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How Novels Work

By John Mullan

Oxford University Press. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, How Novels Work, John Mullan, Never has contemporary fiction been more widely discussed and passionately analysed; recent years have seen a huge growth in the number of reading groups and in the interest of a non-academic readership in the discussion of how novels work. Drawing on his weekly Guardian column, 'Elements of Fiction', John Mullan examines novels mostly of the last ten years, many of which have become firm favourites with reading groups. He reveals the rich resources of novelistic technique, setting recent fiction alongside classics of the past. Nick Hornby's adoption of a female narrator is compared to Daniel Defoe's; Ian McEwan's use of weather is set against Austen's and Hardy's; Carole Shield's chapter divisions are likened to Fanny Burney's. Each section shows how some basic element of fiction is used. Some topics (like plot, dialogue, or location) will appear familiar to most novel readers; others (metanarrative, prolepsis, amplification) will open readers' eyes to new ways of understanding and appreciating the writer's craft. How Novels Work explains how the pleasures of novel reading often come from the formal ingenuity of the novelist. It is an entertaining and stimulating exploration of...



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Reviews

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