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Факультет іноземних мов
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**UK AND US LITERATURE OF THE XX
CENTURY:
INTRODUCTION
TO MODERNISM AND POSTMODERNISM
IN LITERATURE AND CULTURE**

Навчальний посібник для студентів 4 курсу
факультету іноземних мов
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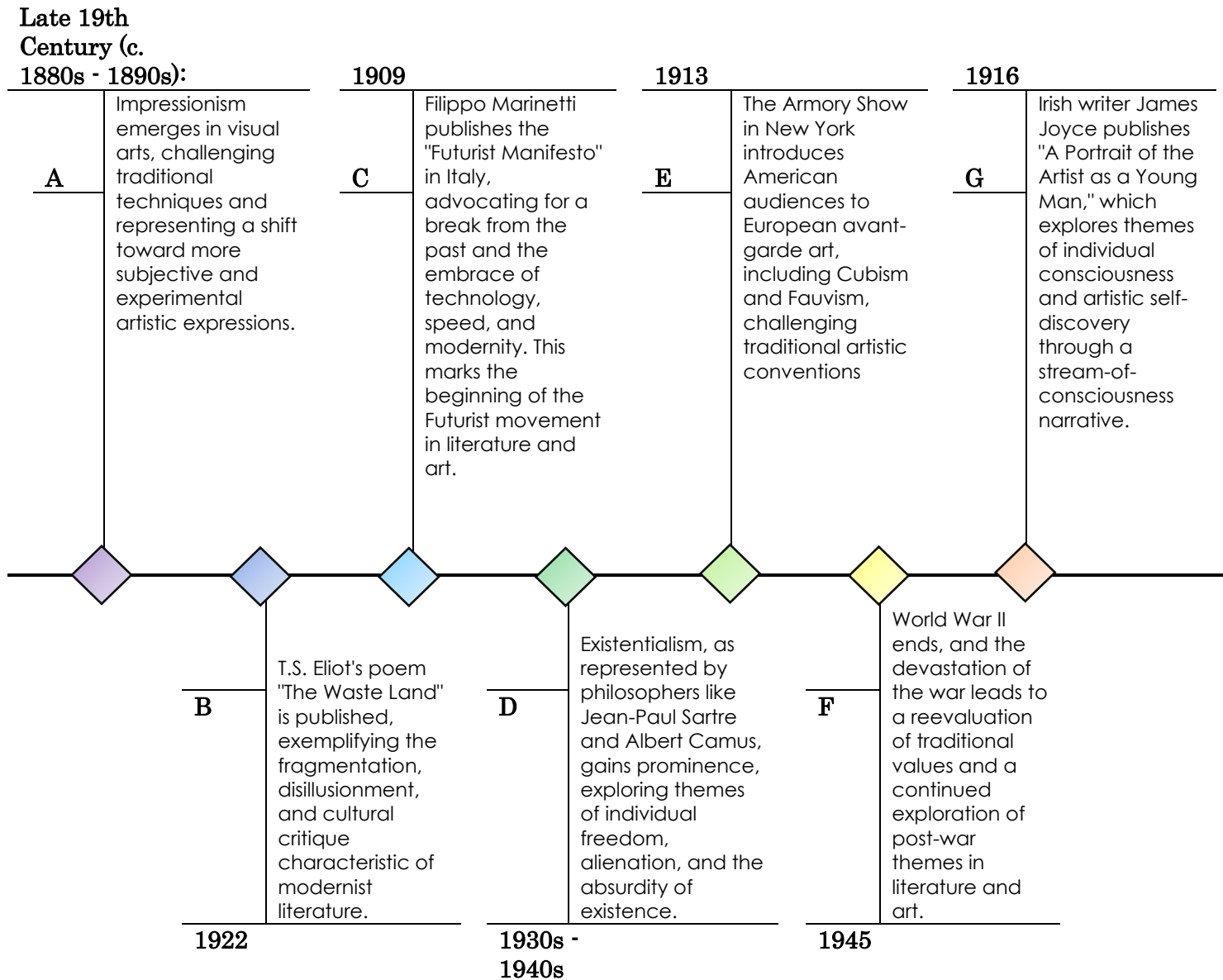
ПОЯСНЮВАЛЬНА ЗАПИСКА

Метою викладання навчальної дисципліни «Література англомовних країн: ХХ століття» є забезпечення студентів системними знаннями з літератури Великобританії та США; надання цілісного уявлення про літературу Англії та США в контексті історичної епохи; ознайомлення з літературними процесами та особливостями творчого спадку письменників доби.

Очікувані результати після проходження модулю «ХХ століття в англійській та американській літературі і культурі»:

1. Здатність аналізувати національну специфіку, особливості культури та літератури Великобританії та США ХХ століття, виявляти зв'язки між літературними процесами в цих країнах та їх історичним і культурним контекстом, відтворювати історико-культурний контекст конкретних історичних епох.
2. Знання основних світоглядних, соціальних та естетичних концепцій, що лежать в основі досліджуваних літературних напрямів британської та американської літератури, теоретичних положень, пов'язаних з формуванням модернізму/постмодернізму і еволюцією художніх форм в країнах, що вивчаються.
3. Знання ідейно-художньої своєрідності творчості відомих англійських та американських письменників модернізму, особливостей художнього методу найбільш яскравих представників окремих художньо-естетичних напрямів і течій, їх місце та значення у національному та світовому літературному процесі.

INTRODUCTION TO MODERNISM



During the first decade of the 20th century the major literary movements of Victorian times continued to flourish. The novelists John Galsworthy and Arnold Bennett; the short story writers W. Somerset Maugham, P. G. Wodehouse, and Saki; and the playwright George Bernard Shaw, among others, explored the changes and conflicts in the British class system in a realistic and often

witty style. By 1910, however, Victorian ideas were yielding to the spirit of modernism, the movement that would dominate Western literature in the first half of the 20th century.

MODERNISM

Modernism is a historical term that refers to a literary and artistic movement that developed in the early 1900s and continued throughout the 1940s. Although there were forerunners to Modernism in the late nineteenth century, it did not fully emerge until the years just before, and immediately following, World War I.

The term is typically associated with the twentieth-century reaction against realism and romanticism within the arts. It is a cultural movement which rebelled against Victorian morals. More generally, the term is often used to refer to a twentieth-century belief in the virtues of science, technology and the planned management of social change.



1

LITERARY MODERNISM is a subset of a larger artistic movement called Modernism that embraces painting and music. In the literary realm, it's basically responsible for literature produced roughly between the end of World War I and the beginning of World War II.

In fact, modernism did not exist until it was almost dead. That is, until the 1930s or later the term “Modernism” simply did not mean what it means today: a group of writers, an arsenal of literary devices, a number of characteristic themes. Interestingly, in the 1910s and 1920s – the height of Modernism as it is understood today – the word “Modernism” referred to a particular strain of thought in the Catholic Church. At that time, the modernist writers did not see themselves as a unified movement.

Instead, the writers, now called modernists, were members of dozens of different smaller movements: the Lost Generation, the Dadaists, the Imagists, the Vorticists, the Objectivists, the Surrealists, and many others. What is identified as the

¹ All pictures are taken from Wikipedia

characteristic themes or concerns of the modernist period (a general pessimism about the state of the world, a rejection of society's certainties, a sense that only the rebel artist is telling the truth about the world) were simply "in the air" of the times; everyone was thinking and writing about the same ideas, so it did not seem necessary to name their commonalities.

Literary critics of the early twentieth century were generally hostile to the writers now called modernists. The Victorian ethos held that literature's purpose was to identify "*sweetness and light*" and "the best that has been thought and said" (in the words of Matthew Arnold, one of Victorian England's most important critics) in order to make better citizens. Literature and art, for the Victorians, were meant to be "edifying" – educational. Literature was read to learn how one should behave. By that same token, literature that did not put forth edifying models was simply bad literature. This attitude is shown especially well in the hostile response to Gustave Flaubert's 1857 *Madame Bovary*, a novel that depicted, without comment or condemnation, the adulterous behavior of a middle-class woman. The Arnoldian attitude toward literature persisted well into the twentieth century, and in the United States was personified by the writers and editors of the *Saturday Review of Literature*, especially Henry Seidel Canby.

For these critics, modernist literature was both incomprehensible and dangerous. Its stylistic experiments made it difficult to digest easily – readers had to work to make it through *Ulysses* or *The Sound and the Fury*,



not to mention *The Cantos* or "The Waste Land"- and its pessimistic, negative attitude toward society could hardly be expected to make better citizens.

In fact, modernist literature celebrated those people, artists especially, who rebelled against society. Where the late Victorian critics and their intellectual descendants wanted edifying, socially-uplifting literature, modernist literature sought to create independent, critical, alienated subjects.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT: WHAT INFLUENCED THE RISE OF MODERNISM?

THE GREAT WAR



Europe exploded into war following the assassination of Austria-Hungary's Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914. Complex military alliances and national rivalries quickly divided European countries into two opposing forces. They became known as the Allies (Britain, France, Russia, and Italy) and the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and the Turkish Ottoman Empire). Before the onset of war, Colonel E. M. House, chief adviser to President Woodrow Wilson, said, "*The situation is extraordinary. It is militarism run stark mad... There is too much hatred, too many jealousies.*"

With no historical precedent for the scale of the bloodshed and destructiveness of World War I, the British referred to it simply as the Great War. The chief battlefield for British troops, known as the Western Front, stretched for hundreds of miles across northern France. The battles of the Great War were vast, prolonged bloodbaths. In 1916, on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, 60,000 British soldiers were killed or wounded. By the time the battle was over in mid-November, British losses amounted to more than 400,000.

"World War I . . . destroyed faith in progress, but it did more than that - it made clear to perceptive thinkers . . . that violence prowled underneath man's apparent harmony and rationality."

William E. Leuchtenburg, *The Perils of Prosperity*

The United States joined the war in 1917, in part because a German submarine had sunk an unarmed British ship, the Lusitania, in the Atlantic in 1915. Of the 1,198 people lost in the Lusitania incident, 128 were U.S. citizens. On November 11, 1918, the Allies emerged victorious. Ten million soldiers died in the war; more lives were lost in World War I than in all wars during the century preceding it. The staggering rate of casualties is attributed to the introduction of tanks, warplanes, machine guns, and poison gas.



CLASS CONFLICT IN UK

As the Victorian politician and novelist observed, By the early twentieth century, people of diverse groups had begun to question Britain's traditional social values. Trade unions grew, and their leaders began to agitate for a radical change to the economic system.

The British upper and lower classes formed *"two nations . . . as ignorant of each other's habits, thoughts, and feelings, as if they were of different planets; who are . . . fed by different food, are ordered by different manners, and are not governed by the same laws."*

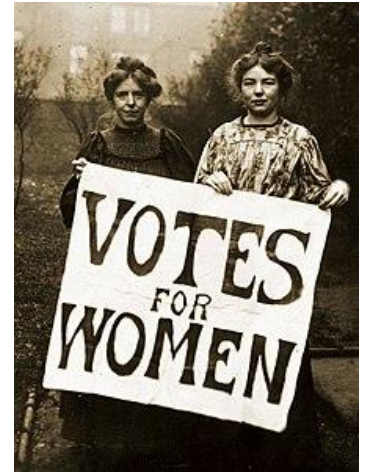
Benjamin Disraeli

In 1900 a new political party was formed, the Labour Party, which dedicated itself to the interests of workers. By midcentury, a group of writers known as the Angry Young Men were voicing their suspicion and resentment of the static British establishment and bitterly attacking its manners, snobbery, and hypocrisy.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Women composed another disaffected group that began to seek greater political power. The suffrage movement in Britain, which had long been working peacefully to secure votes for women, took a bold new direction after Emmeline Pankhurst founded the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) in 1903. Under the leadership of Pankhurst and her

daughters, British suffragettes used unusual publicity stunts to call attention to their demands.



They pelted government officials with eggs, chained themselves to lampposts, burned railroad cars, and smashed the windows of fashionable department stores. The British government finally relented and gave women over thirty the right to vote in 1918; ten years later, the voting age for women was lowered to twenty-one.

"Anything may happen when womanhood has ceased to be a protected occupation."

Virginia Woolf

In US, the push for women's right to vote, or suffrage, grew stronger in the early twentieth century. Some states in the Midwest and West granted women the right to vote. However, the move toward a nationwide amendment to the Constitution stalled. In 1917, suffragist leaders such as Alice Paul picketed the White House and went on hunger strikes when they were jailed for their protests. Women finally got the vote when the Nineteenth Amendment became law in 1920. Women also gained a greater place in the workforce and legally enlisted in the military for the first time during this period.



(Suffragette being force-fed/Wikipedia)

THE ROARING TWENTIES IN AMERICA

As the world emerged from war, and U.S. soldiers, known as doughboys, returned home, people in the United States longed for a good time. The result was the decade called the Roaring Twenties. Many Americans expressed a desperate yet creative hysteria in new jazz rhythms, outrageous fashions, and wacky fads, and in obsessions with money, motorcars, and youth.



The Twenties were marked by a booming economy, jazz, and late night parties where people danced the Charleston. Young women, nicknamed *flappers*, wore short skirts, short hair, and lipstick. Some even drove automobiles.

Many authorities were unsettled by what they saw as society's loosening morals. Congress had attempted to set enforcement guidelines for alcohol with the National Prohibition Act of 1919. The law did little to limit drinking. Instead, it contributed to the rise of gangsters such as Al Capone, who secretly transported liquor and ran "speakeasies," nightclubs where people could drink illegally.



THE GREAT DEPRESSION IN AMERICA

The stock market crash on October 29, 1929, known as “Black Tuesday,” ended the prosperity of the Roaring Twenties. Market conditions were ripe for a collapse, as investors bought stock on credit, and banks did not have enough money in reserve to cover all their customers’ deposits. In 1929, investors became worried that their stocks were overvalued and began selling at a frantic pace. Disastrously, no one was buying. By 1933, about a quarter of the population was unemployed, and many families became homeless, depending on soup kitchens and migrant camps for food and shelter.

BRITISH IMPERIALISM



Throughout the 1800s, Britain had continued to expand its overseas territories, in part to provide markets for British goods to replace those lost to growing commercial rivals such as Germany and the United States. Some British writers, such as Rudyard Kipling

defended colonialism. In a celebrated poem, he admonished,

“Take up the White Man’s burden

The savage wars of peace

Fill full the mouth of Famine

And bid the sickness cease.”

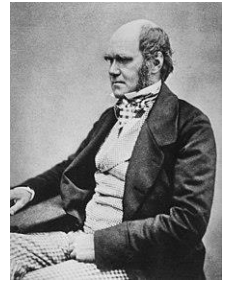
Other writers, such as George Orwell, were far more critical of British imperialism. Orwell, a colonial police officer in Burma, witnessed abuses of power that oppressed him “with an intolerable sense of guilt.”

GROUNDBREAKING IDEAS OF THE TIME

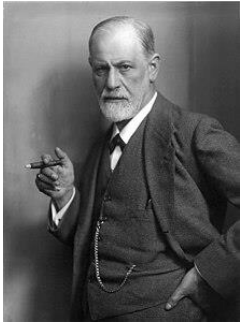
The twentieth century may well be named the Age of Technology.

XIX and early XX century scientific ideas in biology, psychology, and physics strongly influenced the development of Modernism.

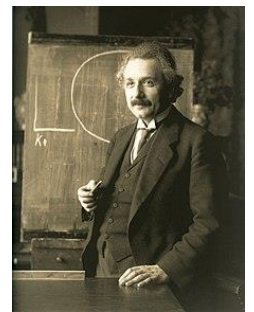
In the late nineteenth century, Charles Darwin's biological theory of evolution had already challenged traditional beliefs about the origin and nature of human beings.



Around 1900, the psychological theories of Sigmund Freud, emphasizing the role of the unconscious in human personality, questioned accepted attitudes about human behavior.



At about the same time, Albert Einstein's special and general theories of relativity established new relationships among space, time, and energy, overturning the familiar Newtonian laws of physics, including the concept of a three-dimensional universe.



Key thinkers and works that have influenced the literature of the 20th century:

- **Charles Darwin**, whose *Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man* described man as simply the occupant of the highest rung on the evolutionary ladder and who promoted the idea of survival of the fittest
- **Karl Marx**, in the *Communist Manifesto* and *Das Capital* saw history as the struggle between capitalist owners and the non propertied proletariat with the revolution ultimately won by the workers
- **Friedrich Nietzsche**, whose work valued instinct over intellect and insisted on the complete freedom of the individual in a world that lacks transcendent law ("God is Dead")
- **Sigmund Freud**, in *Interpretation of Dreams* put forth a new model of personality governed in large part by irrational and unconscious survivals of infantile fantasy
- **Carl G. Jung**, described the concepts of the collective unconscious, a buried level of universal experience tapped by myth, religion, and art, and the concept of archetypes, the master patterns revealing the common experiences of the human species

AVANT-GARD ART MOVEMENTS OF THE TIME

During the first part of the Modernist period, artists ceased trying to create realistic depictions of the world around them.



The painters Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso developed a style of art called **Cubism**, that revolutionized painting and visual art, and influenced artistic innovations in music, literature, and architecture. Cubist subjects are analyzed, broken up, and reassembled in an abstract form – instead of depicting objects from a single perspective, the artist depicts the subject from multiple perspectives to represent the subject in a greater context. In cubism, the shapes of objects or people are angular, geometric, or fragmented. Different sides of a subject are shown simultaneously in flattened, geometric way.

Both artists went on to work in other styles after the end of World War I, but their early work influenced later artists.



Futurism, a flamboyant literary and artistic movement that developed in France and Italy from 1908 through the 1920s, was greatly influenced by *Cubism*.



It emphasized dynamism, speed, technology, youth, violence, and objects such as the car, the airplane, and the industrial city. Futurists added implied motion to the shifting planes and multiple observation points of the Cubists, celebrated natural as well as mechanical motion and speed, glorified danger, war, and the machine.

They also detailed their disdain for traditional Italian Renaissance works of art and their subjects. Futurist Painters (Umberto Boccioni, Luigi Russolo, Gino Severini, Giacomo Balla, and Carlo Carrà) believed that art should be inspired by the modern marvels of their newly technological world.





Another literary and artistic movement, called **Dadaism** – deliberately irrational art, born as a protest against the barbarism of the War and oppressive intellectual rigidity, posed itself as an anti-art. It strived to create works of art and literature that intentionally had no meaning and was as much intentionally offensive. Key figures in the movement included Jean Arp, Hugo Ball, Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabia, Tristan Tzara, among others.

Surrealism, a movement that grew out of Dada and automatism, was influenced by Freud's emphasis on the subconscious and the role of dreams in human behavior. Surrealist artists such as René Magritte and Salvador Dalí created dreamlike images in their paintings, as Max Ernst's *The Elephant Celebes*, or in Dalí's famous work *The Persistence of Memory*, with its melting, distorted timepieces.

Surrealism is often recognized for its impossible and almost absurd combinations of objects depicted in realistic detail which reveals the unconscious mind, the irrational, and the fantastic.



Now these movements are called avant-garde. In the arts and literature, the term **avant-garde** (from French meaning 'advance guard') identifies an experimental genre or work of art, and the artist who created it, which usually is aesthetically innovative, whilst initially being ideologically unacceptable to the artistic establishment of the time.

The military metaphor of an *advance guard* identifies the artists and writers whose innovations in style, form, and subject-matter challenge the artistic and aesthetic validity of the established forms of art and the literary traditions of their time; thus, the artists who created the anti-novel and Surrealism were ahead of their times.

MODERNISM AS A MOVEMENT IN LITERATURE

Definition:

“As far as literature is concerned modernism reveals a breaking away from established rules, traditions and conventions, fresh ways of looking at man’s position and function in the universe and many experiments in form and style. It is particularly concerned with language and how to use it (representationally or otherwise) and with writing itself”

(Dictionary of Literary Terms & Literary Theory).

The term modernism covers a variety of movements united by the desire to break with the past, to change the structure and content of the arts. Spurred by new ideas in anthropology, psychology, and philosophy, writers and other artists were both creating and responding to new ways of perceiving and describing the world.

At first exuberant and optimistic, as in the work of imagists such as Ezra Pound, the tone of the movement was changed by the horrors of World War I to one of disillusionment and alienation—as conveyed in T. S. Eliot’s poem *The Waste Land*, for example. Poets broke out of established meters to experiment with free verse, and prose writers such as James Joyce and Virginia Woolf incorporated into their work the new ideas of psychology, such as stream of consciousness. Through modernism, writers were able to capture and express the soul of their rapidly changing world.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MODERNISM IN LITERATURE

Modernist writers changed the subject of their works from mostly that of the natural world to that of society and individual psyche; they changed their view of the world from optimistic to pessimistic and began to break away from the old ideas, explore new ways of expressing themselves & experiment with **the language**

Literature exhibits *new perspectives*: Meaning comes from the individual’s perspective and is thus personalized; A single story might be told from the perspective of several different people, with the assumption that the “truth” is somewhere in the middle.

Inner psychological reality or “interiority” is represented, interest in the inner workings of the human mind expressed through new narrative techniques: stream of consciousness—portraying the character’s inner monologue.

Rejection of traditional themes and subjects. Loss of faith in religion and society. The subject matter of literature changed too. With the shock of the war, technological advances, and greater social freedom, writers realized that they could and should write about anything. No subject was too dignified or undignified, too familiar or remote, to appear in a modern poem or novel.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE MODERNIST TEXTS

Nonlinearity of plot. Modernist works don't always necessarily have plots, first of all. Organized non-sequentially: Experience portrayed as allusive, discontinuous, using fragmentation and juxtaposition. Emphasis on bold experimentation in style and form. Ambiguous endings—open endings which are seen as more representative of reality.

Irony and satire: *verbal* irony is just saying one thing and meaning its opposite. *Situational* irony occurs when the character acts differently from what he says. *Dramatic* irony means that the reader and the audience know more than the characters do. So, irony isn't necessarily humor, though it often is. But it definitely is always a mismatch between what's actually going on and what should be going on, or what people think is going on.

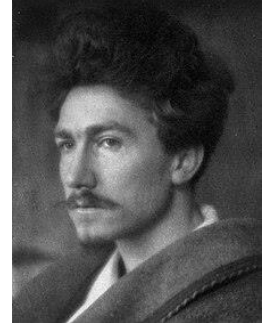
Voices and streams of consciousness. Streams of consciousness is a term pretty synonymous with writers like Joyce and Woolf who employ this technique a lot. Voices is more often used by the poets like Eliot, for example. Altogether it means that Modernists are really interested in trying to get into consciousnesses. And not just one, multiple ones. There isn't one **definitive** voice that's telling what you should think or believe about the text.

Allusions are literary references to other authors, books, music. It's taking something that reader is expected to recognize and using it in a new way.

LITERARY MOVEMENTS WITHIN MODERNISM

IMAGISM

Imagism is the best-known of the dozens of small movements in modernist poetry in the years leading up to World War I. Ezra Pound formulated the “rules” of Imagism, which were essentially a rejection of Victorian poetry. Imagist poets were encouraged to “simply present” an image without comment. Finally, Pound urged imagists to use the rhythm of the metronome.



