

STRUCTURE OF *TOM JONES*

It is commonly agreed among critics that *Tom Jones* is one of, if not the, the most perfectly crafted English novels ever written.

- It is divided into 18 books;
- Each book is divided into chapters;
- Chapter one of each book is a digression or some sort or a hint of what is to come, such as “Book XVI, chapter one: “of Prologues,” or “Book IV, Chapter 1, “Containing Five pages of paper.”

Furthermore:

- The action I the first 6 books takes place in Somerset—the country.
- The action of the next 6 books takes place on the road to London.
- The action of the last 6 books takes place in London—the city.

RE: READINGS FOR EACH CLASS

April 19: Will cover Books 1 through 6—where the action is in the country

Class discussion will focus on the following:

- ⇒ Book I—chapters 2, 3, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13
- ⇒ Book II—chapters 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8
- ⇒ Book III—chapter 3
- ⇒ Book IV—chapters 2, 3, 5, 6
- ⇒ Book V—chapters 7, 8, 9, 10
- ⇒ Book VI

Characters:

- The Narrator is a singular character who has the tone of an author. . The Narrator guides the reactions of the reader, comments on an action that has just taken place, and, in general, sees himself as a companion to the reader. At the end of the novel the narrator comments: “If I have been an entertaining Companion to thee, I promise thee it is what I have desired.”
- Many of the characters are paired. Thus we have good boy/bad boy; good girl/bad girl. These are not obvious pairings but are realized as the story goes on.

Use of the mock heroic:

“Mock heroic” can be defined as: a form of satire that adapts the elevated heroic style of the classical epic poem to a trivial subject. Thus Book X, Chapter II begins:

“Now the little trembling Hare, which the Dread of all her numerous Enemies, and chiefly of that cunning, cruel, carnivorous Animal Man, had confined all the Day to her Lurking-place, sports wantonly o’er the Lawns: Now . . . In plain English, it was now Midnight.”

Flag Raising Concepts

- Fielding’s use of “good nature”;
- Appearance vs. reality situations;