
Further reading

Books by Forster

All Forster's novels are available in excellent Penguin reprints of the definitive Abinger edition, and have scholarly introductions and notes. Besides novels, Forster wrote short stories and had a successful career as an academic and journalist. Other important writings which will help you, whatever novel you are studying, are also available in Penguin paperbacks. Those listed below are particularly recommended.

Aspects of the Novel (1927)

This started off as a set of lectures on the novel as a literary form. It is deceptively simple and straightforward, and will give you several ideas that are insightful into Forster's own methods as a novelist. These include his discussion of 'flat' and 'round' characters, 'pattern', 'rhythm' and 'prophesy'. It really is essential reading.

Abinger Harvest (1936) and *Two Cheers for Democracy* (1951)

These are collections of essays. If you read around in them you will get a good sense of Forster's wide ranging enthusiasms, interests and beliefs. I strongly urge you to read 'Notes on the English Character' in the first volume as background for Forster's satire on the middle class, and 'What I Believe', 'The Challenge of Our Time', and 'Art for Art's sake' in the second, for his views on politics and art.

Collected Short Stories (1947)

Forster's shorter fiction is very diverse; it forms an extension and supplement to his achievements as a novelist. This volume

contains those stories published in his lifetime. 'A Story of a Panic', 'The Eternal Moment' and 'The Road to Colonus' are key expressions of his philosophy of life.

The Life to Come and Other Stories (1972)

These are franker, uncensored treatments of class, race and sex not published until after his death. A reading of 'The Life to Come', 'The Other Boat', 'Dr Woolacott' and 'Arthur Snatchfold' will force you to revise your opinions of Forster and his capacities as a writer.

The Hill of Devi (1953)

This is a travel book on India and interesting background to *A Passage to India*, especially the Gokul Ashtami festival that forms the substance of the 'Temple' section. One can see the shift from documentation into art.

Books on Forster

1 Biography

Furbank, P. N. *E. M. Forster: A Biography* (1974)

(Humane, scholarly and exhaustive, this is the standard life.)

2 Early reviews and the reception of the novels on publication

Gardner, P. (ed.) *E. M. Forster: The Critical Heritage* (1973)

3 Criticism: the establishment of a reputation (1940–70)

Trilling, L. *E. M. Forster: A study* (1944)

(The first major book by an important liberal critic. Still well worth reading.)

McConkey, J. *The Novels of E. M. Forster* (1957)

(A pioneer study helpful for the symbolic patterning in the novels.)

Beer, J. *The Achievement of E. M. Forster* (1962)

(Shows Forster's indebtedness to the Romantic poets.)

Bradbury, M. *E. M. Forster: A Collection of Critical Essays* (1966)

Crews, F. C. *E. M. Forster: The Perils of Humanism* (1962)

(This places Forster in his liberal context.)

- Gransden, K. W. *E. M. Forster* (1962)
 (Still a good book for the beginner.)
- Stone, W. *The Cave and the Mountain* (1966)
 (This is an important study but, because of its psychoanalytical perspective, students should use it with caution.)
- Thomson, G. H. *The Fiction of E. M. Forster* (1967)
 (Stresses the Romance and anthropological aspects of the fiction rather than the social realism. A stimulating corrective but sometimes overstated.)
- Wilde, A. *Art and Order: A study of E. M. Forster* (1964)
 (Helpful on Forster's liberal aesthetics and their consequence for the structure of the novels.)

4 Criticism since Forster's death

General Introductions for the beginner include:

- Gardner, P. *E. M. Forster* (1978)
- Gillie, C. *A Preface to E. M. Forster* (1983)
- Martin, Sayre J. *E. M. Forster: The Endless Journey* (1976)

There have been a number of specialist studies but, for the student, I think that the most valuable recent books are:

- Colmer, J. *E. M. Forster: The Personal Voice* (1975)
 (A helpful book for the general student who wants to learn a little more for it puts Forster in a wider historical context, and has the advantage of knowledge of unpublished material and the details of Forster's private life.)
- Rosecrance, B. *Forster's Narrative Vision* (1982)
 (Gives alert, close readings that concentrate on the rhetoric of the novels, especially the use of the narrative persona.)

Collections of essays on Forster:

- Stallybrass, O. (ed.) *Aspects of E. M. Forster* (1969)
- Das, G. K. and Beer, J. (eds) *E. M. Forster: A Human Exploration* (1979)
- Hertz, J. and Martin, R. (eds) *E. M. Forster: Centenary Revaluations* (1982)
 (The last two centenary volumes have useful annotated bibliographical surveys of the work done on Forster.)

5 Books on individual novels:

Howards End

Widdowson, P. *E. M. Forster's Howards End* (1977)

(Provides the social and political context for Forster's 'Condition of England' novel and shows how his liberal dilemma shapes the text.)

A Passage to India

Unsurprisingly, there is a wealth of material to help the student on this major novel. Useful basic books include:

Colmer, J. *E. M. Forster: A Passage to India* (1967)

Ebbatson, R. and Neale, C. *A Passage to India* (1989)

More detailed studies worth consulting for the critical and historical background:

Das, G. K. *E. M. Forster's India* (1977)

Lewis, R. Jared *E. M. Forster's Passages to India* (1979)

Levine, J. P. *Creation and Criticism: E. M. Forster's 'A Passage to India'* (1972)

Parry, Benita *Delusions and Discoveries: Studies on India in the British Imagination* (1972)

Collections of essays:

Beer, J. (ed.) *A Passage to India: Essays in Interpretation* (1985)

Bradbury, M. (ed.) *A Passage to India* (1966)

(*Macmillan Casebook* that contains part of the 1952 interview with Forster referred to in Chapter 7.)

Rutherford, A. (ed.) *A Passage to India: A collection of critical essays* (1970)

(The more recent Beer collection is a valuable supplement but not a substitute for the earlier volumes which contain much important material.)