From his base in London, Pound published the anthology *Des Imagistes* in 1914. Other poets in the movement included H. D., William Carlos Williams, Richard Aldington, and Amy Lowell; H.D.'s poem “Oread” embodies the imagist project. Pound soon moved on from Imagism but Lowell, from Boston, continued to publish imagist anthologies for years after the movement had become irrelevant.

*The apparition of these faces in the crowd:
Petals on a wet, black bough
Ezra Pound. In a Station of the Metro*

continued to publish imagist anthologies

The Imagists held *the following principles*:

- The image is the essence, the raw material, of poetry.
- Poetry should be expressed economically – with brief, clear, concrete language to convey precise images.
- These images should instantly convey to the reader the poem’s meaning and emotion.
- The language of these poetic images should be similar to the ways people speak – not made up of predictable rhythms and rhymes – but expressed in freer and more modern verse forms.
- Topics for poems do not have to be high-minded or “poetic.” In fact, no topic is unsuitable for a poem.

VORTICISM

After Imagism, Pound moved on to Vorticism. Works of this movement (which consisted primarily of Pound, the writer T. E. Hulme, and the painter/novelist Wyndham Lewis) were published in their magazine *Blast*.

It took the basic tenets of imagism, combined them with the painting style of Cubism, and injected an aggressive anger. At this time Pound had discovered the Chinese written character and had decided that its unique combination of sound, text, and image created a luminous “vortex” of energy. The movement fell apart as World War I began, for its anger and violence seemed very small and ineffective when compared to the realities of trench warfare.



BLOOMSBURY GROUP

The Bloomsbury Group was a gathering of English writers, artists, and intellectuals who held informal artistic and philosophical discussions in Bloomsbury, a district of London, from around 1907 to the early 1930s. The Bloomsbury Group held no uniform philosophical beliefs but did commonly express an aversion to moral prudery, a desire for greater social tolerance, and pacifism in the face of two world wars. At various times the circle included Virginia Woolf, E. M. Forster, Clive Bell, Lytton Strachey, and John Maynard Keynes.

THE LOST GENERATION

The “Lost Generation” was a name given by Gertrude Stein to the group of young Americans who migrated to Paris in the 1920s. Ernest Hemingway is the most famous of these Americans (in fact, it was to him that Stein said, “you are all a lost generation”), but there were dozens. Many of these Americans were artists and writers, but just as many were not and were attracted to Paris because of the strong dollar and the bohemian lifestyle. Hemingway’s first novel, *The Sun Also Rises*, is the enduring portrait of this group as they wander from Paris to Spain and back, looking for thrills and occasionally working.

The Lost Generation’s members constantly crossed paths with the European artists who were already living there. Pablo Picasso, Ezra Pound, James Joyce, Stein, Constantin Brancusi, and many others had made Paris their home and had made it into one of the great centers of artistic activity. When the “Lost Generation” arrived, many of the established artists befriended these



Americans, took advantage of them, or even worked with them. By the end of the 1920s, though, most of these Americans had returned home.

"You can't get away from yourself by moving from one place to another. There's nothing to that."

E. Hemingway. *The Sun Also Rises*

THE JAZZ AGE

F. Scott Fitzgerald gave the label "the Jazz Age" to the period between the end of World War I and the beginning of the Great Depression. To him, this time was both exuberant and mournful. In his short life, Fitzgerald embodied the frantic pace and social ambitions typical of the Jazz Age. Yet, beneath the surface, he believed that the United States was fundamentally in disarray. He said there was a new "generation grown up to find all Gods dead, all wars fought, all faiths in man shaken." In the United States, desire for consumer goods soared after the war, and symbols of success, such as cars, were everywhere.



But many writers were disgusted by what they viewed as shallow materialism. In his novel *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald memorably

"It seemed only a question of a few years before the older people would step aside and let the world be run by those who saw things as they were."

F. Scott Fitzgerald from *Echoes of the Jazz Age*

created glamorous and wealthy characters who dash from one party to the next, yet cannot find happiness.

HARLEM RENAISSANCE

Harlem became a main destination during the Great Migration. It represented the coming-of-age of African American culture and the flowering of the community's creative impulses, especially for southerners, who had been exploited for generations in the US. Out of the African American tradition of spirituals and work songs came blues. Influenced by blues, jazz developed later in New Orleans as a type of music that combined West African rhythms, ragtime, and some European instruments, such as the string bass. In 1929, when the whole country felt the economic shock of the stock market crash, there was less money available to spend on the arts—and as a result, the Harlem Renaissance was over. However, writers in the 1930s and 1940s such as Richard Wright and Ralph Ellison continued the artistic coming-of-age that this movement had begun.

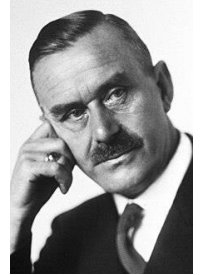
KEY MODERNIST NOVELISTS IN WORLD LITERATURE

- **FRANZ KAFKA** (1883-1924), noted for his surrealistic fiction such as the novella *The Metamorphosis* (1915, tr. 1948) and *The Trial* (1925, tr. 1937)



- **ERICH MARIE REMARQUE** (1898-1970) German journalist and novelist Wrote *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1929), the best known and best example of World War I anti-war literature

- **THOMAS MANN** (1875-1955) a German novelist and essayist, known for his narrative psychological studies of the artistic temperament and for his exploration of mythology. Major Works: *Death in Venice* (1912), *The Magic Mountain* (1924)



- **MARCEL PROUST** (1871-1922) French novelist whose works attempt to find the true meaning of past experience in involuntary memories stimulated by some object or circumstance. His masterwork is *Recherche du Temps Perdu* (literally, in search of lost time); English title *Remembrance of Things Past*) (16 volumes, 1913-27); includes *Swann's Way*

WHY IT MATTERS

The writers who created Modernism challenged the traditional values of society and forms of literature. The war decimated a generation of young men, and many of the survivors were haunted by the horrors of the Western Front, where the traditional view of war as heroic adventure became a grimly ironic absurdity. As the poet Philip Larkin observed, “Never such innocence again.”

Modernism fundamentally changed the way people looked at the world around them. Modernist artists transformed familiar objects into exotic new shapes or explored the content of dreams. Modernist writers, such as T. S. Eliot and James Joyce, broke away from traditional literary forms and values to create the classics of a new literature wherein reality might be redefined not by fidelity to exterior appearances but by the patterns of myth or the flow of the subconscious mind. They believed their innovations brought literature closer to capturing human experience. Today, writers take on the challenge of portraying reality in the twenty-first century.

KEY MODERNISTS IN UK LITERATURE

JAMES JOYCE (1882–1941)

The most important writer of the modernist movement. He produced relatively few works, but these books included poetry, drama, short stories, and the novel that the Modern Library publishing imprint named the most important novel of the twentieth century. His life, too, became the embodiment of many of Modernism's most central themes: exile, the presence of the past in one's life, familiarity with a broad range of cultures and historical periods, and self-destruction.



A few bio facts:

- the oldest of 10 surviving children, born in Dublin, Ireland, to a lower middle-class Catholic family.
- attended boarding school, local school, college in Dublin, moved to Paris, medical school (didn't finish), started writing, moved to Zurich, taught literature and enjoyed an occasional monetary gran

Joyce's works have long-lasting impact in literature: technique known as *stream of consciousness* and *epiphany*: (comes from the Christian church year commemorating the visit of the Wise Man – January 6); an experience of sudden and striking realization; indicates a sudden revelation or discovery, usually unexpected, that allows the protagonist or reader to see smth in a new way

Dubliners - 1914

- a short-story collection (15 stories) about people living in Dublin: 3 – about childhood, 4 – adolescence, 4 – mature life, 3 – public life, *The Dead* – summary. The most famous stories - '*Araby*' and '*The Dead*.'
- Joyce intended these short stories to be “a chapter in the moral history of Ireland”

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

Bildungsroman: novel of formation, of education, or coming-of-age story - a literary genre that focuses on the psychological and moral growth of the protagonist from youth to adulthood and in which, therefore, character change is

extremely important (first bildungsroman - *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe)

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man (1916) was a stream-of-consciousness narrative of Joyce's own life (barely fictionalized as protagonist Stephen Dedalus) up to the point that he left Ireland.

Part I. Childhood: this very young child stage is represented in a language of a child

Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road and this moocow that was coming down along the road met a nice little boy named baby tuckoo.

Part II. Sexual Awakening: his first sexual experience with a prostitute

Part III. Religious Torment: Stephen going in to a confession

Part IV. Discipline: not indulging in pleasures - to be a priest? - thinks about his name and his father - his destiny as an artist

Part V. University: the diary - a dedication to his father

Old father, old artificer, stand me forever in good stead

ULYSSES, June 16th, Leopold Bloom

In 1922 Joyce published his masterpiece and the single greatest work of Modernism, *Ulysses*. This retelling of the Odysseus myth through the persona of a Jewish advertising salesman in Dublin is a triumph on every level. The book was immediately banned in England and the United States for blasphemy and obscenity; it was not until 1934 that it became legal in the United States.

a quarter after what an unearthly hour I suppose theyre just getting up in China now combing out their pigtails for the day well soon have the nuns ringing the angelus theyve nobody coming in to spoil their sleep except an odd priest or two for his night office or the alarmlock next door at cockshout clattering the brain out of itself let me see if I can doze off 1 2 3 4 5 what kind of flowers are those they invented like the stars the wallpaper in Lombard street was much nicer the apron he gave me was like that something only I only wore it twice better lower this lamp and try again so that I can get up early

Finnegans Wake

- experimental with lots of words from foreign languages

It is a very difficult novel, barely recognizable as English in many places, but its intricate structure and brilliant use of all of the English language's possibilities ensure that readers will attempt to decipher it for decades to come.

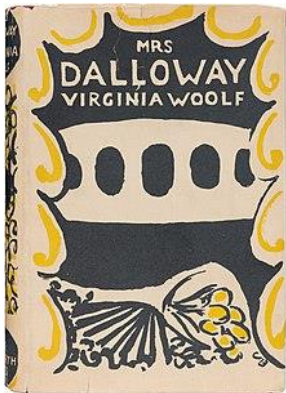
VIRGINIA WOOLF (1882–1941)



Adeline **Virginia Woolf** was an English author, feminist, essayist, publisher, and critic, considered as one of the foremost modernists of the twentieth century along with T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, James Joyce, and Gertrude Stein.

Her parents were Sir Leslie Stephen, who was a notable historian, author, critic and mountaineer, and Julia Prinsep Duckworth, a renowned beauty. The sudden death of her mother in 1895, when Virginia was 13, and that of her half-sister Stella two years later, led to the first of Virginia's several nervous breakdowns. However, it was the death of her father in 1904 provoked her most alarming collapse and she was briefly institutionalized.

Woolf came to know the founders of the Bloomsbury Group. She became an active member of this literary circle. Virginia's most famous works include the novels *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), *To the Lighthouse* (1927) and *Orlando* (1928), and the book-length essay *A Room of One's Own* (1929), with its famous dictum, "A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction." In some of her novels, she moves away from the use of plot and structure to employ stream-of-consciousness to emphasize the psychological aspects of her characters.



After completing the manuscript of her last (posthumously published) novel, *Between the Acts*, Woolf fell into a depression similar to that which she had earlier experienced. On 28 March 1941, Woolf put on her overcoat, filled its pockets with stones, and walked into the River Ouse near her home and drowned herself. Her final writing were these words addressed to her husband:

"I know that I am spoiling your life, that without me you could work. And you will I know. You see I can't even write this properly. I can't read. What I want to say is I owe all the happiness of my life to you. You have been entirely patient with me and incredibly good. I want to say that—everybody knows it. If anybody could have saved me it would have been you. Everything has gone from me but the certainty of your goodness. I can't go on spoiling your life any longer. I don't think two people could have been happier than we have been."

Major Works

- *The Voyage Out* 1915
- *Night and Day* 1919
- *Jacob's Room* 1922 - success 😊! (more experimental. It's an indirect character study of Jacob)
- *Mrs. Dalloway* 1925 - breakthrough novel!!!!
- *To the Lighthouse* 1927 - even more experimental
- *Orlando* 1928
- *A Room of One's Own* 1929
- *The Waves* 1931 - extremely experimental
- *The Years* 1937
- *Between the Acts* 1941



Notes on Style - free indirect discourse

- free indirect discourse (reads a little like stream of consciousness) - a third person representation of a person's thoughts, but without the 'he said,' 'he thought,' 'he considered' tags.
- 'He wondered why he hadn't thought to try Pepsi before. *How effervescent the bubbles, how lovely the taste!*' (instead of: 'He thought, *How effervescent the bubbles.*')
- 'Mrs. Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself. For Lucy had her work cut out for her. The doors would be taken off their hinges; Rumpelmayer's men were coming. And then, thought Clarissa Dalloway, what a morning - fresh as if issued to children on a beach. *What a lark! What a plunge!*'

More Notes on Style

- interweaving plot
- the style of the novel: indirect to direct, thoughts and description, all going on at once without really letting readers know the difference between the two - stylistic effect where we're always in the characters' thoughts and we're always out of the characters' thoughts.
- a meditation on **perspective** and **thoughts** - the characters are constantly thinking about what could have been in their pasts
- how people observe the same thing differently

Famous Quotes from Virginia Woolf

“To look life in the face, always, to look life in the face, and to know it for what it is...at last, to love it for what it is, and then, to put it away...”

– *Virginia Woolf*

“What is the meaning of life? That was all- a simple question; one that tended to close in on one with years, the great revelation had never come. The great revelation perhaps never did come. Instead, there were little daily miracles, illuminations, matches struck unexpectedly in the dark; here was one.”

– *Virginia Woolf, To the Lighthouse*

“For now she need not think of anybody. She could be herself, by herself. And that was what now she often felt the need of - to think; well not even to think. To be silent; to be alone. All the being and the doing, expansive, glittering, vocal, evaporated; and one shrunk, with a sense of solemnity, to being oneself, a wedge-shaped core of darkness, something invisible to others... and this self having shed its attachments was free for the strangest adventures.”

– *Virginia Woolf, To the Lighthouse*

“And all the lives we ever lived and all the lives to be are full of trees
and changing leaves.”

– **Virginia Woolf, *To the Lighthouse***

“How much better is silence; the coffee cup, the table. How much better to sit by myself like the solitary sea-bird that opens its wings on the stake. Let me sit here for ever with bare things, this coffee cup, this knife, this fork, things in themselves, myself being myself.”

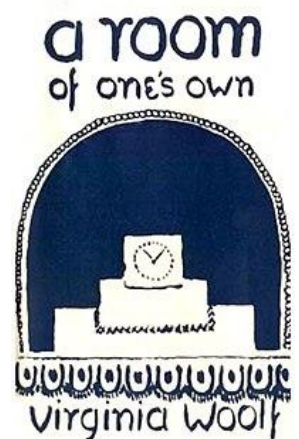
– *Virginia Woolf, The Waves*

“The history of men's opposition to women's emancipation is more interesting perhaps than the story of that emancipation itself.”

– *Virginia Woolf, A Room of One's Own*

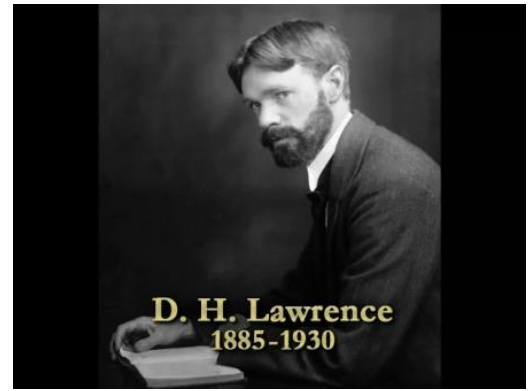
“So long as you write what you wish to write, that is all that matters; and whether it matters for ages or only for hours, nobody can say.”

– *Virginia Woolf, A Room of One's Own*



D.H. LAWRENCE (1885–1930)

David Herbert Lawrence, English author of novels, short stories, poems, plays, essays, travel books, and letters.



Lawrence was the fourth child of a north Midlands coal miner who had worked from the age of 10, was a dialect speaker, a drinker, and virtually illiterate. Lawrence's mother, who came from the south of England, was educated, refined, and pious.

Lawrence won a scholarship to Nottingham High School (1898–1901) and left at 16 to earn a living as clerk in a factory, but he became a pupil-teacher in Eastwood in 1902 and performed brilliantly in the national examination. He began to write in 1905; his first story was published in a local newspaper in 1907.

"A woman has to live her life, or live to repent not having lived it."

D.H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

D.H. Lawrence is regarded as one of the most influential writers of the 20th century. He published many novels and poetry volumes during his lifetime, including *Sons and Lovers* and *Women in Love*, but is best known for his infamous *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The graphic and highly sexual novel was published in Italy in 1928, but was banned in the United States until 1959, and in England until 1960.

Sons and Lovers

- first major book, published in 1913
- semi-autobiographical, set in coal-mining country
- a lot of oedipal issues (an unconscious sexual feeling of a son to his mother)
- his primary concerns in literature - relationships

Other novels

- *The Rainbow* (1915) is D.H. Lawrence's first brush with obscenity and *Women in Love*, which is its sequel, comes out in 1920.
- *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928) - published in a heavily abridged form until 1960 (Obscene Publications Act passed in 1959)

"We've got to live, no matter how many skies have fallen."

D.H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

Poetry and nonfiction

Lawrence evolved a highly spontaneous mode of free verse that allowed him to express an unrivaled mixture of observation and symbolism. His poetry can be of great biographical interest, as in *Look! We Have Come Through!* (1917), and some of the verse in *Pansies* (1929) and *Nettles* (1930) is brilliantly sardonic. But his most original contribution is *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* (1923), in which he creates an unprecedented poetry of nature, based on his experiences of the Mediterranean scene and the American Southwest. In his *Last Poems* (1932) he contemplates death.

D.H.Lawrence

Self-pity

I never saw a wild thing
sorry for itself.

A small bird will drop frozen dead from a bough
without ever having felt sorry for itself.



A Winter's Tale

Yesterday the fields were only grey with scattered snow,
And now the longest grass-leaves hardly emerge;
Yet her deep footsteps mark the snow, and go
On towards the pines at the hills' white verge.

I cannot see her, since the mist's white scarf
Obscures the dark wood and the dull orange sky;
But she's waiting, I know, impatient and cold, half
Sobs struggling into her frosty sigh.

Why does she come so promptly, when she must know
That she's only the nearer to the inevitable farewell;
The hill is steep, on the snow my steps are slow—
Why does she come, when she knows what I have to tell?

Belief

Forever nameless
Forever unknwon
Forever unconceived
Forever unrepresented
yet forever felt in the soul.

GERTRUDE STEIN (1874–1946)



She studied philosophy and psychology at Radcliffe College and then medicine at Johns Hopkins University but left to live in Paris in 1903 before earning her M.D. American living in Paris.
Patron of authors and artists as well as artistic innovator.

Stein's first published novel is *Three Lives* (1909), but she found international fame in 1933 with the publication of *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (which is actually her own autobiography).

She is credited with coining the term “Lost Generation” to describe the American expatriate writers and artists who began gathering at her house after World War I.

Creator of difficult-to-understand poems, mostly characterized by wordplay as greater than meaning. She's more interested in how words sound.
A classic Steinian phrases are '*A rose is a rose is a rose.*' "*There is no there there*"

Example of Style (from *Tender Buttons*)

A RED STAMP.

If lilies are lily white if they exhaust noise and distance and even dust, if they dusty will dirt a surface that has no extreme grace, if they do this and it is not necessary it is not at all necessary if they do this they need a catalogue.

MILK.

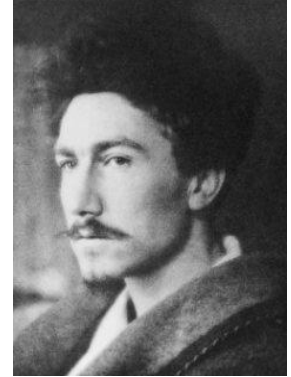
Climb up in sight climb in the whole utter needles and a guess a whole guess is hanging. Hanging hanging.

EGGS.

*Kind height, kind in the right stomach with a little sudden mill.
Cunning shawl, cunning shawl to be steady.*

EZRA POUND (1885–1972)

In many ways, Ezra Pound was the father of literary Modernism. If nothing else, he almost single-handedly brought the techniques of Modernism to U.S. poets, while at the same time bringing the talents of American modernist poets to the notice of the avant-garde establishment.



Pound was born in Hailey, Idaho, but soon after his birth his family moved to the suburbs of Philadelphia. He grew up in that area and attended the University of Pennsylvania (where he met William Carlos Williams and another important American modernist poet, Hilda Doolittle) and Hamilton College. After a short stint teaching at a small college in Indiana, Pound grew tired of what he saw to be American small-mindedness and moved to Venice, Italy.

He soon relocated to London, where he created movements and forced himself into the center of those movements. Probably the most important of those movements was Imagism, a school of poetry that explicitly rejected Victorian models of verse by simply presenting images without authorial commentary.

In 1925 he moved to Rapallo, Italy, where he developed a strong affinity for Mussolini and Italian fascism. At this time, he also began working in earnest on *The Cantos*, the epic poem that would become his life's work.

Pound stayed in Italy for more than twenty years. During World War II he spoke on Italian state radio broadcasts aimed at U.S. soldiers; in 1943 he was indicted for treason as a result of these activities and, in 1945, returned to the United States to face trial. Found mentally unfit to defend himself, Pound was incarcerated in St. Elizabeth's Hospital for the Criminally Insane in Washington, D.C. for thirteen years. In 1958 Pound was released from his incarceration and allowed to return to Italy. He died in Venice, Italy.

Friends with Yeats, T.S. Eliot, Robert Frost, and Ernest Hemingway. Help to edit and publish their works.

Ezra Pound

A Pact

I make a pact with you, Walt Whitman –
I have detested you long enough.
I come to you as a grown child
Who has had a pig-headed father;
I am old enough now to make friends.
It was you that broke the new wood,
Now is a time for carving.
We have one sap and one root –
Let there be commerce between us.

A Girl

The tree has entered my hands,
The sap has ascended my arms,
The tree has grown in my breast -
Downward,
The branches grow out of me, like arms.

Tree you are,
Moss you are,
You are violets with wind above them.
A child - so high - you are,
And all this is folly to the world.

An Immortality

Sing we for love and idleness,
Naught else is worth the having.

Though I have been in many a land,
There is naught else in living.

And I would rather have my sweet,
Though rose-leaves die of grieving,

Than do high deeds in Hungary
To pass all men's believing.



KATHERINE MANSFIELD (1888 -1923)

Katherine Mansfield lived for only thirty-four years, but in her short life she became one of the greatest short story writers and an innovator in the form. Her stories have been called delicate, beautiful, and profound. She revolutionized the concept of the short story, moving it away from the strictures of plot and external action. She was able to capture the meaning of a relationship in a series of sensations, illuminating the inner truth of a character's life.



Born Katherine Mansfield Beauchamp in Wellington, New Zealand, she was the daughter of a domineering father and an aloof mother.

Mansfield had her first story published at the age of nine. Entitled "Enna Blake," it appeared in *The High School Reporter* in Wellington, with the editor's comment that it "shows promise of great merit."

