

American Literature

17th – 19th Century

TES STUDY MATERIAL



America

- A mixture of wanderers, explorers, travellers, settlers, religious outlaws, landless, political refugees and natives
- Of these the minority / marginalized is the Natives
- American multiculturalism has a “melting pot” nature

Beginnings: Pre-Colonial Era

- More than 500 tribal cultures existed in North America
- Tribes maintained their own religions
 - Worshipping gods, animals, plants, or sacred persons
- Various systems of government
 - Democracies
 - Councils of elders
 - Theocracies

Oral Literature

- Native American oral literature is diverse
 - Varies according to tribal cultures
- Includes lyrics, chants, myths, fairy tales, humorous anecdotes, incantations, riddles, proverbs, epics, and legendary histories
- Themes include
 - Origin of the world
 - Histories of tribes
 - Tales of heroes

Exploration of the American Land

- The first known exploration of America was made by Christopher Columbus
 - An Italian explorer
 - Discovered the "New World" of the Americas on an expedition sponsored by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain in 1492
 - The ships in the expedition were Santa Maria, the Pinta and the Niña
 - Landed in the Bahamas Islands in the Caribbean and misunderstood it to be India

Spanish Settlements

- St Augustine
- Albany
- New Amsterdam
- Main language Dutch
- In 1664
 - The English conquered Amsterdam
 - Renamed it as New York

Arrival of the British

- Initial English attempts at colonization were disasters
 - The first permanent colony was set up in James Town in 1607
- In the 17th century pirates, adventurers, and explorers opened the way to a second wave of permanent colonists
 - They brought their wives, children, farm implements and craftsmen's tools

The Thirteen Colonies

(17th and 18th centuries)

- Delaware
- Pennsylvania
- New Jersey
- Georgia
- Connecticut
- Massachusetts Bay
- Maryland
- South Carolina
- New Hampshire
- Virginia
- New York
- North Carolina
- Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Early Literature of Exploration

- The early literature of exploration made up of
 - Diaries
 - Letters
 - Travel journals
 - Ships' logbooks
 - Reports to the explorers' financial backers
- Columbus's journal printed in 1493 recounts the trip
 - The terror of the men
 - They feared meeting monsters
 - Thought they might fall off the edge of the world
- Captain John Smith's accounts gives details about the settlement at Jamestown

Two Early Works

- *A True Relation*
 - Captain John Smith
 - Semi-historical account
 - About the state of Virginia
- *The History of New England*
 - John Winthrop
 - Journal

More Developments

- 1630
 - Establishment of printing press in Cambridge New English colonies
 - 1st printed item was a German book in Pennsylvania
- *The Power of Sympathy* (1775)
 - William Hill Brown
 - First American novel
 - Epistolary novel

The Colonial Period in New England

- The northern side of America was referred as New England
- Many Puritans in New England were university graduates
- For them education was a means to understand and execute God's will
- Puritans tended to feel that earthly success was a sign that they are selected for eternal life
 - Gave importance to hard work, ambition and strived for success
- All of life was an expression of the divine will
 - Even ordinary events reveals some spiritual meaning

- According to Puritans good writing gave awareness of the importance of worshipping God
- Puritan style varied enormously
- Consists of
 - Metaphysical poetry
 - Homely journals
 - Religious history
- Themes
 - Life was seen as a test
 - Failure led to eternal damnation
 - Did not draw lines of distinction between the secular and religious spheres

Pilgrim Fathers

- The first Puritan colonists who settled New England exemplified the seriousness of Reformation
- They interpreted the Bible literally
- They read and acted on the text of the Second Book of Corinthians
 - “Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord.”
- They had formed churches that swore loyalty to the group instead of the king
- Thus they were called traitors and they were often persecuted

- Finally in 1620, about a 100 pilgrims left Jacobean England in a ship called May Flower and reached the New World
- They settled down at Plymouth in Massachusetts in New England
- They sought religious freedom and came to be called Pilgrim Fathers two centuries later

William Bradford (1590-1657)

- Governor of Plymouth
- Travelled in the Mayflower to Plymouth
- *Of Plymouth Plantation* (1651)
 - Account of the colony's beginning.
- Bradford also recorded the first document of colonial self-governance in the English New World
 - “The Mayflower Compact”
 - Drawn up while the Pilgrims were still on board ship

Anne Bradstreet (1612-72)

- The first American to publish a book of poems
- Inspired by English metaphysical poetry
- *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America* (1650)
 - Shows the influence of Edmund Spenser, Philip Sidney, and other English poets as well

Other Colonial Writers in New England

- Edward Taylor
 - *Metrical History of Christianity*
- Michael Wigglesworth
 - *The Day of Doom* (1662)
- Samuel Sewall
 - *Diary*
 - Often compared to Samuel Pepys's English diary of the same period
 - Records the changes in the Puritan life
 - Was involved in Salem witch trials which he regretted later
- Mary Rowlandson
- Cotton Mather

Southern and Middle Colonies

- Early English immigrants were drawn to the southern colonies because of economic opportunity rather than religious freedom
- Institution of slavery released wealthy southern whites from manual labour
- The southern literate upper class led a more leisure oriented life

Literature in Southern and Middle Colonies

- Pre-revolutionary southern literature was aristocratic and secular
- Writers and works
 - Jupiter Hammon
 - African American poet
 - “An Evening Thought”
 - The first poem published by a black male in America
 - William Byrd
 - Robert Beverley

- **Colonial Period (1607–1775)**
 - 1st successful English settlement in Jamestown (in the colony of Virginia) to the outbreak of American revolution
 - Writings religious, political or historical
 - Journals and travelogues
 - Rise of African American writings

Religion in the Colonies

- Christian religious groups played an influential role in each of the British colonies, and attempted to enforce strict religious observance
- However, there was no religious unity
- Between 1680 and 1760 Anglicanism and Congregationalism, an offshoot of the English Puritan movement, were the main organized denominations
- In the 18th century, Protestant movements came into being such as the Baptists, Methodists, Quakers, Unitarians and others, referred to as “Dissenters”
- In communities where one existing faith was dominant, new congregations were often seen as unfaithful troublemakers

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Salem Witch Trials

- In 1692-93, a series of trials and prosecutions of people took place in colonial Massachusetts
- They were accused of witchcraft
- Twenty people were executed
- This was the result of religious mass hysteria

Protests against Taxes

- In the 1760s and 1770s
- Stamp Act of 1765
- Boston Tea Party 1773
- Led to the American Revolutionary War, 1775–1783
- The Declaration of Independence was made on July 4, 1776

Founding Fathers

- George Washington
- John Adams
- Thomas Jefferson
- James Madison
- Alexander Hamilton
- James Monroe
- Benjamin Franklin

The Declaration of Independence

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

TES STUDY MATERIAL

The Declaration of Independence

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government...

TES STUDY MATERIAL

The Great Awakening

- An evangelical movement that swept Protestant Europe and British America, especially the American colonies from about the 1720s to the 1740s
- This movement left a permanent impact on American Protestantism
- Jonathan Edwards was a major figure
- Related to the Enlightenment
- Encouraged the spread of education

American Revolution

- Years of the Revolution 1775-1783
- Revolution to free themselves from the political and cultural dependence on Britain
 - The first modern war of liberation against a colonial power
- Revolution was followed by search for native culture
 - Writers found it difficult to establish their native culture as they had their roots in England

American Revolution and Literature

- Early American writers had no modern publishers and no audience
- The cultivated audience in America wanted well-known European authors
- There were no copyright laws in America
 - Printers pirated the works of well known English writers
 - They refused to publish the work of lesser known writers

Literature of the Revolutionary Period

- Issues related to independence
- Dignified, plain, clear prose
- European influence in early years
- Gradually began to reflect American experiences
- Difference between American and British politics
- Benjamin Franklin
- Thomas Paine
- Thomas Jefferson's "Statute of Virginia"
- Alexander Hamilton & James Madison – Federalist Papers in support of the constitution

American Enlightenment

- The 18th-century American Enlightenment was a movement that emphasised on
 - Rationality
 - Scientific inquiry
 - Representative government
- Enlightenment thinkers and writers were devoted to the ideals of justice, liberty, and equality as the natural rights of man.

Benjamin Franklin (1706-90)

- Belonged to a working class family
- Franklin's life illustrates the impact of the Enlightenment on the life of individuals
- He read John Locke, Lord Shaftesbury, Joseph Addison, and other Enlightenment writers' works
 - Extensive reading helped him to apply reason to break with tradition

- One of the Founding Fathers of the United States
- Called “the first American” for supporting the cause of colonial unity
- Published the revolutionary newspaper Pennsylvania Chronicle
- Established University of Pennsylvania; later became Governor of Pennsylvania
- Led the protests against the 1765 Stamp Act

Works

- A series of essays called “The Busy Body” followed the Addisonian style
- *Poor Richard’s Almanack* (1732)
 - His most well-known work
 - Collection of prose pieces
 - Published under pseudonym Richard Saunders
 - Contained the calendar, weather, poems, sayings and astronomical and astrological information in addition to proverbs that later became highly popular
- Invented many gadgets and instruments as well as social innovations

- Mottos in “Poor Richard’s Almanac”
 - Lost time is never found again.
 - A penny saved is a penny earned.
 - Fish and visitors stink in three days.
 - Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise.
- The Almanack was a reflection of the societal norms of the time, rather than a philosophical document like other contemporary works by Jefferson, Adams, or Paine

Thomas Paine (1737-1809)

- Born in Britain, on January 29, 1737
- Formal education only until the age of thirteen
- He met Benjamin Franklin while doing low-paid jobs
 - Benjamin Franklin convinced Paine to move to America
 - Paine emigrated to America in late 1774
- Paine became involved in American political life
- Edited *Pennsylvania Magazine*
 - Argued that the American colonists should seek complete independence, rather than merely fighting against unfair British taxation

“Common Sense” (1776)

- Political pamphlet by Thomas Paine
- Anonymously published
- Brought the rising revolutionary sentiment into sharp focus
- Placed blame for the suffering of the colonies directly on the British monarch, George III
- Led to the first successful anticolonial action in American history
- Followed with a series of pamphlets entitled *The American Crisis*
- Eventually, Paine went on to write *The Rights of Man* and *The Age of Reason*

Rights of Man (1791)

- Written during a two-year period, during which Paine participated in the French Revolution as a member of the French National Assembly
- Part 1: Dedicated to George Washington; a reply to the conservative attack on the French Revolution made by British politician Edmund Burke in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790)
- Part 2 is a discussion of the principles of government, advocating the constitutional republic that the French Revolution had sought to establish
- Opposes the idea of hereditary government

