A SHORT SUMMARY OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERARY TOPICS, WITH CHRONOLOGICAL TIMELINES OF HISTORY, LITERATURE AND LANGUAGE.

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1. WHAT IS LITERATURE

Definition: What is literature? Why do we read it? Why is literature important?

Literature is a term used to describe written or spoken material. Broadly speaking, "literature" is used to describe anything from creative writing to more technical or scientific works, but the term is most commonly used to refer to works of the creative imagination, including works of poetry, drama, fiction, and nonfiction.

Why do we read literature?

Literature represents a language or a people: culture and tradition. But, literature is more important than just a historical or cultural artifact. Literature introduces us to new worlds of experience. We learn about books and literature; we enjoy the comedies and the tragedies of poems, stories, and plays; and we may even grow and evolve through our literary journey with books.

Ultimately, we may discover meaning in literature by looking at what the author says and how he/she says it. We may interpret the author's message. In academic circles, this decoding of the text is often carried out through the use of literary theory, using a mythological, sociological, psychological, historical, or other approach.

Whatever critical paradigm we use to discuss and analyze literature, there is still an artistic quality to the works. Literature is important to us because it speaks to us, it is universal, and it affects us. Even when it is ugly, literature is beautiful.

Also Known As: Classics, learning, erudition, belles-lettres, lit, literary works, written work, writings, books.

Common Misspellings: Litericher.

Examples:

"The difficulty of literature is not to write, but to write what you mean; not to affect your reader, but to affect him precisely as you wish." -- Robert Louis Stevenson


Writings by Sartre

Classic statement of 'literature and commitment'

This is a famous polemic, written in 1948 following the turmoil of the second world war. Sartre was coming into his own as the most influential philosopher and writer of the existentialist movement. He thinks out loud in his customary [slightly rambling] fashion about the role of the writer in the post-war world. What he was trying to do was reconcile and even fuse his impulses towards writing and politics.

In the first part he discusses the differences between literature and other arts such as music and painting. His argument is that prose writing is different than all other media because of the relationship between the individual and language itself. We might not know anything about musical scales for instance, but we cannot not know about language. At this point fifty years on, we are unlikely to agree with all his conclusions, but his engagement with the relationship between writing and society is certainly thought-provoking.

In the next part he deals with 'Why We Write'. There are some fascinating and vigorous reflections on the psychology of writing and reading - some of which anticipate forms of literary criticism which were not developed until twenty years later. For instance, he explains that the meaning of writing remains only latent until it is brought alive in the reader's mind - and his observation that "reading is directed creation" is Reader-Response Theory summed up in four words. It's a long, tough-minded argument, much of it drifting into the realms of philosophy. Some of the weaknesses in his argument come from over-generalising particular cases. There's also lots of argument spun out of abstract and metaphysical notions such as 'freedom' and 'commitment' which were fashionable at the time.

The centre of the book is a long meditation on the relationship between writers and their readers. This is largely a tour through French literature from the seventeenth to the twentieth century. He finishes with a chapter on the role of the writer in 1948. This is a passionate and well-argued plea for social engagement on the part of the writer. It also debates the temptations and the reasons for resisting the call of the Left (which at that time was the Communist Party).

You have to be prepared for a lot of history and politics, but ultimately this is a robust and bracing read which should be of interest to anybody who wants to think about the relationship between ideology and literary culture. Back to Index

2. THE NATURE OF LITERATURE

The first problem to confront us is, obviously, the subject matter of literary scholarship. What is literature? What is not literature? What is the nature of literature? Simple as such questions sound, they are rarely answered clearly. One way is to define "literature" as everything in print. We then shall be able to study the "medical profession in the fourteenth century" or "planetary motion in the early Middle Ages" or "witchcraft in Old and New England". As Edwin Greenlaw has argued, "Nothing related to the history of civilization is beyond our province"; we are "not limited to belles-lettres or even to printed or manuscript records in our effort to understand a period or civilization", and we "must see our work in the light of its possible contribution to the history of culture". According to Greenlaw's theory, and the practice of many scholars, literary study has thus become not merely closely related to the history of civilization but indeed identical with it. Such study is literary only in the sense that it is occupied with printed or written matter, necessarily the primary source of most history. It can, of course, be argued in defence of such a view that historians neglect these problems, that they are too much preoccupied with diplomatic, military, and economic history, and that thus the literary scholar is justified in invading and taking over a neighbouring terrain. Doubtless nobody should be forbidden to enter any area he likes, and doubtless there is much to be said in favour of cultivating the history of civilization in the broadest terms. But still the
study ceases to be literary. The objection that this is only a quibble about terminology is not convincing. The study of everything connected with the history of civilization does, as a matter of fact, crowd out strictly literary studies. All distinctions fall; extraneous criteria are introduced into literature; and, by consequence, literature will be judged valuable only so far as it yields results for this or that adjacent discipline. The identification of literature with the history of civilization is a denial of the specific field and the specific methods of literary study.

Another way of defining literature is to limit it to "great books", books which, whatever their subject, are "notable for literary form or expression". Here the criterion is either aesthetic worth alone or aesthetic worth in combination with general intellectual distinction. Within lyric poetry, drama, and fiction, the greatest works are selected on aesthetic grounds; other books are picked for their reputation or intellectual eminence together with aesthetic value of a rather narrow kind: style, composition, general force of presentation are the usual characteristics singled out. This is a common way of distinguishing or speaking of literature. By saying that "this is not literature" we express such a value judgement: we make the same kind of judgement when we speak of a book on history, philosophy, or science as belonging to "literature".

The main distinctions to be drawn are between the literary, the everyday, and the scientific uses of language. As for the functions of literature, for the time being just think to these two concepts, "art for art's sake" and "art for progress". "Art for art's sake" is the usual English rendering of a French slogan from the early 19th century, "l'art pour l'art", and expresses a philosophy that the intrinsic value of art, and the only "true" art, is divorced from any didactic, moral or utilitarian function. Such works are sometimes described as "autotelic", from the Greek autoteles, "complete in itself", a concept that has been expanded to embrace "inner-directed" or "self-motivated" human beings. A Latin version of this phrase, "Ars gratia artis", is used as a motto by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and appears in the circle around the roaring head of Leo the Lion in its motion picture logo.

"L'art pour l'art" (translated as "art for art's sake") is credited to Théophile Gautier (1811–1872), who was the first to adopt the phrase as a slogan. Gautier was not, however, the first to write those words: they appear in the works of Victor Cousin,[1] Benjamin Constant, and Edgar Allan Poe. For example, Poe argues in his essay "The Poetic Principle" (1850), that "We have taken it into our heads that to write a poem simply for the poem's sake […] and to acknowledge such to have been our design, would be to confess ourselves radically wanting in the true poetic dignity and force: — but the simple fact is that would we but permit ourselves to look into our own souls we should immediately there discover that under the sun there neither exists nor can exist any work more thoroughly dignified, more supremely noble, than this very poem, this poem per se, this poem written solely for the poem's sake".

"Art for art's sake" was a bohemian creed in the nineteenth century, a slogan raised in defiance of those who — from John Ruskin to the much later Communist advocates of socialist realism — thought that the value of art was to serve some moral or didactic purpose. "Art for art's sake" affirmed that art was valuable as art, that artistic pursuits were their own justification and that art did not need moral justification — and indeed, was allowed to be morally neutral or subversive. In fact, James McNeill Whistler wrote the following in which he discarded the accustomed role of art in the service of the state or official religion, which had adhered to its practice since the Counter-Reformation of the sixteenth century: "Art should be independent of all claptrap —should stand alone […] and appeal to the artistic sense of eye or ear, without confounding this with emotions entirely foreign to it, as devotion, pity, love, patriotism and the like". Such a brusque dismissal also expressed the artist's distancing him or herself from sentimentalism. All that remains of Romanticism in this statement is the reliance on the artist's own eye and sensibility as the arbiter. The explicit slogan is associated in the history of English art and letters with Walter Pater and his followers in the Aesthetic Movement, which was self-consciously in rebellion against Victorian moralism. It first appeared in English in two works published simultaneously in 1868: Pater's review of William Morris's poetry in the Westminster Review and in William Blake by Algernon Charles Swinburne. A modified form of Pater's review appeared in his Studies in the History of the
Renaissance (1873), one of the most influential texts of the Aesthetic Movement. In Germany, the poet Stefan George was one of the first artists to translate the phrase ("kunst für die kunst") and adopt it for his own literary programme which he presented in the first volume of his literary magazine Blätter für die Kunst (1892). He was inspired mainly by Charles Baudelaire and the French Symbolists whom he had met in Paris, where he was friends with Albert Saint-Paul and consorted with the circle around Stephane Mallarmé.

On the other hand the idea of "art for progress" is more connected with social, political, scientific, philosophical and economical subjects and it has many positivistic and pragmatic connotations, while the aesthetic values of the different works are considered less important for scholars' studies, literary criticism and the human advancement in general.

Anyway, from a methodological point of view, we can study literature focusing first of all on literary study, history and criticism, or on the nature of literature itself and the function of it; we can also study mainly general, comparative and national literature. The different approaches to the study of literature can focus on biography, or on psychology, society, ideas and other arts. The intrinsic study and analysis of literature must focus on euphony, rhythm and metre; style and stylistics, figurative language, that is on images, metaphors, symbols, myth and rhetoric at large; then we must look carefully at the nature and modes of narrative fiction, at literary genres, and finally to evaluation and aesthetic values.  

3. WHAT IS A TEXT (SYNTHESIS)

Etymologically "text" comes from a metaphorical use of the latin verb "Textere" (Weave), suggesting a sequence of sentences or utterances "Interwoven" structurally to refer to a sequential collection of sentences or utterances which form a unit by reason of their linguistic cohesion and semantic coherence. Other features that make a text a text are:

INTENTIONALITY: having a plan or purpose;
ACCEPTABILITY: having some use for the receiver;
SITUATIONALITY: relevance to the context;
INFORMATIVITY: degrees of new information;
INTERTEXTUALITY: relations with other texts.

These are the criteria for evaluating a text. (Beaugrande and Dressler 1981, Halliday 1978, 1985).

COHESION: concerns the words that connect up the sentences of a text to create a network of relations within it.

COHERENCE: concerns the unity of topic and function of the text.

COHERENCE: For a text to be fully satisfactory to a listener or reader, it needs not only appropriate grammatical links between sentences (cohesion) but it also need the concepts, propositions or events to be related to each other and to be consistent with the overall subject of the text. This semantic and propositional organization is called coherence. It refers to the underlying semantic unity by which the readers perceives that propositions, actions or events fit together.

COHESION: It refers to the grammatical means by which the elements are linked, usually at sentence level. It provides the linguistic threads that furnish unity to the text and that connect phrases; it recalls to mind the material previously encountered, allowing the linking up of different elements. The most common forms of grammatical connection are: 1) Reference by the use of personal pronouns, the definite article, comparative forms or substitution by the use of pro-forms. Cohesion is also created by the use of linking words.