In 1906, she took up music and became an accomplished cellist, but her father denied her the opportunity to become a professional musician.

Her lifelong friend Ida Baker persuaded Mansfield's father to allow Katherine to move to England with an allowance of £100 a year. There she devoted herself to writing. Mansfield never visited New Zealand again.

Major collections include: *In a German Pension* (1911), *The Garden Party & Other Stories* (1922), *Bliss and Other Stories* (1923)/

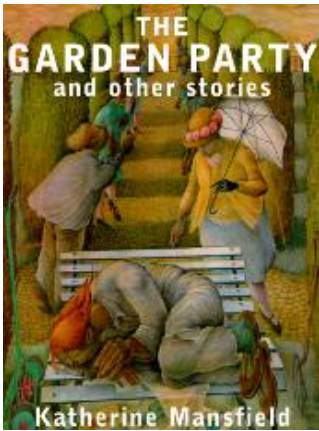
Mansfield's creative years were burdened with loneliness, illness, jealousy, alienation, all of which is reflected in her work with the bitter depiction of marital and family relationships of her middle-class characters.

Mansfield was greatly influenced by Anton Chekov, sharing his warm humanity and attention to small details of human behaviour. Her influence on the development of the modern short story was also notable. Among her literary friends were Aldous Huxley, Virginia Woolf, and D.H. Lawrence. Mansfield's journal, letters, and scrapbook were edited by her husband, who ignored her wish

that he should “tear up and burn as much as possible” of the papers she left behind her.

“For the special thrilling quality of their friendship was in their complete surrender. Like two open cities in the midst of some vast plain their two minds lay open to each other. And it wasn't as if he rode into hers like a conqueror, armed to the eyebrows and seeing nothing but a gay silken flutter--nor did she enter his like a queen walking on soft petals. No, they were eager, serious travellers, absorbed in understanding what was to be seen and discovering what was hidden--making the most of this extraordinary absolute chance which made it possible for him to be utterly truthful to her and for her to be utterly sincere with him.”

— *Katherine Mansfield*



“I have made it a rule of my life never to regret and never to look back. Regret is an appalling waste of energy... you can't build on it; it's only good for wallowing in.”

“When we begin to take our failures non-seriously, it means we are ceasing to be afraid of them.”

“Would you not like to try all sorts of lives - one is so very small - but that is the satisfaction of writing - one can impersonate so many people.”

— *Katherine Mansfield*

“What is it with me? Am I absolutely nobody, but merely inordinately vain? I do not know.... But I am most fearfully unhappy. That is all. I am so unhappy that I wish I was dead—yet I should be mad to die when I have not yet lived at all.”

— *Katherine Mansfield*

“It's a terrible thing to be alone -- yes it is -- it is -- but don't lower your mask until you have another mask prepared beneath -- as terrible as you like -- but a mask.”

— *Katherine Mansfield*

T.S. ELIOT (1888-1965)

Claimed by his native America as well as his adopted homeland of Britain, T. S. Eliot was one of the giants of 20th-century literature. As a poet, playwright, and influential literary critic, Eliot helped to define the contours of modern poetry in the early 20th century.

Thomas Stearns Eliot is regarded as the most dominant literary figure between the two world wars.

Influential poet and literary critic.

American, born in St. Louis, went to Harvard, the Sorbonne, and Oxford, studying philosophy and writing a dissertation on the logician F. H. Bradley.



Eliot became a British citizen later on in life and he lived in London from 1914 onward. In 1927 converted to Anglicanism - his poetry and his plays after that started to be more religiously focused.

Major Works

- *The Love Song Of J. Alfred Prufrock*, 1915 - a meditative monologue presumably of J. Alfred Prufrock
- 1919 - critical essays '*Tradition in the Individual Talent*' - a controversial claim that poetry needs to be impersonal. You need to be able to interpret it without knowing anything about the author and his circumstances.
- '*The Waste Land*.' 1922 - the most famous work of Modernism
- '*The Hollow Men*,' a follow-up to '*The Waste Land*.' 1925

Culmination of his career - the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1948.

The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock, 1915

- first big break poem
- American poem (Boston?)
- theme of being old
- Plot - we follow around the speaker or narrator as he wanders around town. He also wanders through his memories.
- non-linear plot; just his thoughts as he goes.
- written in free verse, doesn't have any set length or set rhyme scheme.

T.S. Eliot

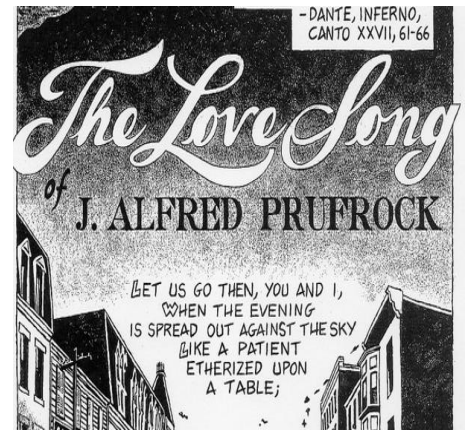
from *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*

Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherized upon a table;
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:
Streets that follow like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question ...
Oh, do not ask, "What is it?"
Let us go and make our visit.

In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes
Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,
Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,
And seeing that it was a soft October night,
Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.

And indeed there will be time
For the yellow smoke that slides along the street,
Rubbing its back upon the window-panes;
There will be time, there will be time
To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet;
There will be time to murder and create,
And time for all the works and days of hands
That lift and drop a question on your plate;
Time for you and time for me,
And time yet for a hundred indecisions,
And for a hundred visions and revisions,
Before the taking of a toast and tea.



ERNEST MILLER HEMINGWAY (1899 – 1961)



American novelist and short-story writer, whose style is brisk, terse, cleansed of adjectives, seemingly objective, and aimed at rendering the precise moment and feeling of experience. Many of his works are regarded as classics of American literature (49 short stories and over 10 novels).

Big-game hunters, deep-sea fishermen, soldiers, boxers, bullfighters – these are the types of characters found in Ernest Hemingway’s fiction. Yet the Hemingway hero is not the typical action-adventure daredevil. Strong but sensitive, brainy as well as brawny, he is usually someone who has been wounded by life, though he keeps his suffering to himself. Inextricably linked to Hemingway’s own adventurous life and personality, the Hemingway hero captured the public’s imagination and granted the author celebrity status that extended beyond the world of literature. His style and depiction of characters has been widely imitated by generations of writers.

Major works: *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940)

Army Career

World War I: Joined volunteer ambulance unit in Italy; Suffered severe leg wound; Had affair with American nurse during his recovery (basis for *A Farewell to Arms*); Decorated twice by the Italian government for his service

In Europe

The center of the modernist movement; Associated himself with writers such as Gertrude Stein and F. Scott Fitzgerald;

The Lost Generation

After World War I: young men and women began to realize that old ideas and beliefs had not saved man from the catastrophe of war; began to look for a new system of values to replace old system, which they found useless.

“If a writer of prose knows enough about what he is writing about, he may omit things that he knows and the reader . . . will have a feeling of those things as though the writer had stated them.”

E. Hemingway. *The Iceberg Theory*

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD (1896 – 1940)



“Show me a hero, and I will write you a tragedy”

Fitzgerald was born in St. Paul, Minnesota. He attended Princeton University, where he wrote for the newspaper and participated in the drama club. Fitzgerald joined the army before graduating, and while stationed in the South in 1918, he met Zelda Sayre at a country club dance.

Following his stint in the army, Fitzgerald settled in New York City and struggled to earn a living. His financial worries ended with the publication of *This Side of Paradise* when he was twenty-four. This novel about his life at Princeton was an overnight success, making it possible for Fitzgerald to marry Zelda.

In the 1920s, Fitzgerald wrote short stories and novels and mingled with the rich in the United States and in Europe. While in France and Italy, he wrote and revised his most successful novel, *The Great Gatsby* (1925). However, he and Zelda also maintained a high style of living and spent money excessively. When the frantic decade ended with the 1929 stock market crash, Fitzgerald’s private life and prosperous career also crashed.

“Draw your chair up close to the edge of the precipice and I’ll tell you a story.”

Fitzgerald

Major works: *The Great Gatsby* (1925), *Tender is the Night* (1934)

- Wrote five novels and numerous short stories during the 1920s and 1930s.
- Portrayed extravagance and carelessness of the Jazz Age.
- Authored *The Great Gatsby*, often called the greatest American novel of the 20th century.

“ Mostly, we authors repeat ourselves. . . . We have two or three great and moving experiences in our lives . . . and we tell our two or three stories - each time in a new disguise.”

Fitzgerald

- Examination of American materialism
- Exploration of the American dream

WILLIAM FAULKNER (1897-1962)

"The past is never dead; it's not even past."

- regarded as an important interpreter of the universal theme of "the problems of the human heart in conflict with itself."



- experimented in the use of stream-of-consciousness technique and in the dislocation of narrative time.

- discusses issues of sex, class, race relations, and relations with nature.

Experimental techniques include stream-of-consciousness and dislocation of narrative time.

Bio facts

William Faulkner was born in New Albany, Mississippi, USA.

The child was introduced to

literature early and learned to read and write before entering school.

Faulkner became fascinated by Mississippi history, dropped out of school and began to dream of repeating the fate of his famous great-grandfather, who was a writer, a colonel and a Civil War hero.

"[I] discovered that my own little postage stamp of native soil was worth writing about and that I would never live long enough to exhaust it ... It opened up a gold mine of other people, so I created a cosmos of my own." - WFaulkner

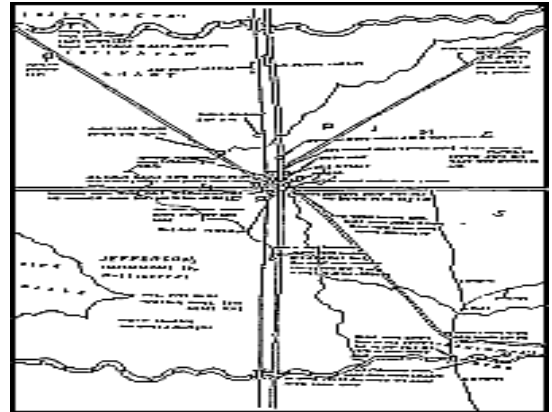
In 1918 he enlisted in the Air Force Reserve in Canada. But by this time the First World War was over, and the young man was forced to return home.

In 1919 the American publication *The New Republic* printed Faulkner's early work, and five years later a collection of poems entitled *The Marble Faun* was published. On the advice of novelist Sherwood Anderson, he began work on the novels *The Soldier's Reward* and *Mosquitoes*.

Faulkner's best-known work was considered by his contemporaries to be the novel *Light in August*, written and published in 1932. Faulkner's other equally famous works are his later novels "*Absalom, Absalom!*", "*The Desecrator of Ashes*", "*The City*" and "*The Mansion*", which won him the Nobel Prize for Literature and became the best "Southern" books of all time.

19 novels

- Sartoris, 1929
- The Sound and the Fury (1929),
- As I Lay Dying (1930),
- Sanctuary (1931),
- Absalom, Absalom! (1936),
- Go Down, Moses (1942)
- *A Fable* (1954), and *The Reivers* (1962) - awarded the Pulitzer Prize
- In 1949 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.



Fictional Yoknapatawpha County

Narrative techniques

- never step between the characters and the reader to explain, but let the characters explain themselves and hinder as little as possible the reader's direct experience of the work of art.
- The most characteristic way of structuring his stories is to fragment the chronological time. Juxtapose the past with the present.
- an unorthodox way of treating a story's chronology, often rearranged the sequence of events, using flashbacks to offer a window into a character's past or dropping hints that ominously foreshadow what is yet to come.
- stream-of-consciousness technique
- combination of symbolism with a stream-of-consciousness style.
- Often, the consciousness he presented was that of a child, a fool, or a person on the verge of madness.
- presenting multiple points of view, gave the story a circular form, one event is centered, with various points of view radiating from it, or different people responding to the same story.
- symbolism and mythological and biblical allusion

Style & language

- experimented with repetition, inconsistent punctuation, long and puzzling sentences, multiple points of view,
- sound very casual or informal sometimes
- capture the dialects of the Mississippi characters, including Negroes and the redneck, as well as more refined and educated narrators
- symbols and imageries drawn from nature

SUGGESTED PRACTICAL CLASSES ON UK AND US MODERNISM

WILLIAM FAULKNER. AMERICAN MODERNISM. PROSE.

1. *Speak on the following theoretical questions:*

1. Modernism; historical and literary context.
2. Major characteristics of Modernist Literature: main representatives and their works. Specific features of modernism in literature.

Read the stories (a story) by James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield or D.H. Lawrence. Use them to discuss the peculiarities of modernism in the style, themes, content.

2. *William Faulkner and His Works*

– biography, works, Yoknapatawpha County

3. *Stories for detailed analysis:*

1) Two stories for analyzes: *A Rose for Emily* and *Wash*

- brief summary
- main themes, characters, symbols
- Gothic characteristics. What makes these stories Gothic?

2) Additional Questions to *A Rose for Emily*

- Reconstruct the sequence of events. What is this story actually about?
- What is the conflict in this story? If Emily is the protagonist, who is the antagonist?
- Who is the narrator of this story? Why does Faulkner use this particular narrator? Is this narrator reliable?
- What is the significance of the title?
- main themes, characters, symbols

Optional. For more Southern Gothic Literature read Edgar Allen Poe, Ambrose Bierce and Flannery O'Connor (especially "A Good Man is Hard to Find").

MODERNISM. JAMES JOYCE.

1. *Speak on the following questions:*

1. Modernism in art and literature: historical and literary context.
2. Define modernism in literature. What are its specific features? themes, techniques of writing and formal characteristics? Use examples to illustrate your point.
 - i. *Read the recommended stories (a story) by Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield or D.H. Lawrence. Use them to discuss the peculiarities of modernism in the style, themes, content.*
3. Main representatives of British modernism and their works.

2. *James Joyce: facts of biography, literary career.*

3. *A story for detailed analysis: Araby.*

- brief summary of the story
- describe the setting in the story. What kind of world is North Richmond Street?
- What is the mood of the story? How is it established in the first pages?
- Who are the main characters in the story? What kind of relationship do they have? What is the nature of the boy's attitude to Mangan's sister?
- Why does the word Araby contain so much meaning for the narrator? What does it symbolize to the boy?
- What is the conflict in this story? How is it resolved?
- Where is the epiphany in the story and what is its meaning for the narrator?
- Which features of modernism do you recognize in this story?

Required reading:

James Joyce *Araby*

Recommended stories:

1. Virginia Woolf – *The Mark on the Wall, Kew Gardens*
2. Katherine Mansfield *Miss Brill* <https://fullreads.com/literature/miss-brill/>
3. D.H. Lawrence *The Horse Dealer's Daughter* <https://fullreads.com/literature/the-horse-dealers-daughter/5/>
4. James Joyce *Eveline, The Dead* (from the collection *Dubliners*) https://www.online-literature.com/james_joyce/959/

THE BRITISH AVANT-GARDE OF THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

1. Introduction to the British Avant-Garde

- 1) What does the word "avant-garde" mean? What is its application in literature and culture?
- 2) Think of the period post-World War I in Britain. Examine a historical and cultural context for the British avant-garde movement.
- 3) How did European avant-garde movements like Futurism, Dadaism, and Surrealism influence British writers and poets?
- 4) What are key British avant-garde figures?
- 5) Vorticism as a British avant-garde movement led by Wyndham Lewis

2. Surrealism in Britain

- 1) Define surrealism and its main characteristics.
- 2) How did British surrealism differ from its French counterpart? What was French surrealist movement's impact in Britain?
- 3) Examine key British surrealist writers and artists (David Gascoyne, Dylan Thomas, Edith Sitwell, etc.)

3. "The Seventh Dream of Isis" by David Gascoyne

- 1) Provide a brief background on David Gascoyne as a central figure in British surrealism.
- 2) Read "*And the Seventh Dream is the Dream of Isis*". Explore the poem's structure, tone, and mood, and how these create a sense of dreamscape. Analyze its use of dream-like imagery, symbolism, and mythological references.
- 3) How does the poem represent surrealism's exploration of the subconscious and irrational?
- 4) How does Gascoyne's poem fit into the broader context of avant-garde literature?

4. Additional Discussion:

- 1) Do you think surrealism is still relevant in contemporary literature?
- 2) How do you see avant-garde/surrealism influences today?

Required Reading:

David Gascoyne " *And the Seventh Dream is the Dream of Isis* " in *New Collected Poems* (pages 118-121)

T.S. ELIOT. MODERNIST POETRY.

1. Speak on the following theoretical questions:

- 1) Modernism: historical and literary context.
- 2) Define modernism in literature. What are its specific features? themes, techniques of writing and formal characteristics? Use examples to illustrate your point.
- 3) Major characteristics of Modernistic Literature: main representatives and their works.

2. T.S. Eliot as a giant of modernistic poetry: facts of biography, literary career.

3. T. S. Eliot Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock and Waste Land.

- 1) Explain how "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and Waste Land are modernist poems.
- 2) Think of your own interpretation of the poems.
Think of the meaning of the epigraph;
Check all allusions, intertext;
Look for stylistic devices in the text and explain their usage (repetitions, metaphors, alliterations, etc.)

TOPICS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION ON MODERNISM

1. Modernism evolved as an artistic reaction to dramatic changes in politics, culture, society, and technology. Research some of the technologies that were developed in the late 1800s and early 1900s that might have literally changed the world. Some of the inventions you might want to investigate might be the technologies that captured and recorded reality (photography, sound recording, film), the technologies of communication, the technologies of transportation, and the technologies of weaponry.
2. The two world wars of the twentieth century had an enormous effect on the modernist movement. Many critics feel that the movement hit its height just after World War I and was effectively killed by World War II. Research the wars' effects on writers of the modernist movement. What did they do during the war years? How did the war change their lives? You might want to look at lesserknown writers such as Rupert Brooke or Wilfred Owen who actually served in the conflict.
3. Most of the important modernist writers were born between 1880 and 1900, and most of them died in the 1960s. The world changed dramatically in the intervening period. In 1890 what were the world's great powers? Who were its important leaders? What were the important issues in international relations? What products did people use? How did people travel from place to place? Compare the answers to these questions to what the world looked like in 1965.
4. In addition to being a reaction to changes in technology and politics, Modernism was a reaction to important developments in Western thought. Dozens of philosophers and scholars of the late nineteenth century rejected the accepted explanations about the world and proposed their own. Of these, the thinkers who had the greatest effect on Modernism were the economist Karl Marx, the naturalist Charles Darwin, the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, and the psychiatrist Sigmund Freud. Research any one of these thinkers. What were their most important insights? What previous explanations did their writings reject? How do their ideas affect the world today?

MODERNISM: SELF-CHECK

Do you know the answers to these questions?

- 1. Lawrence was born in 1885 in which mining town in Nottinghamshire?**
 - A. Eastgate
 - B. Eastwood
 - C. Westwood
 - 2. When was David Herbert Lawrence born?**
 - A. 11 May 1880
 - B. 12 September 1888
 - C. 11 September 1885
 - D. 30 December 1886
 - 3. Which of the following novels of D.H Lawrence has autobiographical overtones?**
 - A. Sons and Lovers
 - B. Rainbow
 - C. Kangaroo
 - D. The White Peacock
 - 4. Lawrence was the ____ child of his parents?**
 - A. second
 - B. first
 - C. third
 - D. fourth
 - 5. During World War I, D.H.Lawrence (few variants are possible)**
 - A. was not well accepted by the British society
 - B. was living in poverty
 - C. had no friends to ask for help
 - D. was alone
 - 6. Choose his famous quote**
 - A. "No need to hurry. No need to sparkle. No need to be anybody but oneself."
 - B. "A woman has to live her life, or live to repent not having lived it."
 - C. "Books are a uniquely portable magic."
 - D. "I do not wish women to have power over men; but over themselves."
 - 7. Tick the major themes in his works (few variants are possible)**
 - A. Male-Female Relationship
 - B. Love and Sex
 - C. War
 - D. Class Barriers
 - E. The Working Class
 - F. Technology and Modernization
 - 8. Did D.H.Lawrence write only novels?**
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
 - 9. What was he thinking about in his last poems?**
 - A. About love
 - B. About death
 - C. About life
- 1. To which movement of literature does T. S. Eliot's *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* most closely belong?**
- a) Romanticism

- b) Postmodernism
- c) Modernism
- d) Victorian

2. Where was Eliot when he started writing "Prufrock"?

- a) At Oxford
- b) At Harvard
- c) In London
- d) In Paris

3. Who is the speaker of this poem?

- a) Dante
- b) Eliot
- c) Prufrock
- d) Lazarus

4. What does Prufrock wonder if he should dare eat?

- a) A banana
- b) An apple
- c) An orange
- d) A peach

5. Who is the eternal Footman?

- a) God
- b) Death
- c) Prufrock
- d) Priest

6. Describe Prufrock : _____

7. To what is the fog compared :

- a) a frog
- b) a mouse
- c) a cat
- d) an owl

8. Prufrock compares himself when trying to engage in conversation to what :

- a) A coffee spoon
- b) A bug
- c) A peach
- d) A circle

9. How does Prufrock describe himself in contrast with Hamlet?

- a) He is not the main character in his own life
- b) He is not in love with woman
- c) He has not enemies
- d) He is altruist

10. Who's singing has Prufrock heard?

- a) Mermaids
- b) Woman`s
- c) Childrens
- d) Lazarus`

11. What does water represent?

- a) Energy
- b) Life
- c) Power
- d) Death

12. What do the women talk of while they come and go?

- a) The weather
- b) Fashion
- c) Men
- d) Michelangelo

13. What theme is not presented in the poem?

- a) Prufrockian paralysis
- b) Temporal repetition and anxiety
- c) Fragmentation
- d) Debasement and Hell
- e) Self-confidence

14. What is the setting of this poem?

- a) Industrialized London
- b) Modern London
- c) The beach
- d) Victorian London

1. William Faulkner's great-grandfather, Colonel William Cuthbert Falkner appears in many of Faulkner's novels under the name of

- a) Colonel John Sartoris
- b) Colonel William Sartoris
- c) Colonel Tom Sartoris
- d) Colonel Edgar Sartori

2. As a teenager, Faulkner was interested in

- a) music
- b) drawing
- c) studying at school
- d) dancing

3. Match the date to the event

- 1. Faulkner had enrolled at the University of Mississippi.
 - 2. Faulkner succeeded in having his first novel published, Soldiers' Pay.
 - 3. Phil Stone escorted a collection of Faulkner's poetry, The Marble Faun, to a publisher.
- a) In 1924
 - b) By 1919
 - c) In 1926

1) What novels made Faulkner famous?

- a. "Noise and fury"
- b. "Dry September"
- c. "The Reivers"
- d. "A Rose for Emily"
- e. "Light in August"
- f. "Red Leaves"

2) Who instilled in the author the love for art and literature?