TES STUDY MATERIAL

The Age of Reason (1794, 1795, 1807)

- “Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology”
- Three parts
- Pamphlet on religion
- Inspired by Freethinkers
- Intellectual Context: 18th century British Deism; freedom of conscience; demand for religious tolerance; opposition to the idea of “Original Sin”
- Objected to organized religion
- Questions the sacredness of the Bible
- Book was condemned by many as atheistic

Neoclassicism:

Epic, Mock Epic, Satire

- Many of the writers produced writings which were neoclassical in style
- American literary patriots felt that the great American Revolution is best expressed in epic
- They practised writing long dramatic narrative poems in elevated language that celebrates the feats of a legendary hero

Neoclassicism:

Epic, Mock Epic, Satire

- *The Conquest of Canaan* (1785)
 - Timothy Dwight
 - Based on the Biblical story of Joshua's struggle to enter the Promised Land
 - Dwight cast General Washington as Joshua
- Mock epic was a well accepted literary form
 - *M'Fingal* (1776-1782)
 - John Trumbull
 - The mock epic derides Tory M'Fingal

Philip Freneau (1752-1832)

- Poet
 - Known as the “Poet of the American Revolution”
 - Wrote a number of literary works against the British
 - Combined neoclassical and romantic elements in his works
- Nationalist
 - Strong believer of democratic ideals

Important Works

- The British Prison-Ship
- “The Beauties of Santa Cruz”
- “The House of Night”
- “The Wild Honey Suckle”
 - A beautiful lyric which established him as an important American precursor of the Romantics

Charles Brockden Brown

(1771-1810)

- Developed the genre of American gothic
 - Inspired by Mrs Radcliffe and William Godwin
- Dramatized scientific and medical theories
- Developed a well defined theory for fiction writing
 - Novels combine fiction and history
 - It places ordinary individuals in situations of historical importance to make the readers understand the impact of historical events on the life of individuals

TES STUDY MATERIAL

- Expressed in essays like
 - “Walsteins School of History”
 - “The Difference Between History and Romance”
- Works
 - *Wieland* (1798)
 - *Arthur Mervyn* (1799)
 - *Ormond* (1799)
 - *Edgar Huntley* (1799)

Early National Period (1775-1824)

- Emergence of a national imaginative literature; ended with triumph of Jacksonian democracy
- *The Contrast* by Royall Tyler – 1st American Comedy; in the tradition of the English Restoration comedies
- *The North America Review* – 1st enduring American Magazine
- Washington Irving: short stories, biographies, history – “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow”, “Rip Van Winkle”
- The first major American novelist James Fenimore Cooper: works about frontier life
- Slave narratives – *The Life of Frederick Douglass* & *The Life of a Slave Girl*

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Washington Irving (1783-1859)

- Known as the father of American short stories
- Occasionally wrote under the pseudonym 'Geoffrey Crayon'
- He understood the desire of the American people living in a raw new nation to have a sense of history
 - Numerous works may be seen as his careful attempts to build the new nation's soul by recreating history and giving it living, breathing, imaginative life
- Through his works he transformed the land into a place of legends

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Important Works

- *The Sketch Book of Geoffrye Crayon, Gent.*
 - Contains two important humorous short stories
 - “Rip Van Winkle”
 - It was adapted for the stage
 - Later went into the oral tradition and was gradually accepted as authentic American legend by generations of Americans
 - “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow”
 - The first four lines are taken from The Castle of Indolence
- Also wrote biography of George Washington

James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851)

- One of the first American novelists to depict African, African American and Native American characters in his works
- Lived mostly in Cooperstown, New York
- Expelled from Yale University for bad behavior
- Served in the US Navy which influenced his works
- Started his writing career with
 - *Precaution* (1820)
 - Anonymously published
 - His high-spirited adventure stories are mostly inspired by childhood in the frontier

As a Writer

- Founded the Bread and Cheese Club
- Included painters and writers like William Cullen Bryant
- Lived in France, England, Switzerland and Italy for about seven years before settling back in Cooperstown, US, in 1833
- Was criticized as being reactionary, romantic and pedagogical in tone; Mark Twain attacked his romanticism in the essay “Fenimore Cooper’s Literary Offenses” (1895)
- Sometimes Cooper is compared to Walter Scott

The Leatherstocking Tales

- Most famous of his novels are the Leatherstocking Tales
- A series of five novels each featuring the main hero Natty Bumppo, known by European settlers as “Leatherstocking,” “The Pathfinder”, and “the trapper” and by the Native Americans as “Deerslayer,” “La Longue Carabine” and “Hawkeye”

Leatherstocking Tale 1

- ***The Deerslayer, or The First War Path (1841)***
- Set in 1740-1745
- Set on Otsego Lake in upstate New York
- Introduces Natty Bumppo as “Deerslayer”, a young frontiersman in early 18th-century New York

Leatherstocking Tale 2

- ***The Last of the Mohicans: A Narrative of 1757* (1826)**
- Set in 1757
- Historical novel; the best known of the pentalogy
- Set during the French and Indian War (the Seven Years' War), when France and Great Britain battled for control of North America; French often allied with Native Americans
- Natty Bumppo as a young British Army scout; he is called Hawkeye

The Plot

- The British Fort William Henry (under Scottish Colonel Munro) is attacked by French General Montcalm and his Indian allies, Hurons
- Magua, a Huron, also called The Subtle Fox, brings this news to British General Webb at Fort Edward, 10 miles south of Fort William Henry
 - Webb sends reinforcements to William Henry

- Cora and Alice Munro, who were visiting Webb, leave to see their father
 - Major Duncan Heyward accompanies
 - Magua is guide but is treacherous
- The group is attacked on the way
- They are helped by Hawkeye, a white hunter and Chingachgook, his Mohican ally
 - Uncas, the son of Chingachgook, is the last of the Mohicans

- Uncas is attracted to dark-skinned Cora
- Magua also desires her; makes her a prisoner and after many adventures finally kills her
- Magua and Uncas kill each other

Leatherstocking Tales 3 & 4

- ***The Pathfinder : The Inland Sea (1840)***
 - Set in 1750s
 - The inland sea of the title is Lake Ontario
- ***The Pioneers: The Sources of the Susquehanna (1823)***
 - Set in 1793
 - The story takes place in Templeton (modelled on Cooperstown)
 - Natty Bumppo is now elderly

Leatherstocking Tale 5

- *The Prairie: A Tale (1827)*
- Set in 1804
- Natty as “the trapper” or “the old man”
- Depicts Natty in the final year of his life still proving helpful to people in distress on the American frontier

Phillis Wheatley (1753-1784)

- Poet born in Africa
- Brought to the United States as a slave
- She lived with the Wheatleys
 - Was given an opportunity to learn
- Important Works
- *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*
 - “To S. M., a Young African Painter on Seeing His works”
 - “On Being Brought from Africa to America”

Other Women Writers

- Susanna Rowson (1762-1824)
 - *Charlotte Temple*
 - Novel
- Hannah Foster (1758-1840)
 - *The Coquette*
 - Novel
- Mercy Otis Warren (1728-1814)

Social Background of the 19th C

- Industrial Revolution (1820-70)
- Westward expansion
 - Started when President Thomas Jefferson bought Louisiana Territory from the French government in 1803
 - Greatly aided by the building of the first Transcontinental Railroad (1863-69)
- Major waves of immigration to the US
- Political ideal of equality and democracy
- The influence of European Romanticists

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Romanticism

- The Romantic movement, which originated in Germany reached America around the year 1820
- Romanticism in America coincided with
 - The period of national expansion
 - The discovery of a distinctive American voice
 - The surging idealism and passion of Romanticism nurtured the spirit of the American Renaissance and literary productions of the time

- Romantic ideas centred around
 - Art as inspiration
 - Art could best express universal truths
 - The spiritual and aesthetic dimension of nature
 - Metaphors of organic growth
- The development of the self became a major theme
 - The idea of self no longer meant selfishness
 - It is a mode of knowledge opening up the universe
 - If one's self were one with all humanity then the individual had a moral duty to reform social inequalities and relieve human suffering

- Exceptional artistic effects and techniques were developed at the time to evoke heightened psychological states
- An age of socio-political changes
 - Gold Rush and American Dream
 - Free-for-all money
 - Idea that hard work, courage and determination will lead to Success
- Two developments
 - American Renaissance
 - Civil War

American Romanticism (1828-65)

- Could be considered the real beginning of American literature
- Includes the period of American Renaissance (1850s)
- Emphasis upon the imaginative and emotional qualities of literature, a liking for the picturesque, the exotic, the sensuous, the sensational and the supernatural
- The strong tendency to exalt the individual and the common man

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Elements of American Romanticism

- Qualities of the American Frontier
 - Ties with nature
 - Optimism
- Spirit of experimentation
 - In science & other institutions
- Mingling of races
 - Due to large-scale immigration
- Industrialization
 - Led to North/South divide & the issue of slavery
 - The Civil War (1861-65, chiefly over slavery)

TES STUDY MATERIAL

The American Frontier

- Unsettled land outside settlements
- Free land in the West; the contraction of the region explained American development
- Historian Frederick Jackson Turner (Turner Thesis, 1893)
- Frontier movement started in Jamestown

Attitudes & Institutions Produced by the Frontier

- Freedom from socio-political institutions
- Achievement and conquest
- Meeting of savagery & civilization
- The cowboy was the quintessential symbol of frontier culture
- The spirit of Democracy (free land—economic equality, rise of common man)

The American Westerns

- The myths of the West were depicted in fiction and film, in the genre called the Westerns
- The most popular Hollywood genre from the early 20th century to the 1960s
- Also in fiction and television
- Centring on the life of a nomadic cowboy or gunfighter
- Set in immense plains, depicting the harshness of the wilderness
- *The Great Train Robbery* (1903 silent film) marks the birth of the genre

Movie *Far and Away*

- A 1992 Ron Howard film that portrays Nicole Kidman and Tom Cruise as Irish immigrants trying their luck in 1890s America.
- Depicts the Land Run of 1893 in detail (a land rush in which unassigned lands are open for settlers to claim on a first-arrival basis)

American Renaissance (1850s)