In order to effect cohesion different linguistic devices called cohesion mechanisms may be employed. Some cohesion mechanisms consist in the following:
1) lexical repetitions, for example, the re-iteration of the same word, or the use of a verb and its
corresponding noun form (to analyse - analysis);
2) the use of keywords, for example, the re-proposition of some particularly important words in the
text, that allow the meaning to progress;
3) the use of parallel structures, for example, the repetition of a syntactic structure, with different
lexical items, in the same or in a following phrase or sentence (too near... too far; the more... the
less...);
4) the use of "pro-forms", that is, parts of speech that substitute others that have preceded them. The
most well-known are the pronouns (it, one, ones), but there are also pro-verbs (to do) used to
substitute previous full verbs, pro-adverbs (so), pro-adjectives (such), and pro-phrases (this), used to
refer to an entire preceding sentence. With regard to the latter it may be noted that the definite
article (the) is often used in English where Italian uses questo/quello; certain forms called
'retrospective labels', namely, nouns preceded by the determinative article or by the demonstrative
adjectives, that allude to and re-propose previous information. These labels can functions as
information connectors and so link topics, or else they can shift the focus of information and so
effect a transition in the topics.

However, the main category of cohesion mechanisms are the coordinating and subordinating
conjunctions, which link up and indicate the relationship between one sentence or clause and
another. In what follows some of the relationships and the words that can indicate them are
presented:

1) a logical deduction or result: therefore, then, thus, hence, as a consequence, consequently, as a
result, accordingly, for this reason, so; a contrast or contraposition: but, however, nevertheless,
onetheless, on the other hand, whereas, while, instead, on the contrary, conversely, in
2) contrast, all the same, in spite of, alternatively, even so, yet, despite; a temporal relationship: at f
rst, firstly, subsequently, then, afterwards, thereafter, next, after, before, when, as soon as, since, till
until, while, hitherto, as yet, at the same time, concurrently, meanwhile, in the meantime,
henceforth, henceforward, from now on, from now onwards, up to now, to date;
3) a concession: although, though, despite, in spite of, even though, even if, despite the fact that, in
spite of the fact that, given that, notwithstanding;
4) a subdivision into different topics or stages: first, second, third, etc., last, firstly, secondly,
thirdly, etc., lastly, finally, on the one hand, on the other hand;
5) an exemplification, especially of what has already been said: for example (eg.), for instance, that
is (i.e.), namely (viz.), in other words; a clarification or correction: actually, in fact, as a matter
offact, rather, a validity or generalization: by and large, as a rule, in general generally, generally
speaking, broadly speaking, on the whole, approximately;
6) a cause or reason: as, because, since, in view of the fact that;
7) an addition: and, besides, also, in addition, in addition to, additionally, furthermore, moreover,
further;
8) a purpose: to, in order to, so as to;
9) a condition: if, to the extent that, unless, on condition that, as long as, provided that,
10) a certainty: of course, naturally, obviously; a doubt: possibly, perhaps;
11) a conclusion or summing up: in brief, briefly, in short, in conclusion, to summarize, to sum up,
to conclude, in summary. Back to Index

4. TEXT TYPES (SYNTHESIS)

NARRATIVE: the focus is on persons, objects or relations in time. This text type is related on the
mental processes of "perception in time".
DESCRIPTIVE: the focus is on people, objects or relations in space. This text type is related to the
mental processes of "perception in space".
EXPOSITORY: the focus is on the analysis or synthesis of concepts, the related mental process is that of comprehension.
ARGUMENTATIVE: the focus is on the relations between concepts, where one opinion is upheld and its relation with opposing opinions or solutions investigated. The related mental process is that of "Judging".
INSTRUCTIVE: the focus is on intended future behaviour of the sender or of the receiver. The related mental process is that of "planning". Back to Index

5. SCIENTIFIC OR ACADEMIC WRITING GENERAL CRITERIA

Scientific or academic writing consists in a prose text directed to the peers of the writers, that are, like the author, specialists or professionals in the topic. It is the kind of writing employed for learned articles and journals, books, scientific conferences and papers and scientific research. Effective writing for scientific or academic purposes may be said to be characterised by five general criteria: fluency, lucidity, precision, synthesis and objectivity.

FLUENCY: two elements are fundamental for the fluency of a text: coherence and cohesion. Coherence is the logical link between the phrases, sentences and paragraphs that constitute a text. It concerns the effective distribution of information in the text and it involves the sequence of information.

Cohesion is the implicit or explicit correlation between a phrase and the one following so as to develop organic thought. It sustains the logical development of the information: it provides the linguistic threads that furnish unity to the text and that connect phrases; it recalls to mind the material previously encountered, allowing the linking up of different elements.

LUCIDITY: it can be articulated into five distinct aspects: denomination; characterisation of the discourse; equivalence (what the object or theme of the discourse is like, and to what it is similar or analogous; examination of the topic, all those elements that constitute the discourse topic itself; function or purpose of the discourse, in this context the scope, relevance and rationale of the discourse are evidenced.

PRECISION: the terms selected should be appropriate and they should be univocal in meaning, in that words with different significations should be avoided so as to prevent ambiguity. Finally the words should be endowed with objectivity, that is, they should lack multiple connotations that might impair comprehension.

SYNTHESIS: redundancy must be avoided and the discourse must lack unessential and superfluous information.

OBJECTIVITY: avoid to speak in the first person, use active and passive structures with introductory subjects, for example it, you must always remember the experimental method and research results, as a matter of fact science and technology develop through trials and errors.

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6. MORE ABOUT CONNECTORS AND LINKERS

ADDITION

Uniscono, mettendola in evidenza, una frase ad un'altra. They are the following: again (nuovamente), also (anche), and (e), and then (e poi), apart from. ..also (oltre a ... anche), as well as (come pure), besides (inoltre), both ...and (sia ... sia), equally important (altrettanto importante), thurther (oltre), furthermore (inoltre), in addition to (oltre a), indeed (davvero), in fact (infatti), moreover (per di più), too (anche), on top of that (inoltre), what's more (e perdi più).

Esempi:
There are so many ways of improving your English in England. You can speak with native speakers for example. Moreover you can read English newspapers and watch English television, which can
be very helpful. (Ci sono molti modi per migliorare il proprio inglese in Inghilterra. Si può parlare con parlanti madrelingua. Inoltre si possono leggere giornali inglesi e guardare la televisione inglese, il che può essere molto d'aiuto.)

CAUSE

Indicano una causa, una ragione, un motivo per cui si compie l'azione o si prova il sentimento espressi dalla proposizione reggente.

as (poiché), because (perché), because of (a causa di), considering/given/seeing that, due to (dovuto a), for per, for + ing (per), for this reason (per questo motivo), in case (qualora), owing to (a causa di), now that (ora che), just in case (nel caso), since (poiché).

Esempi:
Since the air traffic controller were on strike, we couldn't leave for Barcelona yesterday. (Poiché i controllori di volo erano in sciopero, non siamo potuti partire per Barcellona ieri.)
She'll have the letter translated because she doesn't know Spanish. (Ella si farà tradurre la lettera, perché non conosce lo spagnolo.)
I stayed at home because it was very cold outside. (Rimasi a casa perché fuori faceva molto freddo). They were very late at the meeting because of the traffic jam. (Erano molto in ritardo alla riunione a causa dell'ingorgo stradale.)
The teacher did not get angry because the student was late, but because he made a lot of noise during the lesson. (L'insegnante si adirò, non perché lo studente fosse in ritardo, ma perché faceva molto chiasso durante la lezione.)
He only smokes because his friends do. (Egli fuma solo perché lo fanno i suoi amici.)
As/since/seeing that she knows German well, she'd better introduce the lecturer at the opening of the seminar.
Poiché ella conosce bene il tedesco, sarebbe bene che presentasse il conferenziere all'apertura del convegno.
Since I've never met them, I can't you what they are like.
Poiché non li ho mai incontrati, non posso dirti come siamo.
I'll do the translation myself, as you don't want to work now.
Farò io la traduzione, visto che adesso non vuoi lavorare.
We decided to stay a little longer at the party as/since it was still early and we were enjoying ourselves.
Decidemmo di rimanere un po' più a lungo alla festa, poiché era ancora presto e ci stavamo divertendo.
Since she is not keen on rock music, why did you give her a Guns'n Roses' record?
Poiché ella non è appassionata di musica rock, perché le hai regalato un disco dei Guns 'n Roses'
He stayed one more week in New York for he had nowhere else to go.
Egli rimase a New York ancora una settimana, poiché non c'era nessun altro posto dove potesse andare/non aveva dove andare.

COMPARISON

Stabiliscono una comparazione.

as ... as (tanto quanto), as well ... as (bene quanto), as if/as though (come se), likewise (similmente), in the same way (allo stesso modo), similarly (analogamente).

Esempi:
She plays the guitar as well as her brother (does). (Ella suona la chitarra bene quanto suo fratello.)
His computer holds as much information as mine (does). (Il suo computer contiene tante informazioni quanto il mio.)
He studies as hard as his sister.

**CONCESSION**

Indicano una circostanza che potrebbe impedire quanto è espresso nella proposizione reggente o indicano una difficoltà nonostante la quale si compie ciò che la reggente esprime.
as much (anche se), although (sebbene), despite (malgrado), even if (anche se), even though (sebbene), even so (ciononostante), except that (solo che), however (tuttavia), in spite of (malgrado), not that (non che), no matter (non importa), still (tuttavia), though (eppure), whereas (invece), while (benché, mentre), whatever (qualsiasi).

Esempi:

Although she had no specific qualifications, she got that job at the American Embassy. (Sebbene non avesse alcuna specifica qualifica professionale, ella ottenne quel posto all'ambasciata americana.

I used to love listening to music, even though I was very busy with my work. (Mi piaceva ascoltare musica, sebbene fossi molto impegnato col mio lavoro).

Though/although she liked that film, she couldn't watch it.

Sebbene quel film non le piacesse, non poté vederlo.

They said they would come; I don't think they will though.

Dissero che sarebbero venuti; non credo che verranno, tuttavia.

Even though he was very tired, he couldn't sleep all night.

Anche se era molto stanco, non riuscì a dormire/non poté dormire tutta la notte.

It is still quite warm despite the rainstorm.

E ancora abbastanza caldo nonostante la burrasca di pioggia.

In spite of what they had heard about the dangers in the jungle, the explorers went on with their journey.

Nonostante quello che avevano sentito sui pericoli della giungla, gli esploratori proseguirono nel loro viaggio.

She's not feeling well in spite of the fact that she's taken a lot of medicines.

Ella non sta bene, nonostante abbia preso molte medicine.

**CONCLUSION**

Indicano la fine dell'avvenimento/dell'azione compiuta nella proposizione reggente e vengono usati per trarre una conclusione.

after all (dopo tutto), all the same (eppure), anyway (tuttavia), anyhow (comunque), as a whole (nel complesso), at any rate (in ogni modo), at all events (in ogni caso), in any case (in ogni modo), in brief (in breve), in conclusion (concludendo), in the main (tutto sommato), in short (brevemente), however (comunque), nevertheless (nondimeno), on the whole (tutto sommato), to conclude (per concludere), still (comunque sia), though (peraltro), to summarize (riassumendo), to sum up (riepilogando), yet (tuttavia).

Esempi:

There is fog at Malpensa Airport today. Therefore the plane will be diverted to Fiumicino. (C'è nebbia all'aeroporto Malpensa oggi. Perciò l'aereo sarà dirottato a Fiumicino.)

The champion hadn't trained hard. However he won the race all the same. (Il campione non si era allenato molto. Tuttavia vinse la corsa lo stesso).

**CONDITION**

Introducono un'opposizione, indicano un fatto in forte contrasto con l'azione che è espressa nella proposizione reggente. Indicano una condizione, senza la quale l'azione espressa nella principale
non potrebbe realizzarsi.

assuming (that) (supposto (che), as long as (ammesso che), if (se), in case (that) (in caso (che), on condition that (a condizione che), only if (solo se), provided (that) (sempreché), providing (that) (qualora), suppose (that) (ammesso (che), supposing (concesso), unless (se non), whether or not (in ogni caso/se ...o no), in the event that (nel caso che).