- a. mother

- b. father
- c. nanny
- d. grandfather
- e. family friend
- f. grandmother

3) Choose what fits the book "Flags in the Dust":

- a. the first successful work
- b. the editors didn't like it
- c. the first work in a series of novels that the author planned to write in 1927
- d. 1929 was completely revised and printed under the title Sartoris.
- e. This story is steeped in the traditions and spirit of the American South

4) Choose what fits the work "The Noise and the Fury":

- a. caused negative emotions of readers.
- b. readers did not understand the author's intention
- c. written in an unusual language
- d. a truly great novel was appreciated only in 1932.
- e. an innovative approach to language and literature.

5) The collection of short stories "Thirteen" includes:

- a. "Rose for Emily"
- b. "Light in August"
- c. "Red Leaves"
- d. "Evening Sun"
- e. "Ash Defiler"
- f. "Dry September"

6) Choose true facts about the personal life of the author:

- a. had many wives
- b. Faulkner remained devoted to his first love Estelle Oldham
- c. in 1929 Estelle became his legal wife.
- d. was lonely throughout his life

7) How did the father also contribute to the formation of William's personality?

- a. taught to observe the beauty of the surrounding world while fishing
- b. insisted on reading more literature
- c. drove to other cities
- d. went hunting with his son
- e. spent time with him on walks in remote unexplored forests

8) Choose what relates to the author's childhood and youth:

- a. could not read at all
- b. systematically skipped classes
- c. before entering school, he already knew how to read and write
- d. born in Lafayette County
- e. got acquainted with literature early
- f. the family often moved from city to city

'A Rose for Emily' William Faulkner

1. Which of the following is a motif (recurring element) in the story?
 - a) Dust/Gossip and people watching her
 - b) Dead bodies

- c) Crying
- d) Isolation

2. Why did the Board of Aldermen send a deputation to Miss Emily's house?

- a) to ask her what the odd smell was
- b) to vanquish her father
- c) to arrest her
- d) to collect taxes

3. What complaints was Judge Stevens receiving about Miss Emily from the townspeople?

- a) she was not involved with the community enough
- b) her house smelled bad
- c) she needed to stop killing rats in her yard
- d) it was unfair that she did not have to pay taxes

4. What do the town members finally do about "the smell"?

- a) they cleaned her house for her
- b) Judge Stevens made her move out
- c) sprinkle lime around and in her house
- d) Tobe, her servant, stopped killing rats in the yard.

5. What is the name of Miss Emily's love interest?

- a) Homer Simpson
- b) Homer Illiad
- c) Homer Barron
- d) Homer Odyssey

6. Former mayor of Jefferson represents old style/world.

**absolves main character
from taxes**

- a) Homer Barron
- b) Mr. Grierson
- c) Judge Stevens
- d) Colonel Sartoris

7. Why did the townspeople disapprove of Miss Emily's relationship with Homer?

- a) he was too good looking for her
- b) he was a Yankee
- c) he was a construction worker
- d) he was a bachelor

8. What does Miss Emily purchase from the druggist?

- a) Ajax
- b) Borax
- c) Bleach
- d) Arsenic

9. Why is the transaction between Miss Emily and the druggist ambiguous?

- a) the audience does not know what Emily is using the poison for
- b) the audience feels that Emily is demanding
- c) the audience knows that the druggist is scared of her
- d) the audience does not know what he sold her

10. What did the townspeople think Miss Emily was going to do with the poison?

- a) Kill rats
- b) Kill herself
- c) Kill her servant, Tobe

d) Kill her cousins

11. Why did the townspeople think that Emily and Homer got married?

- a) He proposed to her at a town meeting
- b) She bought him a nightshirt and a toiletry set
- c) He moved in with her
- d) She moved away to be with him

12. What makes the minister's visit to Miss Emily ambiguous?

- a) He refuses to officiate the marriage between Miss Emily and Homer
- b) He refuses to go back to her house after his first visit
- c) he refuses to sit in the same room as Miss Emily
- d) he refuses to drive to Mississippi

13. What change took place in Miss Emily's relationship with the town for a period of several years when Miss Emily was in her forties?

- a) She taught china painting lessons
- b) She opened her house for friends to visit
- c) She began dating again
- d) She gave tours of her house

14. Where does the final scene take place?

- a) A graveyard

- b) The second floor of Emily's house
 - c) On the lawn in front of Emily's house
 - d) At the sheriff's office
- 15. What does the narrator find on the pillow at the end of the short story?**
- a) A gray hair
 - b) A rose
 - c) A handkerchief
 - d) Her father's watch
- 16. What is the definition of the word encroached?**
- a) defended
 - b) intruded
 - c) surrounded
 - d) endured
- 17. What is the definition of the word vanquish?**
- a) to defeat
 - b) to disappear
 - c) to shrink
 - d) to give up
- 18. Why did the townspeople think that**

Emily and Homer got married?

- a) He proposed to her at a town meeting
 - b) She bought him a nightshirt and a toiletry set
 - c) He moved in with her
 - d) She moved away to be with him
- 19. What did the townspeople think Miss Emily was going to do with the poison?**
- a) Kill rats
 - b) Kill herself
 - c) Kill her servant, Tobe
 - d) Kill her cousins
- 20. The story focuses on the life of Emily after she has already died. What is the term for this story structure?**
- a) Allusion
 - b) Metaphor
 - c) Flashback
 - d) Allegory

LITERATURE AFTER WORLD WAR II.

The excitement of early modernism crumbled into disillusionment for many of the writers who survived the devastation of World War I. In the aftermath of the war, writers tended to see the world as bleak and fragmentary – a Waste Land like that presented by T. S. Eliot in his most famous poem. The tone of many writers became bitter, expressing the cynicism of what has come to be called the Lost Generation.

Others turned away from society altogether, exploring private concerns, personal experience, and the role of the artist.



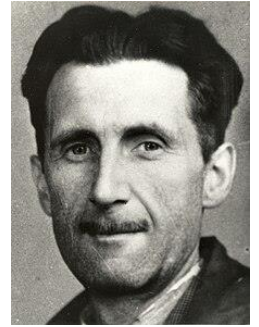
In the 1930s and 1940s, the growth of fascism and communism and the trauma of World War II prompted many **British** writers to focus again on social concerns. W. H. Auden and Stephen Spender examined and criticized society in much of their poetry; Aldous Huxley, Graham Greene, and George Orwell did likewise in their fiction.

Aspects of modernism were increasingly accepted as they became more familiar, and mere novelty played a less important role in literature than before. Free verse remained popular, but such poets as Auden and Dylan Thomas were equally at home with more traditional forms. In fiction, the use of the stream-of-consciousness technique became more widespread and less obscure.

After the war, devastated by widespread poverty and in desperate need of refashioning their social order, Britons turned to the nation's young liberals, electing a Parliament overwhelmingly dominated by Labor members. Over the next few years, the Labor government transformed Britain into a welfare state, setting up a national health-care system and nationalizing such industries as steel, coal, and railroads.

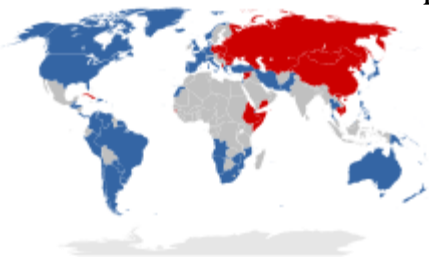
Britain also began slowly to relinquish its colonies. In the climate of the cold war, with the United States assuming a leading role in international affairs, Britain was no longer to be the world's greatest power.

A new strain of pacifism and anti-imperialism entered British literature. Based on his own experiences as a police superintendent in Burma, **George Orwell** became increasingly disillusioned with British colonialism, sharing his thoughts in classic essays such as “A Hanging” and “Shooting an Elephant.” He also made it his goal to expose and criticize totalitarianism in all forms. The “Ministry of Truth” in his novel 1984 was based on his own experiences writing wartime propaganda for the BBC during World War II. Similarly, **Graham Greene**, who looked with disdain on both the remains of the British Empire and the new influence of the United States, filled his novels with images of a sad, tawdry world stained by its colonial past.



The British writers who emerged after World War II struggled to come to terms with their changing world. They responded in various ways: poet **Ted Hughes** with brutal imagery, novelist Muriel Spark with cool irony; and the “**angry young men**”, writers such as **John Osborne** and **Alan Sillitoe**, with anti-authoritarian rage and working-class resentment. In the words of a character from Osborne’s *Look Back in Anger*, “There aren’t any good brave causes left. If the big bang does come, and we all get killed off, it won’t be in aid of the old-fashioned, grand design. It’ll just be for the Brave New nothing-very-much-thank-you. About as pointless and inglorious as stepping in front of a bus.”

America came out of World War II a world power, wielding a new weapon of unparalleled destructive force: the atomic bomb. But along with strength and influence came deep uneasiness. The Soviet Union, once an ally, emerged as a rival superpower with equally large ambitions and a political system—communism—which many saw as a threat to the American way of life.



Knowing any direct confrontation could end in nuclear annihilation, the two nations fought a “**Cold War**,” each side racing to develop more and more devastating weapons while they jostled for strategic influence around the globe. As the arms race spiraled upward, ordinary citizens felt less and less secure.

In literature, this pervasive fear of known and unknown dangers prompted a boom in *science fiction writing*, as writers pondered what might arise if the current trends continued.

The devastation in Europe allowed U.S. industries to dominate world markets, and the wartime economic boom continued through the 1950s. However, the United States and the Soviet Union—wartime allies in the struggle against the Axis Powers—became tense Cold War rivals in a worldwide struggle for power between capitalism and communism. The two world superpowers never went to war, but they continued to develop and stockpile nuclear weapons. An anxious world now lived under a new cloud – the mushroom cloud of the atomic age.

Modern writers also have responded in a variety of ways to a peculiarly American philosophy: that of the *American dream*.

For earlier generations, the American dream had meant many things – political and religious freedom, economic opportunity, the chance to achieve a better life through talent, education, and hard work. After living through the Great

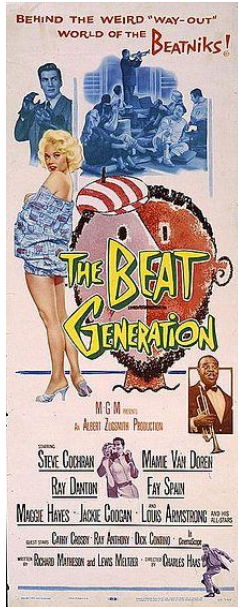


Depression and two World Wars, however, many Americans in the 1950s whittled that dream down to something much simpler: the chance to own a home in a stable neighborhood.

For millions of mainly white Americans, life in the suburbs became the American dream. Families sought out communities with affordable single-family homes, good schools, shopping malls, and parking that was free and easy to find. People didn't care if their houses looked alike; they just wanted a safe place to raise their children.

As the years passed and the economy boomed, however, Americans began to add to their once-simple dream. Things became more important: a new television, car, or washing machine came to be seen as symbols of success. Soon the dream

seemed to narrow to a vision of a consumer society in which conformity and “keeping up with the Joneses” was valued above all.



Writers from the mid-century to today have wrangled with the idea of the American dream. In the mid-'50s, “beatniks” such as **Jack Kerouac** and **Allen Ginsberg** protested the shallowness and conformity of American society. Dramatists such as **Arthur Miller** examined the strivings of ordinary Americans reaching for that American dream. Poets, novelists, short story writers—all have explored the many facets of the American dream.

The profound changes of the first half of the 20th century gave rise to a sharpened anxiety and sense of irony. The writers began to experiment with new and highly personal forms to express these

feelings.

LITERATURE OF THE TIME

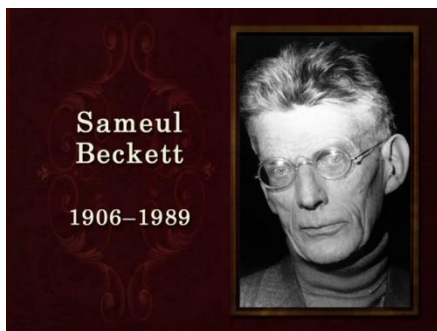
THE THEATRE OF ABSURD

Absurdism, and its more specific companion term Theatre of the Absurd, refers to the works of a group of Western European and American dramatists writing and producing plays in the 1950s and early 1960s.

The writers most commonly associated with Absurdism are *Samuel Beckett*, *Eugène Ionesco*, *Jean Genet*, *Arthur Adamov*, *Harold Pinter*, and *Edward Albee*, as well as a number of lesser-known dramatists. The avant-garde nature of absurdist writing contributed in part to its short life as a literary movement.

Features of the plays that seemed completely new and mystifying to audiences in the 1950s when absurdist works first appeared, soon became not only understandable, but even commonplace and predictable. With the exception of Ionesco, most playwrights abandoned the absurdist style after the 1960s; however, many of the individual plays were later considered classics of European and American drama.

SAMUEL BECKETT



- *the latter end of Modernism and right up into PM*
- *the pioneer and genius of Theater of the Absurd*

- born in Dublin in 1906 on Friday the 13th (Good Friday)
- a disciple, secretary, & friend of James Joyce (helped him research and transcribe *Finnegan's Wake*)
- started out writing prose (*Murphy* in 1938, later - trilogy: *Molloy*, *Malone Dies* and *The Unnameable*)
- a hero of the French Resistance during World War II

When World II ended,

- 1) he started writing in French,
- 2) he made a conscious decision to be way more minimalist and weirder than he was prior to World War II. He made this conscious decision to not be like Joyce.

Theater of the Absurd in the 50s and 60s in theater, a bizarre form of minimalism, bizarre characters and situations with usually fairly minimal sets. It is largely a blank stage; there's basically just a tree and a mound of dirt.

The theatre of the Absurd

- Influence of Camus and Sartre (existentialism)
- pessimistic view of man's existence
- no purpose at all in man's life, totally absurd
- After 2 world wars, in a world with no religion, with no belief Man is lost and senseless, absurd, useless.
- A BIG existential question
- WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF HUMAN EXISTENCE?

Waiting for Godot, 1953

- First written in French and performed in Paris *En Attendant Godot* (1953). Then translated (by Beckett himself) into English (1954) and performed in London (1955)
- The two-act play presents two men – two tramps, **Estragon** and **Vladimir** (Didi, Gogo) who engage in apparently pointless conversation while waiting by the side of the road for Godot, who fails to appear on two successive evenings. It is a play in which virtually nothing happens.
- no purpose or reason for their existence; they are in an absurd universe
- Beckett creates a world in which there is no heroism, no society, no superhuman agency. We are all stateless tramps, on a road to nowhere.
- impact that *Waiting for Godot* had on English theater and culture in the mid-1950s !!!!!!!
- The British Royal National Theater took a poll on which English language play is the most significant of the 20th Century- *Waiting for Godot!!*



ANGRY YOUNG MEN (50'S). UK.



- people still feeling the hangover of the war
- culture was in crisis: narrowness and pessimism of novels
- “the individual has been devalued, like the pound“ (L.P.Hartley)
- 1956: 8th May – première of *Look Back in Anger*
- **young anti-hero**: working class origin
- boorish rather than well behaved
- rudely angry rather than angry
- rise of a working class man into the upper middle class

Angry young men: The features

- fiercely critical of the established order
- working class families, lower, middle families
- frustration of the younger generation who rejected their parents’ middle class values and wanted to expose their unfair situation
- write about ugliness of life and expose the hypocrisy of the genteel class
- Written in ordinary, sometimes dirty language, direct/real language of the working class

MAJOR NOVELS BY ANGRY YOUNG MEN

- John Wain: *Hurry on Down*
- John Brain: *Room at the Top, Life at the Top*
- Colin Wilson: *The Outsider*;
- Kingsley Amis: *Lucky Jim*;
- Allan Sillitoe: *Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*
- Stan Barstow: *A Kind of Loving*
- David Storey: *This Sporting Life*
- Keith Waterhouse

JOHN OSBORNE (12.12.1929 – 24.12.1994)

- educated at "a rather cheap boarding school"
- former actor in provincial repertory companies
- served as actor-manager for a string of repertory companies in London and soon decided to try his hand at playwriting
- founding member of the "A. Y. M." group

THE “BEAT” GENERATION

In the late 1940s, writers Jack Kerouac and John Clellon Holmes were searching for a way to capture the essence of their generation. They saw a nation slowly emerging from years of war and economic depression, years during which it seemed that most people held similar opinions and led predictable, responsible lives. For Kerouac and Holmes, postwar society was epitomized by anonymous dress, as in the uniform suits of office workers, and by conventional taste. But they saw young people rejecting conformity and turning to creativity. In pursuit of unique identities, the young looked for more artistic and less money-driven lives. Kerouac and Holmes decided that this trend was encapsulated by one word: Beat.

Beat had many connotations, ranging from the sordid to the sublime. Kerouac first heard the term from the street hustler Herbert Huncke, who used it as slang for “tired and beaten down.” Kerouac saw in Beat a suggestion of beatitude, saintly or otherworldly beauty and happiness.

Poet Allen Ginsberg said, “The point of Beat is that you get beat down to a certain nakedness where you actually are able to see the world in a visionary way.” The core group of Beat Generation writers – **Kerouac, Ginsberg, and William S. Burroughs** – met in New York City in the areas around Columbia University and in Greenwich Village. The movement soon attracted attention throughout the country, establishing hubs in both New York City and San Francisco.

Rejecting the prevailing dictates of style and topic, these writers were unabashed experimenters who addressed issues previously considered taboo. Their fearlessness appealed to a newly arising community of bohemians, people who pursued artistic or literary interests and lived nonconformist lives.



Term coined by Jack Kerouac: It was meant to describe how they felt beat down, defeated and out of place among the returning soldiers and businessmen. (Jazz musicians on the streets in New York City, in response to how they were doing, sometimes said they were “beat,” meaning they were down and out, looking for work, a place to display their creativity, and they were open to whatever opportunities or inspirations offered to them).

1. A rejection of mainstream American values

2. Experimentation with drugs and sexuality

Drugs • Psychedelic drugs such as marijuana, LSD, and mushrooms were taken to expand the mind and creative experiences of the poets who chose to take them • Sexual Freedom • They did not seek to hide their sexuality or beliefs or experimentation, some of the things that made them who they are.

3. An interest in Eastern spirituality

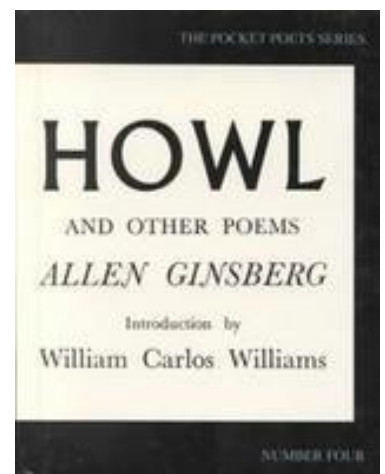
Eastern religions like Buddhism • Meditation •

The Goal

- The Goal of the Beat Generation writers was to defy conventional writing styles. They were against conformity and tradition.
- The generation that lived before them questioned WHY they lived, but the Beat Generation tried to figure out HOW to live.
- Questioned mainstream politics and culture. Politically radical and anti-authoritarian.

“HOWL” BY ALLEN GINSBERG

A central work in the Beat Movement is Allen Ginsberg’s book-length poem *Howl* (1956), which created a stir with critics, the public, and even law enforcement. (For selling the book, Lawrence Ferlinghetti was briefly held under arrest.) In a free verse style strongly influenced by Walt Whitman, *Howl* catalogs the wonders and horrors of U.S. society in dizzying abundance.





Howl, by Allen Ginsberg is considered to be one of the principal works of the Beat generation.

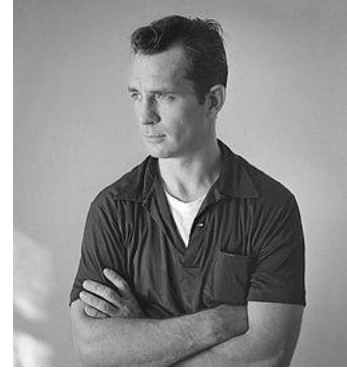
- a long poem celebrating his friends of the Beat Generation and attacking what he saw as the destructive forces of materialism and conformity in the United States at the time.
- “Howl” was originally considered by many to be obscene.
- Lawrence Ferlinghetti was arrested for publishing it.

*I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving hysterical
naked,
dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for an angry fix,
angelheaded hipsters burning for the ancient heavenly connection to the starry
dynamo in the machinery of night,
who poverty and tatters and hollow-eyed and high sat up smoking in the
supernatural darkness of cold-water flats floating across the tops of cities
contemplating jazz,
who bared their brains to Heaven under the El and saw Mohammedan angels
staggering on tenement roofs illuminated,
who passed through universities with radiant cool eyes hallucinating Arkansas and
Blake-light tragedy among the scholars of war,
who were expelled from the academies for crazy & publishing obscene odes on the
windows of the skull,
who cowered in unshaven rooms in underwear, burning their money in wastebaskets
and listening to the Terror through the wall,
who got busted in their pubic beards returning through Laredo with a belt of
marijuana for New York,
who ate fire in paint hotels or drank turpentine in Paradise Alley, death, or
purgatoried their torsos night after night
with dreams, with drugs, with waking nightmares, alcohol and cock and endless
balls, <...>*

JACK KEROUAC AND *ON THE ROAD*

Major Beat Novel: *On the Road*

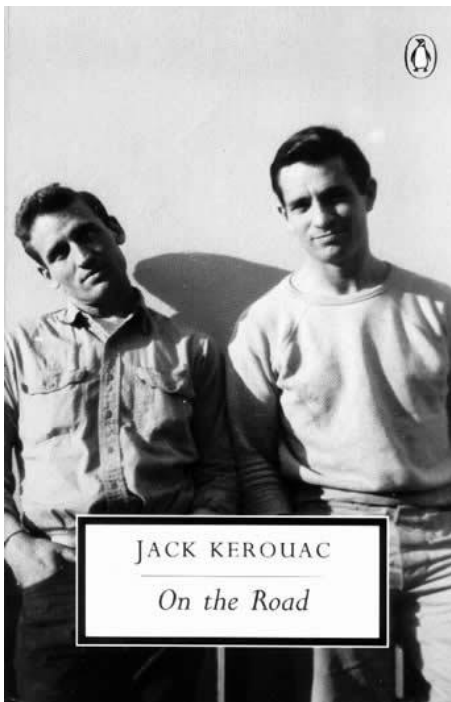
It is a story of traveling across the U.S., both alone and with friends. Written in 1951; published in 1957/.



For many, the word Beat is synonymous with Jack Kerouac's novel *On the Road*. Kerouac published his novel in 1957, after years of rejections from publishers.

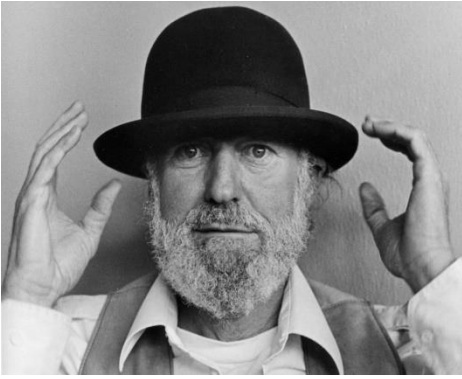
While traveling and living in a variety of places, Kerouac wrote multiple drafts. He revised his drafts into their final form in one three-week sprint, during which he typed nearly nonstop on a continuous, 120-foot-long scroll of paper he fed through his typewriter.