- *American Renaissance: Art and Expression in the Age of Emerson and Whitman* (1941) by FO Matthiesen
 - The term originated in this book
- Major works of the age:
 - Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Representative Men* (1850; best-known texts published earlier)
 - Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851)
 - Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick* (1851)
 - Henry David Thoreau's *Walden* (1854)
 - Walt Whitman's first edition of *Leaves of Grass* (1855)

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Ideas from Europe

1. Individualism=each unique, own emotions, ideas
 - internal man different from external nature
2. Nature=as an organism
 - a mysterious process, always in flux
3. Emotion=passion, intuition, imagination
 - a higher source of truth than reason
4. Diversity=acceptance of different lifestyles
 - optimism, progress, democratic
- Two predominant genres
 - The Sentimental Novel
 - The Romance

The Sentimental Novel

- Influence of Samuel Richardson
- Feelings, religious faith, moral virtue, family closeness, traditional values, marriage and motherhood
- Reform—concern for black slaves, poor...
- *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
 - Harriet Beecher Stowe
- *Little Women*
 - Louisa May Alcott

Harriet Elizabeth Beecher (1811-96)

- Family of abolitionists
- Worked as a teacher at Connecticut
- At the age of 40, published her first novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852)
 - Subtitle “Life Among the Lowly”
- Lincoln said of her and the Civil War, “This is the lady who started this great war.”
- Other Novels
 - *The Minister's Wooing*
 - *Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp*

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852)

- Kentucky farmer Arthur Shelby is in debt
- Though kind and affectionate to his slaves, he is forced to sell two slaves to Haley, a slave trader: Uncle Tom and Harry (son of Mrs. Shelby's maid Eliza)
- Arthur's wife, Emily Shelby is shocked because she has promised Eliza that Shelby would not sell her son
- Eliza overhears the conversation
- After warning Uncle Tom and his wife, Aunt Chloe, she takes Harry and flees to the North, hoping to find freedom with her husband George Harris in Canada

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Tom Meets Eva

- Helped by the slave hunter Loker, Haley pursues her, but she miraculously escapes by crossing the Ohio River, the boundary separating Kentucky from the North
- Eliza and Harry reach a Quaker settlement where they are reunited with George
- Haley puts Uncle Tom on a boat on the Mississippi, to be taken to the slave market
- On the boat, Tom befriends an angelic little white girl named Eva and saves her from drowning
- Her father, Augustine St. Clare, gratefully agrees to buy Tom from Haley

Topsy

- At the St. Clare household in New Orleans, Tom grows invaluable and shares with Eva a devout Christianity
- Meanwhile, George shoots at their pursuer Loker, whom Eliza wants to be taken to the next settlement to be healed
- In New Orleans, St. Clare's cousin Ophelia opposes slavery as an institution but is deeply prejudiced against blacks
- St. Clare, by contrast, feels no hostility against blacks but tolerates slavery because he feels powerless to change it
 - He buys Topsy, a young black girl who was abused by her past master and arranges for Ophelia to begin educating her

Eva Dies

- Two years after Tom came to New Orleans, Eva falls ill and dies
- Touched by Eva's death, Ophelia resolves to love the slaves, Topsy learns to trust and feel attached to others, and St. Clare decides to set Tom free.
- St. Clare is stabbed to death while trying to settle a brawl
- His wife sells Tom to a cruel plantation owner, Simon Legree
- Tom is taken to rural Louisiana with a group of new slaves , including Emmeline, a sex slave who would replace Legree's previous sex slave Cassy, who has been separated from her daughter by slavery

Tom Dies

- George, Eliza, and Harry at last cross over into Canada from Lake Erie and obtain their freedom
- In Louisiana, Tom suffers greatly, and gets renewed spiritual strength because of two visions—one of Christ and one of Eva
- Encouraged by Tom, Cassy escapes with Emmeline, both pretending to be ghosts
- Legree beats Tom to death, and George Shelby arrives too late with the money to buy Tom's freedom
 - His father Arthur Shelby had died by then

The End

- Cassy and Emmeline travel to Canada, where Cassy realizes that Eliza is her long-lost daughter
- The newly reunited family travels to France and decides to move to Liberia, the African nation created for former American slaves
- George Shelby sets all the slaves free in honor of Tom's memory.
- He urges them to lead a pious Christian life, just as Tom did.

Harriet Jacobs (1818-96)

- Born a slave in North Carolina
- She was taught to read and write by her mistress
- *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861)
 - Autobiography
 - Linda Brent
 - Pseudonym
 - Condemned the sexual exploitation of black slave women

Harriet Wilson (1807-1870)

- Harriet Wilson was the first African-American to publish a novel in the United States
- *Our Nig* (1859)
 - Depicts the marriage between a white woman and a black man
 - Also depicts the difficult life of a black servant in a wealthy Christian household

Frederick Douglass (1817-95)

- The most famous African American anti-slavery leader and orator of the era
- *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave* (1845)
 - The most popular slave narrative
 - The slave narrative was the first black literary prose genre in the United States
 - Helped in establishing African American identity

The Romance

- Novel distinguished from Romance
- Long fiction, excitement, adventure, dark passions, less realistic than novel
- *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826)
- *The Scarlet Letter* (1850)
- *Moby-Dick* (1851)
- Edgar Allan Poe (Gothic Romances)

Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-64)

- Born in New Hampshire
- Related to Dark Romanticism
- Melville's *Moby Dick* was dedicated to him

Major Novels

- *The Marble Faun* (1828)
- *Fanshawe* (1828)
- *Twice-Told Tales* (1837)
- *House of the Seven Gables* (1851)
- *The Blithedale Romance* (1852)
 - Written in first person
- *Moses from an Old Manse* (short story collection)

The Scarlet Letter (1850)

- Set between 1642-49; during the Puritan regime in Boston
- Introductory section: The Custom House
- Autobiographical sketch on Hawthorne's own experiences at the Salem Custom House
- Excellent social commentary
- Provides the background story for the discovery of the scarlet letter
- Dilapidated, decayed, dingy place—proper setting for a romance

The Custom House

- Salem is a port city, but not major harbour
- Worn out streets, townsfolk old and sober
- Inhabitants, including narrator's ancestors, are severe Puritans
- The Custom House serves a small ship traffic
- Narrator appointed here as chief executive officer
- Reverent yet mocking picture of his subordinates

The Custom House

- Narrator's subordinates a bunch of tottering old men
 - rarely get out of their chairs
 - sleep or talk softly to each other all day
- Narrator could not bring himself to fire them
- Long descriptions of these men: General Miller, (oldest inhabitant, glorious military career), Inspector (light-hearted)

The Custom House

- Narrator discovers in the upstairs hall a packet with Jonathan Pue's name (an ancient surveyor), containing the scarlet letter and some old papers
- General Taylor elected President of the U.S. and narrator is fired.
- Narrator will now write out the story of the scarlet letter

The Trial Scene

- Hester Prynne, with her three-month old daughter Pearl, is led from the prison to the scaffold where she is publicly shamed for having committed adultery
- Rev. Mr. Dimmesdale asks Hester to reveal the name of her child's father, and she refuses
- She wears a scarlet "A" (adultery) on her chest as a sign of sin
- Compared to Anne Hutchinson, Puritan rebel from Boston

Major Symbols

- Major images / symbols are introduced here
- The prison, symbol of severe Puritan law, is old and rusted, yet with a strong door
- A rosebush grows outside the prison door
 - Symbolizing Hester's sin of passion
 - Relates to the wilderness around Boston, where Puritanical laws have no power
 - Relates to Pearl, born out of wild passions, who later grows up to be wildly spirited and passionate
 - Symbolizes nature's ability to outlast man's activities

The Letter “A”

- The letter ‘A’ embroidered on Hester's dress
 - Means more than “adultery”
 - It is so beautiful and ornamented that it is more a decoration than a punishment; her passion seems not so sinful after all
- The scarlet letter and the cruel comments of onlookers serve to criticize Puritanical strictness
- The letter sets Hester apart from the others —she is terribly alone hereafter

Dimmesdale and Chillingworth

- Dimmesdale talks to Hester on the scaffold, and on the edge of the crowd, beside an Indian stands Hester's husband, Roger Chillingworth. He had sent her to Boston and remained in Amsterdam
- Chillingworth, disguised as a physician, visits Hester in prison
 - vows to find out her partner in sin
 - will read the truth on the man's heart
 - bids Hester not to reveal his true identity

The Symbol of the Indian

- The Indian standing on the edge of the crowd
 - bridges the gap between the austere Puritanical world and the savage, passionate wilderness beyond
 - symbolizes Hester's dilemma to simultaneously live with her wild passion and its consequences, and to belong to the moral utopia of Boston

Hester's Life Begins

- Hester
 - Moves into a solitary cottage near the woods
 - Does embroidery for the local dignitaries
 - Helps the poor and the sick
 - Pearl grows up beautifully dressed, wild and disobedient
- Governor Bellingham & Rev. John Wilson want to let Pearl live in a 'Christian' family; but with Dimmesdale's help, Pearl is not separated from Hester
- Mistress Hibbins invites Hester to meet Black Man

More Symbols

- The scarlet letter is now a more complex symbol
 - Represents the hidden shame of the community
 - Is an example to the community of crime & punishment
- Hester's choice of the isolated cottage near the forest symbolizes her 'in-between' existence—she tries to live in both worlds simultaneously
 - Between civilization and wilderness
 - Between strict moral codes and passionate love

The Symbol of “Pearl”

- Pearl is a living extension of the scarlet letter, of Hester’s passion and shame
 - beautiful clothes and wild temper
 - touches the scarlet letter and threw flowers on it
 - asks Hester who her father is
- Pearl’s name
 - beautiful object inside ugliness
 - contains a grain of sand
 - the clash between appearances and reality
- Without a father (family), Pearl is a ‘witch’

The Leech

- Chillingworth
 - Is now popular in Boston as a physician
 - Lives with Dimmesdale, the ailing minister
 - Knows him to be Pearl's father
 - Torments Dimmesdale (like a leech)
- Dimmesdale has a habit of keeping his hand over his heart

The Second Scaffold Scene

- Dimmesdale
 - Tormented by shame and remorse; now famous for sermons
 - Tries to confess to congregation
 - Masochism (tortures himself)
 - On the scaffold at night—imagines scarlet letter on his chest, screams, laughs
- Hester & Pearl returning from Gov Winthrop's deathbed
 - All three stand on scaffold
 - There is a giant meteor in the sky—giant A ('angel', for Winthrop)
 - Chillingworth watches them from below