Esempi:
In case the weather is cold, we will take some warm clothes. (Se c'è freddo, porteremo vestiti pesanti).
I can lend you the money, if you let me know when I can have it back. (Posso prestarti il denaro, se mi fai sapere quando potrò riaverlo).
Providing you have a ticket you can get into the football ground. (Qualora tu abbia un biglietto, puoi accedere allo stadio).
Write down the time of your meeting tomorrow, in case you forget it.
Prendi nota del tuo appuntamento di domani, nel caso tu lo dimentichi.
If you don't get to the airport in Urne, you won't be able to check in.
Se non arriverai all'aeroporto in tempo, non potrai fare il check in.
If you get any more news, let us know.
Se hai ulteriori notizie, faccele sapere.
When you get some more news, let us know.
Quando avrai ulteriori notizie, faccele sapere.
I'll be at my aunt's house in case they (should) need to reach me.
Sarò a casa di aria zia, se/nel caso avessero bisogno di raggiungermi.
You'll finish late unless you start work at once.
Finirai tardi, se non comincerai / a meno che tu non cominci a lavorare subito.
In case you are in trouble, call me.
Se/nel caso fossi in difficoltà, chiamami.
You won't be allowed to smoke in here, unless you leave the window open.
Non ti sarà concesso di fumare qui dentro, a meno che non lasci la finestra aperta.

CONTRAST / OPPOSITION

Introducono un'opposizione, indicano un fatto in forte contrasto con l'azione che è espressa nella proposizione reggente.

although (sebbene), but (ma), compared with (in confronto a), in comparison with (in paragone a), despite (malgrado), else (altrimenti), even though (anche se), granted (concesso), however (tuttavia), in contrast (in contrasto), in spite of (nonostante/malgrado), nevertheless (eppure), on the contrary (al contrario), on the other hand (d'altra parte), otherwise (altrimenti), still (tuttavia), whereas (invece), while (mentre), and yet (eppure), at the same time (allo stesso tempo).
Esempi:
Nuclear physics has always been very easy for her. On the other hand it is very difficult for most people. (La fisica nucleare è stata sempre molto facile per lei. Al contrario essa è molto difficile per la maggior parte della gente).
The novel was wonderful, whereas the film is terrible. (Il romanzo era splendido mentre il film è un fallimento).

EFFECT / RESULT
Indicano la conseguenza di ciò che è indicato nella proposizione principale, dove si trova quasi sempre un termine correlativo o antecedente alla consecutiva.

accordingly (in conseguenza), as a result (come risultato), consequently (consequentemente), in this way (in tal modo), so (quindi), so that (così che), such that (tale da), then (quindi), thereby (perciò), therefore (dunque), thus (di conseguenza).

Esempi:
We were so late that we missed the last train for London. (Eravamo così in ritardo che perdemmo l'ultimo treno per Londra).

EXPLANATION / EMPHASIS
Introducono una dichiarazione o una spiegazione.

Actually (in realtà), as a matter of fact (in verità), in fact (infatti), in other words (in altre parole), namely (precisamente), or rather (o piuttosto), to tell the truth (a dire il vero).

Esempi:
"You look happy". "Yes, in fact I am". (Sembri contento. Sì. Infatti lo sono.)
She seems to be rich, but actually she hasn't got any money at all. (Sembra ricca, ma in realtà non ha affatto denaro.)

ILLUSTRATION / EXAMPLE
Chiariscono quanto già espresso nella proposizione reggente, adducendo esempi.

Especially (particolarmente), for example (per esempio), for istance (ad esempio), for this reason (per questa ragione), incidentally (per inciso), in particular (in particolare), in other words (in altre parole), namely (cioè), I mean (intendo dire), particularly (in particolare), specifically (precisamente), such as (come), that is (cioè), that is to say (vale a dire).

Esempi:
They always use the bus, especially when they go to the city centre. (Usano sempre l'autobus, specialmente quando vanno in centro).

INTRODUCING A SUBJECT
Collegandosi a quanto espresso nella proposizione reggente, introducono un nuovo argomento.

by the way (a proposito), incidentally (per inciso), as for/as to (quanto a), as far as is concerned (per ciò che concerne), regarding (riguardo a), as regards (per quanto riguarda).

Esempi:
As regards contemporary English literature, my favourite author is David Lodge. (Per quanto riguarda la letteratura inglese contemporanea, il mio autore preferito è David Lodge).
MANNER

Indicano il modo di attuazione dell'azione espressa nella proposizione reggente.

as (come), as if/as though (come se), just as (proprio come), like (come).

Esempi:
The teacher treats her students as though they were all her children. (L'insegnante tratta i suoi studenti come se fossero tutti suoi figli.
There was a loud noise outside as if it were raining heavily. (C'era molto rumore fuori. come se stesse piovendo forte).

TIME

Indicano una circostanza di tempo. Precisano le circostanze temporali di quanto è espresso nella proposizione principale, mettendolo in relazione cronologica con quanto è espresso nella subordinata.

after (poi), after a short time (dopo un po' di tempo), after a while (dopo poco), as (mentre), afterwards ( SUCCESSIVAMENTE), as soon as (non appena), at last (alla fine), at present (attualmente), before (prima), immediately (immediatamente), in the meantime (frattanto), later (dopo), lately (ultimamente), meanwhile (nel contempo), no sooner ...than (non appena ... che), now (that) (ora (che), once (una volta), originally (in origine), presently (tra poco/ attualmente), previously (precedentemente), shortly (fra poco), since (da allora), since then (da allora in poi), soon (presto), subsequently (successivamente), temporarily (temporaneamente), then (poi), thereafter (successivamente), till (finché), until (finché non), when (quando), whenever (ogni volta che), while (mentre).

Esempi:
My parents won't move to London until I get my university degree. (I miei genitori non si trasferiranno a Londra, finché non prenderò la laurea.)
He called an ambulance as soon as he realized he had broken his leg. (Chiamò l'ambulanza, non appena si rese conto che si era rotta la gamba.)
He always reads the newspaper before going to work. (Legge sempre il giornale prima di andare al lavoro).

PURPOSE

Indicano lo scopo per il quale un'azione si compie o tende a realizzarsi.

to (per), so that (cosicché), so as to (così da), so as not to (non da), for (per), in order to (affinché), in order not to (per non), in order that (così da), for the purpose of (con lo scopo di).

Esempi:
Dr Brown is trying to learn English so that he can read medical journals in that language. (Il Dr. Brown sta cercando di studiare l'inglese per potere leggere le riviste mediche in quella lingua.
He is working very hard to earn enough money to /in order to buy a flat.
Lavora molto per guadagnare abbastanza denaro per comprare un appartamento.
They passed the law, in order to restrict the sale of fire arms.
Approvarono la legge per ridurre la vendita delle armi da fuoco.
I always use my neighbour's lawn mower for cutting/to cut the grass.
Uso sempre la falciatrice del mio vicino per tagliare l'erba.
She studied hard so that she might go to university.

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Studiò molto per poter andare all'università.
I want to learn English so that I can go/will be able to go to America.
Voglio imparare l'inglese per poter andare in America.
I took my car to the garage so that it could be serviced.
Portai l'auto al garage perché fosse controllata.
While you were out, some friends of yours called on you.
Mentre eri fuori, alcuni tuoi amici vennero a trovarti.
While they were swimming, someone took their wallets.
Mentre stavano nuotando, qualcuno prese i loro portafogli.
She has to look after the baby until his parents arrive.
Deve aver cura del bimbo, finché arriveranno i suoi genitori.
Before going on holiday, he finished all his work.
Prima di andare in vacanza, finì tutto il suo lavoro.
The college accepted Jane after she had passed her exams.
Il college accettò Jane dopo che ebbe superato gli esami.

SEQUENCE

Servono a specificare l'ordine in cui determinati avvenimenti o azioni si verificano, oppure servono a stabilire l'ordine di importanza di azioni avvenute o che avverranno.

to begin with (a cominciare con), to start with (a iniziare con), first(ly) (per prima cosa), at first (dapprima), in the first place (in primo luogo), initially (inizialmente), second(ly) (in secondo luogo), third(ly) (in terzo luogo), eventually (infine), finally (alla fine), next (in seguito), in the end (in fondo), last(ly) (per finire).
Esempi:
First finish your homework and then you can go out and play. (Prima finisci il compito e dopo puoi uscire a giocare). Back to Index

7. A SHORT HISTORY OF ENGLAND

Prehistory and Antiquity

England was settled by humans for at least 500,000 years. The first modern humans (homo sapiens) arrived during the Ice Age (about 35,000 to 10,000 years ago), when the sea levels were lower and Britain was connected to the European mainland. It is these people who built the ancient megalithic monuments of Stonehenge and Avebury.

Between 1,500 and 500 BCE, Celtic tribes migrated from Central Europe and France to Britain and mixed with the indigenous inhabitants, creating a new culture slightly distinct from the Continental Celtic one. This was the Bronze Age.

The Romans tried a first time to invade Britannia (the Latin name of the island) in 55 BCE under Julius Caesar, but weren't successful until 43 CE, during the reign of Emperor Claudius. In 122 CE, Emperor Hadrian built a wall in the north of Britannia to keep the barbarian Picts at bay.

The Romans controlled most of present-day England and Wales, and founded a large number of cities that still exist today. London, York, St Albans, Bath, Exeter, Lincoln, Leicester, Worcester, Gloucester, Chichester, Winchester, Colchester, Manchester, Chester, Lancaster, were all Roman towns, as in fact were all the cities with names now ending in -chester, -cester or -caster, which derive from Latin castrum ("fortification").
The Anglo-Saxons

The Romans progressively abandoned Britannia in the 5th century as their Empire was falling apart and legions were needed to protect Rome.

With the Romans gone, the Celtic tribes started fighting with each others again, and one of the local chieftain had the not so brilliant idea to request help from the some Germanic tribes from the North of present-day Germany and South of Denmark. These were the Angles, Saxons and Jutes, who arrived in the 5th and 6th centuries.

However, things did not happen as the Celts had expected. The Germanic tribes did not go back home after the fight, and on the contrary felt strong enough to seize the whole of the country for themselves, which they did, pushing back all the Celtic tribes to Wales and Cornwall, and founding their respective kingdoms of Kent (the Jutes), Essex, Sussex and Wessex (the Saxons), and further north East Anglia, Mercia and Northumbria (the Angles). These 7 kingdoms, which rules over all England from about 500 to 850 AD, were later known as the Anglo-Saxon heptarchy.

The Vikings

From the second half of the 9th century, the Norse from Scandinavia started invading Europe, the Swedes taking up Eastern Europe, Russia (which they founded as a country) and the Byzantine Empire, the Norwegians raiding Scotand and Ireland, discovering and settling in the Faroe Islands, Iceland and Greenland (and were in fact the first Europeans to set foot in America in 1000 AD), while the Danes wrought havoc throughout Western Europe, as far as North Africa.

The Danes invaded the North-East of England, from Northumerland to East Anglia, and founded a new kingdom known as the Danelaw. Another group of Danes managed to take Paris, and obtain a grant of land from the King of France in 911. This area became the Duchy of Normandy, and its inhabitants were the Normans (from 'North Men' or 'Norsemen', another term for 'Viking').