On the Road is essentially a roman à clef, a novel about real events and people whose names have been changed. The long, rhythmic, bebop-jazz inflected sentences of *On the Road* capture a series of road trips Kerouac took with his friend and Beat Generation icon Neal Cassady (called Dean Moriarty in the novel). *On the Road* expresses Kerouac's openness to the nation's desolate places as well as its exciting cities and to its humble people as well as its mighty. Kerouac had a talent for communicating impulsive generosity and a spirit of fun. For readers who were exhausted by societal complacency and stodginess, Kerouac's adventures were revolutionary.



"The only people for me are the mad ones, the ones who are mad to live, mad to talk, mad to be saved, desirous of everything at the same time, the ones who never yawn or say a commonplace thing, but burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars."

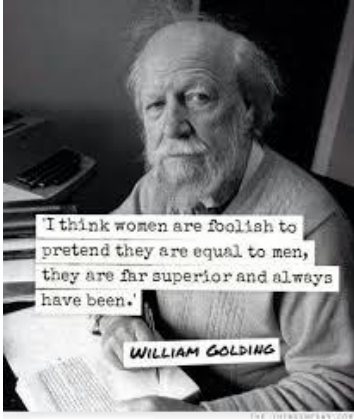
LAWRENCE FERLINGHETTI



- Primary member of the Beat Generation, he was an avant-garde author who affected popular culture as well as literature.
- Much of his work is semi-autobiographical, drawn from his experiences as an opiate addict.
- Time magazine included the novel “The Naked Lunch” in its TIME 100 Best English-language Novels from 1923 to 2005. Drawn from Burroughs own experience in and his addiction to drugs.

IMPORTANT AUTHORS AND MOVEMENTS OF THE XX CENTURY

SIR WILLIAM GERALD GOLDING



(19 September, 1911 – 19 June, 1993)

British novelist, poet and Nobel Prize for Literature Laureate best known for his novel "Lord of the Flies".

He was also awarded the Booker Prize for literature in 1980, for his novel "Rites of Passage," the first book of the trilogy "To the Ends of the Earth".

• A running theme in William Golding's works is that man is savage at heart, always ultimately reverting back to an evil and primitive nature.

• *The Inheritors* (1955)

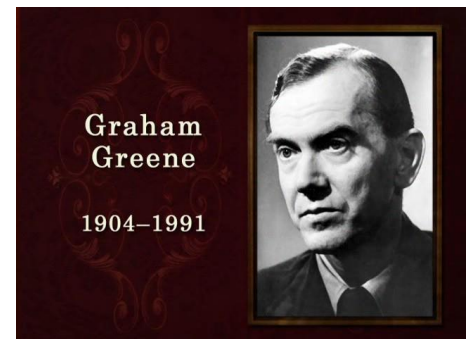
CATHOLIC NOVEL

These Catholic novels do not necessarily exclude criticism of the Church. On the contrary, it would be difficult to find a Catholic novel that does *not* include it. It may criticize the Church for being too materialistic, too indifferent to the suffering, too bourgeois, too rigid in its sexual teaching, inattentive and insensitive to the needs and special gifts of women.

The most important Catholic novelists are **Graham Greene** (1904-1991) and **Evelyn Waugh** (1903-1966).

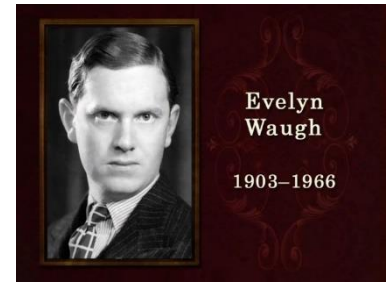
Graham Greene – a prolific and versatile writer. Many of his novels are based on his own experiences as an agent in the British Foreign Office.

- wrote 5 dramas and screenplays for several films based on his novels.
- Greene's film reviews are still worth reading and often better than the film he praised or slashed.
- his models were Henry James, Joseph Conrad, and Ford Madox Ford.



Evelyn Waugh was probably a more devout Catholic than Greene, but he was also more of a satirist. Waugh's fictional universe is irredeemably fallen—it's hell. And Waugh's fiction asks us: How can one act honorably in this hellish, fallen world?

This is the theme of Waugh's great postwar trilogy, *the Sword of Honour*, which follows the career of an officer in World War II.



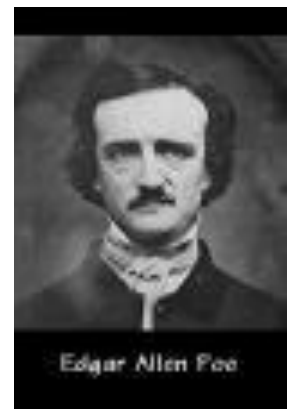
CRIME AND DETECTIVE



In crime fiction authors explore the motives of criminals, their crimes and possible retribution. Crime storytelling goes back to the Song Dynasty (960–1279) in China

when tales of government magistrates solving criminal cases were conveyed through oral storytelling and puppetry.

Though he may not have been the first, **Edgar Allan Poe** is widely credited with creating detective fiction (a subgenre of crime) as it is known today, through stories such as 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue' (1841), featuring C. Auguste Dupin, the first eccentric detective. In this character Poe combined the uncanny intellect of the detective with a scientific detachment that became typical of fictional crime-solvers thereafter, such as Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes.





Other authors who are regarded as possible the detective novel founders:

- William Godwin (1756–1836), an English journalist, political philosopher, and writer: *Caleb Williams* (1794)
- Charles Dickens's *Bleak House* (installments, 1852–53), *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (1870)
- Wilkie Collins *The Moonstone* (1868) - an example of Sensation fiction

Conan Doyle is credited with the remarkable popularity of 'locked-room mysteries', in which no perpetrator could seemingly have left or entered the crime scene.

This detective subgenre thrived from the 1840s to the 1950s through writers such as Agatha Christie and Akimitsu Takagi. Today, crime subgenres like Scandi noir, such as Stieg Larsson's Millennium trilogy (2005-07), courtroom dramas like Scott Turow's Presumed Innocent (1987) and forensic thrillers such as Patricia Cornwell's Body Farm (1994), have kept readers up all night with their doors locked.

Typical Characters

1. Sleuth: "private eye"/private investigator/detective investigating the case
 2. Sidekick: "helper," person/animal who helps detective investigate the crime
 3. Victim: person to whom the crime happened
 4. Suspect: a person who may be involved in the crime
 5. Witness: someone who saw what happened
 6. Culprit: person who committed or assists in the crime / a villain
 7. Fugitive: person running from the law
- Origins of the genre are difficult to define

SUGGESTED PRACTICAL CLASSES ON UK AND UK MID XX CENTURY LITERATURE

THE GREAT TRIAD OF AMERICAN DRAMATISTS:

WILLIAM TENNESSEE, ARTHUR MILLER, EUGENE O'NEILL

1. Life and works. Important facts of biography
2. Social and historical context. Why did the theatre become so popular in the 20th century? Popular trends.
3. Symbolism and metaphor of William Tennessee's plays. Southern Gothic writing.

Realistic portrayals of psychology of the South.

Social and psychological realism of William Tennessee's plays *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *The Glass Menagerie*.

- explain how Blanche Du Bois is the "artist" of the play,
 - summarize the role of the past in Blanche's twisted vision of the world,
 - describe how Stanley Kowalski represents the new American man.
4. American values and the American Dream in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*.
 - describe how *Death of a Salesman* is an example of expressionism,
 - explain the irony of Willy Loman's "legacy,"
 - summarize the dilemma of Linda's freedom at the end of the play, and
 - explain Miller's complex view of the role of dream
 5. A family portrait of the Tyrones in *Long Day's Journey Into Night* by O'Neill.
 - give examples of O'Neill's deft use of symbols,
 - summarize the role of home in the Tyrone family tragedy,
 - explain the interaction of space and time in *Long Day's Journey Into Night*.

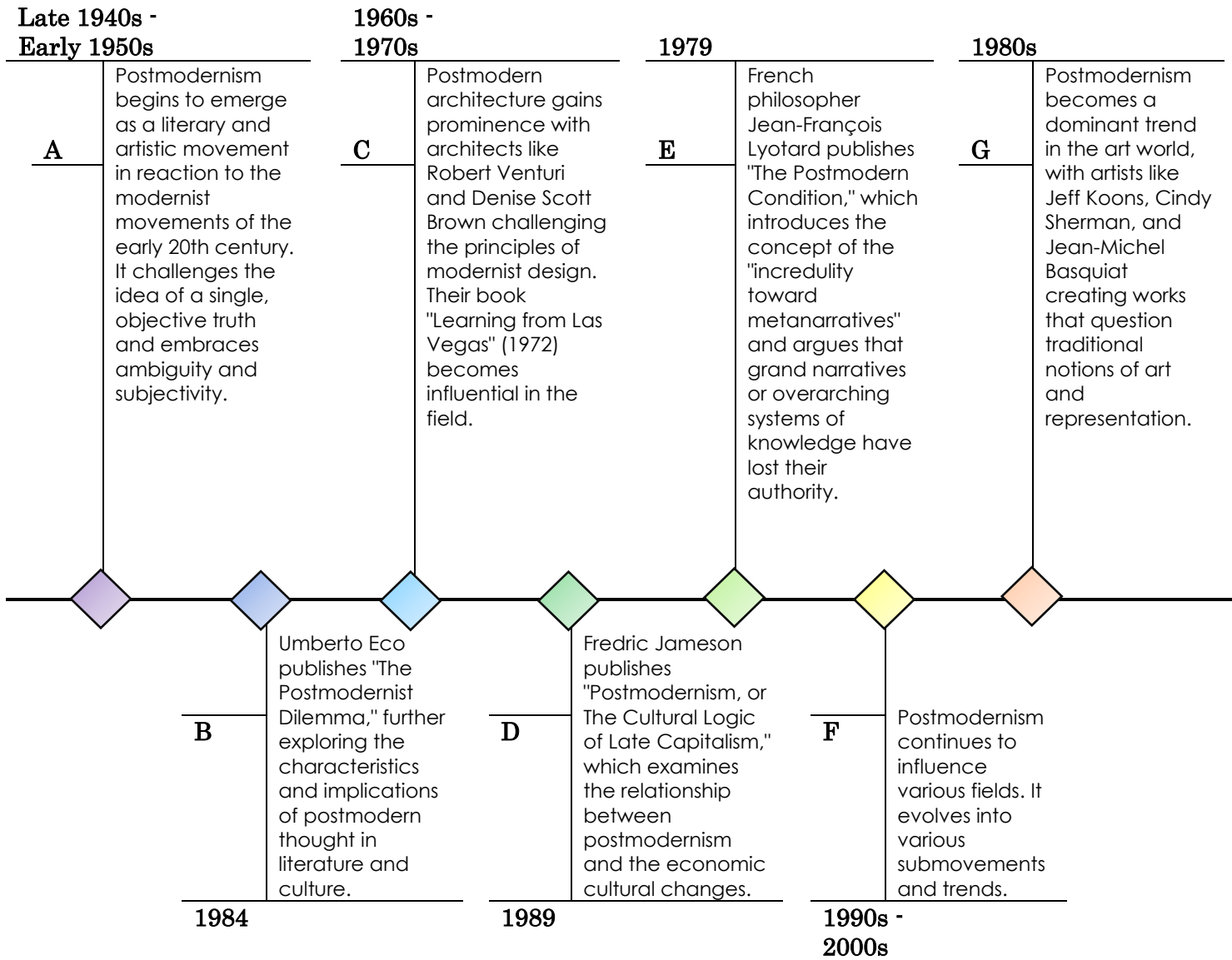
JOHN STEINBECK

Plan

- I. Historical context: Post-war American society, the Roaring Twenties, the Great Depression.
- II. Modernism. Literary context: major trends in prose and poetry, key themes and ideas. Famous authors.
- III. Test on the US early XX century literature.

- IV. **J. Steinbeck.** Biography facts. General characteristic of most popular works: "*Of Mice and Men*", "*The Pearl*", "*The Grapes of Wrath*". Stories. Important themes and problems, symbolism and allegory in Steinbeck's works, stylistic tone and writing style. What do you think is the attitude of the author to what he is describing? Support your answers with references to the text.

POSTMODERNISM



The term Postmodernism is used to refer to trends in art, architecture, literature, and music created after World War II. Postmodernists favor unusual juxtapositions of styles, such as linking fine art and popular culture. Postmodern writing reflects an awareness of the growing influence of the media on modern sensibilities and an enthusiasm for this trend. Postmodernists also share a willingness to question traditional attitudes toward the central place of Western cultures in world civilization.

Premodernism assumes that man is ruled by authority (e.g., the Catholic Church) and tradition.

With **modernism**, influenced by humanism and the Enlightenment, man rejects tradition and authority in favor of a reliance on reason and on scientific discovery.

Postmodernism stretches and breaks away from the idea that man can achieve understanding through a reliance on reason and science.

Discoveries convey the belief that the universe cannot be explained by reason alone.

Modernism, with its belief in the primacy of human reason, values realism in fiction and logical narrative structures.

Modernity is fundamentally about order: about rationality and rationalization, creating order out of chaos. The assumption is that creating more rationality is conducive to creating more order, and that the more ordered a society is, the better [i.e., the more rationally]. . .it will function.

Postmodernism extends modernist uncertainty, often by assuming that reality, if it exists at all, is unknowable or inaccessible through a language grown detached from it.

War, with all its moral complexities and attendant brutality, has had a strong influence on writers throughout the 20th and

21st centuries.

World War II brought with it previously unimaginable horrors: millions of casualties, the genocide of the Holocaust, the use of nuclear weapons. Struggling to come to terms with such destruction, some writers worked in the modernist style—giving detailed, realistic, and somewhat detached accounts of the war, as if



told by an outside observer such as a journalist. In fact, much of the most powerful literature of World War II was straight nonfiction, such as war correspondent John Hersey's *Hiroshima*, an unforgettable account of the first hours and days after the United States dropped atomic bombs on two Japanese cities, bringing massive destruction and an end to the war. John Steinbeck, better known for his Depression-era literature, worked as a war correspondent as well, spending time with troops in North Africa and England. His essay "Why Soldiers Won't Talk" explores how soldiers cope with the things they have witnessed.

Many writers of this period wrote of their own experiences, including the horrors of the Holocaust. *Elie Wiesel*, who was born in Europe and became an American citizen much later in life, was taken as a 15-year-old boy to a Nazi concentration camp in Poland. His memoir, *Night*, describes his nightmarish experiences in the camp, where he was beaten, starved, and nearly worked to death. Most members of his family did not survive.



In the 1960s, *Joseph Heller's* *Catch-22* and *Kurt Vonnegut's* *Slaughterhouse-Five* introduced a new style of war literature. Both writers had seen combat in World War II, and their novels shared a dark, ironic humor that focused on the absurdity of war. One such absurdity is the "catch" in *Catch-22*. It refers to a mysterious Air Force regulation which asserts that any person willing to go into battle should be considered insane, yet the very act of asking to be excused would prove one's sanity—and send a pilot back into battle. With their cynicism toward authority and sense of helplessness in the face of huge, inhuman forces, Heller and Vonnegut spoke to a younger generation caught up in a very different war: Vietnam.

Where World War II had united Americans in moral certainty against a common enemy, Vietnam drove them apart. Protestors—among them students, pacifists, and some returning veterans—marched in the streets, calling for an end to the war. Writers of this time questioned authority, conventional values, and even the nature of reality. Some experimented with a "postmodern" style of fiction that drew attention to its own artificiality, pointing out the presence of the author by displaying its inner workings like a clock without a face.

Others, like Vietnam veteran Tim O'Brien, wrote stories that blurred the lines between fiction and nonfiction. In *The Things They Carried*, O'Brien writes about telling his daughter how he killed a man in Vietnam, but this Tim O'Brien is a character, and the real O'Brien neither killed a man nor has a daughter. Can something that "didn't really happen" still be true? Postmodernism asks, What is fiction? What is truth?

Postmodernism *as a movement in art, literature, music, architecture* and other spheres of life and culture emerged after the second world war, first in America, and later spread all over the world. It was flourishing in the 1970-1980's and was replaced with the contemporary movement in culture which is sometimes called Post-post modernism or meta-modernism.



Perhaps the easiest way to start thinking about postmodernism is by thinking about modernism, the movement from which postmodernism seems to grow or emerge. Modernism has two modes of definition, both of which are relevant to understanding postmodernism. The first definition of modernism comes from the aesthetic movement broadly labeled "modernism." This movement is roughly coterminous with twentieth century Western ideas about art (though traces of it in emergent forms can be found in the nineteenth century as well).

Modernism is the movement in visual arts, music, literature, and drama. In Britain, it rejected the old Victorian standards of how art should be made, consumed, and what it should mean.

In the period of "high modernism," from around 1910 to 1930, the major figures of literature helped radically to redefine what poetry and fiction could be and do: figures like Joyce, Pound, Stevens, Proust, Mallarme, Kafka, and Rilke are considered the founders of twentieth-century modernism and they are basically responsible for some seriously weird literature of the early 20th century.

It emerged as a response to a lot of the destruction and disruption caused by World War I. It is the time when the industrialization of weapons was getting better, the city transformed. It's this difference that really provoked a lot of literati, including such British writers as James Joyce, T.S. Eliot, Virginia Wolfe, Katherine Mansfield, D.H. Lawrence, Americans E. Hemingway, F.S. Fitzgerald, W. Faulkner and also painters and musicians, to really think that they needed a new art to make sense of this new world.

Unlike realism, where the main criticism was given to the society which corrupts, destroys, ruins the personality and people are portrayed as victims of society and the conditions in which they live, Modernists shift the interest to a person and his "inner" state, revealing his fears, phobias, hidden ambitions, desires, sins, laziness and lack of responsibility.

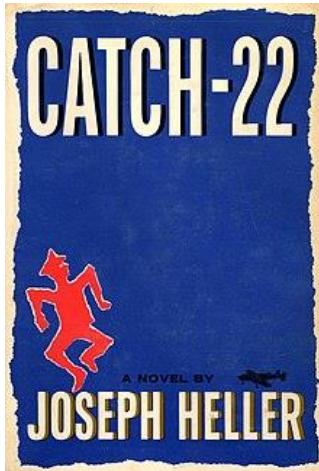
They explored the ways that truth is not straight forward, rational or clearly defined, but rather how it is completely influenced by human perception. Meaning comes from the individual's perspective and is thus personalized. A single story might be told from the perspective of several different people, with the assumption that the "truth" is somewhere in the middle. Inner psychological reality or "interiority" is more important than the surrounding world, the environment in which the character lives.

Thus, already Modernist writing brought us deeper into the workings of the human mind as a means to get at reality. In other words, Modernists believed that the characters' thoughts mattered more than the plot, and the way things are said may communicate more about the character than what they are doing. Passages may not proceed in an ordered way, but may be more choppy or fragmented. The shift from working to objectively portray events and experiences in the world to the often nonsensical exploration of human psychology is a clear marker for Modern literature. It also brings a shift in how we see the world. By the end of WWII, the modernists had heightened our awareness that truth is merely a product of human perception. If truth is so influenced by human perception, then a clear, objective standard for truth isn't quite so clear-cut, and reality is, to some extent, what we make of it.

Whereas Modernist writers really began to explore human consciousness as a primary mode of getting at truth, the writers following the war also struggled to reconcile the irrational and violent actions taken by humans.

Like modernist literature, postmodern literature is part of socio-cultural and historical development and can be seen as a specific way of a depiction of the postmodern life and culture. It shows a crisis of identity of human being (ethnic, sexual, social and cultural) and its struggle for legitimization in a hypocritical society.

Postmodernism emerged after the Second World war as a reaction against "Modernism". The post WWII literature continued the Modernist trend to explore the workings of human consciousness, and it was common to have the way things were said mean more than actions or plot. After WWII, many people struggled to deal with the horror of war and felt uncertain about the existence of a stable sort of truth as well as questioned the goodness of humans.



In America in particular, there was also simultaneously a march toward patriotism and mass conformity, and much of the writing in the after WWII period can be understood as an underground response to conformity of the time, with a main theme for literature during this period being dissent from traditional norms and social orders. The same is true about British post-war class-ridden and antiquated society with its super-traditional values. Many writers were often disturbed by this situation and criticized, opposed and spoke against it.

POSTMODERN ART

The term **postmodern art** refers to a group of movements that began in the late 1950s and early 1960s, during which artists rejected established practices and questioned the importance of their roles in the artistic process. The term originated with a philosopher around 1979. Postmodern artists use familiar images from consumer and pop culture and mass media to confront or question

art and society. Their work has an irreverent, almost mocking view, of artistic importance.

Postmodern artists include minorities and women who weren't previously part of the art establishment. For example, Claes Oldenburg transformed familiar objects, like apple cores and hamburgers, into giant soft sculptures. They also include photographer Cindy Sherman, who places herself in scenarios that comment upon the roles forced upon women in society.

Context & Theory

To understand postmodern art, let's use the definition of modern art to explain the difference between the two. The term **modern art** is used to define art created from the end of the 19th century through the 1950s. Modern art challenged the academic art of its time and championed ideas like the importance of the artist and originality. Modern artists wrestled with ideas and emotions apart from average everyday people and the world around them. By the 1950s, modern art was so wrapped up in its own ideas, narrative, and importance, that it was difficult to understand. After two World Wars and the dawn of the nuclear age, the 1950s and 1960s were also a time of dramatic historical change. Younger artists questioning established ideas about modern art saw it mostly in a negative context, both in terms of its imagery and who was making it - white males under the influence of Western art.

Just like modern art up-ended the traditional art of its time, early postmodern art did the same thing to modern art. The finished products were less important and more open-ended, allowing audiences to reach their own conclusions. Postmodern art movements reject the artist as special, someone who stands apart from society. It's less personal and expressive, and finds its inspiration in everyday images and objects, including consumer goods. In general, postmodern makes less of a distinction between high and low art and questions originality. The viewer is as important as the artist, rather than excluded from the process by virtue of not understanding the imagery.

Postmodern art is less personal. In fact, you could consider it almost impersonal. You don't look at a painting, a print, or a sculpture and get a sense of the artist at work. But, keep in mind that not all of contemporary art is postmodern

art. Some of today's portrait and landscape painters and other artists explore ideas reminiscent of modern art.

Types

There are no easy-to-define visual approaches or characteristics common to all postmodern art. This is because it includes a wide range of movements and styles. For example, in **performance art**, artists perform a series of actions, use themselves as canvases, and sometimes ask for audience participation. In **conceptual art**, artistic processes and ideas are more important than any finished product. Postmodern art includes **pop art** and its visual references from popular culture and mass media. It also includes **feminist art**, which comments on women's roles in society and challenges notions of male dominance.

Postmodern art uses images from many sources, like advertising, movies, newspapers, and television and is more connected to mundane reality. It also tends to be irreverent, with a definite element of parody: for example, like the sculptures of a giant white terrier puppy and Michael Jackson and his chimp Bubbles by artist Jeff Koons.

