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As most literature teachers know, the Modern Language Association's Publications Committee has been issuing for several years a series of texts entitled *Approaches to Teaching World Literature*. The aim of the series is to provide texts that will offer teachers curricular, critical, theoretical, and practical approaches to commonly taught works of literature. The latest title in the series is dedicated to William Faulkner's complex novel, *The Sound and the Fury*, a work that requires of instructors not only erudition, organization and sensibility but also special teaching skills. This book reflects the culmination of several years of discussions at the Teaching Faulkner session of the annual Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference at the University of Mississippi.

The first part of the book offers an exhaustive bibliographical review of criticism on the novel and a very valuable introduction to authoritative editions of the text. It includes a discussion of the original 1929 text, known as the «corrected text,» established under the direction of Noel Polk in 1984; editions that include Faulkner's 1946 appendix; David Minter's Norton Critical Edition (2nd); reference works such as Michel Gresset's *A Faulkner's Chronology*; biographies; collections of essays; handbooks; regional and historical studies; periodicals; audiovisual resources etc. For those who teach it together with Faulkner's short stories, a basic bibliography of essays on his short fiction is also provided.

The section «Contextual and Comparative Approaches,» offers methods of teaching the novel in relation to historical, cultural, and literary traditions: for example, one chapter discusses *The Sound and the Fury* as a product of its southern milieu; another treats the novel's relationship to the cultural ferment of the 20s, and yet others outline ways in which thematic and stylistic aspects of Faulkner's short fiction can be used to teach this novel. Thus, Gail L. Mortimer's chapter suggests using «Barn Burning» to explore family life and economic struggle in Faulkner's world.

Of all the approaches offered in the book, Robert Parker's chapter on the teaching of Benjy's section is among the most interesting, for it foregrounds what I take to be one of the most difficult problems facing the teacher. As Parker adeptly puts it, the Benjy section «proceeds as if readers were already beyond a first reading, it assumes a pre-knowledge of the plot and so it doesn't trade on the suspense that can come from gradually unrolling that plot.» Since students inevitably encounter difficulty simply understanding what is happening in this section of the novel, Parker suggests giving them a genealogy of the Compsons and Gibsons, a brief introduction to the story (which appears as an appendix to the essay), and a chart of the scene shifts in the first two sections taken from Edmond L. Volpe's *A Reader's Guide to William Faulkner* (1968).

Another problem students face when reading this novel for the first time is its lack of system, or more precisely the fact that the author establishes a pattern and then violates it. Faulkner varies the ways in which he indicates time shifts for example. At first these are indicated by a simple change from roman to italics, but the text is not consistent in its use of this convention. Finally, there appear to be three ways to indicate time shifts—switching from roman to roman, from roman to italics, or from italics to roman. In addition, the mind of Benjy can shift to an earlier point in the same scene, which exposes the artificiality of Volpe's convenient division of Benjy's memories into scenes. Teachers should, in Parker's opinion, expose and clarify such textual difficulties for students. He also suggests that in order to reveal the feelings of loss central to Benjy's consciousness, teachers ask students to brainstorm, to name Benjy's losses while the instructor records them on the board. Each loss provides a chance to discuss someone's interest: fire, mother, pasture, cushion, etc. In the last pages of this section the concept of transition is dramatized at several levels: transition between the

memory of the past and present perception, transition from child to adult, and other emotional transitions which open new possibilities for the second section, dedicated to Quentin's musings through the technique of stream of consciousness.

In a chapter that explores the novel through its related texts, Philip Cohen and Doreen Fowler suggest using Faulkner's introduction to the book as a source of information. During the summer of 1933, Faulkner wrote a number of drafts of this introduction for a limited edition that never materialized. Fragments of different versions of this essay are available. James B. Meriwether published a short version in *The Southern Review* and a longer one in *The Mississippi Quarterly*, and Cohen and Fowler themselves have edited a version that appears to be the one that Faulkner himself intended to publish. When using this introduction, students should pay particular attention to Faulkner's use of dates, especially to his inconsistencies. Faulkner writes in the introduction, for example «So I, who never had a sister and was fated to lose my daughter in infancy, set out to make myself a beautiful and tragic little girl.» He is referring to his first child, Alabama, who was born prematurely on 11 January 1931 and died nine days later of respiratory failure. According to the introduction, this biographical fact is a relevant source of information about the genesis of a central character in the novel, but an examination of dates reveals that Faulkner wrote *The Sound and the Fury* in 1928, three years before Alabama's birth and death, so the connection with Alabama is impossible. More correct would be the identification of Caddy with Faulkner's lifelong sense of loss, which would answer a question that students frequently pose: why doesn't Caddy have her own interior monologue? The answer, teachers might suggest, is that the character Caddy evokes a painful emptiness, a sense of loss in Faulkner's life and it wouldn't help this intention to have Caddy appear throughout the novel.

Of course, among so many essays on the same topic, one is bound to encounter some faults. Reiterations, for example, are almost unavoidable, and a few of the chapters offer what seem to me to be suggestions that are rather farfetched for use in an undergraduate classroom, but in general I believe that this book, like others in the series, will be of great utility to instructors who are not experts on Faulkner.