The Normans

After having settled in their newly acquired land, the Normans, adopted the French feudal system and French as official language.

During that time, the Kings of Wessex had resisted and eventually vanquished the Danes in England in the 10th century. But the powerful Canute the Great (995-1035), king of the newly unified Denmark and Norway and overlord of Schleswig and Pomerania, led two other invasions on England in 1013 and 1015, and became king of England in 1016, after crushing the Anglo-Saxon king, Edmund II.

Edward the Confessor (1004-1066) succeeded to Canute's two sons. He nominated William, Duke of Normandy, as his successor, but upon his death, Harold Godwinson, the powerful Earl of Wessex, crowned himself king. William refused to acknowledge Harold as King and invaded England with 12,000 soldiers in 1066. King Harold was killed at the battle of Hastings (by an arrow in the eye, as the legend as it), and William the Conqueror become William I of England. His descendants have sat on the throne of England to this day.

William I (1027-1087) ordered a nationwide survey of land property known as the Domesday Book, and redistributed land among his vassals. Many of the country's medieval castles were built under
William's reign (eg. Dover, Arundel, Windsor, Warwick, Kenilworth, Lincoln...).

The Norman rulers kept their possessions in France, and even extended them to most of Western France (Brittany, Aquitaine...). French became the official language of England, and remained it until 1362, a bit after the beginning of the Hundred Years' War with France. English nevertheless remained the language of the populace, and the fusion of English (a mixture of Anglo-Saxon and Norse languages) with French and Latin (used by the clergy) slowly evolved into modern English.

12th & 13th centuries : Royal intrigues & troubled successions

The English royals after William I had the infamous habit to contend for the throne. William's son, William II was killed while hunting, and it is believed that he was in fact murdered, so that William's second son, Henry, could become king. Henry I's succession was also agitated, with his daughter Matilda and her cousin Stephen (grandson of William I) starting a civil war for the throne. Although Stephen won, Matilda's son succeeded him as Henry II (1133-1189). It is under Henry II that the University of Oxford was established.

The following struggle of Henry II's two children was made famous by the legend of Robin Hood. Richard I "Lionheart" was hardly ever in England, too busy defending his French possessions or fighting the infidels in the Holy Land. During that time, his brother John "Lackland" usurped the throne and startled another civil war.

John's grandson, Edward I "Longshanks" (1239-1307) spent most of his 35-year reign fighting wars, first against his barons led by Simon de Montfort (see Kenilworth), then on the 9th Crusade, back home annexing Wales, and last but not least against the Scots, led by William Wallace and Robert the Bruce, whose proud resistance was immortalised in the Hollywood movie Braveheart.

Edward I' son, Edward II, was all his father wasn't. He didn't like war, preferring to party with his friends. He also happened to be gay, which led to his imprisonment and tragic murder by his wife and her lover (see Gloucester).

14th & 15th centuries : Hundred Years' War & War of the Roses

Edward III (1312-1377) succeeded his father at the age of 15 and reigned for 50 years (the second longest reign in English history after Henry III, queens excluded). His reign was marked by the beginning of the Hundred Years' War (1337-1416) and epidemics of bubonic plague ("Black Death"), which killed one third of England (and Europe's) population.

Edward III was often fighting in France, and the government was controlled de facto by his third son John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. John of Gaunt's son, Henry Bolingbroke, took advantage of his cousin Richard II's absence to proclaim himself King Henry IV (1367-1413). Escaping several assassination attempts, Henry also had to deal with the revolt of Owen Glendower, who declared himself Prince of Wales in 1400, then with the rebellion of the Earl of Northumberland.

Henry V (1387-1422), famously defeated the French at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415, but his pious and peace-loving son Henry VI (1421-1471), who inherited the throne at just one year old, was to have a much more troubled reign. The regent lost most of the English possessions in France to a 17-year old girl (Joan of Arc) and in 1455, the Wars of the Roses broke out. This civil war opposed the House of Lancaster (the Red Rose, supporters of Henry VI) to the House of York (the White Rose, supporters of Edward IV). The Yorks argued that the crown should have passed to Edward III' second son, Lionel of Antwerp, rather than to the Lancasters descending from John of
Gaunt.

One of the key players was Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, nicknamed "the Kingmaker", for deposing Henry VI for Edward IV, then again Edward for Henry 9 years later.

Edward IV's son, Edward V, only reigned for one year, before being locked in the Tower of London by his evil uncle, Richard III (1452-1485), although probably not as evil as Shakespeare depicted him in his play. The reason is that Lancastrian Henry Tudor (1457-1509), the half-brother of Henry VI, defeated Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth Field in 1485, and became Henry VII, founder of the House of Tudor, for which Shakespeare wrote.

Henry Tudor's son is maybe England's most famous and historically important ruler, the magnificent Henry VIII (1491-1547).

The 16th century Renaissance

Henry VIII

Henry VIII is remembered in history as one of the most powerful kings of England. Except for getting married six times, desperate for a male heir, Henry changed the face of England, passing the Acts of Union with Wales (1536-1543), thus becoming the first English King of Wales, then changing his title of Lord of Ireland into that of (also first) King of Ireland (1541).

In 1533, Henry divorced his first wife, Catherine of Aragon (Queen Mary's mother, see Peterborough) to remarry Anne Boleyn (Queen Elizabeth I's mother), the Pope excommunicated Henry, and in return, Henry proclaimed himself head of the Church of England. To assure the control over the clergy, Henry dissolved all the monasteries in the country (1536-1540) and nationalised them, becoming immensely rich in the process.

Henry VIII was the last English king to claim the title of King of France, as he lost his last possession there, the port of Calais (although he tried to recover it, taking Tournai for a few years, the only town in present-day Belgium to have been under English rule).

It was also under Henry VIII that England started exploring the globe and trading outside Europe, although this would only develop to colonial proportions under his daughters, Mary I and especially Elizabeth I (after whom Virginia was named).

Henry VIII's children
The 10-year old Edward VI inherited the throne at his father's death in 1547, but died 6 years later and was succeeded by his elder half-daughter Mary. Mary I (1516-1558), a staunch Catholic, intended to restore Roman Catholicism to England, executing over 300 religious dissenters in her 5-year reign (which owned her the nickname of Bloody Mary). She married the powerful King Philip II of Spain, who also ruled over the Netherlands, the Spanish Americas and the Philippines (named after him), and was the champion of the Counter-Reform (read "Inquisition"). Mary died childless of ovarian cancer in 1558, and her half-sister Elizabeth ascended the throne.

The great Virgin Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603) saw the first golden age of England. It was an age of great navigators like Sir Francis Drake and Sir Walter Raleigh (see Plymouth), an age of enlightenment with the philosopher Francis Bacon (1561-1626), and playwrights such as Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593) and William Shakespeare (1564-1616).
Her reign was also marked by conflicts with France and Scotland (bound by a common queen, Mary Stuart), then Spain and Ireland. Elizabeth was an undecisive and prudent ruler. She never married, and when Mary Stuart tried and failed to take over the throne of England, Elizabeth kept her imprisoned for 19 years (most of the time in Chatsworth House under the guard of the Earl of Shrewsbury), before finally signing her act of execution.

Elizabeth died in 1603, and ironically, Mary Stuart's son, James VI of Scotland, succeeded Elizabeth as King James I of England - thus creating the United Kingdom.

The 17th century: Religious troubles & Civil War

James I (1566-1625) was a Protestant, like Elizabeth, and aimed at improving relations with the Catholics. But 2 years after he was crowned, a group of Catholic extremists led by Guy Fawkes attempted to place a bomb at the parliament's state opening, when the king and his entourage would be present, so as to get rid of all the Protestant aristocracy in one fell swoop. The conspirators were betrayed by one of their number just hours before the plan's enactment. The failure of the Gunpowder Plot, as it is known (see Coughton Court), is still celebrated throughout Britain on Guy Fawkes' night (5th November), with fireworks and bonfires burning effigies of the conspirators' leader.

The divide between Catholics and Protestant worsened after this incident. James's successor Charles I (1600-1649) was eager to unify Britain and Ireland, and wanted to do so as an absolute ruler of divine right, like his French counter-part Louis XIV. Despite being an (Anglican) Protestant, his marriage with a French Roman Catholic combined with policies at odds with Calvinist ideals and his totalitarian handling of the Parliament eventually culminated in the English Civil War (1642-1651). The country was torn between Royalist and Parliamentary troops, and most of the medieval castles still standing were destroyed during that period (eg. Kenilworth, Corfe, Bodiam...).

Charles was beheaded, and the puritan leader of the Parliamentarians, Oliver Cromwell (1599-1658), ruled the country as a dictator from 1649 to his death. He was briefly succeeded by his son Richard at the head of the Protectorate, but his political inability prompted the Parliament to restore the monarchy in 1660, calling in Charles I's exiled son, Charles II (1630-1685).

The Restoration

The "Merry Monarch", as Charles II was known, was better at handling Parliament than his father, although as ruthless with other matters. It is during his reign that the Whig and Tory parties were created, and that the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam became English and was renamed New York, after Charles' brother, James, Duke of York (and later James II).

Charles II was the patron of the arts and sciences. He helped found the Royal Society and sponsored architect Sir Christopher Wren, who rebuilt the City of London of the Great Fire of 1666, and constructed some of England's greatest edifices. Charles acquired Bombay and Tangiers through his Portuguese wife, thus laying the foundation for the British Empire.

Although Charles produced countless illegitimate children, 14 of whom he acknowledged (including the Duke of Monmouth, the Duke of Northumberland, the Duke of Grafton, the Duke of Cleveland, the Duke of Richmond and the Duke of St Albans), his wife couldn't bear an heir, and when he died in 1685 the throne passed to his Catholic and unpopular brother James.

The Glorious Revolution

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James II's religious inclinations and despotism led to his quick removal from power in the Glorious Revolution of 1688. His Protestant daughter Mary, married to his equally Protestant nephew, William of Orange. The couple was "invited" by the Protestant aristocracy to conduct an invasion from the Netherlands. They defeated James' troops at the Battle of the Boyne, and deposed James II with limited bloodshed. James was allowed to escape to France, where he remained the rest of his life under the protection of Louis XIV. His son and grandson later attempted to come back to the throne, but without success.

The new ruling couple became known as the "Grand Alliance". The parliament ratified that all kings or queens would have to be Protestant from then on. After Mary's death in 1694, then William's in 1702, James's second daughter, Anne, ascended the throne. In 1707, the Act of Union joined the Scottish and the English Parliaments thus creating the single Kingdom of Great Britain and centralising political power in London. Anne died heirless in 1714, and a distant German cousin, George of Hanover, was called to rule over the UK.

The House of Hanover

German Georges

When George I (1660-1727) arrived in England, he couldn't speak a word of English, and the legend has it that he was mistakenly arrested while strolling around his palace's garden when questioned by his staff who weren't familiar with his appearance.

The king's inability to communicate well with his government and subjects led him to appoint a de facto Prime Minister in the person of Robert Walpole (1676-1745). This marked a turning point in British politics, as future monarchs were also to remain more passive figures, letting the reins of the government to the Prime Minister.

George II (1683-1760) was also German born, and combined the title of Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg, Archtreasurer and Prince-Elector of the Holy Roman Empire to that of King of Great-Britain and Ireland. He was a powerful ruler, and the last British monarch to personally lead his troops into battle. Hanoverian composer G.F. Handel was commissioned to compose his coronation anthem ("Zadok the Priest"), which has been sung at every coronation since.

