

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

British & American Literature:
Romanticism to Modernism (the long 19th century)

Description: This part of the MA exam focuses on major 19th century writers/texts from the U.K. and U.S.A. Students should have a general knowledge of the definitions and rules of the various forms and genres popular during the British Romantic and Victorian literary periods, as well as the American Romantic, Transcendentalist, and Realist movements. Students should also pay attention to how these forms and genres are used/deployed in different historical and cultural moments.

Poetry:

- Lyrical ballad
- Ode/hymn
- Elegy
- Sonnet (Petrarchan, Miltonic, Shakespearean)
- Broadside

Prose:

- Gothic Novel
- Historical Romance
- Bildungsroman
- Domestic Novel
- Detective Novel
- Serialized Novel
- Silverfork Novel
- Slave Narrative
- Short Story
- Sketch
- Tall Tale

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; however, the Broadview anthologies offer the most current and diverse historical context on these periods.

British: Romantic-era (1775-1835) and Victorian-era (1835-1902) Literature

Charlotte Smith (1749-1806)	<i>Elegiac Sonnets</i> (1795)
William Blake (1757-1827)	<i>Songs of Innocence and Experience</i>
Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-97)	<i>Vindication of the Rights of Men, Vindication of the Rights of Woman</i>
William Wordsworth (1770-1850) and Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834)	<i>Lyrical Ballads</i> (1798 version), Preface to the 1800 edition of <i>Lyrical Ballads</i>
Jane Austen (1775-1817)	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i> or <i>Northanger Abbey</i>
George Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824)	<i>Don Juan</i>
Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822)	“Prometheus,” “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty,” “Ozymandias,” “Mutability,” “England in 1819,” <i>A Defence of Poetry</i>
John Keats (1795-1821)	“The Eve of St. Agnes,” <i>La Belle Dame sans Merci</i> ,” “Ode to a Nightingale,” “Ode on a Grecian Urn”
Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley (1797-1851)	<i>Frankenstein</i> (1818) and Introduction to 1831 version of <i>Frankenstein</i>
Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-92)	<i>In Memoriam</i> , “The Palace of Art,” “The Lady of Shalott”
Charlotte Brontë (1816-55)	<i>Jane Eyre</i>
Emily Brontë (1818-48)	<i>Wuthering Heights</i>
Charles Dickens	<i>Dombey and Son</i> or <i>Bleak House</i>
George Eliot (1819-80)	<i>Middlemarch</i> or <i>The Mill on the Floss</i>
Thomas Hardy (1840-1928)	<i>Jude the Obscure</i> or <i>Tess of the D’Urbervilles</i>
Oscar Wilde (1854-1900)	<i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i> or, <i>The Picture of Dorian Gray</i>

American: Romanticism (c. 1820- c. 1865), Transcendentalism (1820s-1850s), Realism (c. 1860- c. 1914)

Susanna Rowson (1762-1824)	<i>Charlotte Temple</i>
Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882)	“Nature,” “The Poet,” “The American Scholar,” “The Over-Soul,” “Experience,” “Fate,” “The Rhodora,” “Circles.”
Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864)	<i>The Blithedale Romance</i> or <i>The House of the Seven Gables</i> , “My Kinsman, Major Molineaux,” “Rappaccini’s Daughter,” “Young Goodman Brown,” “The Minister’s Black Veil,” “The Artist of the Beautiful,” “The Old Manse.”
Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)	<i>The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym</i> , “The

Purloined Letter,”

Selected Poetry

<http://rpo.library.utoronto.ca/poet/262.html>

Harriet Jacobs (1813-1897)

Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl

Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)

Walden

Frederick Douglass (1818?-1895)

Autobiography of Frederick Douglass

Louisa May Alcott (1832-1888)

Little Women

Walt Whitman (1819-1892):

–From the 1855 edition of *Leaves of Grass*: “Song of Myself.”

–From any edition: The “Calamus” sequence, “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry,” “Song of the Open Road,” “Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking,” “As I Ebb’d with the Ocean of Life,” “When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d”

Drum-Taps and *Sequel to Drum-Taps*

Herman Melville (1819-1891)

Moby Dick, Piazza Tales

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

Final Harvest

Mark Twain (1835-1910)

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

Henry James (1843-1916)

The Portrait of a Lady; or “Daisy Miller,” “The Figure in the Carpet,” and “The Turn of the Screw”

Kate Chopin (1850-1904)

The Awakening

Charles Chesnutt (1858-1932)

The Marrow of Tradition or *The Wife of His Youth, and Other Stories of the Color Line, The Conjure Woman*

Sample Questions:

1. In 1837, Ralph Waldo Emerson identified “the new importance given to the single person” as a sign of the times. Write an essay that considers Emerson’s statement in the context of three nineteenth-century novels, short stories, and/or poems, at least one American and one British.
2. Using three works from the list (at least one American and one British), write an essay that examines the gendered, economic, social, interpersonal, and/or religious aspects of the marriage market.

Updated 2/29/20