TES STUDY MATERIAL

The Black Man's Mark

- Seven years have gone by
- Hester's reputation for being helpful
- Her "A" is interpreted as 'Able,' not 'adultery'; compared to cross on a nun's bosom
- Hester meets Chillingworth, pleads with him to pardon Dimmesdale
- Chillingworth: "Let the black flower blossom as it may"
- Hester & Pearl in the forest—story of Black Man
- Hester tells Pearl 'A' is Black Man's mark
- Dimmesdale comes; Pearl asks if he has a mark too
 - Comparison of the nature of suffering of H. and D.
 - H's open & visible—D's internal (on soul and skin)

A Ray of Hope

- Hester tells Dimmesdale, Chillingworth is her husband, and asks forgiveness
- Hester says they'll live in the forest
- Finally Dimmesdale agrees & Hester throws her "A" into the stream
- Across the stream, in a ray of sunshine, Pearl screams and convulses and Hester has to put the "A" back
- Dimmesdale returns home with a new perception of life. Tempted to utter blasphemy, to teach children dirty words
- Dimmesdale works on Election Sermon

The Election Sermon

- People crowd to hear Election Sermon
- Chillingworth gets himself accepted on the ship on which Dimmesdale & Hester plan to escape
- Hester & Pearl stand close to the scaffold to hear D
- Dimmesdale gets the highest praise for his sermon
- He walks upto the scaffold; ask Hester & Pearl to join him
- He confesses; reveals the scarlet letter on his flesh; dies
- Hester & Pearl leave the town; Hester returns after several years; Hester never removed her scarlet letter
- No one heard of Pearl again; lived probably in Europe

Major Themes

- Sin – as with Adam and Eve – resulting in
 - expulsion and suffering, and
 - knowledge of what is human (personal growth, sympathy & understanding of others)
- The nature of evil
 - Black Man: Dimmesdale, Chillingworth, Mistress Hibbins, Pearl
 - Confusion over nature of evil reveals problems with the Puritan concept of sin
 - Evil arises from the close relation between hate & love
 - Evil is C.'s carefully plotted revenge; D's cruel denial of love to his own daughter

TES STUDY MATERIAL

The House of the Seven Gables (1851)

- A Gothic romance by Hawthorne
- Based on a curse pronounced on the author's family when his great grandfather was a judge in the Salem witch trials
- In the novel, the Pyncheons are cursed by Wizard Maule when the first Colonel Pyncheon deprived him of his wealth
- The novel is about the decadent Pyncheons in the mid-19th century, and how the curse is lifted

The Romance and the Novel

- In the preface to *The House of the Seven Gables*, Hawthorne describes himself as a writer of ‘romances’
- Here he distinguishes the romance from the novel
 - The two genres are different in their conception of truth

The Romance and the Novel

- The romance portrays the “truth of the human heart”
 - Ordinary fiction is based on facts
 - “Truth” is internal while “Fact” is external
- Hawthorne’s romances portray the “truth of the human heart”
 - By using the strategy of indirection, without a direct statement of facts leading to a conclusion(using delay and evasion, leading to moral ambiguity)
 - Through the images of imagination

- Regarded Emerson as too idealistic
 - Was fascinated with the realism of Anthony Trollope
 - Described Trollope's novels as "just as real as if some giant had hewn a great lump out of the earth and put it under a glass case"
 - Trollope quotes this in *An Autobiography*
- In the preface to *The House of the Seven Gables*, he also reflects on the creative work of the romantic artist
 - The romantic artist manipulates facts into symbols in a manner that does not violate the "truth of the human heart"

***Blithedale Romance* (1852)**

- Modelled on the Transcendentalists' Brook Farm community, *Blithedale Romance* presents a utopian community
- Hawthorne is sceptical about Transcendentalist idealism
- Protagonist and narrator Miles Coverdale seeks betterment of the world through the agrarian lifestyle
- Character Zenobia represents Margaret Fuller
- Hollingsworth, a passionate monomaniac, is reminiscent of Herman Melville

Herman Melville (1819-91)

- Born in New York
- Descendant of an old wealthy family that fell abruptly into poverty upon the death of the father
- At 19 he went to sea
 - Most of his early novels grew out of his voyages

Major Works

- *Typee* (1846)
 - Became famous as the man who lived among the cannibals
- *White Jacket* (1850)
- *The Confidence Man* (1857)
- *Billy Budd, Sailor* (1891, pub. 1924)
- *Mardi* (1849)
 - About his voyages
- *Pierre* (1852)
 - Put an end to his career as a popular writer

Typee (1846)

- Subtitle: “A Peep at Polynesian Life”
- Typee is the name of a tribe
- About his travel experiences as a captive on the island Nuka Hiva
- Expresses sympathy for the savages and tries to civilize them
- Protagonist Tommo fears cannibalism of the Typee people, but still wants to civilize them
- Criticizes missionaries

White Jacket (1850)

- Subtitle: “The World in a Man of War”
- Experience as a common seaman working for the US government

Billy Budd, Sailor (1891)

- Novella
- Adapted as a stage play in 1951
- Billy Budd, a seaman, is working on the ship HMS Bellipotent
- Another character, John Claggart falsely accuses Billy of conspiracy to mutiny
- Captain Edward Fairfax “Starry” Vere summons both in his cabin
- Billy, unable to respond due to his stuttering, accidentally kills Claggart
- Billy is court-martialled and executed; Billy dies saying “God bless Captain Vere!”
- Later, Captain Vere dies saying, “Billy Budd Billy Budd”

TES STUDY MATERIAL

***Moby-Dick* or The Whale (1851)**

- Story of a whaling voyage narrated by Ishamel
- Captain Ahab's tragic monomania in his pursuit of a white whale
- Main issues which dominated 19th century thought in America
 - Land and sea
 - Adventure and domesticity
 - Frontiersman and citydweller
- Symbolic; tightly packed with philosophical musings
- Unfavourable criticism

The Voyage Begins

- An ordinary seaman, Ishmael, signs in for a whaling voyage in 1840s Massachusetts
- Journey begins at New Bedford, a prosperous whaling town
- Cross-over at island Nantucket; Ishmael takes up cheap lodgings in waterfront at The Spouter Inn
- Forced to share bed with South Sea islander and cannibal Queequeg
 - Fierce-looking harpooner; covered with tattoos; carrying tomahawk

Forebodings of Danger

- Ishmael and Queequeg become friends
- Ishmael visits whalemens chapel; Father Mapple's disturbing sermon on prophet Jonah (blasphemous Jonah is punished; the terrors of his soul); hears of dangers of whaling
- Two friends sign up at whaling ship, Pequod, run by notorious Captain Ahab
- Elijah, a shabby old man who haunts the docks, warns them

The Voyage Begins

- Pequod leaves on Christmas day for whaling grounds in the Pacific
- Ahab shuts himself in the cabin for several days while crew gets accustomed to the sea
- Starbuck and Stubb in command
- Ahab comes out and appearance startles Ishmael—long white scar on face; artificial leg made of whale bone

Ahab's Monomania

- Ahab tells them of his singleminded mission to find white whale, Moby-Dick, who took his leg.
- 16 dollar gold doubloon offered to whoever first spots him
- Demonic ceremony; drink to the death of the whale

The Whale and Whaling

- When not under Ahab's obsessive search, Ishmael meditates upon whaling and Moby-Dick
- Ishmael thinks Ahab fears and hates the whiteness of Moby-Dick because it recalls the nothingness that lies behind all nature

Digression on Cetology

- Ishmael recalls ship's first whale hunt and butchering of sperm whale
- Ishmael's discussion on whales (cetology)—representation; own experiences; huge, mysterious body; significance to men who hunt it
- Search for Moby Dick
- Encounter with a herd of sperm whales

The Infidel Crew

- Ahab reveals the presence of his 'infidel' (strong, ungodly) boat crew led by Fedallah, a Parsee ('dusky phantom', sinister figure)
- Ahab's obsession with Moby Dick: special harpoon from nail stubs of racing horses; tempers it in the blood of the three pagan harpooners (Queequeg-Maori, Tashtego-Indian, Daggoo-African); baptizing the weapon 'in the name of the devil'

Queequeg's Coffin

- Ishmael less prominent as a character
 - Reappears to narrate mythological history of whaling and discuss the symbolism of Jonah's story
- Queequeg terminally ill; orders coffin; survives. Coffin is then used as bed; then as life-buoy

Fedallah's Influence

- Starbuck, first mate, pleads with Ahab to turn back and return to his wife and child
- Ahab torn between the good and bad influences of Starbuck and Fedallah
- Turns to demonic advisor Fedallah

Fedallah's Prophecy

- Ahab will know neither hearse nor coffin
- Before he dies on this voyage he will see two hearses on the sea—one not made by man; other made of American wood
- Only hemp or rope can kill the captain
- So Ahab declares himself immortal on land and sea

Moby Dick is Wounded

- Moby Dick spotted; three days' chase
- Ahab's boat lost—a bad omen
- Fedallah gets caught in the ropes (line) that encircle Moby Dick and is killed (First prophecy fulfilled)
- Third day—whale turns towards the Pequod
- Ahab's harpoon in his hump
- Ahab gets caught in the line and is dragged under sea (Third prophecy)

TES STUDY MATERIAL

The End

- Whale smashes Pequod and it sinks
- All crew overboard (Second prophecy)
- Whirlpool created by the sinking ship
- Ishmael floats on the edge of the action
- Ishmael floats for one day and one night on Queequeg's coffin
- Rescued by Rachel, a whaling ship

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-49)

- Poe was orphaned at an early age
- Marriage to his first cousin Virginia Clemm when she was not yet 14
 - Has been interpreted as an attempt to find the stable family life he lacked
- Pioneer of American short story, detective fiction and science fiction
- “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” early detective story

- He believed that strangeness was an essential ingredient of beauty
- His writing is often exotic
- His stories and poems are populated with doomed, introspective aristocrats
- The bizarre setting of his stories reflect the over civilized yet disturbed psyches of his characters
- Poems are musical and strictly metrical
 - The most famous poem “The Raven” (1845)
- Belongs to Dark Romanticism, a reaction to Transcendentalism
- Developed a unique style in literary criticism
- Baudelaire translated Poe’s stories and admired him

“To Science” (1829)

- ‘To Science’ is a sonnet by Poe published as a prologue to ‘Al Aaraaf’ in *Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems*.
- The poet apostrophizes Science as one whose peering eyes alter all things, as a destroyer of beauty, preying upon the heart of its lover, as a vulture whose wings are ‘dull realities’.
- Poe developed the theme of the conflict of scientific thought and poetic feeling in his prose, but later, as in the prose poem *Eureka*, considered that the beauty of poetry depended on its representing a scientific concept of an ordered universe.