The British Empire expanded considerably during his reign and the song "God Save the King" also developed during that period. Some other notable changes include the replacement of the Julian Calendar by the Gregorian Calendar in 1752, and the New Year was officially moved from 25 March to 1 January.

George III : American, French & Industrial Revolutions

The first Hanoverian king to be born in England with English as his native language, George III (1738-1820) had one of the most troubled and interesting reign in British history. He ascended the throne during the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) opposing almost all the major Western powers in two teams, chiefly British against French, and ended in a de facto victory for the UK, which acquired New France (Quebec), Florida, and most of French India in the process.

However, 13 years later, the American War of Independence (1776-1782) started after the British government imposed a series of taxes on the colonies. The 13 American colonies were finally granted their independence in 1782 and formed the United States of America. 7 years later, the
French Revolution broke out, and Louis XVI was guillotined. George III suffered from an hereditary disease known as porphyria, and his mental health seriously deteriorated from 1788. By 1811 he was permanently insane (see Regency below). In 1800, the Act of Union merged the Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland.

During that time, Britain had to face the ambitions of Napoleon to conquer the whole of Europe. Admiral Nelson's naval victory at Trafalgar (off the coast of Spain) in 1805, and Wellington's decisive victory at Waterloo saved the UK, and further reinforced its international position. The 19th century would be dominated by the British Empire, spreading on all five continents, from Canada and the Caribbeans to Australia and New Zealand, via Africa, India and South-East Asia.

Another notable fact of George III's reign was the start of the Industrial Revolution, with James Watt's famous steam engine and the mechanisation of the manufacturing industry transforming the face of England to this day. Great industrial cities such as Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds and Sheffield emerged as the new economic centres of the country, their population booming several fold. The gap between the rich and the poor increased considerably, as was poignantly described by Charles Dickens in such novels as David Copperfield or Oliver Twist.

Regency & Reforms

During George III's insanity (1811-1820), the Prince of Wales was appointed as Regent, then became King George IV (1762-1830) at his father's death. The Regent was known for his extravagance and liking for women. He was more often diverting himself in his magnificent Oriental-style pavilion in Brighton than worrying about the affairs of state in London, leaving the power to the Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool (1770-1828), during most of his reign.

George IV notoriously had poor relationships with his father, and especially his wife, Caroline of Brunswick, refusing to recognise her as Queen and seeking to divorce her.

The King and Lord Liverpool were opposed to the Catholic Emancipation, i.e. the issue of reducing restrictions on the political rights of Roman Catholics. The Duke of Wellington, however, passed the Catholic Relief Act in 1829 during his term as Prime Minister (1828-1830).

George IV died in 1830, and was replaced by his brother, William IV (1765-1837). In 1831, the Whig party came back to power and Earl Grey (1764-1845), the new Prime Minister (after whom the tea is named), reformed the electoral system.

On the cultural scene, the early 19th century was highly prolific. It was the Romantic period, with poets like Lord Byron (1788-1824), Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822) or John Keats (1795-1821) and novelist Jane Austen (1775-1817). Also worth noting is that the world's first steam train was launched on the Stockton and Darlington railway (North-East England) in 1825 by George Stephenson (1781-1848).

The British Empire & Victorian England

In 1837, William IV died of liver disease and the throne passed to the next in line, his 18-year old niece Victoria (1819-1901), although she did not inherit the Kingdom of Hanover, where the Salic Law forbid women to rule.

Victoria didn't expect to become queen, was still unmarried and inexperienced in politics, and had to rely on her Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne (1779-1848), after whom the Australian city is
named. She finally got married to her first cousin, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha (1819-1861), and both were respectively niece and nephew of the first King of the Belgians, Leopold I (of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha).

Prince Albert organised the Great Exhibition (the first World Fair) in 1851, and the profits were used to found the great South Kensington Museum (later renamed the Victoria and Albert Museum) in London.

Britain asserted its hegemony on virtually every part of the globe, although this resulted in numerous wars, as for example the Opium Wars (1839-42 & 1856-60) with Qing China, or the Boer Wars (1880-81 & 1899-1902) with the Dutch-speaking settlers of South Africa.

In 1854, the United Kingdom was brought into the Crimean War (1854-56) on the side of the Ottoman Empire and against Russia. One of the best known figure of that war was Florence Nightingale (1820-1910), who fought for the improvement of the women's condition and pioneered modern nursing (see Claydon House).

In 1861, Albert died prematurely at the age of 42. Victoria was devastated and retired in a semi-permanent state of mourning. She nevertheless started a romantic relationship with her Scottish servant John Brown (1826-1883), and there were even talks of a secret marriage. This episode of Victoria's life has been the object of the film Mrs Brown.

The latter years of her reign were dominated by two influential Prime Ministers, Benjamin Disraeli (1808-1881) and his rival William Ewart Gladstone (1809-1898). The former was the favourite of the Queen, and crowned her "Empress of India" in 1876, in return of which Victoria creating him Earl of Beaconsfield. Gladstone was a liberal, and often at odd with both Victoria and Disraeli, but the strong support he enjoyed from within his party kept him in power for a total of 14 years between 1868 and 1894. He legalised trade unions, advocated both universal education and universal suffrage (well, at least for men).

Queen Victoria was to have the longest reign of any British monarch (64 years), but also the most glorious, as she ruled over 40% of the globe and a quarter of the world's population.

The Two World Wars

Victoria's numerous children married in about all European Royal families, which owned her the affectionate title of "grandmother of Europe". Her son, Edward VII (1841-1910) was the uncle of German Emperor Wilhelm II, Tsar Nicholas II of Russia, King Alphonso XIII of Spain, and Carl Eduard, Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, while George I of the Hellenes and King Frederick VIII of Denmark were his brothers-in-law; and King Albert I of Belgium, Manuel II of Portugal, King Ferdinand of Bulgaria, Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands, and Prince Ernst August, Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg, were his cousins.

The alliances between these related monarchs escalated in the Great War (WWI) of 1914-1918 when Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated in Sarajevo, and Austria declared war on Serbia, which in turn was allied to France, Russia and the UK. The First World War left over 9 million dead (including nearly 1 million Britons) throughout Europe, and financially ruined most of the countries involved. The monarchies in Germany, Austria, Russia and the Ottoman Empire all fell, and the map of central and eastern Europe was redesigned.

The consequences in Britain were disillusionment with the government and monarchy, and the
creation of the Labour Party. The General Strike of 1926 and the worsening economy led to radical political changes, and women were granted the same universal suffrage as men (from age 21 instead of previously 30) in 1928.

In 1936, Edward VIII (1894-1972) succeeded to his father George V, but abdicated the same year to marry Wallis Simpson, a twice divorced American woman. His brother then unexpectedly became George VI (1895-1952) after the scandal.

Nazi Germany was becoming more menacing as Hitler grew more powerful and aggressive. Finally Britain and France were forced to declare war on Germany after the invasion of Poland in September 1939, and so started the Second World War. The charismatic Winston Churchill (1874-1965) became the war-time Prime Minister in 1940 and his speeches encouraged the British to fight off the attempted German invasion. In one of his most patriotic speeches before the Battle of Britain (1940), Churchill address the British people with "We shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender." And indeed, Britain did not surrender.

The Postwar

In 1945, the UK was bankrupt and its industry destroyed by the Blitz war, and the British Empire was dismantled little by little, first granting the independence to India and Pakistan in 1947, then to the other Asian, African and Caribbean colonies in the 1950's and 60's (in the 70's and 80's for the smaller islands of the eastern Caribbean).

Most of these ex-colonies formed the British Commonwealth, now known as the Commonwealth of Nations. 53 states are now members of the Commonwealth, accounting for 1.8 billion people (about 30% of the global population) and about 25% of the world's land area.

In 1952, Elizabeth II (b. 1926) ascended the throne at the age of 26. Although she somewhat rehabilitated the image of the monarchy, her children did not, and their sentimental lives have made the headlines of the tabloid newspapers at least since the marriage of Charles, Prince of Wales, with Lady Diana Spencer (see Althorp) in 1981.

Pop and Rock music replaced colonial remembrances in the 1960's with bands like the Beattles, Pink Floyd, the Rolling Stones or Black Sabbath. The Hippie subculture also developed at that time.

The 70's brought the oil crisis and the collapse of the British industry. Conservative PM Margaret Thatcher (b. 1925) was elected in 1979 and stayed until 1990. She privatised the railways and shut down inefficient factories, but also increased the gap between the rich and the poor by cutting on the social security. Her methods were so harsh that she was nicknamed the 'Iron Lady'.

Thatcher was succeeded in her party by the unpopular John Major, but in 1997, the "New Labour" (more to the right than the "Old Labour") came back to power with Tony Blair (b. 1953). Blair's liberal policies and unwavering support of neo-conservative US President George W. Bush (especially regarding the invasion of Iraq in 2003) disappointed many Leftists, who really saw in Blair but a Rightist in disguise. But Blair has also positively surprised many by his intelligence and remarkable skills as an orator and negotiator.

Nowadays, the English economy relies heavily on services. The main industries are travel (discount airlines and travel agencies), education (apart from Oxford and Cambridge universities and
textbooks, hundreds of language schools for learners of English), music (EMI, HMV, Virgin...), prestige cars (Rolls Royce, Bentley, Jaguar, Lotus, Aston Martin, MG...), fashion (Burberry, Dunhill, Paul Smith, Vivienne Westwood, French Connection...), and surprisingly to some, food (well especially tea, biscuits, chocolates and jam or companies like Unilever and Cadbury-Schweppes).  

8. A SHORT HISTORY OF AMERICA

A BRIEF HISTORY OF AMERICA

By Tim Lambert
Find people in the USA! Search for lost friends or family and get reunited! Never lose touch again, get searching now!!

PART ONE COLONIAL AMERICA
THE FIRST NORTH AMERICAN COLONIES

The first Europeans to establish colonies in North America were the Spanish. In 1526 a Spaniard called Lucas Vazquez de Ayllon attempted to found a colony in Carolina. (He also brought the first black slaves to North America). However the attempt failed. Many Spaniards died of disease and the survivors abandoned the colony.

In 1565 Pedro Menendez de Aviles founded a settlement at St Augustine, Florida, the first permanent European settlement in what is now the USA.

The first English attempt to colonize North America was made by a man named Sir Humphrey Gilbert. In 1578 Queen Elizabeth granted him permission to establish a colony there. In 1583 Gilbert sailed with a small fleet of ships to Newfoundland. However Gilbert soon abandoned the venture. Gilbert was lost on the voyage home.

However his half-brother, Walter Raleigh made another attempt to found a colony. In 1584 he sent two ships to explore the coast. They found what they thought was a suitable place for a colony. In January 1585 Queen Elizabeth the 'Virgin Queen' allowed him to call the place Virginia, after her. In April 1585 an expedition was sent led by Richard Grenville. They arrived in July 1585. Grenville left men on Roanoke Island then left for England to obtain more men and supplies. However while he was gone the colonists ran very short of supplies. In 1586 the colonists abandoned Virginia and returned to England.

In 1587 another attempt to found a colony was made by a man named John White. He led an expedition of men, women and children to Virginia. However White returned to England to seek more support for the colony. Because of a war between England and Spain he was unable to return to Virginia until 1590. When he did he found the colony deserted. The fate of the colonists is unknown.

