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New Readership and Pamela
(The Rise of the Novel)

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Restoration & Eighteenth-Century English Literature (ANGBA3- Literature Survey Course)

New Readership and Pamela

(The Rise of the Novel)

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SUMMARY:

This lesson explores the emergence of a new readership primarily of middle-class women in urban centres of London. As female domestic manufacture has been displaced by factory manufacture, middle-class women in London have acquired leisure time for reading. However, lacking the education in classical literacy, a new form of literary entertainment was required → the 18th-century novel. The lesson will look into its characteristics (themes, settings, characters, narrative techniques) and its dissemination (serialised publication, circular libraries). The lesson will also take a look at Samuel Richardson's *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* (1740) as an example of the radical change in the theme of the novel.

Topics to be discussed:

- New readership
- Circulating libraries
- Serialised publication
- The Novel and its characteristics
- Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740)
 - Inspiration
 - Reception
 - Criticism

New Readership & *Pamela*

Restoration & 18th-century English
Literature



2 TASK

📖 & 📄 Read and compare Hogarth's *A Harlot's Progress*, [plate 1](#) and Richardson's *Letters*, [Letter LXII](#) (A young Woman in Town to her Sister in the Country, recounting her narrow Escape from a Snare laid for her on her first Arrival, by a wicked Procuress).

Also compare the style of Hogarth's narrative engraving with that of the engravings based on Highmore's narrative painting of *Pamela*. What is your observation (especially based on what we learned about Hogarth)?



Plate 1 of Hogarth's *Harlot's progress*, with madame Elizabeth Needham procuring Molly in the foreground.



Plate 7 (out of 12), etched by L. Truchy and A. Benoist after paintings by J. Highmore. Printed in London, 1745.



Test your knowledge with the following quiz: [09_R18CEL](#)

3 COMPULSORY SECONDARY READINGS:

Carnochan, W. B. 2000. "'A Matter Discutable': *The Rise of the Novel*." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 12 (2-3): 167-184.

Watt, Ian, 1957. "Love and the Novel." In *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*, 135-173. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Watt, Ian. 1957. "The Reading Public and the Rise of the Novel." In *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*, 35-59. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

4 SUGGESTED READINGS:

Donovan, Josephine. 1999. *Women and the Rise of the Novel, 1405-1726*. New York: St. Martin's.

Parker, Kate and Courtney Weiss Smith, ed. 2014. *Eighteenth-Century Poetry and the Rise of the Novel Reconsidered*. Lewisburg, Pennsylvania: Bucknell University Press.