“The Raven” (1845)

- First published in *New York Evening Mirror*
- The poem is inspired by Dickens’ *Barnaby Rudge* (1841), where Barnaby Rudge is a local idiot who wanders with his pet raven, Grip
- The famous refrain of the poem is ‘Nevermore’.

The Story

- One stormy night, a tired student is visited by a raven that can speak one word, 'Nevermore'.
- The student is grieving for his lost beloved and questions the bird about meeting her in another world.
- He is driven to wilder demands by the repetition of the fatal word, until the raven becomes an immutable symbol of the student's frustration and longing.
- The poem symbolizes the mournful and never-ending memories of Poe's dead wife Virginia

- The raven has become an ominous figure and an artistic inspiration for writers like Stephen King (his novel *Insomnia*) and for filmmakers like Tim Burton
- You Tube
 - A haunting rendition of the poem by Christopher Walken
 - Freddie Mercury wrote a song 'Nevermore' based on the poem for his band Queen.
 - A 2012 film 'The Raven' depicting a fictionalised biography of Poe

“To Helen” (1836)

- This poem praises the nurturing power of women.
- He himself said that the poem was written for Mrs Jane Stanard, a friend's mother.
- The name was changed to ‘Helen’ to symbolize the Greek ideal of beauty.
- The famous lines ‘The glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome’ idealize the classical world.
- Helen is also called Psyche in the poem, and the poet's love for her is symbolic, for the woman herself symbolizes the poet's emotional and creative state

“The Bell” (1849)

- Onomatopoeic poem
- Mourning over loss of his wife Virginia
- Poem is in four parts
- Shows life from the nimbleness of youth to the pain of age
- Growing emotions of despair
- Passing seasons is used as a metaphor of life

“Al Aaraaf, A Palace” (1829)

- Allusive poem based on stories from the Qur'an
- Tells of the afterlife in a place called Al Aaraaf
- Inspired by Tycho Brahe's discovery of a supernova in 1572
- Poe identified this nova with Al Aaraaf, a star that was the place between paradise and hell
- Themes are ideal love, ideal beauty
- Characters are personified emotions

“El Dorado” (1849)

- Journey of a gallant knight in search of El Dorado, the mythical city of treasures
- Reaction to California Gold Rush (1849)

Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque

- Famous stories
 - “MS Found in a Bottle”
 - “The Pit and the Pendulum”
 - “The Fall of the House of Usher”
 - “The Purloined Letter”
 - “The Tell-Tale Heart”
 - “The Haunted Palace”
 - “The Oval Portrait”
 - “Tamerlane”
 - “The Murders at Rue Morgue”

TES STUDY MATERIAL

“The Fall of the House of Usher” (1839)

- First published in *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*
- An unnamed narrator approaches the house of his boyhood friend, Roderick Usher
- The house has an evil and diseased atmosphere; is decaying in places but the structure itself is fairly solid
- Roderick had sent him a letter earnestly requesting his company, since he was feeling physically and emotionally ill
- In the Usher family, only one member has survived from generation to generation

Roderick's Dilapidation

- The narrator walks through the long passages to the room where Roderick is waiting
- Roderick is paler and less energetic and suffers from nerves and fear, even of his own house
- Roderick's sister, Madeline, was ill with a mysterious sickness—the loss of control of one's limbs
- The narrator spends several days with Roderick, but he cannot lift Roderick's spirit
- Roderick thinks that the house itself is unhealthy, just as the narrator had thought at the beginning

Madeline is Buried

- Soon Madeline dies, and Roderick decides to bury her temporarily in the tombs below the house
- The narrator helps Roderick put the body in the tomb, and notes that Madeline has rosy cheeks in death
- In the next few days, Roderick becomes more uneasy
- One night, the narrator cannot sleep
- Roderick knocks on his door, hysterically
- He leads the narrator to the window, from which they see a bright-looking gas surrounding the house, which the narrator thinks is a natural phenomenon

TES STUDY MATERIAL

The Eventful Night

- The narrator reads a medieval romance to Roderick in order to pass the night
- As he reads, he hears noises that correspond to the descriptions in the story
- At first, he ignores these sounds but soon they are so loud that he can no longer ignore them
- Roderick had slumped over in his chair muttering that he has been hearing these sounds for days, and believes that they have buried Madeline alive and that she is trying to escape

The End

- The wind blows open the door
- They see Madeline stand there in white robes bloodied from her struggle
- She attacks Roderick as she drops dead, and Roderick also dies of fear
- The narrator flees the house
- As he escapes, the entire house cracks along the break in the frame and crumbles to the ground

“The Purloined Letter” (1844)

- Presents the detective C. Auguste Dupin
- Epigraph from Petrarch

“The Tell-Tale Heart” (1843)

- A Gothic short story by Poe
- Starts in medias res
- First person narrative of an unnamed narrator
- Example of an ‘unreliable narrator’
- A short film version of this story can be found in YouTube

“The Philosophy of Composition” (1846)

- Poe analyses “The Raven” in this essay in order to illustrate how he writes poetry and to prove that the death of a beautiful woman is the most poetical topic in the world.
- The essay appeared in *Graham’s Magazine* which Poe edited, and argues that good writing depends upon certain factors: brevity, unity of impression or unity of effect, and a logical method (as against intuition and spontaneity advocated by the British romantics).
- Poe says the climax of “The Raven” (stanza 16) was written first so that every effect in the poem should lead in that direction.

TES STUDY MATERIAL

As an Anti-Transcendentalist

- Edgar Allan Poe was a Dark Romanticist who did not share the Transcendentalists' optimism and belief in human greatness
- Poe wrote a story, "Never Bet the Devil Your Head", in which he expressed his deep dislike for Transcendentalism, calling its followers 'Frogpondians' after the pond on Boston Common
- In Poe's essay 'The Philosophy of Composition' he denounces 'the excess of the suggested meaning... which turns into prose (and that of the very flattest kind) the so-called poetry of the so-called transcendentalists'
- "The Raven" is also an anti-Transcendental poem with its tone of mystery, terror, darkness and evil

New England Transcendentalism

- Developed in New England
- The Transcendentalist movement was a reaction against 18th-century rationalism
- The movement was based on a fundamental belief in the unity of the world and God
- Believed God is present in nature
- The identification of the individual soul with God
 - Lead to the doctrine of self-reliance and individualism
- The soul of each individual was thought to be identical with the world

- Based on the writings of the 18th century philosopher Immanuel Kant, who theorized that the only true knowledge was that which could be known instinctively instead of proved empirically
- American Transcendental Romantics gave a lot of importance to individualism
- Transcendentalism was intimately connected with Concord
- Some Transcendentalists were involved in experimental utopian communities
 - Brook Farm
 - Described in Hawthorne's The Blithedale Romance

The Transcendental Club

- Organized in 1836
- Includes
 - Ralph Waldo Emerson
 - Henry David Thoreau
 - Margaret Fuller
 - EW Channing
 - Amos Bronson Alcott

Transcendentalism: Influences

- Transcendentalism drew heavily on the idealist and otherworldly aspects of the following
 - English and German Romanticism
 - Hindu and Buddhist thought
 - The tenets of Confucius and Mencius

Concord

- Transcendentalism centred in Concord
 - A New England village 32 kilometers west of Boston
 - Concord was the first rural artist's colony
 - Thoreau was born here
 - Emerson settled here as an adult
 - American Revolutionary War had also started here in 1775
 - By the 1850s, Concord was almost like a pilgrim centre

The Dial (1840-44)

- Official magazine of Transcendentalism
- Quarterly magazine
- The first issue, edited by Margaret Fuller, published in July 1840 in Boston
- Emerson called it a 'Journal in a new spirit'
- The title was suggested by Bronson Alcott, and suggested a sundial
- Emerson succeeded Fuller as editor for the magazine's last two years.

Beginnings of Transcendentalism

- Influenced by Montaigne, Swedenborg, Hegel, Plato
- After a tour of Europe, Emerson became a lecturer
- He re-married and lived in Concord, Massachusetts
- In Concord, Emerson became friends with Nathaniel Hawthorne and Henry David Thoreau
- In the early 1840s he began to write works on various aspects of transcendentalist philosophy

Ralph Waldo Emerson

(1803-82)

- Born in Boston, Massachusetts
- Attended Boston Latin School and Harvard College
- Began a career as a Unitarian minister
- Married Ellen Tucker, the great love of his life, in 1829
 - Her death a year and a half later devastated him and took a heavy toll on his religious faith

Emerson's Ideas

- Personal, conversational style
- Caught the mood of America—optimism
- America as torch-bearers of human history
- Urged Americans to be independent thinkers
- Do not look to Europe for models
- **Self-culture movement**
- Individuals have access to the eternal truths of nature
- Truth resides throughout creation and is grasped intuitively, not rationally
- **Oversoul, I'm part and parcel of God**
- "we will walk on our own feet, we will work with our own hands, we will speak our own minds." - should "read God directly" - books only for "scholar's idle times"

Nature

by Ralph Waldo Emerson

A subtle chain of countless rings The next unto the farthest brings; The eye reads omens where it goes, And speaks all languages the rose; And, striving to be man, the worm Mounts through all the spires of form.

Introduction

Our age is retrospective. It builds the sepulchres of the fathers. It writes biographies, histories, and criticism. The foregoing generations beheld God and nature face to face; we, through their eyes. Why should not we also enjoy an original relation to the universe? Why should not we have a poetry and philosophy of insight and not of tradition, and a religion by revelation to us, and not the history of theirs? Embosomed for a season in nature, whose floods of life stream around and through us, and invite us by the powers they supply, to action proportioned to nature, why should we grope among the dry bones of the past, or put the living generation into masquerade out of its faded wardrobe? The sun shines to-day also. There is more wool and flax in the fields. There are new lands, new men, new thoughts. Let us demand our own works and laws and worship.