JAMESTOWN AND VIRGINIA

The first attempts to found a colony in North America were made by gentlemen adventurers. Success came only when a group of men joined together and pooled their resources to found a colony. The Virginia Company was founded in 1606. They sent two expeditions to North America. Raleigh Gilbert (Sir Humphrey Gilbert's son) led one of them. They landed in Maine but soon gave up. They returned to England in 1609. The second expedition founded Jamestown on 14 May 1607.
More settlers arrived in 1609. However shortage of food, disease and conflict with the natives caused many deaths among the colonists. In 1610 the survivors were on the verge of leaving. They were dissuaded from doing so only when more ships from England arrived. In 1611 Sir Thomas Dale became the Governor of the colony. He introduced strict discipline with a code of laws called 'Laws, Divine, Moral and Martial'. Penalties for disobedience were severe.

In 1612 a man named John Rolfe began growing tobacco. In 1614 the first Virginian tobacco was sold in England. Exports of tobacco soon became the mainstay of the Virginian economy.

Gradually the colony expanded. In 1618 the Company offered 50 acres of land to anyone who could pay for the cost of their voyage across the Atlantic. If they could not pay they could become indentured servants. When they arrived they were not free. They had to work for the company for several years to pay back the cost of their passage. In 1619 twenty black indentured servants arrived in Virginia.

Also in 1619 the first representative government in North America was created when the House of Burgesses met. (Burgess is an old English word. A burgage was a plot of land in a town on which a house was built. A burgess was the owner of a burgage).

In 1624 the Virginia Company was dissolved and the Crown took over the colony. By 1660 the population of Virginia was 27,000. By 1710 it had risen to 78,000. However in 1699 the seat of government of Virginia was moved from Jamestown to Middle Plantation (Williamsburg). Afterwards Jamestown went into decline.

THE PILGRIM FATHERS AND NEW ENGLAND

Another English colony was founded 1620 by a group of people fleeing religious persecution. They disagreed with the teachings of the Church of England and wished to separate themselves from it not to reform it. However they did not actually call themselves 'pilgrims'. The colonists set out in a ship called the Mayflower and they arrived on 11 December 1620. Half of the colonists did not survive the first year in North America. The Natives who taught them how to grow crops saved the survivors. Another colony was founded at Salem in 1628.

The Massachusetts Bay Company was formed in 1629. From 1630 large numbers of settlers were transported to New England and its population swelled. Furthermore English colonists spread over the coast of North America. In 1634 people from Massachusetts founded the town of Wethersfield in Connecticut.

In 1636 a group of people left the Massachusetts Bay colony and settled on Rhode Island. The first settlement was at Providence.

Meanwhile a fishing settlement was founded in New Hampshire in 1623. In 1629 the area between the Merrimack River and the Piscataqua River was granted to a man named Mason. It was named New Hampshire. Portsmouth, New Hampshire was founded in 1630. Officially New Hampshire was part of Massachusetts until 1679.

Unlike the southern states, which were overwhelmingly agricultural New England developed a partly mercantile economy. Fishing was an important industry. Exports of timber and barrels were also important. There was also a ship building industry in New England.
The Europeans introduced many diseases to which the natives had little or no resistance. As a result many natives died and their number declined sharply. As the British colonies grew they inevitably came into conflict with the natives. The Pequot War was fought in 1637-1638 and it ended in the destruction of the Pequot tribe. Another desperate struggle took place in 1675-1676. the colonists heavy-handed treatment of the natives led to King Philip's War. King Philip was actually a native called Metacom and the war ended with his death. Although great damage was done on both sides the defeat of the natives effectively meant that the colonists now had mastery of New England.

In 1692 twenty people died as a result of the Salem Witch Trials.

NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

In 1624 the Dutch West India Company founded a colony called New Netherland. The first settlement was at Fort Orange (Albany). In 1638 Swedes formed a colony at Fort Christina (Wilmington). The Dutch captured this colony in 1655 and made it part of New Netherland. The British captured New Netherland in 1664 and renamed it New York in honor of the king's brother the Duke of York. King Charles II granted the colony to his brother. He in turn granted the land between the Delaware and the Hudson to two men, Lord John Berkeley (1607-1678) and Sir George Carteret (1615-1680). Carteret came from the island of Jersey in the English Channel and he named the area New Jersey after his home. In 1676 the colony was divided into East and West Jersey. Carteret took East Jersey. In 1681 his widow sold it to William Penn and 11 other Quakers. Penn hoped to turn this new colony into a haven of religious tolerance for Quakers and others. In 1682 the area now called Delaware was ceded to William Penn. In 1704 it was allowed its own assembly. However until the revolution Delaware and Pennsylvania shared a governor. Meanwhile East and West Jersey were reunited in 1702.

MARYLAND

Maryland was founded as a haven for Catholics (though by no means all the early colonists were Catholic, some were Protestant). A man named Cecil Calvert was granted territory north of the Potomac River. His brother Leonard led 200 settlers there to found a colony in 1634. It was named Maryland after the king's wife, Henrietta Maria. By 1640 there were about 500 people in Maryland. It soon became another tobacco growing colony.

CAROLINA AND GEORGIA

The Carolinas were settled after 1663 when Charles II granted them to 8 proprietors. Settlers came from islands in the Caribbean as well as from Virginia and New England. Charleston was founded in 1670. Carolina soon became a slave state. From the end of the 17th century many African slaves were transported to work on the plantations. In the early 18th century the African slave population in North America increased rapidly. In 1701 Carolina was divided into North and South Carolina.

Georgia was founded in 1732 when George II gave it a charter. It was named after him. The first settlement in Georgia was Savannah, which was founded in 1733.

THE GREAT AWAKENING

In the early 18th century there was a great religious revival in the North American colonies. (Later it was given the name 'The Great Awakening'). Leading figures in the revival were William Tennent 1673-1745, a Scottish-Presbyterian preacher, Jonathan Edwards 1703-1758, a Congregationalist and John Davenport 1716-1757. The English preacher George Whitefield 1714-1770 also visited the
colonies and won many converts.

CONFLICT WITH BRITAIN

As the North American colonies grew tension with Britain was inevitable. The British felt that the colonies existed for the benefit of the mother country and this attitude was bound to cause resentment. As early as 1651 the British Parliament passed a navigation act. It stated that any goods grown or made outside Europe must be transported to England in English ships. Other Navigation Acts followed it. The 1660 Navigation Act stated that certain goods (cotton, indigo, sugar and tobacco) could only be exported from the colonies to England or to other colonies. It was followed by acts in 1670 and 1673. However the British made little attempt to enforce these acts and they were widely ignored by the colonists. (After 1763 the British tried to enforce them more rigorously, causing great resentment among the colonists).

In the early 18th century the population of the North American colonies grew rapidly. It was probably about 300,000 at the end of the 17th century but by 1760 it was over 1 million. By 1780 it had doubled. In the early 18th century the population was boosted by immigrants from Northern Ireland (most of them descended from Scottish Presbyterians). There were also many immigrants from Scotland itself. Also in the early 18th century there were many German immigrants. Land was cheap in North America and it attracted many people hoping for a better life.

THE GREAT PROCLAMATION

However relations between the colonists and the mother country turned sour after 1763. The British had just finished fighting the Seven Years War against France. They had won Canada but the war was very expensive. The British were keen to prevent any wars with the Native Americans, which might prove expensive. In 1763 a royal proclamation known as the Great Proclamation sought to ban any further westward expansion. It forbade people to settle in 'any lands beyond the heads or sources of any of the rivers which fall into the Atlantic Ocean from the West or Northwest'. This proclamation was ignored by the colonists but it also caused great resentment. The colonists objected to being told by the British government that they could not expand westwards.

NO TAXATION WITHOUT REPSRESENTATION

Furthermore in 1763 Americans paid few taxes, certainly less than the British. The British felt that the Americans should pay a greater contribution towards the cost of their defense. In 1764 the British Prime Minister, George Grenville, passed the Sugar Act. (So called because it affected imports of molasses from the West Indies. Its proper name was the American Revenue Act.) The act actually reduced duty on molasses but steps were taken to make sure it was collected! (Smuggling was widespread). The Sugar Act infuriated the Americans and they were alienated further by the Currency Act of 1764. The colonies were printing their own money because of a shortage of currency but the act banned the issue of paper money in the American colonies (and so hindered trade).

However most offence was caused by the Stamp Act of 1765, which imposed duty on legal documents, newspapers and playing cards. It was not just that the Americans hated paying the tax but that they felt a constitutional issue was involved. They believed that since they were not represented in the British parliament it had no right to impose taxes on them. In the immortal phrase 'no taxation without representation'. The Stamp Act soon proved to be unenforceable. Colonial assemblies denounced it and in October 1765 a number of colonies sent delegates to a 'Stamp act Congress' to organize resistance. Imports of British goods were boycotted and debts to British
merchants were suspended. Rioters attacked tax collectors and their property. Eventually in March 1766 the British were forced to repeal the Stamp Act. However at the same time they passed the Declaratory Act, which said that parliament was sovereign over all American colonies. This stupid act simply annoyed the colonists.

Moreover the British had learned nothing. In 1767 the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Charles Townshend, imposed duties on lead, glass, paint, oil and tea. Once again the colonists boycotted imports of British goods and once again the British government was forced to back down. By March 1770 all duties except those on tea were removed.

THE BOSTON MASSACRE AND THE BOSTON TEA PARTY

However American public opinion was galvanized by the 'Boston massacre' of March 1770. A group of people in Boston threw snowballs at British soldiers. The soldiers opened fire, killing 5 people and wounding 6. Worse all 6 of the 8 soldiers put on trial for the deaths were acquitted. Two were found guilty of manslaughter and branded on the thumbs. The British failure to execute anybody for the massacre outraged American opinion.

Then in 1773 the British East India Company sent tea to the American colonies to sell. Three ships were sent to Boston with 298 chests of tea. However Boston was a center of resistance to the British. On 16 December 1773 men dressed as Indians boarded the ships and threw the tea into the sea.

The British Prime Minister, Lord North, behaved very unwisely. In 1774 a series of laws were passed called the Coercive or Intolerable Acts. The port of Boston was closed and the seat of government was moved to Salem. The charter of Massachusetts was changed to give the royal governor more power.

The Americans were also annoyed by the Quebec Act of 1774. This was an attempt by the British parliament to make the French Catholics loyal to the British Crown. The Act extended the boundaries of Quebec southward and westward. The Americans feared the king intended to settle loyal French speaking Catholics in the West to increase his own power in the region.

THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS

Finally in September 1774 a Continental Congress met to decide policy. They demanded the repeal of the Coercive Acts and of the Quebec Act. The Congress also denounced British interference in American affairs and asserted the right of colonial assemblies to pass laws and raise taxes as they saw fit.

In September 1774 a man named Joseph Galloway put forward a compromise plan. The king would be allowed to appoint president-general and the colonial assemblies would elect a grand council. However the Congress rejected his plan.

Furthermore the British refused to compromise with the Americans. On 5 February 1775 they declared that Massachusetts was in a state of rebellion. British troops were given a free hand to deal with it.

However the American colonies had militias made up of civilians and they resisted the British. Fighting began on 19 April 1775 when British soldiers attempted to seize a colonial arms dump near Concord. The militia were warned that the British were coming. At Lexington the British were
met by the militia. The British opened fire killing 8 Americans. Meanwhile the Americans had
removed the weapons. The British advanced to Concord and fired upon the militia but then
withdrew. They retreated back to Boston with the Americans firing at them along the way. During
the march the British lost 73 dead and 200 wounded or missing. The American Revolution had
begun.

