

Dept. of English & Comparative Literature, SJSU
MA Exam Reading List: Group 2

1900-Present American and British Literature

Description: This part of the MA exam focuses on literature after 1900 from the U.K and the U.S.A. Students should have a general knowledge of twentieth-century literary movements in the United States and Great Britain, as well as forms and genres popular therein. Students should also familiarize themselves with the general biographical, cultural, historical, and political for the various texts and their related periods. A review of the information included in the introduction and headnotes in most anthologies is sufficient.

Movements:

Realism

Naturalism

The New Woman

Modernism

Harlem Renaissance

The Lost Generation

Imagism

Postmodernism

Beat Poets

Magical Realism

American:

Edith Wharton (1862-1937)

The House of Mirth or *The Age of Innocence*

W.E.B. du Bois (1868-1963)

The Souls of Black Folk

Willa Cather (1873-1947)

My Antonia

T. S. Eliot (1888-1965)

The Waste Land and “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”

William Faulkner (1892-1962).

Absalom! Absalom! or *The Sound and The Fury*

F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940)

The Great Gatsby

Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961)

The Sun Also Rises or *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* and *Other Stories*

Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

Collected Poems

William Carlos Williams (1883-1963)

Paterson, Selected Poems

Zora Neale Hurston (1901?-1960)

Their Eyes Were Watching God

Elizabeth Bishop (1911-1979)
Allen Ginsberg (1926-1997)
John Steinbeck (1902-1968)
Richard Wright (1908-1960)
Toni Morrison (1931-)
Don DeLillo (1936-)

Complete Poems
Howl, Selected Poems
Grapes of Wrath or East of Eden
Native Son
Song of Solomon or Beloved
White Noise

British:

Joseph Conrad (1857-1924)
William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)
E.M. Forster (1879-1970)
James Joyce (1882-1941)

Lord Jim, Heart of Darkness
Selected Poems (Sterling)
Passage to India or Howard's End
Ulysses, or Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man
and Dubliners

Virginia Woolf (1882-1941)
D.H. Lawrence (1885-1930)
Samuel Beckett (1906-1989)
W. H. Auden (1907-1973)
Dylan Thomas (1914-1953)
Muriel Spark (1918-2006)
Philip Larkin (1922-1985)
Seamus Heaney (1939-)
Kazuo Ishiguro (1954-)
Hanif Kureishi (1954-)
Zadie Smith (1975-)

To the Lighthouse or Mrs. Dalloway
Sons and Lovers or Lady Chatterley's Lover
Waiting for Godot
Selected Poems (Vintage)
Selected Poems (Phoenix)
The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie
Collected Poems (Farrar, Straus and Giroux)
Selected Poems (Noonday), *Beowulf*
Remains of the Day
My Beautiful Laundrette
White Teeth

Sample Questions:

1. The 20th century has been defined by major wars. Examine the role, representation, or impact of war on three writers (at least one American and one British) from the list.
2. Drawing on three texts (at least one American and one British) examine how race and gender shape the narrative in terms of plot, character, theme, form or style.
3. Using three texts (at least one American and one British) delineate the major features of Modernism. Conclude with a brief commentary on whether post-modernism represents a continuation or a break with Modernism.

Updated 2/29/20