“Nature” (1836)

- Long prose essay
- Preface in the first edition is a passage from the Neoplatonic philosopher Plotinus describing the primacy of spirit and of human understanding over nature
- The Preface in the 1849 second edition is a poem by Emerson himself which emphasizes the unity of all manifestations of nature and the development of all of nature's forms toward the highest expression as embodied in man
- *Nature* is divided into an introduction and eight chapters

The Concept of Nature

- In the Introduction, Emerson laments the current tendency to accept the knowledge and traditions of the past instead of experiencing God and nature directly, in the present
- All our questions about the order of the universe may be answered by our experience of life and by the world around us
- Each individual is a manifestation of creation and holds the key to unlocking the mysteries of the universe

- Nature, too, is both an expression of the divine and a means of understanding it
- The goal of science is to provide a theory of nature
- It is only through solitude that humans can attain completely what nature has to offer
 - Solitude is going out into nature and leaving behind all preoccupying activities as well as society
- Nature and humans should have a reciprocal relationship
- Spirituality as the main theme of human life

Four 'uses' of nature

- Commodity
 - Sensuous contributions of nature to mankind
- Beauty
 - Noble spiritual and intellectual elements of nature
- Language
 - Symbolic character of nature which conveys transcendental meanings
- Discipline
 - The function of nature in educating both Understanding and Reason
- From this, he develops the concept of the 'Oversoul' or 'Universal Mind'

“The Transparent Eyeball”

- A metaphor developed by Emerson
- First appeared in his essay, “Nature”
- Aligned to the idea of the self being a part and parcel of God
- Works like a camera lens, drawing out the form of Transcendentalism in nature

“Brahma” (1856)

- Influenced by Hindu philosophy of life
- Emerson was studying the work of Victor Cousin on Hindu philosophy at this time

“If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Other Poems

- “Concord Hymn” (1837)
 - He sung this at the completion of the monument commemorating the Battle of Concord
- “The Rhodora” (1847)
 - On the flower rhodora, describing its beauty in nature, incorporating his deep philosophical thoughts on nature
- “Uriel”
 - On the Archangel Uriel espousing Emerson’s philosophies
- “Snow Storm”

“The American Scholar” (1837)

- Lecture given to the Phi Beta Kappa Society
- Emerson begins with a sketch of the social fragmentation caused by the manufacturing culture that mechanizes lives and destroys the soul
- Emerson presents an idealized portrait of intellectual life rooted in the liberated individual thinker
- Instead of uncritically accepting established institutions that promote mental timidity, man should learn from Nature, history, and life as action

TES STUDY MATERIAL

- The scholar should reject old ideas and think for him or herself, to become “Man Thinking”
- By doing so, the scholar would attain wholeness, which is a central concern of the essay
- Such a scholar has certain duties based on qualities like freedom, courage, openness, attentiveness, and an intense awareness of the moment
- In this essay, Emerson supports self-reliant individualism and rejects everything that blunts creative human potential

“Self-Reliance” (1841)

- Considered to be the definitive statement of Emerson’s philosophy of individualism and the finest example of his prose
- Explains Emerson’s phrase “trust thyself”
- Every individual possesses a unique genius that can only be revealed when that individual has the courage to trust his or her own thoughts, attitudes, and inclinations against public disapproval
- Follow one’s own instincts and ideas

TES STUDY MATERIAL

“The Over Soul” (1841)

- Relationship between soul and ego
- Spirit of individualism and vedantism

“Politics” (1844)

- Essay taken from the collection *Essays: Second Series* published in 1844
- Explained Emerson’s thoughts on democracy
- Civilization can reach unfathomable places through moral force and creativity
- Came to be seen as quintessentially American

Representative Men (1850)

- A compilation of some of Emerson's lectures
- Discusses the role played by great men in society
 - Plato, Swedenborg, Montaigne, Shakespeare, Napoleon, Goethe
- Praised by Matthew Arnold

The Conduct of Life (1860)

- Collection of nine essays
 - “Fate,” “Power,” “Wealth,” “Culture,” “Behaviour,” “Worship,” “Beauty,” “Illusion,” etc
- Central question is “How shall I live?”
- Influenced several writers including Friedrich Nietzsche

Henry David Thoreau (1817-62)

- Born in Concord, Massachusetts
- Unorthodox manners and irreverent views
- Idealism
- A devoted Abolitionist (against slavery)
- Became an intimate friend of Emerson
- In 1845-47, Thoreau spent two years in Walden Pond, near Concord, Massachusetts, living a simple life supported by no one
- The episode was both experimental and temporary
- *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*, first published in 1854

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Walden: Life in the Woods (1854)

- Divided into 18 chapters
- Records Thoreau's life from 1845-47 when he spent two years living a simple life supported by no one in Walden Pond, near Concord, Massachusetts, which was owned by Emerson
- Importance of contemplation, solitude, closeness to nature
- Themes: Self-reliance and simplicity of life, non-conformity and self-sufficiency

- Concluding the book, Thoreau writes: “The light which puts out our eyes is darkness to us. Only that day dawns to which we are awake. There is more day to dawn. The sun is but a morning star.”
- A video of Walden where Thoreau lived can be found in YouTube

“Paradise (to be) Regained” (1843)

- An essay written in the form of a review
- Themes
 - Democracy
 - Self-improvement of people
 - Distrust of humanity’s attempts to improve upon nature

“Civil-Disobedience” (1849)

- In July 1846, he was imprisoned for not paying a poll tax
 - He refused to pay it because it supported a nation endorsing slavery
- Thoreau defended himself in a lecture to the Concord Lyceum
- This lecture was later published under the title “Civil Disobedience”

The Main Ideas

- Illustrates the idea, “That government is best which governs least”
- The individual should not permit the government to overrule
- Don’t wait passively for justice; be just yourself
- The most internationally known of Thoreau’s works
- Inspired social thinkers as Leo Tolstoy and Mahatma Gandhi

“A Plea for Captain John Brown” (1859)

- Speech given at Concord, Massachusetts
- About the abolitionist John Brown who raided Harper’s Ferry Armory in 1859, which led to his execution

Walt Whitman (1819-92)

- One of the greatest of American writers
- Inspiration Emerson
- Long lines, flow of operatic singing
- Free verse
- Glorifies spiritual life grounded in the body and everyday life
- Democracy
- Individualism

Leaves of Grass (1855)

- Title is from the essay “The Poet” by RW Emerson
- The title is ironic: “leaves” means pages, and “grass” is the slang for inferior creative efforts
- First edition was published in Brooklyn on 4 July, with 12 poems
- *Leaves of Grass* was self-published.
- Inspired partly by his travels through the American frontier and by his admiration for Ralph Waldo Emerson.
- Emerson declared the first edition as “the most extraordinary piece of wit and wisdom that America has yet contributed.”

“Song of Myself”

- The title
 - Had no title in the 1855 edition
 - In 1856 it was called “A Poem of Walt Whitman, an American” and in 1860 it was simply termed “Walt Whitman”
 - Gave the title “Song of Myself” in 1881
- Depiction of human sexuality
- Use of powerful “I”
- Poet sings for humanity’s sake
- Themes of slavery, women’s rights, etc

TES STUDY MATERIAL

“When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom’d”

- Whitman wrote a series of poems after Lincoln’s assassination in 1865, at the end of the American Civil War (1861-65)
- “Lilacs” is an unconventional pastoral elegy in three parts
- First part
 - First, the poet says the last time lilacs bloomed, he saw a great star (now symbolizing Lincoln) falling in the western sky
 - Now, every spring, lilacs will fill his heart with gloom
 - The color of the lilac indicates the passion of the Crucifixion, which is comparable to Lincoln’s death
 - The poet breaks off a sprig of lilac in remembrance

The Second Part of “Lilacs”

- Second part
 - He describes the mournful journey of Lincoln’s coffin from Washington DC to Lincoln’s hometown in Springfield, Illinois
 - The poet tells the dead president, ‘I will give you my sprig of lilac’ (death is associated with fresh life) and says he mourns for all who died a ‘sane and sacred death’
 - Listening to a hermit thrush’s song, the poet describes how he would mourn for the dead
 - Unlike the classical pastoral tradition, he would decorate the tomb with pictures of ordinary people and everyday life in America

The Third Part of “Lilacs”

- Third part
 - Having gained a ‘sacred knowledge’ of death, the thrush’s song of death seems lovely and soothing
 - The poet has a vision of battlefields and corpses but realizes that the dead do not suffer any more, but only the living—their relatives—suffer
 - The coffin has now passed the poet, and has reached its resting place
 - Death’s song is ‘sinking and fainting’ yet bursting with joy
 - The poet’s personal emotional conflicts have now given him a sense of the ultimate truths of life and death, and of immortality

“Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking” (1859)

- Belongs to the ‘birth of the poet’ genre
 - Typically romantic
 - Much used by Wordsworth
- “Out of the Cradle” describes the poet as a young boy watching a pair of mocking birds nesting on the Paumanok beach
- One day the female bird disappears
- The male waited for his lost mate, crying out to the wind, ‘I wait and I wait till you blow my mate to me’
- The bird’s cries touched the boy’s heart, and he seems to be able to translate what the bird is saying

The Boy Comes of Age as a Poet

- He asks nature to give him the one word 'superior to all', and the endlessly rocking waves of the sea tell him, 'death'
 - This universal backward and forward movement is fundamental to 'Crossing Brooklyn Ferry' also
- With that, the boy matures as a poet, who continues to be preoccupied with the endless repetitions of life and death
- The bird is a symbol of the natural world
- The sea symbolizes the cycle of birth and death
- The poem implies that death is only a natural transition to another life
- The transition from the boy to the poet is a transition from a literal experience of life to a spiritual experience

“Crossing Brooklyn Ferry”

- Originally titled ‘Sun Down Poem’
- The poet observes the crowd at the ferry and thinks of those who will make the crossing in the future
- In a hundred years, others will be seeing the same sunset, the same ebb and flow of the tides
- This scene forms part of a grand, spiritual scheme of life, in which everything has its individuality yet is part of the whole

- Despite differences in time and distance, the poet identifies with the crowd
- Whatever future generations might see, the poet has also seen
- He recalls the sights he had seen at the ferry in the past
- Underlying all these is the central symbol of the river, forever flowing, yet forever appearing the same
- He is united with other men not only in sense perceptions, but also in thoughts and feelings, in occasional darkness of the soul, in self-doubt, and in the sins of which humanity is capable

- The poet now draws ever closer to the reader
- Three rhetorical questions follow, the last of which links the past and future: ‘Who knows, for all the distance, but I am as good as looking at you now, for all you cannot see me?’
 - This means, the human self is part of a larger entity which is not subject to the limits of time or space
- The poet and reader now have a realization of oneness