From April 1775 to March 1776 the British army was besieged in Boston. They could be supplied
by sea by the British navy. Nevertheless they soon ran short of supplies. On May 25 the British
were reinforced but they were unable to break out. Eventually they were evacuated by sea to
Canada.

The Continental Congress met again in May 1775 and agreed to raise an army. George Washington
was made its commander in chief. Congress hoped they could force the British to negotiate but
George III refused to compromise. Instead in August 1775 he declared that all the American
colonies were in a state of rebellion.

Meanwhile rule by royal governor broke down and the people demanded government without royal
interference. In May 1776 Congress decided that royal government should cease and government
should be 'under the authority of the people'. Subsequently the colonies drew up state constitutions
to replace their charters.

Meanwhile the fire was stoked by Tom Paine 1737-1809. In 1776 he published a pamphlet called
Common Sense, which rejected all talk of negotiation with the British and demanded complete
independence. Common Sense became a best seller.

On 7 June 1776 Richard Henry Lee of the Virginia Assembly presented Congress with resolutions
declaring the independence of the colonies, calling for a confederation and expressed the need to
find foreign allies for a war against Britain. On 111 June Congress appointed a committee to write a
declaration of independence. It was signed on 4 July 1776.

PART TWO THE EARLY USA

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR

At first sight the British had many advantages. They greatly outnumbered the Americans and had
much greater resources. However they were handicapped by long lines of communication. (In those
days it took a sailing ship 6 to 8 weeks to cross the Atlantic). The British won the battle of Long
Island in August 1776 and in September 1776 they captured New York. Washington was forced to
retreat. However Washington won victories at Trenton in December 1776 and at Princeton in
January 1777. The Americans were defeated at Brandywine in September 1777 but they won a
decisive victory at Saratoga in October. A British force led by Burgoyne marched south from
Canada but was surrounded and forced to surrender.

Saratoga convinced the French that the Americans might win the war. As a result they declared war
on Britain, their traditional enemy in 1778. French naval activity in the Atlantic made it even harder
for the British to supply their forces in America. Spain declared war on Britain in 1779 and the
Dutch declared war in 1780. The Spanish and Dutch tied down British forces in Europe.

Furthermore the Americans won victories at Kings Mountain in October 1780 and at Cowpens in
January 1781. Cornwallis, the British Commander, unwisely concentrated his forces on the coast at
Yorktown, Virginia. However the French navy blockaded him while the Americans besieged him
from the land. The British were forced to surrender. Yorktown was a catastrophic defeat for the
British and ended any hope of them ending the war. Nevertheless it continued for 2 more years
before the Treaty of Paris ended it in September 1783.

To read about life in Colonial America click here.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

In 1777 Articles of Confederation were drawn up which joined the states into a loose federation.
However the arrangement proved unsatisfactory. In 1787 each state sent delegates to a convention
in Philadelphia to remedy this. Between May and September 1787 they wrote a new constitution.
The first Congress met in 1789 and George Washington became the first President. In 1791 ten
amendments, known as the Bill of Rights were ratified.

In the late 18th century and the early 19th century the population of the USA grew rapidly.
Immigrants from Europe poured into the country including many from Germany. Meanwhile the
USA expanded westward. In 1791 Vermont was admitted to the union as the 14th state. Kentucky
became the 15th state in 1792 and Tennessee the 16th in 1796. In 1803 Ohio became the 17th state.

THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE

Also in 1803 American territory was greatly increased by the Louisiana purchase. France claimed a
vast amount of land in central North America around the Missouri River and the Arkansas River. In
1803 Napoleon agreed to sell the lot for $15 million. Buying the French land meant there was now
no bar to the USA spreading across the continent to the Pacific Ocean. Louisiana became the 18th
state of the union in 1812.

THE WAR OF 1812

Meanwhile the Americans and British fought another war. This war came about partly because,
after 1807, the British navy blockaded European ports during the war with Napoleon and they
prevented American ships from delivering their cargoes. They also boarded American ships looking
for deserters. Some of the men they arrested were not deserters at all. Finally some Americans
wished to invade Canadian territory. War was declared on 18 June 1812. The senators voted 19 to
13 for war. However not all Americans actively supported the war. Some were, at best, lukewarm in
their support. This dissension weakened the US war effort. On the other hand American sailors
were all volunteers while many sailors in the British navy were forced to join by press gangs.
Volunteers were, generally, better than pressed men, one reason why America did well in naval
battles.

However an American attempt to invade Canada failed. However the American navy had more
success. They won a victory on Lake Erie in September 1813. However Napoleon abdicated in
April 1814 allowing the British to send more forces to North America. In August 1814 a British
expedition landed and captured Washington. They withdrew after a few weeks. A peace treaty was
signed at the end of 1814. However a major battle was fought after it was signed. The British were
severely defeated at the Battle of New Orleans on 8 January 1815.

THE GROWTH OF THE USA

In 1804 Meriwether Lewis and William Clark set out to explore what is now the northwest United
States. In 1805 they followed the Missouri River to its headwaters then crossed the Rocky
Mountains and reached the Pacific. They returned in 1806.

By 1810 the population of the USA was over 7.2 million and it continued to grow rapidly. By 1820 it was over 9.6 million and by 1840 over 17 million. More and more states were added to union. Indiana was admitted in 1816. Mississippi followed in 1817. Illinois became a state in 1818 and Alabama in 1819. Missouri became a state in 1821. It was followed by Arkansas in 1836 and Michigan in 1837.

The American economy also grew rapidly. In the south cotton expanded rapidly after Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin in 1793. It also grew because Britain was industrializing. There was a huge cotton industry in Britain in the early 19th century, which devoured cotton from America. In the North trade and commerce grew rapidly. By 1860 more than 60% of the world's cotton was grown in the USA.

In the decades after the war of 1812 the Northern States began to industrialize. Coal mining and manufacturing industries boomed.

In 1817 the New York legislature authorized a canal from the Hudson River to Lake Erie. The canal was completed in 1825 and it cut the cost of transporting freight. Furthermore the first railroad was built in the USA was built in 1828.

After 1814 there was fighting between Seminole Indians from Florida and settlers from Georgia. The Seminoles also allowed runaway slaves to live among them, which annoyed the Americans. Eventually, in 1818 Andrew Jackson led a force into Florida (although it was Spanish territory). This was the first Seminole War. Spain ceded Florida to the USA in 1821. Florida became a US state in 1845.

TEXAS JOINS THE USA

In the 1820s the Mexican government welcomed Americans who wished to settle in its thinly populated territory of Texas. However in the American settlers soon quarreled with their Mexican masters and in 1835 they began a rebellion. On 1 March 1836 a convention met and on 2 March 1836 they signed a Texas Declaration of Independence. Meanwhile a force of Mexicans under Santa Anna besieged about 189 men in the fortress at Alamo. All the defenders were eventually killed and the Alamo passed into legend. Apart from Americans Scots fought at the Alamo, so did Irishmen and Englishmen. There was also a Welshman and a Dane.

However on 21 April 1836 Texan troops under Sam Houston routed the Mexican army under Santa Anna at the battle of San Jacinto. Texas became independent and Sam Houston became its first president. In 1845 the USA annexed Texas and it became the 28th US state. However the Mexicans never accepted the independence of Texas and they were infuriated when the Americans annexed the territory. The US annexation of Texas led directly to war with Mexico.

THE MEXICAN WAR

In 1845, fearing the Mexicans would invade Texas, President Polk sent troops under Zachary Taylor to the Rio Grande. The Mexicans ambushed an American patrol north of the river. However the Americans defeated the Mexicans at the battles of Palo Alto on 8 May 1846 and Resaca de la Palma on 9 May 1846. On 13 May 1846 Congress declared war on Mexico. On 21 September Taylor attacked Monterrey. An armistice was agreed and the Mexican troops withdrew. Santa Anna counterattacked on 22 February 1847 but he was defeated.

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Then General Scott captured Veracruz on 28 March 1847. He then marched on Mexico City and captured it in mid-September 1847. The Mexican War was ended by the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in February 1848. Mexico ceded New Mexico and California to the USA.

THE PACIFIC COAST OF THE USA

The population of California boomed when a gold rush occurred. Gold was discovered at Sutters Mill on 24 January 1848. In the fall of 1848 newspapers in the East published the news that gold could be found in California and a gold rush began. By early 1849 large numbers of men set out for California hoping to make their fortune. By 1852 the population of California reached 250,000. The huge wave of migrants created a huge demand for industries products and the Californian economy prospered. California was admitted to the union as a state in 1850.

Meanwhile, in the 1840s and 1850s, many settlers traveled along the Oregon Trail. The trail was used by trappers from the early 19th century but the first wagon train traveled along it in 1842. It was followed by many others but railroads eventually made the trail obsolete. Oregon was admitted to the union as a state in 1859.

THE INDIAN WARS

As the USA expanded westward there were many wars with the Indians. In 1790 Chief Little Turtle of the Miami defeated an American force under Josiah Harmar. The next year the Americans were defeated again. However in 1794 American troops decisively defeated the natives at the Battle of Fallen Timbers. By the treaty of Greenville, 1795, the natives were forced to cede most of Ohio to the Americans.

During the war of 1812 some natives sided with the British. The Creeks won a battle against the Americans at Fort Sims in 1812. However troops led by Andrew Jackson defeated the Creeks at Horseshoe Bend in 1814. The Treaty of Fort Jackson forced the Creeks to cede more than half their land to the Americans. (It later became the state of Alabama).

Andrew Jackson later became President and in 1830 he signed the Indian Removal Bill which forced Indians east of the Mississippi River to move to Oklahoma.

The Choctaws were forced to move in 1832. They were followed by the Creeks in 1835 and the Chickasaw in 1837. The Cherokee's were forced to move in 1838-39. (So many of them died on the trail it was called the 'Trail of Tears'. However one tribe, the Seminoles of Florida, resisted deportation. In the years 1835-1842 they fought a guerrilla war against the Americans. This was the Second Seminole War. However in 1837 their leader, Osceola, was captured. Most of the Seminoles eventually surrendered and were forced to move to Oklahoma but several hundred escaped and fought another war in 1855-1858. This was the Third Seminole War.

In the 1850s the USA also fought wars with the natives of the Northwest. The natives were defeated in the Rogue River War of 1855-56 and the Yakima War of 1855-58. Afterwards they were forced onto reservations.

THE USA IN THE MID-19TH CENTURY

The USA continued to grow rapidly and by 1860 its population was 31 million. New states were added. Iowa was added to the union in 1846. Wisconsin followed in 1848 and Kansas was admitted
in 1861.

However the rapidly growing nation was torn apart by the issue of slavery.

When the constitution was written in 1787 many people hoped that slavery would die out of its own accord. However Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton gin in 1793 gave slavery a new importance in the southern states. In the northern states slavery was gradually abolished and the USA became divided into 'free states' and 'slave states'.

THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE

In 1803 the USA bought land from France. This was known as the Mississippi purchase. In 1819 part of the territory asked to be admitted to the union as a state in which slavery was allowed. However at that time the USA was evenly divided between free states and slave states. Another slave state would upset the balance. Furthermore northerners feared that more slave states would be created in future. Representative James Tallmadge of New York proposed an amendment, which would have ended slavery in Missouri. However it did not become law.