Early on in the movement, postmodern artists often used mechanical means and image reproduction processes, like screen printing. Take, for example, Andy Warhol, who became famous for his screen prints of Campbell's soup cans and Marilyn Monroe. Postmodern artists today use ordinary or unconventional materials, including things like neon and scotch tape, and yes, we're sorry to say, animal fat and dead animals. Some postmodern art also embraces newer technologies, like computer-generated art and lighting systems.

Postmodern art was everything modern art was not; this type of art questioned the styles and techniques used in modern art and redefined what art can be. Postmodern artists believe that art should be up for interpretation and that the audience's experience is often more critical than the artist's intent. Interestingly, the term *postmodern* was created in 1979, shortly after the movement was well on its way.

When Did Postmodernism Begin in Art?

Postmodernism art began in the late 1950s and early 1960s; during this time, people began to feel skeptical of the world around them and questioned the authority that had existed for so long. In response, postmodern art began to act as a mirror to the cultural changes of the time. Some early, more commonly known postmodern artists were the following:

- Andy Warhol
- Claes Oldenburg
- Marina Abramovic

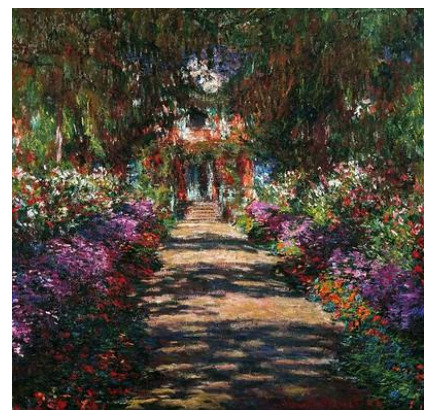
Modernism vs. Postmodernism Art: Context and Theory

Modern art began in the 1860s and lasted until the late 1950s. This period was defined by strict rules, reflecting how people lived through wars, such as the Civil War, World War I, World War II, and poverty. **Modern art** was meant to be created by and for men, as was the social norm at the time; modern artists strived to be known as individuals and, as a result, made their style very distinct. This type of art included different movements like cubism, expressionism, and surrealism. Some of the best-known artists from this era are the following:



Where modern art served to represent the rigid structure of life and the pointed purpose of art, postmodern art aimed to flip those rules on its head. In postmodern art, the pieces were created by and for anyone; art did not need to follow a set of rules to be worthwhile.

Part of the reason for this change in art theory was the cultural shift in the 1960s. The civil rights movement was underway, as was rising tensions in the Cold War. Simultaneously, scores of men were being sent to Vietnam to fight in the war, and for the first time, many Americans considered that going to war was not in their best interest.



During this time, people began to believe in freedom of thought, directly shown in postmodern art.

Postmodernism Art Characteristics

Unlike other art movements, postmodern art does not stay within specific characteristics as the entire movement was about discovery and rejecting what had come before. However, there are common themes, such as:

- Multiple mediums
- Incorporating women and minorities
- Disappointment and dissatisfaction with authority
- A higher focus on low culture

Only high culture art was valued as anything else was too popular among the masses in the past. In postmodern art, part of the purpose was for the audience en masse to determine its meaning, and therefore low culture was valued more because it allowed accessibility.

Principles of Postmodern Art

While postmodern art does not fit inside a box, three main principles exist:

- **Instant meaning.** Postmodern art was typically created using themes and images that the average person would instantly recognize and form an instant meaning.
- **Art can be made from anything.** Beyond the ability to instantly recognize the imagery of the art, it could be made from any material.
 - Postmodern art did not have to live on canvas, and artists often used anything they could get their hands on, including garbage. Using other materials also helped gain accessibility in their audience.
- **The idea matters more than the work of art itself.** Lastly, postmodern artists believed that the concept of the idea mattered more than the finished product.
 - Modern artists believed that the end product was all that mattered and that it showed their skill and intelligence that way.

Types and Movements in Postmodern Art

Due to the loose structure of postmodern art, there were many movements. The list below is not entirely inclusive of all movements but features the most popular:

- **Pop art:** This art form was popularized in the 1960s, and Andy Warhol is perhaps best known as its leading artist. Pop art used pop culture as its base and helped bring about a focus on low culture art.

- **Feminist art:** A significant movement in postmodern art that was previously art made by men for men, but now, women could be artists.
 - Feminist art often pointed out the double standards of society for men and women and other women-centric issues society had ignored.
- **Body art:** Self-explanatory, body art is just that; art created on the body. Artists used their own or other bodies as a canvas to convey a message or idea. Body art includes body painting, tattooing, piercing, nail art, and mimes/living statues.
- **Minimalism:** This art form was all about simplicity. Artists who participated in this movement wanted to keep art "pure" by removing any excess they deemed unnecessary or that would get in the way of their concept.
- **Performance Art:** In this movement, artists would perform a number of actions or movements, often using themselves as the canvas. Some artists also chose to incorporate audience participation in this postmodern movement.
- **Conceptual Art:** This movement best exemplifies the principle of the idea mattering more than the work of art itself.
 - Conceptual artists tended to steer away from commercial art, and their end product could be anything or nothing; the concept behind the art was what mattered.
- **Fluxus art:** An art form that sought to blend the boundaries of different genres into what were known as events or happenings. Events or happenings were often presented as performance art and incorporated different elements to entice the audience.

Materials

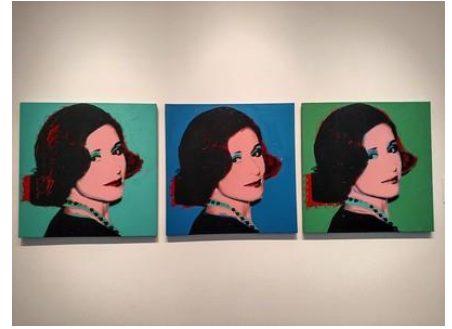
Postmodern artists would use almost anything to create their pieces; some postmodern artists still used traditional materials like canvas, paints, and brushes, but many broadened their horizons to redefine what art could be. Others used magazines and everyday household objects to create their art, in addition to more recent technology, like computers and screen printing, to create theirs. Most often, the materials themselves did not matter as much as the idea behind the end product.

Postmodern Artists and Postmodern Art Examples

During this period, many artists rose to fame for their postmodern work. In particular, there was an influx of female and minority artists that had never been seen before.

Andy Warhol is perhaps one of the best-known postmodern artists. In much of his work, Warhol used a process called screen-printing, or silk pressing, in which ink is pressed through a mesh stencil, creating the desired image onto the base.

One such image is "The Portrait of Marion Bloch," which shows the woman in both color and black and white. Between the variation in color and the number of times her image is included, Warhol left room for audience interpretation with this piece.



Cindy Sherman

Another early postmodern artist was **Cindy Sherman**. Her most famous work is a series of 70 untitled photos. In the photos, Sherman photographed herself as different vague female characters popular in film at the time. Sherman made herself both subject and artist, asking the audience to determine what each woman was thinking.

Jeff Koons



Jeff Koons was a postmodern artist who worked later in the postmodern movement. He is best known for his statues of balloon dogs, which have sold for some of the highest prices in art history.

Postmodern art rejected and questioned the styles and techniques used in modern art, altogether redefining what art can be. Three principles define this type of art, instant meaning, art can be made from anything, and the idea matters more than the work of art itself. Essentially, as long as these principles are included, the presentation of art can be whatever the audience interprets it to be.

Postmodernism is a complicated term, or set of ideas, one that has only emerged as an area of academic study since the mid-1980s. Postmodernism is hard to define, because it is a concept that appears in a wide variety of disciplines or areas of study, including art, architecture, music, film, literature, sociology, communications, fashion, and technology. It's hard to locate it temporally or historically, because there is no exact date when postmodernism began. The term

“crept into” usage long after the first novels, which would be later called postmodern, were written. Originally they were called “Novels of Black Humor” and they are associated mostly with such American authors as Kurt Vonnegut, Thomas Pynchon, Joseph Heller, Don DeLillo and others.

Reasons for the emergency of Postmodernism:

- Partly a reaction to another war – after WWI people genuinely believed there would never be another conflict of that scale. WWII was even worse re. loss of life, destruction of landscape/cities, etc.
- Reaction to nuclear age. The post-WWII atmosphere was heightened by Cold War – fear of nuclear war between US and Russia in 1950s. Apocalypse was no longer associated with God but now was potentially manmade.
- Events of WWII led to new uncertainties about human nature and the powerlessness of the individual.
- New awareness of environmental damage being done – breakdown of concrete reality.

All these factors led to increased paranoia and even more doubt about meaning in reality.

Main slogans of Postmodernism:

- Truth is an illusion, misused to gain power
- Truth and error are synonymous
- Logic relies on opinions rather than facts
- Scientific method unreliable
- Speaks out against religious and moral constraints
- Morality is personal, subject to personal opinion—private code of conduct

Postmodernism has been described as both a continuation of modernism and a departure from it. The two genres share a number of commonalities, including:

- A rejection of the distinctions between high and low culture
- An exploration of meaninglessness and absurdity
- An interest in mixing genres in a single work
- An obsession with challenging philosophical and psychological questions

Postmodernism, like modernism, follows most of the same ideas, rejecting boundaries between high and low forms of art, rejecting rigid genre distinctions, emphasizing pastiche, parody, irony, and playfulness.

But while postmodernism seems very much like modernism in these ways, it differs from modernism in its attitude toward a lot of these trends. Modernism, for example, tends to present a fragmented view of human subjectivity and history, but presents that fragmentation as something tragic, something to be lamented and mourned as a loss. Postmodern authors rather depict the world as having already undergone countless disasters and being beyond redemption.

These authors are greatly influenced by ideas taken from postmodern philosophy, which tends to conceptualize the world as being impossible to strictly define or understand and argues that knowledge and facts are always relative to particular situation and that it's both futile and impossible to attempt to locate any precise meaning to any. They reject outright meanings in their novels, stories and poems, and, instead, highlight and celebrate the possibility of multiple meanings, or a complete lack of meaning, within a single literary work.

Postmodern means so many things to so many people, and it has a slightly different meaning in nearly every discipline, from art and architecture to fashion and technology.

A few of the ***most common narrative and stylistic devices*** found in postmodern texts:

1. Postmodern literature often uses confusing chronology, jumping from one historical period to another and from one character's thoughts to another character's thoughts without any indication at all.
2. In 350 B. C. Aristotle wrote that every story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. With postmodern texts, that's not always the case. Postmodern writers often leave their stories open-ended, with no satisfying conclusion, or the book concludes by making a reference back to the beginning, thereby offering circularity.

3. Postmodern stories and novels often rely on parody or satire, revealing little tolerance for aspects of our culture that typically evoke reverence.

4. The postmodern text, at heart, reveals skepticism about the ability of art to create meaning, about the ability of history to reveal truth, about the ability of language to convey reality. All of that skepticism leads to fragmented, open-ended, self-reflexive stories that are intellectually fascinating but often difficult to grasp on the first read.

Features of Postmodernism, similar to Modernism

Several features that make these texts recognizable include nonlinearity, irony and satire, stream of consciousness, allusions:

1) *Nonlinearity*: Modernist works don't always necessarily have plots. When they do have plots, they don't always seem to go in the chronological way. The texts are organized non-sequentially: Experience portrayed as allusive, discontinuous, using fragmentation and juxtaposition. It's a new view of time: no longer viewed as a series of chronological moments to be presented in a sequence; now considered a continuous flow in the consciousness of the individual.

2) *The idea of voices and streams of consciousness*. Stream of consciousness—a key new technique—explores the fabric of a character's consciousness. Important new technique for the English novel (Joyce's *Ulysses* - best example, also Virginia Woolf and William Faulkner). The past is always present in consciousness at some level and affects our reactions. Voices is more developed by the poets. Eliot uses a lot of voices. Modernists are really interested in trying to get into multiple consciousnesses. There isn't one definitive voice that's telling what you should think or believe about the text.

3) *Irony and satire* play a big role. *Verbal irony* is just saying one thing and meaning its opposite. It can also be *situational* when things that are said are different from how they are done. *Dramatic irony* - when the reader and the audience know more than the characters do. Irony isn't necessarily humor, though it often is. But it definitely is always a mismatch between what's actually going on and what should be going on, or what people think is going on.

4) Allusions. For example, in Eliot's poem *The Waste Land*, he quotes Shakespeare's *The Tempest* with a line, 'Those were pearls that were his eyes.' Since *The Tempest* opens with the disaster at sea and the scene in *The Waste Land* is dealing with the fortune teller who's maybe going to predict things, recognizing the allusion to *The Tempest* adds to your ability to understand what Eliot might be going for in that scene.

However, postmodernism in many ways went further than modernism did. Postmodernist writers seemed to feel that they were living in a world even more chaotic than the modernists could have anticipated, especially with the advent of nuclear weapons and the staggering horrors of the Second World War to contend with.

Postmodern literature is marked both stylistically and ideologically; it relies on such literary conventions as fragmentation, paradox, unreliable narrators, often unrealistic and downright impossible plots, games, parody, paranoia, dark humor. As a result, postmodernist writing tends to mix humor with descriptions of extremely dark events.

Specific features of postmodernism include:

1) Irony, playfulness, black humor

Postmodern authors were certainly not the first to use irony and humor in their writing, but for many postmodern authors, these became the hallmarks of their style. Postmodern authors will often treat very serious subjects—World War II, the Cold War, conspiracy theories—from a position of distance and disconnect, and will choose to depict their histories ironically and humorously.

"Laughter and tears are both responses to frustration and exhaustion. I myself prefer to laugh, since there is less cleaning up to do afterward." Kurt Vonnegut

2) Pastiche

Many postmodern authors combined, or "pasted" elements of previous genres and styles of literature to create a new narrative voice, or to comment on the writing of their contemporaries. Thomas Pynchon, one of the most important postmodern authors, uses elements from detective fiction, science fiction, and war fiction, songs, pop culture references, and well-known, obscure, and fictional history.

3) Temporal distortion

Temporal distortion is a literary technique that uses a nonlinear timeline; the author may jump forwards or backwards in time, or there may be cultural and historical references that do not fit.

4) Metafiction

Writing about writing, often used to undermine the authority of the author and to advance stories in unique ways.

"I once made up a story as a wedding present for some friends. It was about a couple who were given a story as a wedding present. It was not a reassuring story." Neil Gaiman

5) Technoculture and hyperreality

Frederic Jameson called postmodernism the "cultural logic of late capitalism." According to his logic, society has moved beyond capitalism into the information age, in which we are constantly bombarded with advertisements, videos, and product placement. Many postmodern authors reflect this in their work by inventing products that mirror actual advertisements, or by placing their characters in situations in which they cannot escape technology.

6) Magical realism

Arguably the most important postmodern technique, magical realism is the introduction of fantastic or impossible elements into a narrative that is otherwise normal. Magical realist novels may include dreams taking place during normal life, the return of previously deceased characters, extremely complicated plots, wild shifts in time, and myths and fairy tales becoming part of the narrative.

The term "magic realism" appeared in Europe. It was invented in 1925 by German art critic Franz Roh.

Features of Magical Realism:

- an aesthetic style or genre of fiction
- magical elements are blended into a realistic atmosphere in order to access a deeper understanding of reality
- magical elements are explained like normal occurrences
- the "real" and the "fantastic" to are connected in the same stream of thought
- fantasy traits given to characters, such as levitation, telepathy, and telekinesis

- writers don't invent new worlds but reveal the magical in this world

7) *Other features:*

- ***Intertextuality***, Allusions: The acknowledgment of previous literary works within another literary work.
- ***Reader Involvement***: Often through direct address to the reader and the open acknowledgment of the fictional nature of the events being described.
- ***Minimalism***: The use of characters and events which are decidedly common and non-exceptional characters.
- ***Maximalism***: Disorganized, lengthy, highly detailed writing.
- ***Faction***: The mixing of actual historical events with fictional events without clearly defining what is factual and what is fictional.
- ***Different perspectives***

Literary texts reflect postmodernism's collapse of conventional ideas about human values, time, and space – demolishing the last certainties in the narrative. What is the impact of these games on the reader – how do we read stories that don't even have a conventional structure?

Absence of a conventional structure encourages the reader to remake the text – open to us remodelling it. Everything is about how we respond as individuals – no right or wrong way to read these stories.

So, to recap, Postmodernism in literature indicates a departure from earlier genres. Postmodernists attempted to express the deep paranoia and sense of meaninglessness that they felt as a result of the Second World War and other major historical events. Postmodernism is credited with breaking apart many literary standards and paving the way for new genres that have emerged in recent decades. Postmodern literature is also considered an important exploration of the human psyche and a creative and unusual form of artistic expression.

Postmodernism in literature is not an organized movement with leaders or central figures, so it is difficult to say if it started or ended. Arguably postmodernism peaked in the 60s and 70s with the publication of *Catch-22* in 1961 as one example.

Some declared the death of postmodernism in the 80's with a new surge of realism represented and inspired by Raymond Carver. However, Chuck Palahniuk, David Foster Wallace, Michael Chabon, and Cormac McCarthy have surfaced recently with very PM novels.

Most Influential works

Catch 22, Something Happened – Joseph Heller

Slaughterhouse Five – Kurt Vonnegut

Lost in the Funhouse – John Barth

The Things They Carried – Tim O'Brien

White Noise – Don DeLillo

Gravity's Rainbow, The Crying of Lot 49 – Thomas Pynchon

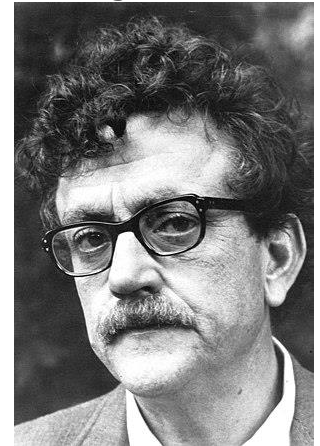
Shōgun – James Clavell

MAIN REPRESENTATIVES OF POSTMODERNISM

KURT VONNEGUT (1922-2007)

Born November 11, 1922 in Indianapolis, Indiana. Graduated from Cornell University - double major (bio and chemistry). Known for using Pastiche in his works. Blends satire, black comedy, and science fiction to create novels, such as *Slaughterhouse Five*, *Breakfast of Champions*, *The Cat's Cradle*.

As a former soldier and prisoner of war, many of his experiences influenced his later works.



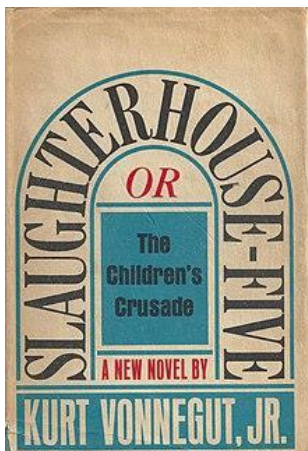
Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. was a 20th-century American writer. His works such as *Cat's Cradle* (1963), *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969), and *Breakfast of Champions* (1973) blend satire, gallows humor, and science fiction. As a citizen he was a lifelong supporter of the American Civil Liberties Union and a critical leftist intellectual. He was known for his humanist beliefs and was honorary president of the American Humanist Association.

Vonnegut graduated from Shortridge High School in Indianapolis in May 1940 and

matriculated into Cornell University that fall. Though majoring in chemistry, he was Assistant Managing Editor and Associate Editor of *The Cornell Daily Sun*. He was a member of the Delta Upsilon Fraternity, as was his father. While at Cornell, Vonnegut enlisted in the U.S. Army. The Army transferred him to the Carnegie Institute of Technology and the University of Tennessee to study mechanical engineering.

Kurt Vonnegut's experience as a soldier and prisoner of war had a profound influence on his later work. As a private with the 423rd Infantry Regiment, 106th Infantry Division, Vonnegut was captured during the Battle of the Bulge on December 19, 1944, after the 106th was cut off from the rest of Courtney Hodges's First Army. Imprisoned in Dresden, Vonnegut was chosen as a leader of the POWs because he spoke some German. After telling the German guards "...just what I was going to do to them when the Russians came..." he was beaten and had his position as leader taken away. While a prisoner, he witnessed the fire bombing of Dresden in February 1945 which destroyed most of the city.

Vonnegut was one of a group of American prisoners of war to survive the attack in an underground slaughterhouse meat locker used by the Germans as an ad hoc detention facility. This experience was the inspiration for his famous novel, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, and is a central theme in at least six of his other books. In *Slaughterhouse-Five* he recalls that the remains of the city resembled the surface of the moon, and that the Germans put the surviving POWs to work, breaking into basements and bomb shelters to gather bodies for mass burial, while German civilians cursed and threw rocks at them.



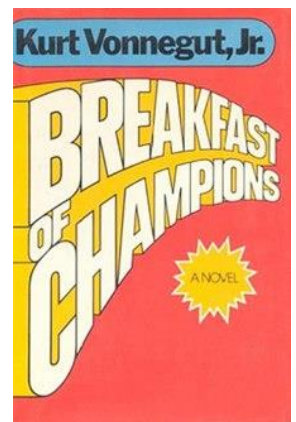
After the war, Vonnegut attended the University of Chicago as a graduate student in anthropology and also worked at the City News Bureau of Chicago.

The University of Chicago later accepted his novel *Cat's Cradle* as his thesis, citing its anthropological content, and awarded him the M.A. degree in 1971.

Vonnegut's first short story, "Report on the Barnhouse Effect" appeared in the February 11, 1950 edition of *Collier's* (it has since been reprinted in his short story collection, *Welcome to the Monkey House*). His first novel was the dystopian novel *Player Piano* (1952), in which human workers have been largely replaced by machines.

He continued to write short stories before his second novel, *The Sirens of Titan*, was published in 1959. Through the 1960s, the form of his work changed, from the relatively orthodox structure of *Cat's Cradle* to the acclaimed, semi-autobiographical *Slaughterhouse-Five*, given a more experimental structure by using time travel as a plot device. These structural experiments were continued in *Breakfast of Champions* (1973), which includes many rough illustrations, lengthy non-sequiturs and an appearance by the author himself, as a *deus ex machina*.

Breakfast of Champions became one of his best-selling novels. It includes, in addition to the author himself, several of Vonnegut's recurring characters. One of them, science fiction author Kilgore Trout, plays a major role and interacts with the author's character.



Vonnegut also taught at Harvard University, where he was a lecturer in English, and the City College of New York, where he was a Distinguished Professor.

Vonnegut's work as a graphic artist began with his illustrations for *Slaughterhouse-Five* and developed with *Breakfast of Champions*, which included numerous felt-tip pen illustrations. Later in his career, he became more interested in artwork, particularly silk-screen prints, which he pursued in collaboration with Joe Petro III.

Among other Postmodernist Writers

THOMAS PYNCHON



American novelist, known for his experimental writing techniques that involve extremely complicated plots and themes. His most famous novel, *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973), won the National Book Award.

Thomas Pynchon was born May 8, 1937, in Glen Cove, Long Island, New York. He served two years in the U.S. Navy before graduating from Cornell University in 1959 with his bachelor's degree in English literature.