- The final section begins with an apostrophe to the river—symbolizing time and change—urging it to continue its eternal ebb and flow
- More exclamatory apostrophes follow—to the clouds at sunset, to Manhattan and Brooklyn, to life itself
- The poem closes in a mystic tone when the poet feels the whole world within him and wishes that the myriad phenomena of the natural and human world should continue to flourish as one Soul, in the vast sea of time

Drum Taps (1865)

- 53 poems on the opening of the Civil War
- Topics
 - Purpose of war
 - Patriotism
 - Issue of slavery
 - Sufferings of soldiers
- Later 18 poems from *Sequel to Drum Taps* added
- This includes the famous poem 'O Captain! My Captain!' written following the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Brahmin Poets

- Originally a humorous/pejorative reference to the Brahmans, the highest caste of Hindu society
- A group of 19th century New England writers, including Oliver Wendell Holmes, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and James Russell Lowell
 - Educated in Europe; associated with Harvard University
- Dominated and influenced the American literary taste until the 1890s
- They were based in Boston, the literary capital of America in their day
 - Edited two influential Boston magazines, *North American Review* and the *Atlantic Monthly*

Features of Brahmin Poets

- Fused American and European traditions and sought to create a shared Atlantic experience
- In an age that brought forth the masterpieces of Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Melville, Whitman, Poe and Twain, they advocated a genteel, rational humanism, quite out of step with their brilliant contemporaries
- They advocated democratic ideals; were aesthetically conservative
- Upper class in background but democratic in sympathy

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Fireside Poets

- Also known as the 'schoolroom' or 'household' poets
- Refers to five 19th century American poets
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, John Greenleaf Whittier, Oliver Wendell Holmes, James Russell Lowell, and William Cullen Bryant
- For the first time, American poetry became widely popular in Britain with the Fireside Poets

Features of Fireside Poetry

- Long narrative poems
 - Longfellow's *Evangeline* and *The Song of Hiawatha*
 - Whittier's *Snowbound*
 - Holmes's "Old Ironsides"
- Common features
- Conventional use of rhyme
- Strict metric cadence
- Vivid descriptions of contemporary life
- Also commented on the political issues of the day

William Cullen Bryant (1794-1878)

- American romantic poet, journalist, and long-time editor of the *New York Evening Post*
- Bryant's first published poem was "The Embargo; or, Sketches of the Times", a satirical work concerning Thomas Jefferson's Embargo Act of 1807.
- Chiefly remembered for his poem "Thanatopsis"
- Another important poem "To A Waterfowl"
- His poetry has been described as being "of a thoughtful, meditative character, and makes but slight appeal to the mass of readers."

- Bryant edited the very successful *Picturesque America* which was published between 1872 and 1874. This two-volume set was lavishly illustrated and described scenic places in the United States and Canada
- *Letters of a Traveller* (1850): A series of letters he had written to *The Evening Post* describing his tours of Europe, Mexico, Cuba and South America
- Towards the end of his career, he worked towards translating Homer's works instead of penning his own poetry. He worked on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* from 1871 to 1874.
- Died at the age of 84 in 1878

Thanatopsis (1817)

- First published in the *North American Review* in 1817
- A meditation on death
- In the poem Bryant views death as a natural and unavoidable part of human existence rather than as something to be worried upon
- The poem focuses on the importance of nature in the role of death

Oneness With Nature

- Uses nature to explore death
 - Gives nature human characteristics – voice, emotion, beauty, thoughts.
 - Underscores the idea that everyone must eventually die.
 - Nature has a “voice of gladness” and an “eloquence of beauty”
 - Through nature we can find solace.

Relation to History

- The poem was written early in America's history, before the nation had forged the idea of a past
 - Bryant is sensitive to this
 - Wants readers to find comfort in knowing that they're part of a bigger plan that extends beyond their own death
 - The poem ends with the idea that death is pleasant

H.W. Longfellow (1807-1882)

- American poet and educator
- First American to translate Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*
- First major poetry collections were *Voices of the Night* (1839) and *Ballads and Other Poems* (1841).
- In 1839, Longfellow published *Hyperion*, a book in prose inspired by his trips abroad
- His poems like that of the other Fireside Poets were popular in being recited and memorized

Major Works

- ***Evangeline, A Tale of Acadie (1847)***
 - The poem follows an Acadian girl named Evangeline and her search for her lost love Gabriel, set during the time of the Expulsion of the Acadians
 - The poem had a powerful effect in defining both Acadian history and identity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries

Major Works

- *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855)
 - Epic poem, in trochaic tetrameter, by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, featuring a Native American hero
- Paul Revere's Ride (1860)
 - Commemorates the actions of American patriot Paul Revere on April 18, 1775.
 - It was first published in the January 1861 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*.

Emily Dickinson (1830-86)



- Called Nun of Amherst
- About 1700 short poems
- Only a few published during lifetime
- Puzzling, obscure
- Love, death, nature, immortality
- Questioning of established religion, authority

- The largest portion of her poetry concerns death and immortality
- Most of them have no titles, always quoted by their first lines
- Her short poems especially are known for their laconic brevity, directness and plainness.
- Almost perfect assonance is achieved with the use of dashes and capital letters for emphasis

Because I could not stop for Death –
He kindly stopped for me –
The Carriage held but just Ourselves –
And Immortality.

We slowly drove – He knew no haste
And I had put away
My labor and my leisure too,
For His Civility –

We passed the School, where Children strove
At Recess – in the Ring –
We passed the Fields of Gazing Grain –
We passed the Setting Sun –

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Or rather – He passed Us –
The Dews drew quivering and Chill –
For only Gossamer, my Gown –
My Tippet – only Tulle –

We paused before a House that seemed
A Swelling of the Ground –
The Roof was scarcely visible –
The Cornice – in the Ground –

Since then – 'tis Centuries – and yet
Feels shorter than the Day
I first surmised the Horses' Heads
Were toward Eternity –

TES STUDY MATERIAL

“Because I could not Stop for Death”

- Also called “The Chariot”
- Death is personified in this poem as a male friend or suitor who arrives in his carriage.
- During their outing, ‘Immortality’ accompanies them as their chaperone. Their drive is slow, and they pass the familiar sights of the town.
- The speaker realizes that this is no ordinary outing when they pass the setting sun, ‘Or rather—He passed Us—.’
- Death takes the speaker to her new home, a swelling of the ground, whose roof is scarcely visible.
- Centuries have passed since this event, but the entire episode seems less than a day in length.

My life closed twice before its close

My life closed twice before its close--
It yet remains to see
If Immortality unveil
A third event to me

So huge, so hopeless to conceive
As these that twice befell.
Parting is all we know of heaven,
And all we need of hell.

“My life closed twice before its close”

- Like Dickinson's other poems, this poem has a personal and a universal level.
- On the personal level, the speaker recollects the two losses in her life (which she does not name, but is some kind of 'parting'), which were as painful as death itself.
- She cannot imagine suffering the pain of death, which will be greater than the pain she has already suffered.
- The theme of the universal human condition of suffering

The Closing

- ‘Parting is all we know of heaven, / And all we need of hell’
 - The last two lines
 - To enter heaven means parting from our loved ones in death.
 - At the same time, the misery of separation and loss is hell enough in this world.

I heard a Fly buzz - when I died

I heard a Fly buzz - when I died -
The Stillness in the Room
Was like the Stillness in the Air -
Between the Heaves of Storm -

The Eyes around - had wrung them dry -
And Breaths were gathering firm
For that last Onset - when the King
Be witnessed - in the Room -

I willed my Keepsakes - Signed away
What portion of me be
Assignable - and then it was
There interposed a Fly -

With Blue - uncertain - stumbling Buzz -
Between the light - and me -
And then the Windows failed - and then
I could not see to see -

“I Heard a Fly Buzz When I Died”

- The speaker says she heard a fly buzz when she died.
- Then she describes the moment of her death.
- The silence of the room was like the qualm between two phases of the storm: life and death are the two phases.
- The people beside her deathbed are quietly waiting for the final moment.
- The speaker is also getting ready to go, and wishes to let go her last possessions.
- Then instead of the King, i.e., Death, the fly comes as an intruder with a ‘stumbling buzz’, between the light and the dying speaker. Thus, instead of presenting Death as a terrifying end, it is presented as absurd and trivial, a mere transition from one state to another.

“Hope” is the thing with feathers -
That perches in the soul -
And sings the tune without the words -
And never stops - at all -

And sweetest - in the Gale - is heard -
And sore must be the storm -
That could abash the little Bird
That kept so many warm -

I've heard it in the chilliest land -
And on the strangest Sea -
Yet - never - in Extremity,
It asked a crumb - of me.

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Other Poems

- “A Bird Came Down the Walk”
- “A Dimple in the Tomb”
- “A Loss of Something Ever Felt I”
- Collections
 - *Wild Night*
 - *Final Harvest*
 - *A Brighter Garden*

The Period of Realism

The second part of the 19th century

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Historical Background

- The American Civil War 1861-65
 - Republican Abraham Lincoln elected as President in 1860
 - Civil War due to North-South divide over slavery issue breaks out in 1861
 - 1863: Battle of Gettysburg
 - 1865: Assassination of Lincoln
 - War ended in 1865 but deeper problem of race relations persisted

Impact of the Civil War

- Growth of industry and the metropolis
- The Civil War laid the groundwork for the rapid post-war economic growth and industrialization of America
- Industrialism was a result of the increase in wartime production and the development of new technologies
- Increasing industrialization led to the widening contrast of wealth and poverty
- Popular feeling of frustration and disillusionment
- Slavery ended
- Reconstruction, the plan to rebuild America after the war, began

Realistic Period (1865-1914)

- An aftermath of the savage Civil War
- American self concept was reflected in literature
- Novels by Mark Twain, William Dean Howells, Henry James, John W. Deforest (Miss Ravenel's Conversion from Secession to Loyalty), Harold Frederic
- Realism was a reaction against Romanticism
- There arose a great interest in the realities of life, everyday existence and local class struggle
- Local colourism marked the beginning of Realism with the representation and interpretation of the local character

Naturalistic Period (1900-1914)

- The former writers were present but more influenced by Frank Norris, Jack London & Theodore Dreiser
- Naturalism describes a type of literature that applies scientific principles of **objectivity** and **detachment** to the study of human beings
- Unlike realism, which focuses on literary technique, naturalism implies a **philosophical** position
- In **Emile Zola**'s phrase human beings are “human beasts,” and characters are “products” can be studied impartially through their relationships to their surroundings
- Described in Zola's *The Experimental Novel* (1880)
- **Herbert Spencer** was a major influence

