

Learn the 10 Major American Literary Movements: What are literary movements?!?

A literary movement is a general term for pieces of literature by different authors (written over the same time period) who share a similar impetus for writing in some way. Usually these authors are considered part of a "movement" because they have similar ideas about something

Objective: Be able to identify the time period, key characteristics, and authors from each period.

**HISTORY molds a country's literature!



The earliest literature of our nation came from the **Native Americans**. Much of the literature of that period were myths that were spoken and written long before Europeans settled in North America.

Characterized by _____, _____, _____, _____ & _____
Recently, authors like _____ have revived stories of American Indians which give insight into life on the reservation.

Other notes:



The **Puritans** left England to colonize the new world. They were characterized by their desire to "purify" the Church of England with the simple worship of God. As settlers, they recorded their experiences. Colonization did NOT mark the beginning of America's cultural and literary development. America was essentially still a _____ culture until the early 1800s. The earliest writings in America (the first 200 years) were from these Puritans and reflected REAL concerns of the times:

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____, writings about physical and spiritual survival in a harsh new world. There was very little _____ literature because there simply wasn't time for it.

Other notes:



The **Age or Reason or Enlightenment** included the American Revolutionary period and featured many political documents, speeches, and letters. Writings of this movement emphasized the belief that humans could arrive at truth by using _____ rather than relying on the authority of the past or on kings. _____, they believed, thrived on _____

Writers were mostly scientists and philosophers whose writing sparked an enlightenment in thought:

- A. _____—wrote *Poor Richard's Almanac* that was full of reasonable sayings such as "Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise."
- B. _____—penned the *Declaration of Independence*.
- C. _____—delivered the "Give me liberty or give me death" speech in the Virginia



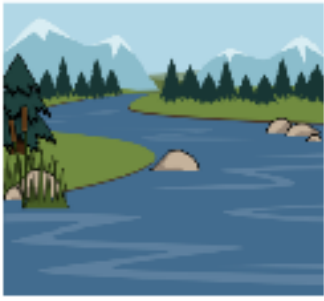
Not to be confused with being ROMANTIC (lovey dovey) literature, the writings of this movement valued _____ and intuition over _____. It placed faith in inner experience and imagination.

Individual freedom and the worth of the individual were paramount. _____ was seen as the highest expression of the mind. Romantic literature was also characterized by an emphasis on the moral clarity and healthful living that comes with a _____. Writers wanted to take readers away from the corruption of civilization after the devastation of the Revolutionary War and toward the _____ and the _____.

Dark Romantics or _____ writers used dark supernatural themes and settings. Writers of this movement included many poets who wrote of imagination, emotion, and nature:

- A. _____—best known for his poetry and short stories, particularly his tales of mystery and the macabre ("The Tell Tale Heart," "The Pit and the Pendulum," "The Raven.")
- B. _____—wrote the famous poem "Oh Captain! My Captain!" in response to the assassination of President Lincoln just as the Civil War was coming to an end. Hi poem was so popular, and he was requested to recite it so often, that he said, "I'm almost sorry I ever wrote it..."
- C. Poets Whitman, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and _____, whose most famous poem urged readers to SIMPLIFY. All of these literary giants wrote poems about returning to the simplicity of nature.

**Transcendentalism
(1840-1860)**



Transcend (definition): to

Transcendentalists advocated _____ and individualism over _____ to tradition, believing that institutions and organizations were responsible for corrupting the inherent goodness of people.

In their writing, transcendentalists commonly reflected on _____, a unified “_____” common to all people, and the concept of community.

**Realism, Naturalism &
Regionalism (1865-1930)**



We begin our study of American Literature and American History here!

The Civil War was a major influence on the literature of this era.

Writers of this period examined life as it was ACTUALLY lived and _____ around them as honestly as they could. _____ is a key word in any discussion of Realism. Realistic writers avoided the unusual and deliberately concentrated on the _____ and _____.