While at Cornell, Pynchon began to write short fiction, publishing his first story immediately after graduation. Pynchon's first novel, *V.*, was published in 1963 and won an award for best first novel from the William Faulkner Foundation. *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973), Pynchon's third novel, is one of his most acclaimed and is often held up as a major work of postmodernism. Pynchon won a 1974 National Book Award for *Gravity's Rainbow* and narrowly missed winning a Pulitzer. Other novels by Pynchon include *Mason & Dixon* (1997) and *Against the Day* (2006).

He writes about history, mathematics, imperialism, and religion, although his books range even further afield in theme and subject matter. Also wrote essays concerning diverse topics such as missile security and Watts Riots (a large scale riot that lasted six days in the Watt's neighborhood of LA).

Pynchon is a reclusive person who eschews public appearances or interviews; even his residence is unknown.

TONI MORRISON

Toni Morrison was born Chloe Anthony Wofford on February 18, 1931, in Lorain, Ohio, to a black working-class family. She studied humanities in college, obtaining her bachelor of arts in 1953 from Howard University (a distinguished black college) and her master of arts from Cornell University in 1955. Morrison married Harold Morrison in 1958 and the couple had two sons before divorcing in 1964. Morrison has worked as an academic, an editor, a critic, and continues to give lectures.



After the publication of her first novel in 1970, Morrison's writing quickly came to the attention of critics and readers who praised her richly expressive style and ear for dialogue. She received the Pulitzer Prize in 1988 for her novel *Beloved* (1987) and won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1993.

Morrison has written novels, plays, and nonfiction essays, including *The Bluest Eye* (1969); *Sula* (1973); *Book of Mean People* (2002); *A Mercy* (2008). Morrison has also edited and/or collaborated on several volumes with other authors.

JULIAN PATRICK BARNES

is a contemporary English writer, one of the most famous representatives of the postmodernist literary movement. Barnes won the Man Booker Prize for his book *The Sense of an Ending* (2011), and three of his earlier books had been shortlisted for the Booker Prize: *Flaubert's Parrot* (1984), *England, England* (1998), and *Arthur & George* (2005).



Playful writer, experiments with form and narrative structure. Interested in disordered realities and non-linear plot-lines.

NEIL GAIMAN

An English author of short fiction, novels, comic books, graphic novels, audio theatre, and films. His notable works include the comic book series *The Sandman* and novels *Stardust*, *American Gods*, *Coraline*, and *The Graveyard Book*.

The Wedding gift, the Price – good examples of postmodern stories.

- He is one of the bestselling authors in modern comics, as well as writer of books for readers of all ages.
- He is listed in the dictionary of literary biography as one of the top ten post-modern writers.
- He is also a prolific creator of works of poetry, prose, journalism, comics, film, song lyrics, and drama.

Most of his books were suggested to be turned into films.

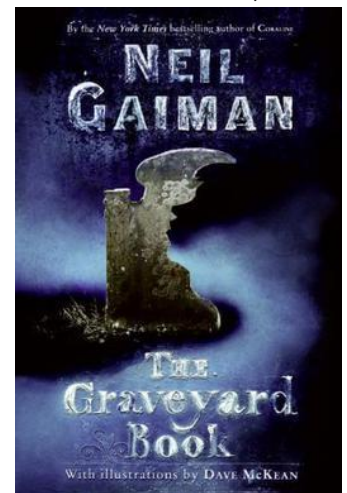
Gaiman has said Roger Zelazny was the author who influenced him the most, with this influence particularly seen in Gaiman's literary style and the topics he writes about. Other authors Gaiman says "furnished the inside of my mind and set me to writing" include Samuel R. Delany and Angela Carter. Gaiman takes inspiration from the folk tales tradition, citing Otta F Swire's book on the legends of the Isle of Skye as his inspiration for *The Truth Is a Cave in the Black Mountains*



In the early 1980s, Gaiman pursued journalism, conducting interviews and writing book reviews, as a means to learn about the world and to make connections that he hoped would later assist him in getting published. He wrote and reviewed extensively for the British Fantasy Society. His first professional short story publication was "Featherquest", a fantasy story, in *Imagine Magazine* in May 1984.

Fun Facts

- In 1984, he wrote his first book, a biography of the band Duran Duran, as well as *Ghastly Beyond Belief*, a book of quotations, with Kim Newman. Although Gaiman thought he had done a terrible job, the book's first edition sold out very quickly. When he went to relinquish his rights to the book, he discovered the publisher had gone bankrupt. After this, he was offered a job by *Penthouse*. He refused the offer.
- He also wrote interviews and articles for many British magazines, including *Knave*. During this he sometimes wrote under pseudonyms, including Gerry Musgrave, Richard Grey, and "a couple of house names. Gaiman has said he ended his journalism career in 1987 because British newspapers regularly publish untruths as fact. In the late 1980s, he wrote *Don't Panic: The Official Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy Companion* in what he calls a "classic English humour" style
- Following this, he wrote the opening of what became his collaboration with fellow English author Terry Pratchett on the comic novel *Good Omens* about the impending apocalypse.



SALMAN RUSHDIE



born in Bombay, India to a prosperous family. Moved to England, received M.A. from King's College, Cambridge. Worked as an actor, free-lance advertising copy-writer, was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, the UK's senior literary organization. In June 2007, Queen Elizabeth II knighted him for his services to literature. In 2008, The Times ranked him thirteenth on its list of the 50 greatest British writers since 1945. *The Book of the Pir*, 1971; *Midnight Children*, 1981; *Shame*, 1983; *The Satanic Verses*, 1989.

1989 - "FATWA" - Condemned to death

SUGGESTED PRACTICAL CLASSES ON UK AND UK POSTMODERNISM LITERATURE

TONI MORRISON

Speak on the following questions:

1. Main tendencies of the late XX – early XXI century American Literature: genres, topics, writers.
2. Toni Morrison: life and work.
3. Toni Morrison and *Beloved*. Discussion points:
 1. Consider the extent to which slavery dehumanizes individuals by stripping them of their identity, destroying their ability to conceive of the self. Consider, especially, Paul and how he can't determine whether screams he hears are his or someone else's. How do the other characters reflect self-alienation?
 2. Discuss the different roles of the community in betraying and protecting the house at 124. What larger issue might Morrison be suggesting here about community.
 3. What does Beloved's appearance represent? What about her behavior? Why does she finally disappear—what drives her departure? And why is the book's title named for her?
 4. Talk about the choice Sethe made regarding her children when schoolteacher arrives to take them all back to Sweet Home. Can her actions be justified—are her actions rational or irrational?

MODERNISM vs POSTMODERNISM: Literary Techniques

Questions for discussion:

1. Define modernism and postmodernism in literature. What are their specific features? How are they different in subjects and themes, techniques of writing and formal characteristics?
2. Postmodernism as a complex literary and cultural movement is characterized by a number of formal and conceptual features. Look at some of them in greater detail. Use the stories from “Suggested Reading” list to this class, as well as the stories from the previous classes to illustrate your ideas.
 - a) ***Magic realism*** as one of the most important postmodern techniques.
 - b) ***Narrative Experimentation***: different perspectives, rejection of traditional narrative structures
 - c) ***Blurring of the boundaries*** (between - ??? – high and low, reality and fiction, etc.)
 - d) ***Metafiction*** – definition, examples, significance
 - e) ***Intertextuality***, collage, pastiche, allusions
 - f) ***Playfulness***, irony
 - g) ***Other*** techniques/characteristics

Suggested Reading:

(Some of the authors in the following list are not British or American, but their stories are really worth looking into in order to better understand what is postmodernism)

Margaret Atwood: *Happy Endings*

R. Akutagawa: *In a Grove*

David Foster Wallace: *Incarnations of Burned Children*

Donald Barthelme: *The School*

Julio Cortázar: *The Continuity of Parks*

Gabriel García Márquez: *Light is Like Water*

Additionally

Margaret Atwood: *There Was One*

Gabriel García Márquez: *A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings*

Donald Barthelme: *The Balloon*

Thomas Pynchon: *Entropy*

Kurt Vonnegut: *Slaughterhouse-Five*

Neil Gaiman: short stories collection *Smoke and Mirrors*:

Angela Carter: *The Bloody Chamber*

POSTMODERNISM: REVISING CULTURE AND HISTORY

1. Be ready to write a test on the 20-21th century literature.

2. Speak on the following questions:

1. Postmodernism of the XX century in art, architecture, music, fashion, movies, etc.: main characteristics, similarities/differences from modernism.

How are the trends in culture similar to/different from literary postmodernist ideas in subjects and themes, techniques and formal characteristics?

Why might West-European culture have taken this direction in its development?

2. Read the 1st chapter of Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse-Five*. Think of the major themes of *Slaughterhouse-Five*, the relationship between the structure and the content.

Explain the subtitle, "*The Children's Crusade: a Dirty Dance With Death*."

Be ready to discuss postmodernist features of the extract.

Suggested Reading:

Kurt Vonnegut. *Slaughterhouse-Five*. Chapter 1.

POSTMODERNISM. KURT VONNEGUT.

Speak on the following questions:

1. Main features of postmodernism. What makes it recognizable?
2. Main representatives of American postmodernism, their lives and works.
3. Kurt Vonnegut and *Slaughterhouse-Five* as an example of postmodern fiction:
 - a. Post-modern features in *Slaughterhouse-Five*
 - b. Is it really an anti-war novel? Why/why not?
 - c. Explain the subtitle, "*The Children's Crusade: a Dirty Dance With Death.*"
 - d. Are we intended to believe Billy's tales of Tralfamadore or are we supposed to assume that Tralfamadore is a figment of Billy's post-brain-damaged imagination? Does it matter whether he's sane or insane?
 - e. Discuss the major themes of *Slaughterhouse-Five*, the relationship between the structure and the content. How does Vonnegut use time to communicate his themes?
 - f. Discuss the use of irony and black humour in the novel.
 - g. What is the significance of the phrase "so it goes"? What is the significance of the bird cry "poo-tee-weet"?

Suggested Reading:

Kurt Vonnegut. *Slaughterhouse-Five*.

POSTMODERNISM IN THE US AND UK LITERATURE.

Speak on the following theoretical questions:

1. Postmodernism of the XX century in art, architecture, music: definition, origin, main characteristics, similarities to modernist literature.
2. Define modernism and postmodernism in literature. What are their specific features? How are they different in subjects and themes, techniques of writing and formal characteristics? Use examples from the suggested reading to illustrate your point.
3. Main representatives, their life and works.
4. Magic realism as one of the most important postmodern techniques. Main representatives.

Suggested Reading:

Neil Gaiman:

Coraline

short stories collection *Smoke and Mirrors:*

The Wedding Present

The Price

Apples, Snow, and Mirror (ONLY for sober-minded; tough content; 22+)

Angela Carter:

The Bloody Chamber (collection *The Bloody Chamber And Other Stories*)

(ONLY for sober-minded; tough content; 22+)

Other authors for further reading:

Julian Barnes, stories by Muriel Spark, Doris Lessing, A. S. Byatt, Salman Rushdie, Christine Brooke-Rose, Peter Ackroyd, Martin Louis Amis, Gregory Norminton, John Robert Fowles, Lawrence George Durrell, Graham Colin Swift, Zadie Smith, etc.

POSTMODERNISM: SELF-CHECK

Do you know the answers to these questions?

What do some critics and scholars fault postmodern literature for?

1. Lack of engagement with social and historical issues
2. Sexism and overly complicated plots
3. Appealing to popular tastes and interests
4. Lack of creativity and experimentation

Which of the following writers is NOT considered to be a postmodern writer by many scholars and critics?

1. Margaret Atwood
2. Ernest Hemingway
3. Thomas Pynchon
4. Samuel Beckett

Which of the following statements is true regarding the philosophy of postmodernism?

1. Postmodern philosophy argues that all belief systems and ideologies are developed for the express purpose of controlling others and maintaining particular political and social systems.
2. Postmodern philosophy argues that knowledge and facts are always relative to particular situations and that it's both futile and impossible to attempt to

locate any precise meaning to any idea, concept or event.

3. Postmodern philosophy tends to conceptualize the world as being impossible to strictly define or understand.
4. None of the statements are true
5. All of the statements are true

Which of the following are common conventions of postmodern literary writing?

1. Straightforward plots and realistic situations
2. Metafiction and intertextuality
3. Clear and obvious meanings
4. A respect for previous literary styles and conventions

In the view of many historians, philosophers and literary scholars, which war gave rise, at least in part, to postmodern literature?

1. The Vietnam War
2. World War I
3. The Korean War
4. World War II

The bloody stalemate that emerged during World War I completely _____ Europe.

- (A) retorted
- (B) grappled
- (C) appeased

(D) converged

(E) ravaged

The unreasonable restrictions imposed on Germany at the end of World War I were _____ related to the rise of Hitler and the start of World War II.

(A) intrinsically

(B) impassively

(C) heedlessly

(D) odiously

(E) reverently

Many in Germany held the conviction that its _____ was to _____ the rule of the British Empire.

(A) labyrinth . . . brevity

(B) feud . . . ecstasy

(C) destiny . . . supplant

(D) farce . . . compensation

(E) vileness . . . amiability

Modernism _____ radically from the literary movements of the Victorian period.

(A) supplanted

(B) commiserated

(C) trudged

(D) hailed

(E) diverged

While the Realists were reacting to the _____ conditions of urban life, the Modernists were, in part, reacting to the horrors of mechanized war.

(A) squalid

(B) spellbound

(C) imperturbable

(D) dogged

(E) exotic

The start of the twentieth century was marred by the rise of numerous _____ European governments.

(A) quaint

(B) intermittent

(C) despotic

(D) prosaic

(E) sensible

Many of the heads of Europe were _____ of the threat posed by Nazi Germany.

(A) callous

(B) heedless

(C) sensible

(D) unsavory

(E) quaint

The _____ spirit of the British was demonstrated during the Blitz, in which London was destroyed by bombing.

(A) imperious

(B) garish

(C) forsaken

(D) indomitable

(E) frail

Although the Nazis _____ Europe for years, the continent was eventually emancipated from Nazism.

(A) frail

(B) suppressed

(C) exotic

(D) emanated

(E) despotic

During the first half of the twentieth century, Modernism was _____ by many critics, who

recognized the movement's great inventiveness.

- (A) precipitated
- (B) converged
- (C) hailed
- (D) impinged
- (E) retorted

The _____ rations of many families during the Great Depression led to near-starvation conditions in both urban and rural areas.

- A. amiable
- B. meager
- C. retractable
- D. diplomatic

Many European Americans became _____ toward Japanese Americans after the start of World War II.

- A. hostile
- B. vivid
- C. futile
- D. solemn

Many workers _____ fought for their rights during the Great Depression.

- A. stately
- B. ineffably
- C. vigorously
- D. abjectly

The wild, _____ music and style of dress during the 1920s gave way to the desperate and _____ days of the 1930s.

- A. ceremonial . . enamored
- B. animated . . morose
- C. amorphous . . grave
- D. ravenous . . ceremonial

The _____ of the Nazi conquest of Europe were far-reaching and horrible.

- A. inquisitors
- B. hemorrhage
- C. turrets
- D. implications

While people in the United States were in the economic recovery effort, Europe was about to _____ to another deadly war.

- A. enamored . . grapple
- B. premeditated . . loiter
- C. engrossed . . succumb
- D. intimidated . . grapple

The end of World War II caused _____ celebrations to erupt across the United States.

- A. jubilant
- B. gaunt
- C. ravenous
- D. poised

The United States' war with Germany and Japan was the _____ outcome of Axis military aggression.

- A. pious
- B. impudent
- C. alien
- D. inevitable

The _____ by experts that the Dust Bowl was the result of agricultural mismanagement shocked many farmers.

- A. premonition
- B. tribute
- C. twinge
- D. intimation

A common sight during the Great Depression was the urban poor, starved and _____ for food.

- A. ravenous
- B. amorphous
- C. vivid
- D. solemn

Kurt Vonnegut was born in:

- a) America
- b) Indiana
- c) France

Vonnegut met his wife in the:

- a) kindergarten
- b) hospital
- c) private school

What was the name of the first Kurt's child?

- a) David
- b) Mark
- c) George

Which of these books belong to Vonnegut?

- a) Bluebeard
- b) Three meters above the sky
- c) Champion

5. When did Kurt Vonnegut died?

- a) 13 March 2012
- b) 28 December 2011
- c) 11 April 2011

What genre is "Coraline"?

- 1. Novel
- 2. A children's tale
- 3. Detective

When was the book written?

- 1. 2001
- 2. 2000
- 3. 2002

Where does the story begin?

- 1. Does Coraline and her parents move to a new home
- 2. Coraline's father dies
- 3. Coraline gives birth to a baby sister

What did Coraline find in the house?

- 1. A new doll
- 2. A locked door
- 3. A fascinating book

Who opens the door that so interested the girl?

- 1. Uncle
- 2. Sister
- 3. Mother.

What was behind the door?

- 1. An empty room
- 2. The wall
- 3. Strange flower

Coraline's neighbour was training mice. What did the bears say to the girl?

- 1. Don't open the door
- 2. Play with them
- 3. Go to sleep.

What gift did the two girls' neighbours give after the fortune-telling ?

- 1. a bracelet
- 2. a doll
- 3. an amulet

What did the neighbours tell the girl?

- 1. That she would be happy
- 2. That danger awaits her
- 3. That she will fall ill.

When no one was home, Coraline walks through a mysterious door and what does she see?

1. the same house, parents with buttons for eyes
2. A scary monster
3. A forest.

Coraline spends some time outside the door and wakes up:

1. Rabbit
2. The cat
3. Fox.

What does the other mother ask Coraline to do?

1. to give her a hug
2. To play with her
3. Put buttons instead of eyes

What did the girl find with the amulet?

1. Colourful balls
2. Strange flowers
3. Cup

What was the girl dreaming about?

1. The souls of the children thanking her
2. a happy family
3. The father

What appeared in the real world after the incident ?

1. a witch's spirit
2. the witch's hand
3. the witch's head

Where did the souls of boys come from?

1. from a cup
2. from a snow globe
3. from coloured balls

Where did the hand go?

1. to the well
2. to the door
3. to the mother

What is Coraline doing by the well?

1. sings
2. having a tea party
3. draws

Where has the witch's hand gone?

1. fell into the well
2. evaporated
3. stayed with the girl forever

How does the story end?

1. Coraline moves in with her parents
2. The girl has been dreaming about everything
3. The girl goes to school

Neil Gaiman learned how to make comics:

- a) on his own
- b) with the help of books and Alan Moore
- c) he had his own teacher

Neil Gaiman's post-secondary education:

- a) journalism
- b) pedagogy
- c) without education

The first issue of his comic was called:

- a) Coraline
- b) Sandman
- c) Good Omens

What was Neil Gaiman's inspiration for working for television?

- a) to write a new book - the novel
- b) for a new comic
- c) for admission to the university

POST-POSTMODERNISM. **(additional lecture)**

Post-postmodernism is a term applied to a wide-ranging set of developments in critical theory, philosophy, architecture, art, literature, and culture which are emerging from and reacting to postmodernism. Another similar recent term is *metamodernism*.

Definition: Post-postmodernism is often considered a reaction to the skepticism, irony, and fragmented narratives of postmodernism. It seeks to reintegrate sincerity, emotion, and a renewed sense of narrative cohesion.

Context: Emerged in the late 20th and early 21st centuries as a response to the perceived *exhaustion of postmodern techniques* and the desire for a return to more grounded, authentic forms of expression.

Periodization

Most scholars would agree that **MODERNISM** began in the late 19th century and continued on as the dominant cultural force in the intellectual circles of Western culture well into the mid-twentieth century. Like all epochs, modernism encompasses many competing individual directions and is impossible to define as a discrete unity or totality.

However, its ***chief general characteristics*** are often thought to include an emphasis on

- radical aesthetics,
- technical experimentation,
- spatial or rhythmic, rather than chronological form,
- self-conscious reflexiveness
- the search for authenticity in human relations,
- abstraction in art,
- utopian striving.

These characteristics are normally lacking in postmodernism or are treated as *objects of irony*.

POSTMODERNISM arose after World War II as a reaction to the perceived failings of modernism, whose radical artistic projects had come to be associated with totalitarianism or had been assimilated into mainstream culture.

The basic features of what we now call postmodernism can be found as early as the 1940s, most notably in the work of Jorge Luis Borges. However, most scholars today would agree that postmodernism began to compete with modernism in the late 1950s and gained ascendancy (predominance) over it in the 1960s.

From the Cold War and the social movements of the 1960s to the rise of social media and the political instability of today, life since World War II has been characterized by tumult and upheaval. The writers responded to the vast social and political challenges of this chaotic period complicated by the emergence of rivals to literature's cultural primacy in the form of new media such as cinema, television, and the Internet.

Since 1960s, postmodernism has been a dominant, though not undisputed, force in art, literature, film, music, drama, architecture and philosophy. Salient (most noticeable or important) features of postmodernism are normally thought to include

- the ironic play with styles,
- citations and narrative levels,
- a metaphysical skepticism or nihilism towards a "grand narrative" of Western culture,
- a preference for the virtual at the expense of the real (or more accurately, a fundamental questioning of what 'the real' constitutes)
- a "waning of affect" (emotion or desire, especially as influencing behavior or action) on the part of the subject, who is caught up in the free interplay of virtual, endlessly reproducible signs inducing a state of consciousness similar to schizophrenia.

Since the late 1990s there has been a small but growing feeling both in popular culture and in academia that postmodernism "has gone out of fashion."

Linda Hutcheon *The Politics of Postmodernism* (2nd edition, 2002) – no more postmodernism – it belongs to the past – there's a need for a new language of depiction.

Why Has Post-Postmodernism Emerged?

- Cultural and Social Shifts: The 21st century has seen significant technological, social, and political changes that have prompted a re-evaluation of postmodern detachment.
- Desire for Meaning: A reaction to the nihilism and fragmentation of postmodernism, with a yearning for meaning, connection, and community.
- Digital Age Influence: The rise of the internet, social media, and digital culture has influenced narrative structures and modes of storytelling, pushing writers to explore new forms.

However, there have been few formal attempts to define and name the epoch succeeding postmodernism, and none of the proposed designations has yet become part of mainstream usage.

PoPoMo

Definitions

Consensus on what makes up an epoch can hardly be achieved while that epoch is still in its early stages. However, a common positive theme of current attempts to define post-postmodernism is that ***faith, trust, dialogue, performance and sincerity*** can work to transcend postmodern irony.

The following definitions, which vary widely in depth, focus and scope, are listed in the chronological order of their appearance.

In 1995, the landscape architect and urban planner Tom Turner issued a book-length call for a post-postmodern turn in urban planning. Regarding terminology, Turner urges us to “embrace post-Postmodernism – and pray for a better name.”

In his 1999 book a Slavist Mikhail Epstein suggested that postmodernism “is [...] part of a much larger historical formation,” which he calls “postmodernity.”

Epstein believes that postmodernist aesthetics will eventually become entirely conventional and provide the foundation for a new, ***non-ironic*** kind of poetry, which he describes using the prefix “**trans-** (across; beyond, changing or having changed from one thing to another, is used to form words which indicate

that someone or something moves from one group, thing, state, or place to another.):

In considering the names that might possibly be used to designate the new era following "postmodernism," one finds that the prefix "trans" stands out in a special way. The last third of the 20th century developed under the sign of "post," which signalled the demise (death) of such concepts of modernity as "truth" and "objectivity," "soul" and "subjectivity," "utopia" and "ideality," "primary origin" and "originality," "sincerity" and "sentimentality." All of these concepts are now being reborn in the form of "trans-subjectivity," "trans-idealism," "trans-utopianism," "trans-originality," "trans-lyricism," "trans-sentimentality" etc.