Mark Twain (1835-1910)

- Real name Samuel Langhorne Clemens
- Considered the true father of American literature
- Lived a sea life—‘mark twain’ is the second mark in depth in seafaring
- The power he wielded over language, the use of vernacular and colloquial speech still influence readers
- His most iconic works are *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885), *Life on the Mississippi* (1883)
- His first short story “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County” in 1865 brought him national fame

Mark Twain's Style

- Character writer
- Defined an era
- Anti-imperialist themes
- Local colour realism
- Depicted the rugged frontier life and the Southern tradition
- Explored themes of racism & slavery
- Intellectual & moral education
- Hypocrisy of civilized society
- Rough humour and social satire

TES STUDY MATERIAL

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (1876)

- Novel about a young boy Tom
- Features the Mississippi River
- Set in the fictitious St. Petersburg, inspired by Twain's hometown Hannibal in Missouri
- Summary
 - Tom lives with Aunt Polly
 - Fancies Amy Lawrence, and then Becky Thatcher who rejects him
 - Undertakes adventures with Huck Finn
 - Encounters Injun Joe, the villain
 - At the end, at McDougal's Cave, Joe dies

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Adaptations of *Tom Sawyer*

- One of the most frequently adapted characters in literature, Tom Sawyer has been depicted in film since 1917
- The most popular adaptation arguably is the 1938 technicolor film which can be watched in YouTube
- The 1968 animated series by Hanna-Barbera productions is also worth watching
- *Tom Sawyer & Huckleberry Finn (2014)* is the latest movie adaptation

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

(1885)

Starts from where
Adventures of Tom Sawyer stopped.

- Called “The Great American Novel”
- Tom and Huck had found a treasure of \$12,000.
- Judge Thatcher had invested this money for them so that each boy gets a dollar a day.
- Huck moved in with Widow Douglas.

TES STUDY MATERIAL

The Life of Huck

- Narrator Huck describes his life.
- Widow Douglas tries to 'civilize' Huck (new clothes, Bible, dinner bell, no smoking)
- Huck runs away; Tom brings him back, promising they will start a band of robbers.
- Widow's spinster sister Miss Watson tries to give Huck 'education' (spelling, behaviour, Hell)
- Lonely Huck sneaks away with Tom.
- Huck and Jim play the boyish game of robbers

- Huck's Pa
 - A filthy poor man
 - Harasses Huck for good clothes; school; for being better than his father; for being able to read.
- Pa locks up Huck in a log cabin up river; beats Huck, gets nightmares and chases him with a knife.
- Huck runs away after staging his own death
- Huck explores the island and finds a still smoking campfire. Frightened.
- The other man is Jim. He escaped when Miss Watson decided to sell him.

- In the river, they find drifting logs, a raft and a house with a man shot in the back while trying to rob the house. Huck doesn't know it's Pa.
- Jim and Huck spend the next few days down the river
- They have a canoe, and a raft and have many adventures
- Find a wrecked steam boat with three robbers—one tied up by the others

- They get involved in the feud between the Grangerfords and the Shepherdson
- Two frauds running away from the town join them.
- Younger man tells them he is a descendant of a Duke; the older man says he is going to be King
- King and Duke practise to perform Shakespeare

- Shakespearean play a disaster; they announce 'Royal Nonesuch' where ladies and children are not admitted
- House packed with men. King crawls on all fours, naked, covered with paint.
- The crowd laughs; knows they are cheated, but goes away.
- Second night house full.
- Third night rotten eggs, dead cats... the group sneaks away with \$465.
- Jim pines for his family 'just as a white man would.'

- Tells Huck how he came to know his daughter Elizabeth had lost her hearing.
- They hear from a fool about Peter Wilks.
- Duke and King pretend to be his brothers; Huck servant; they generously give their share of \$3,000 to Wilks's daughters (Mary Jane, Susan, Joanna).
- They are entrusted with all the money.
- The frauds sell off the slaves; auction the house
- The girls are unhappy and Huck steals the money from the frauds and hides it in the coffin.

- Finally the treachery is discovered; the frauds escape.
- Duke and King fight over money.
- King cheats by selling Jim to the Phelps (Tom's uncle and aunt).
- Aunt Sally mistakes Huck for Tom.
- Tom arrives and pretends to be Sid Sawyer
- Tom and Huck make plans to rescue Jim imprisoned in a hut.
 - Tom's plans are elaborate, like in adventure stories. (dig a hole, case knives to dig, tin plates to write messages...)
 - Huck's simple and practical. (steal the key, unlock the door...)

- Huck, Tom and Jim manage to escape.
- Jim is a free man and will be always.
- Tom is shot in the leg and is taken to a doctor
- Later Tom tells Sally about everything.
- Aunt Polly appears and sorts out everything.
- Jim is welcomed.
- Sally wants to adopt Huck and he plans to head west.

Major Concerns

- Conflict between civilization and "natural life"
- Mockery of Religion
- Superstition
- Slavery
- Honour
- Food
- Money

Other Works

- “Advice to Little Girls” (1865, humorous short story)
- *The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today* (1873, a novel)
- *The Prince and the Pauper* (1881)
 - Twain’s first attempt at historical fiction
- *The Tragedy of Pudd’nhead Wilson* (1894)
- “Fenimore Cooper’s Literary Offences” (essay)
- “Advice to Youth” (satirical essay)

The Gilded Age (1873)

- The Gilded Age in US history is the late 19th century (1870s – 1900)
- One of the most dynamic, contentious, and volatile periods in American history
- rapid industrialization, urbanization, the construction of great transcontinental railroads, innovations in science and technology, and the rise of big business
- The term came into use in the 1920s and 30s
- Derived from Mark Twain's novel *The Gilded Age* which satirized an era of serious social problems masked by a thin gold gilding

Novels Based on the Civil War

- ***The Red Badge of Courage*** (1895) by Stephen Crane: The story is about a young private of the Union Army, Henry Fleming, who flees from the field of battle. Overcome with shame, he longs for a wound, a "red badge of courage," to counteract his cowardice
- ***Gone With the Wind*** (1936) by Margaret Mitchell: The novel delineates the changes in the American South during the civil war period and the struggles of the South people who live through this era

- ***Shiloh* (1952)** by Shelby Foote: Uses first-person narratives by soldiers on both sides of the conflict to tell the story of the horrific 1862 battle of Shiloh, one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War
- ***The Killer Angels* (1975)** by Michael Shaara: Describes the story of the four days of the Battle of Gettysburg in the American Civil War
- ***March* (2005)** by Geraldine Brooks: Blending one great fictional tale into another the novel imagines the wartime experiences of Mr. March, the father of the four girls in Louisa May Alcott's classic *Little Women*.

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Margaret Mitchell (1900-1949)

- Author of the celebrated novel *Gone With the Wind* (1936)
- Born on 8 November 1900 in Atlanta
- Became the president of Washington Literary Society
- Awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1937 for her only published novel, *Gone With the Wind*
- Met with a car accident and died on 16 August 1949

Gone With the Wind (1936)

- A Southern plantation fiction written from the perspective of the slave owners
- Title taken from a poem written by the British poet, Ernest Dowson
- The novel is set in Clayton County, Georgia and Atlanta during years of the Civil War
- Differs from most Civil War novels by glorifying the South and demonizing the North
- The book was adapted into an American film in 1939

Scarlett O'Hara

- Main focus is on Scarlett O'Hara, a dark-haired, green-eyed Georgia belle who struggles through the hardships of the Civil War and Reconstruction
- Her development precisely mirrors the development of the South. She changes from spoiled teenager to a hard-working widow to a wealthy opportunist
- The novel portrays Scarlett's ongoing internal conflict between her feelings and the expected behaviour for a woman of her age and class.

TES STUDY MATERIAL

The Plot

- The novel opens in the spring of 1861 at the Tara plantation owned by Gerald O'Hara an Irish immigrant, his wife, Ellen Robillard O'Hara, who is from an aristocratic family of French descent
- Their only daughter Scarlett O' Hara concerns herself only with her numerous suitors and her desire to marry Ashley Wilkes
- She becomes distressed when she hears that Ashley is engaged to her cousin Melanie Hamilton from Atlanta

Marriage

- An infuriated Scarlett marries Charles Hamilton, Melanie's brother in order to take revenge upon Ashley
- But the marriage was short lived as Charles dies of pneumonia following the measles two months after the Civil War begins
- A young widow, she gives birth to her first child
- She is bound by tradition to wear black and avoid conversation with young men. Scarlett is saddened by these restrictions, as her happy, carefree life is over

Life in Atlanta

- Scarlett goes to Atlanta to stay with Melanie and Melanie's aunt, Pittypat
- As the war progresses, food and clothing run scarce in Atlanta
- Scarlett and Melanie fear for Ashley's safety. After the bloody battle of Gettysburg, Ashley is captured and sent to prison, and the Yankee army begins bearing down on Atlanta
- Scarlett desperately wants to return home to Tara, but she has promised Ashley she will stay with the pregnant Melanie, who could give birth at any time

TES STUDY MATERIAL

Return to Tara

- On the night the Yankees capture Atlanta and set it afire, Melanie gives birth to her son, Beau
- Scarlett drives the cart all night and day through a dangerous forest full of deserters and soldiers, at last reaching Tara
- She arrives to find that her mother Ellen is dead; her father Gerald has lost his mind; and the Yankee army has looted the plantation, leaving no food or cotton. She has to scavenge for food and vows never to go hungry again.

Another Marriage

- She gets married to Rhett and starts living happily but as the time progresses Rhett becomes increasingly bitter and indifferent toward her
- She gives birth to a daughter Bonnie Blue Butler
- After Bonnie is killed in a horse-riding accident, Rhett nearly loses his mind, and his marriage with Scarlett worsens

New Revelation

- Melanie has a miscarriage and falls very ill.
- She makes Scarlett promise to look after Ashley and Beau. Scarlett realizes that she loves and depends on Melanie and that Ashley has been only a fantasy for her
- Scarlett finds herself to be truly in love with Rhett
- After Melanie dies, Scarlett hurries to tell Rhett of her revelation.

Conclusion

- But to her shock, Rhett says that he has lost his love for Scarlett, and he leaves her.
- Grief-stricken and alone, Scarlett makes up her mind to go back to Tara to recover her strength in the comforting arms of her childhood nurse and slave, Mammy, and to think of a way to win Rhett back