One term often used in connection with Realism is “_____.” The realistic writer took a slice of the real world and examined it in almost the same way that a _____ examines a specimen under a microscope. Thus, we learn a lot about the lives of soldiers, slaves, and slave owners in the stories, songs, poetry and novels of this era.

This movement was also marked by feelings of disillusionment because of the devastation of the war. Familiar subjects included _____, _____, and _____.

Realism had its roots in _____, literature that emphasizes a _____ and makes use of the _____

_____ (also called **LOCAL COLOR**).

The most popular realistic writers include:

- A. _____ = *Tom Sawyer, Huck Finn* and MANY short stories
- B. _____ = *Oh Pioneers, My Antonia* and other tales of life on the Plains
- C. _____ = *The Call of the Wild, White Fang* and “To Build a Fire”
- D. _____ = *The Red Badge of Courage*

**Lost Generation, Jazz Age, Roaring 20's
& The Harlem Renaissance (1917-1937)**



African American culture in Harlem, New York, was flourishing. Much of the style derived from poetry rhythms based on spirituals, jazz lyrics on the blues, and the use of slang in everyday diction.

These influences intersected with _____, _____, and the sultry nightlife of the big city to produce an energetic, progressive culture. All of that changed though with the crash of the stock market in 1929.

Characteristics of the literature of this era included:

- an emphasis on _____ in style and form
- a _____ of traditional themes and styles
- a sense of _____ and loss of _____ in the American Dream.

*The Lost Generation=

Most popular writers of this movement:

- A. _____ — *The Great Gatsby*
- B. _____ — *The Old Man & the Sea, The Sun Also Rises*
- C. _____ — *The Grapes of Wrath, Of Mice and Men*

Modernism (1914-1945)



The literature of the Modern movement was often bleak.

_____, the _____ & _____ were the major historical events that impacted literature of this movement.

There was greater use of symbolism and themes of _____ & _____

Man's experiences in war created an interest in the inner workings of the human mind, sometimes expressed in literature through a new narrative technique called "_____ consciousness." a method of narration that describes in words the flow of thoughts in the minds of characters. The Stream of Consciousness style of writing is marked by the sudden rise of thoughts and lack of punctuation

Authors: William Faulkner and T.S Eliot

Playwrights: Tennessee Williams (*The Glass Menagerie*), Thornton Wilder (*Our Town*)

Contemporary/Postmodernism (1950-Present)



Post-Modernism, Contemporary and Pluralism are the three overlapping labels used to describe literature of the past 70 years.

Post Modern=(1950s-present)—Largely impacted by the _____ War, the Cold War, the war in _____, and the _____ Movement.

Sometimes called the "Age of _____," because of war and nuclear threats.

Marked by corruption, falsehood and pretensions but also by escapism and nostalgia or a longing for the _____.

Most famous Post-Modern authors:

- A. _____—*The Crucible* and *The Death of a Salesman*
- B. _____—*In Cold Blood* and *Breakfast at Tiffany's*

Contemporary =(1970-Present)

Related to Post Modern but focused on _____, _____
_____, and _____

Authors include:

- A. Tim O'Brien—*The Things They Carried*
- B. Sherman Alexie—*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*
- C. John Grisham—*The Firm, The Client, The Chamber, Rainmaker, Runaway Jury*
- D. Maya Angelou—*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*
- E. Michael Crichton—*Jurassic Park, Sphere, Congo, The Lost World*
- F. Stephanie Meyer—*The Twilight Series (Twilight, New Moon, Eclipse, Breaking Dawn)*

Pluralism=(1970s-Present)

The intentional creation of literature by authors of _____.

This literature is fueled by _____ and _____.

Authors share universal themes through the detailed lens of their _____ culture.

Authors include:

- A. Amy Tan—*The Joy Luck Club*=Japanese American
- B. Alice Walker—(won the Pulitzer Prize) *The Color Purple* —African American
- C. Sandra Cisneros—*The House on Mango Street*=the Mexican-American experience
- D. Toni Morrison—(won the Pulitzer Prize) *Beloved*—African American