The term *post-millennialism* was introduced in 2000 by the American cultural theorist Eric Gans to describe the epoch after postmodernism in ethical and socio-political terms. Gans associates postmodernism closely with "victimary thinking," which he defines as being based on a non-negotiable ethical opposition between perpetrators and victims arising out of the experience of Auschwitz and Hiroshima. In contrast to postmodernism, post-millennialism is distinguished by Post-postmodernism the rejection of victimary thinking and a turn to "non-victimary dialogue" that will "diminish [...] the amount of resentment in the world." (*Chronicles of Love and Resentment*)

In 2006 the British scholar Alan Kirby formulated a socio-cultural assessment of post-postmodernism that he calls "*pseudo-modernism*." Kirby associates pseudo-modernism with the triteness (triviality, banality) and shallowness resulting from the instantaneous, direct, and superficial participation in culture made possible by the internet, mobile phones, interactive television and similar means: "In pseudo-modernism one phones, clicks, presses, surfs, chooses, moves, downloads."

Pseudo-modernism's "typical intellectual states" are furthermore described as being "ignorance, fanaticism and anxiety" and it is said to produce a "trance-like state" in those participating in it. The net result of this media-induced shallowness and instantaneous participation in trivial events is a "silent autism" superseding "the *neurosis of modernism* and the *narcissism of postmodernism*."

As examples of its triteness he cites reality TV, interactive news programs, docu-soaps, and the essayistic cinema of Michael Moore or Morgan Spurlock.

In a book published in September 2009 titled *Digimodernism: How New Technologies Dismantle the Postmodern and Reconfigure our Culture* Kirby developed further and nuanced his views on culture and textuality in the aftermath of postmodernism.

New technologies make it possible to move on – from the play with reality common in PM – to the use of reality and practice of reality.

- *Digimodernism*
- Ultramodernism
- Hypermodernism
- Cosmomodernism
- *Etc.*

In 2010 the cultural theorists Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin van den Akker introduced the term **METAMODERNISM** as an intervention in the post-postmodernism debate.

(*Word origin* Greek, from *meta* with, after, between, among. Meta - (of a creative work) referring to itself or to the conventions of its genre; self-referential; connected with a change of position or state; higher; beyond; concerned with cultural conventions rather than with reality)

In their article '*Notes on metamodernism*' they assert (claim) that the 2000s are characterized by the emergence of a sensibility that oscillates (swings) between, and must be situated beyond, modern positions and postmodern strategies. As examples of the metamodern sensibility Vermeulen and van den Akker cite the 'informed naivety', 'pragmatic idealism' and 'moderate fanaticism' of the various cultural responses to, among others, climate change, the financial crisis, and (geo)political instability.

To describe "the structure of feeling" of metamodernism, Vermeulen and van den Akker use the metaphor of a pendulum continually oscillating from the sincere seriousness of modernism to the ironic playfulness of postmodernism.

The return of a Romantic sensibility has been posited as a key characteristic of metamodernism, They claim that the neoromantic approach to metamodernism is done in the spirit of resignify "the commonplace with significance, the ordinary with mystery, the familiar with the seamliness of the unfamiliar, and the finite with the semblance of the infinite." By doing so, these artists seek to "perceive anew a future that was lost from sight."^[11]

Aesthetically, metamodernism is exemplified by the writings of Haruki Murakami, Roberto Bolaño, David Foster Wallace, and Jonathan Franzen, as they are each typified by a continuous oscillation, a constant repositioning between attitudes and mindsets that are evocative of the modern and of the postmodern but are ultimately suggestive of another sensibility that is neither of them; one that negotiates between a yearning for universal truths and relativism, between a desire for sense and a doubt about the sense of it all, between hope and melancholy, sincerity and irony, knowingness and naivety, construction and deconstruction.

The prefix 'meta' here refers not to some reflective stance or repeated rumination (a deep or considered thought about something), but to Plato's *metaxy*, which intends a movement between opposite poles as well as beyond.

(Described by Plato in the *Symposium* and other works, *metaxy means 'between'*. Voegelin describes this most fundamentally as our 'experience of being itself, the experience of a tension between the poles of time and eternity' (Voegelin, 2002, 328).)

PM vs PPM

PM

- Rebellion against classical literature.
- Deconstructing things; questioning of authority;
- Sacrifice the element of human connection in literature.
- Irony – destroys but does not show the way :(
- Didn't offer solutions to the problems of the world; criticized everything; didn't offer alternatives
- Very political (e.g. Thomas Pinchon)

PoPoMo Key Characteristics:

- Even when they are talking about politics, they still focus on themselves; they want to open themselves to the reader

- Rediscovering human connections
- Reestablishing a relationship/real connection with the reader; recognize that the reader exists and has some needs
- Not afraid to be too romantic, emotional, cheesy
- Michael Chabon in critical and personal essays “Maps and Legends” asserts his literary manifesto: "I read for entertainment, and I write to entertain. Period." For Chabon, the stories that give us great pleasure are in many ways our truest, best art—the building blocks of our shared imagination. Whether he's taking up Superman or Sherlock Holmes, Poe or Proust, Chabon's emphatic mission is to explore the reasons we tell each other tales, and to offer a glimpse of his own history as reader and writer.

In “Trickster in a suit of lights: thoughts on the modern short story” Chabon rediscovers the value of entertainment (story is not supposed to just teach you things; enjoy the texts!)

- Embrace of sincerity and authenticity.
- Reconciliation with traditional narrative forms.
- Focus on emotional engagement and ethical responsibility.
- Integration of digital and multimedia forms into the narrative.
- A blend of high and low culture, with a greater emphasis on accessibility.

Basic Concepts and Themes of literature today:

- **Metamodernism:** Often associated with post-postmodernism, it oscillates between modernist idealism and postmodernist skepticism, embracing a sense of hope and irony simultaneously.
- **New Sincerity:** A movement within post-postmodernism that rejects postmodern irony in favor of genuine emotion and straightforward communication.
- **Hybrid Narratives:** The blending of various genres and forms (literary, visual, digital) to create a more immersive experience.
- **Return to Grand Narratives:** A tentative return to overarching stories and universal themes, often with a critical self-awareness that reflects on their construction.

MAIN REPRESENTATIVES AND WORKS

AMERICAN LITERATURE:

- **David Foster Wallace:** Often considered a bridge between postmodernism and post-postmodernism, his works like *"Infinite Jest"* grapple with irony, sincerity, and the search for meaning.
- Michael Chabon. *The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*.
 -
 - **Post-Postmodernism and the New Sincerity**
 - David Foster Wallace, "The Depressed Person"
 - David Foster Wallace, from "Consider the Lobster"
 - George Saunders, "CivilWarLand in Bad Decline"
 - Junot Díaz, "Drown"
 - Jhumpa Lahiri, "Sexy"
 - Jennifer Egan, "Black Box"
 - **Jennifer Egan:** *"A Visit from the Goon Squad"* uses fragmented narrative and digital themes to explore time, identity, and memory.
 - **Jonathan Franzen:** Novels like *"The Corrections"* and *"Freedom"* focus on social realism, family dynamics, and ethical concerns, with a clear departure from postmodern playfulness.
 - **George Saunders:** His blend of satire and sincerity, particularly in *"Tenth of December,"* reflects post-postmodern tendencies.
 - **Autofiction and the New Authenticity**
 - Jenny Offill, *Dept. of Speculation*,
 - Natasha Trethewey, "Native Guard"
 - Lydia Davis, all selections
 - Jennifer Egan, "Black Box" (*)
 - Charles Yu "Systems" (*)

BRITISH LITERATURE:

- **Zadie Smith:** *"White Teeth"* and *"NW"* explore multiculturalism, identity, and the complexities of modern life with a mix of irony and heartfelt engagement.
- **Ian McEwan:** *"Atonement"* and *"Saturday"* focus on ethical dilemmas, realism, and a return to more traditional narrative forms.
- **Ali Smith:** Her works, such as *"How to be Both,"* experiment with form while maintaining a strong emotional core, reflecting post-postmodern aesthetics.

- Junot Díaz. *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*
- Jennifer Egan. *A Visit from the Goon Squad*
- Jonathan Safran Foer. *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close*
- Dave Eggers. *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius*
- Michael Chabon. *The Yiddish Policeman's Union* (genre fiction- police; escape)
- Michael Chabon (Editor). *McSweeney's Mammoth Treasury of Thrilling Tales* (genre fiction collection)

Jeffrey Eugenides **The Virgin Suicides. The Marriage Plot**

Madeleine Hanna, dutiful English major, is writing her senior thesis on Jane Austen and George Eliot, purveyors of the marriage plot that lies at the heart of the greatest English novels.

Leonard Bankhead - charismatic loner, college Darwinist - suddenly turns up in a semiotics seminar, and soon Madeleine finds herself in a highly charged erotic and intellectual relationship with him. At the same time, her old "friend" Mitchell Grammaticus - who's been reading Christian mysticism - resurfaces, obsessed with the idea that Madeleine is destined to be his mate.

Over the next year, as the members of the triangle graduate from college events force them to reevaluate everything they learned in school.

Are the great love stories of the nineteenth century dead? Or can there be a new story, written for today and alive to the realities of feminism, sexual freedom, prenups, and divorce? With devastating wit and an abiding understanding of and affection for his characters,

Jeffrey Eugenides revives the motivating energies of the Novel, while creating a story so contemporary and fresh that it reads like the intimate journal of our own lives.

Sources

1. Literature for the 21st century. Pp. 75-78.

2. Key Texts and Further Reading

• **Books:**

- *"After Postmodernism: An Introduction to Critical Realism"* by Garry Potter and José López.
- *"Metamodernism: Historicity, Affect, and Depth after Postmodernism"* edited by Robin van den Akker, Alison Gibbons, and Timotheus Vermeulen.

- *"Everything and Less: The Novel in the Age of Amazon"* by Mark McGurl.
- **Articles:**
 - *"E Unibus Pluram: Television and U.S. Fiction"* by David Foster Wallace.
 - *"Notes on Metamodernism"* by Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin van den Akker.

"The Black Box" Background

If you are a fan of classic science fiction, you may already know that many early science fiction novels, like Isaac Asimov's *Foundation* and Frank Herbert's *Dune*, first appeared as **serials**, or separate chunks of a bigger story in popular pulp magazines, with each installment read eagerly by science fiction fans. However, new technology for delivering fiction as well as the wide availability of inexpensive paperbacks have made serial fiction all but disappear.

But in 2012, American writer Jennifer Egan decided to combine the traditional serial format with the technology of **Twitter**. The result was the story "The Black Box." As you know, Twitter requires that a Twitter user keep all posts to 140 characters or less. So Egan and *The New Yorker* teamed up to use the magazine's Twitter account to tweet her entire short story in posts one minute apart on *The New Yorker* website. Egan described her project as "a series of terse mental dispatches from an undercover spy of the future."

"The Black Box" Plot Summary

First of all, you have to let go of your traditional expectations about the fictional format in order to appreciate the plot. What we usually call exposition, in which the reader finds out about the setting and characters, is not presented in a straight-forward way near the start of the text.

As the action of the story unfolds, we gradually learn about the protagonist and her mission. At first, she identifies herself as a "beauty" and we learn sentence by sentence that she actually is a secret agent equipped with implanted technology, like the **black box** of the title, which is a flight recorder found on downed airplanes. What she refers to as her **designated mate** is the male enemy that she is assigned to spy on and from whom she hopes to gather helpful data.

We learn that she has volunteered for this mission and that she is not being paid. Her reward is to know that she has helped "the good guys" in some way. "Some of you will not survive, but those who do will be heroes."

We know also that she has a husband who is an engineer, and that she grew up in a peaceful area of upstate New York.

The action of the plot becomes more serious and sinister as she goes with her designated mate to a remote island by speedboat. There, she is stranded and must use her courage and wits to survive. The technique of leaving her body behind, that she has used before when having sex with members of the enemy force, returns, as she lies close to death.



The Black Box with Important Data

The information found on her can provide valuable data. The protagonist's body serves as a black box for the forces of good that attempt to rescue her. Whether found dead or alive, her body contains the all-important data she acquired via her wits and inner strength.

"The Black Box" Analysis

When you read the story in single tweets, the effect is a continuous stream of information. This stream is almost necessarily detached from emotion because there is no room for any elaboration on the simple declarative statements.

This detachment is mirrored by the protagonist's technique of purposely leaving her physical body at will.



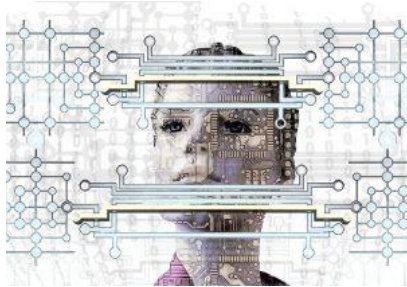
Escaping Emotion at Will

If you read the text as a continuous story, since it was published by *The New Yorker* after the Twitter project, it may be difficult for the reader to acclimate to

the format. Until you get involved in the actual plot, it may seem that you are reading an instruction manual for some trainee outside the narrative. "Your Field Instructions, stored in a chip beneath your hairline, will serve as both a mission log and a guide for others undertaking this work."

Imagine trying to tell a descriptive and exciting tale about something that happened to you in 140-character snippets. You are almost forced to write declarative sentences, and dialogue is not really an option. As a writer, Egan was forced to find a way to communicate both a narrative continuum and the nature of her protagonist within these formatting restrictions.

Finally, the idea of data transmission permeates every aspect of the narrative. The format in which the protagonist speaks to the reader feels like impersonal data. And we know that her own seemingly human and vulnerable body is being used as a device to collect data.



Data Collection and Transmission

Yet the reader cannot help but connect personally with the "beauty" who volunteers to help her country.

"The Black Box" by Jennifer Egan: Summary

"The Black Box" is written entirely in the second person with the narrator speaking directly to the reader. Instead of stating what happens, the second-person narrator describes how a person would feel or what they would do if something happens to them.

Fairly early on, the reader is able to surmise that the narrator is an undercover agent working to protect the United States from dangerous operatives. The narrator is not a professional intelligence or counterintelligence agent. Rather, she is an ordinary woman who has decided to take on an undercover mission as a Beauty in order to help her country before she settles

down and has children. Her husband is a high-level engineer and is approving of this mission.

She is undercover as a Beauty. These Beauties are women who are in the orbit of dangerous and influential men. The men desire them for their bodies, but they do not take them seriously. Because their intelligence is not even considered, Beauties are better able to get into space where these men speak about secret matters.

The women's bodies, themselves, are a big part of the mission. They have listening devices implanted inside their ears. They have cameras inserted in their eyes. They can even activate a flash, when necessary, to aid in the photographs. These flashes, however, can blind them temporarily. In addition, they can plug an electronic device into their own body to download information. Their bodies, in essence, become like a black box on an airplane should they die. As long as the Americans can retrieve their body, they are able to get all of the information necessary. The women know they may not come back alive, but they know that it is important that their bodies return home. If not, none of the information their body has captured will make it to the Americans.

The narrator has a Designated Mate that she has been assigned to spy on. Her job is to remain close to him and become intimate with him without drawing any attention to herself as anything besides a sex object. The narrator has become skilled at disassociating or having out-of-body experiences. She does this when she is intimate with her Designated Mate as in real life she is married and does not want to have sex with anybody else.

She has been taught how not to draw attention to herself and how to analyze the actions of her Mate. At one point, he brings her onto a boat and they are carried away into the Mediterranean. She puts her head near his so that she can navigate by the stars as he could. The moon is her Personal Calming Device. They land on an island. The host does not even acknowledge the narrator, making it likely that he really does not see women as a threat. The host has many beauties at his home, but one is the Alpha Beauty.

The narrator sees something she must photograph, but the men cannot see her do so. She pretends to hear something in the distance. When the men go to see what it is, she takes a picture, but they detect the flash. The narrator becomes blind because of the flash. Her Designated Mate tries to quickly leave the island because of danger. He tries to drag her along, but blind, she is too much of a burden, and he leaves her behind.

The Alpha Beauty finds the narrator and brings her back to the house. There, the host has sex with the narrator while she again disassociates. Eventually, she sneaks into the bedroom of the host and his lover and finds his handset. She plugs the handset into herself for a Data Surge. She plugs it in between two of her toes. This essentially downloads the data on the device onto her body. The Alpha Beauty finds her.

The narrator is able to kick the host, but the Alpha Beauty is holding a baby and a gun. The narrator is shot as she hesitates to protect herself so as not to hurt the baby that the Alpha Beauty is holding. The narrator lets out a Primal Roar that stuns and scares everyone, and she is able to escape.

Eventually, she makes it back to the sea and finds a boat that the host has in case he needs a fast escape. She leaves on the boat and makes it to a Hot Spot in the middle of the sea where the Americans can detect her signal. Again, she disassociates because of the pain. She mentions that some people do not want to return to their bodies. If a person loses sight of their body while dissociating they may never get it back. The last tweet has the narrator seeing human beings in the helicopter coming to rescue her.

"The Black Box" by Jennifer Egan: Analysis

"The Black Box" is unique in that it was delivered via tweets. Often science fiction stories of old were told in a serial manner, and Twitter provides a new means by which to do this. The sentences are declarative, simply stating what the narrator thinks the listener would need to know in such a situation. Many of the sentences are less than 140 characters, and none of them are overly emotional. For example, the reader learns the narrator has been shot by the tweet, " A lag time exists between getting shot and knowing that you have been shot."

Most short stories are told in an expository style. This allows the writer to incorporate detail, advance the plot, and create character development. The Twitter format does not allow for this. Therefore, the author uses the second person to draw the reader into the story. It is important to remember that while now, we can read the story as a series of tweets, when it first came out, there were sixty seconds between each Tweet, and the audience was getting other Tweets in the meantime over many hours from other sources. The initial experience of reading "The Black Box" in real time is quite different from the experience readers get when they read it as a whole now.

Jennifer Egan's short story "**The Black Box**" was released in a groundbreaking format in 2012: a long series of Twitter tweets culminating in a full-length narrative published by *The New Yorker*. It was actually a new way of telling a story in the form of **serials**, or separate chunks of a bigger story. The plot involves a secret agent of the future who performs a service to her country by collecting data from a **designated mate**, which is the male enemy that she's assigned to spy on and from who she hopes to gather helpful data. With the use of implanted devices, the body of the woman serves as the **black box**, which is a flight recorder found on downed airplanes, containing the valuable data required. Perhaps Egan's use of new reading formats will revive the former popularity of serials in the world of science fiction.

The death of the traditional book

21 April 2013

Despite this being a novella and also appearing in a magazine, I simply could not leave off making some comments on this rather unusual piece of literature. I guess this is something that you would call post-modern, but the way the story is constructed, and the uniqueness of it, is what makes it intriguing. Basically it is a simple spy story, but it was originally told through a number of Twitter™ posts over a period of a week and the story unfolds through a number of instructions to a spy (who, by the way, is not getting paid for her work).

The protagonist of the story is a volunteer American spy who goes to the south of France to infiltrate an organisation and obtain some secret information. The thing is that we do not know who this person is (she is never named), we do not know what the information is, or who the organisation is, but I do not think that detracts from the work in itself because what it does is that it leaves that part of the story up to us to imagine.

I guess this is a classic example of what one would consider post-modern literature. The idea has moved on from where the the images of the characters in our head differ from reader to reader (one person's vision of Bilbo Baggins would differ from almost every other) to the actual guts of the story being determined individually by all who read it. All we know is that she is a beauty (once again relative to the reader's perception of beauty), and that she is on a mission to extract information. What that information, who the mark is, what the organisation is, and what this person is back in the United States is (though we

know that her husband is black) is left up to us to determine. Even the bulk of the dialogue is left for us to imagine, since, as I said, the story is constructed by using instructions from a spy manual.

It took me a little time to work out what was going on, but that is not surprising since at the start it seems that it is simply a random collection of comments, posted as Twitter posts, that do not seem to have any particular connection, but as we move through the story it becomes clear that they are instructions, and then it becomes clear that it is a spy story. At first I thought it was simply instructions to a beautiful woman on how to handle a man, and I guess in some ways the story can also be as such. It has, in a sense, a dual purpose. It is also, in a sense a movement from the unreal and the chaotic to the ordered and it takes time for this to come about. We, the reader, no doubt, are meant to be confused, to try to make sense of and understand what it going on, in the same way that we are meant to try to make sense of and understand life.

It also shows us how technology has changed the way we communicate. Ten years ago if you went on a holiday you would only be able to describe your experiences through emails to a select group of friends with photos attached to those emails, and ten years before that it would be over a beer at a pub once you had returned home. However these days you can follow people's exploits over Facebook, while seeing the photos appear as they are taken (though I would upload them when I had some down time at my hotel or in the airport). When I travelled around Australia I would only be able to update my status when I had access to a computer, but now I have a laptop that has been to Europe twice and Hong Kong once.

One wonders if this is how literature is going to develop and whether the traditional book is on its way out. Maybe, maybe not. We follow people on Twitter (well, I don't) and we follow people in Facebook. The idea of the imaginary novel may disappear as we are able to see people's lives more as they are posted on the internet for the world to see. Of course, some people seem to have no shame in what they post on the internet, and others are much more reserved, but still, the way we communicate seems to be changing day by day.

David Foster Wallace and His Legacy:

Postmodernist writers in the 1990s began to experiment with the literary form, contextualizing history, immigration, race, sex and technology, while rejecting boundaries, convention and absolute truth.

David Foster Wallace was an American Postmodernist writer and educator who was best known for his novel, "Infinite Jest."

David Foster Wallace is important because of his writings. He searched through them a connection with the readers in an honest way. David Foster Wallace has made that many people throughout the time can't control their emotions when they read his writings.

David Foster Wallace was ingenious with his writings. He introduced the honesty in the genre of postmodernism and he made it possible to find sincere characters in this fiction genre that explains his permanence in time. Foster Wallace is crucial because he found a way to describe better than anyone else the years of post-war, and his style to do it is unique.

“Yet Another Example of the Porousness of Certain Borders (XI)”

Themes

- [Awareness](#). Having "experienced" blindness, the man is now poignantly aware of his ability to see. Though, even after experiencing blindness the narrator fails to reach full awareness of his ability to see. This is understood by the manner in which he addresses the blind people he sees on the subway and their "strange-looking faces"(35). While the narrator experiences a transformative dream, he remains only partially transformed in his awareness.

Voice

LITERATURE USED IN THIS GUIDE

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2. Glencoe Literature. Reader's Choice. British Literature. New York. 2007. 1537 p.
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5. 30-SECOND LITERATURE. The 50 most important forms, genres and styles, each explained in half a minute/ Editor Ella Berthoud. Ivy Press, UK. 2020. 163 p.
6. Literary Movements for Students, Second Edition/ Project Editor: Ira Mark Milne. Gale, Cengage Learning. 2009. 963 p.
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