/uncut)?
 - Which stage of the process should concern an editor when making decisions about a definitive version of a text? What do editors mean by the following: last authorized-published edition, continuous manuscript text, isotext? Should the editor be concerned with the physical appearance/makeup of the text (print culture)?
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 - Should the instructor consider the physical appearance of a text?
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- What should an instructor tell students about the process of choosing a version of a text for a class?



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Worksheets II-V

(Make four copies of this sheet, one for each text under consideration.)

TITLE OF EDITION:

EDITION'S STRENGTHS:

(Include a list of strengths and an explanation of why the strength represents a benefit)

EDITION'S WEAKNESSES:

(Include a list of weaknesses and an explanation of why the weakness represents a problem. In addition, for the text you've chosen, please, offer a strategy for compensating for the text's weaknesses)

RATIONALE FOR CHOOSING/NOT CHOOSING THIS EDITION:

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:



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Worksheet VI

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF WORKS CONSULTED