A row occurred between northerners who believed that Congress had the power to ban slavery in new states and southerners who believed that new states had the right to allow slavery if they wished. Eventually an agreement was reached. Missouri was admitted as a slave state but at the same time part of Massachusetts became the state of Maine so the balance of slave and free was preserved. Furthermore a line was drawn across the continent. States north of it were to be free, south of it they were to be slave. However the Missouri compromise was only a temporary solution. Gaining new territory from Mexico created new tensions. In 1846 a man named David Wilmot introduced the Wilmot proviso, which stated that slavery should not be allowed in any territory taken from Mexico. It was added as an amendment to bills but was never passed by Congress. Nevertheless the Wilmot Proviso alienated the south.

THE COMPROMISE OF 1850

Eventually a compromise was reached. The Compromise of 1850 stated that the territories of New Mexico and Utah could decide for themselves whether they wished to allow slavery or not when they applied to become states. A fugitive slave law was also passed which said that slaves who ran away to the north should be returned to their masters.

The Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 organized the territories of Kansas and Nebraska. It also ended the Missouri Compromise. The compromise drew a line across the continent and banned slavery north of it. Although Kansas and Nebraska were north of the line the Act allowed them to choose whether to permit slavery or not when they applied to become states.

In Kansas supporters and opponents of slavery came to blows in a series of violent incidents called 'Bleeding Kansas'.

Feeling against slavery in the north was strengthened by Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel Uncle Tom's Cabin, which was published in 1852.

In the Dred-Scott case of 1857 the southern-dominated Supreme Court decided that slaves were not and never could be US citizens. It also declared the 1820 Missouri Compromise unconstitutional. The case enraged public opinion in the north.
The civil war was not caused just by the question of slavery. North and south were also divided over tariffs. The northern states began to industrialize in the early 19th century. By the middle of the century the north was becoming an industrial, urban society. Northerners wanted tariffs to protect their industries. However the south remained an agricultural society. Its economy was based on plantations worked by slaves. Southerners objected to tariffs because they bought goods from the north or from Europe and tariffs made them more expensive. North and south were quite different economically and culturally.

THE OUTBREAK OF CIVIL WAR

The civil war was finally provoked by the election of Abraham Lincoln 1809-1865 as president. Lincoln did not believe he had the power to abolish slavery in states where it already existed. However he firmly opposed the expansion of slavery into territories of the USA, which were likely to become states in future. His policy meant that in future free states would outnumber slave ones. As a result of his election South Carolina ceded from the union on 20 December 1860. Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Texas followed it early in 1861. Together they formed the Confederate States of America on 4 February 1861. Jefferson Davis(1808-1889) became the President.

Fighting began on 12 April 1861. Fort Sumter was a unionist stronghold under Major Robert Anderson. On 12 April the Confederate General Beauregard ordered the unionists to evacuate the fort. The unionists rejected his terms and that day southern artillery bombarded the fort. Fort Sumter was forced to surrender the next day but the unionist soldiers were allowed to retreat to the north. Afterwards both sides began arming for war.

Following Fort Sumter Arkansas ceded from the union on 6 May 1861. It was followed by Tennessee and North Carolina.

However the south was easily outmatched by the north. In the south there were only 5 1/2 million whites and over 3 1/2 million slaves. The north outnumbered the south 4 to 1 in men of military age. Furthermore while the north had begun to industrialize the south remained an agricultural society. About 90% of manufacturing industry was in the north of 2/3 of US railroads. Furthermore the south suffered from disunity. Since they were firm believers in states rights the confederate states could not form a firmly united federation.

Despite these disadvantages the south won some early victories.

THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

In July 1861 General Beauregard was in charge of 22,000 confederate troops an Manassas Junction by the Bull Run River. General McDowell marched south with over 30,000 unionist soldiers. They attacked the confederates on 21 July 1861. However they were held in check by troops led by Thomas 'Stonewall' Jackson. Eventually the unionists retreated.

However in the west the unionists won a significant victory at Shiloh on 6-7 April 1862. On the first day the confederates had some success but they were unable to drive the unionists off the field completely. Unionist reinforcements arrived that night and on 7 April the confederates were forced to retreat with heavy losses. In Louisiana unionists captured New Orleans on 25 April and Baton Rouge on 12 May.

In April 1862 the Army of the Potomac, led by General McClellan began the Peninsular Campaign.
They captured Yorktown on 4 May 1862. By late May McClellan reached the outskirts of Richmond. However in late June 1862 General Robert E. Lee attacked and fought a series of battles called 'The Seven Days'. McClellan was forced to retreat.

In August 1862 the two armies clashed at a battle known as Second Bull Run or Second Manassas. It was a decisive southern victory and the northern army retreated. Lee invaded the north and the two armies fought at Antietam. Lee was forced to retreat into Virginia.

However the unionists were severely defeated at Fredericksburg on 13 December 1862. Robert E. Lee won another brilliant victory at Chancellorsville in May 1863.

Lee invaded the north again in June 1863. The turning point of the war was at Gettysburg in July 1863. The two armies clashed on 1-3 July. At first the confederates had some success. Eventually, however, they were forced to retreat with heavy losses. The south also suffered defeat at Vicksburg on the Mississippi. General Grant laid siege to the town and captured it on 4 July 1863. From the middle of 1863 the south's fortunes gradually waned. In November the south suffered another defeat at Chattanooga.

In May 1864 both sides suffered heavy losses at the Battle of the Wilderness in Virginia. The unionists were unable to capture Petersburg or Richmond for many months.

Meanwhile, after Chattanooga, General Sherman began to advance through Georgia towards the sea. His army entered Atlanta on 3 September 1864. On 21 December 1861 Sherman's troops captured Savannah on the coast. The confederacy was cut in half. Then, in February 1865, Sherman headed north into South Carolina. He captured Columbia on 19 February 1865. Then he pressed on into North Carolina.

Further north Robert E. Lee faced increasing pressure from Grant's forces in Virginia. On 2 April 1864 the confederates abandoned Petersburg and Richmond. Finally on 9 April 1865 Lee surrendered to Grant at Appotomax Court House. That was effectively the end of the civil war. The rest of the confederate forces surrendered soon afterwards. Johnston surrendered to Sherman on 18 April and the last confederate army surrendered on 26 May 1865.

However Lincoln did not live to see the end of the war. John Wilkes Booth assassinated him on 15 April 1865. Lincoln was watching a play in Ford's Theater when Booth shot him in the head. Andrew Johnson took his place.

THE END OF SLAVERY

At first Lincoln was reluctant to abolish slavery in the south. However he eventually changed his mind. On 23 September 1862 he made the Emancipation Proclamation. Slaves would be made free in any states still in rebellion on 1 January 1863. However this only applied to areas occupied by the unionist army after that date it did not apply to areas already under unionist control. However the proclamation was followed by the 13th amendment, which banned slavery. It was ratified by December 1865.

To read a history of slavery click here.

RECONSTRUCTION IN THE SOUTH

Johnson appointed provincial governors for the former confederate states. In each of them a
constitutional convention was elected to draw up a new constitution.

However although they were forced to accept the end of slavery southern governments drew up 'black codes' which restricted black peoples rights, such as depriving them of the right to vote or to sit on juries. Southern whites were completely unwilling to accept the former slaves as equals.

Johnson was unwilling to force the south to change. Congress passed the Civil Rights Act 1866. It stated that all people born in the USA were now citizens regardless of race, color or previous condition (i.e. if they were former slaves). Johnson vetoed the act but congress overrode his presidential veto.

Johnson's refusal to take firm action against the south alienated Congress. They passed the first Reconstruction Act in 1867. (It was followed by other acts). The southern governments were removed from power and the former confederate states were placed under military rule again. They were forced to allow black men the right to vote.

However the southern states were gradually re-admitted to the union and allowed to send senators and representatives to Congress again.

In 1875 Congress passed the Civil Rights Act. By it all people regardless of race, color or previous condition, were entitled to full and equal treatment in 'inns, public conveyances on land or water, theatres and other places of public amusement'. However in 1883 the Supreme Court decided the Act was unconstitutional.

When Rutherford Hayes was inaugurated as President in 1877 he withdrew troops from the south. The former confederate states were then left to go their own way without any interference from the north. In the south white people re-asserted their rule and black people were forced to become subservient. Between 1890 and 1908 black people were deprived of the right to vote in all the former confederate states.

Furthermore in 1866-1867 the Ku Klux Klan was formed to terrorize black people. They played an important role in restoring white rule by scaring black people into not voting.

PART THREE THE RISE OF THE USA

In the late 19th century the population of the USA grew very rapidly. In 1860 the population was 31 million. By 1900 it was almost 76 million. Immigrants from Europe poured into the USA hoping for a better life. Many people were lured by the Homesteader Act of 1862. Settlers were offered 160 acres of land free provided they agreed to till it for 5 years. (However Chinese immigration into the USA was ended by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882).

American industry also boomed. In the late 19th century the USA was the fastest growing industrial nation in the world. By the end of the century it had surpassed Britain in production of iron and steel. The American railroad network also grew rapidly. In 1850 there were 9,000 miles of railways. By 1900 there were 190,000 miles. The first transcontinental railroad was built in 1869.

Meanwhile, in 1859, Edwin Drake (1819-1899) struck oil in Pennsylvania. Soon there was a flourishing oil industry in Pennsylvania. The first oil pipeline was built in 1865.

In 1874 Levi Strauss began making riveted jeans.
An increasing number of Americans lived in cities. By 1900 almost 1/3 of them did. by then there were more than 40 cities with a population of over 100,000. (It wasn't until 1920 that the majority of Americans lived in cities). Conditions in the industrial cities were often appalling. Many people lived in overcrowded slums.

Meanwhile American agriculture continued to boom. It was helped by new technology. Cyrus McCormick invented a mechanical reaper in 1834. John Deere (1804-1886) invented the steel plough in 1838. In 1854 the first successful self-governing windmill (that changed direction automatically to face the wind) was made. In 1874 barbed wire was patented.

THE PLAINS INDIANS

Westward expansion inevitably meant wars with the plains Indians. From the 1860s to the 1880s a series of wars were fought.

Eventually all the Indian Wars were won by the whites because of their superior technology. They also hunted the buffalo, the main food supply, almost to extinction. The plains tribes such as the Cheyenne, Arapaho and Sioux were all forced to move onto reservations.

Conditions on the reservations were appalling. Rations were inadequate and in some cases there was near starvation. Then in 1888 a Paiute Indian called Wovok claimed he was the messiah. He claimed that soon North America would be restored to the Natives and the plains would run black with buffalo again. His followers did the ghost dance. This new religious movement alarmed the white men. It ended with a massacre at Wounded Knee on 29 December 1890. Soldiers were sent to disarm a group of Indians but one man refused to surrender his gun. Somebody started shooting and the rest of the soldiers followed killing many Indians (possibly as many as 350). The massacre at Wounded Knee marked the end of the Indian Wars and the final triumph of the white man.

Meanwhile in 1881 Helen Hunt Jackson published A Century of Dishonor which showed how unjustly the native people had been treated. However in 1887 the Dawes Act was passed. It stated that tribal lands should be divided up into individual holdings. The intention was to undermine the tribal way of life and force the natives to adopt the white way of life. Furthermore after the land was divided a great deal was left over. It was declared 'surplus' and sold. As a result the amount of land held by Indians declined drastically.

The year 1890 was significant for another reason. By then the frontier had disappeared as settlers moved across the continent.

In the late 19th century several new states were added to the union. West Virginia was admitted in 1863. Nevada followed in 1864. Nebraska was admitted in 1867. It was followed by Colorado in 1876. In 1889 four new states were admitted to the union, North and South Dakota, Montana and Washington. In 1890 Idaho and Wyoming were admitted. Utah followed in 1896.

THE SPANISH WAR

In 1898 the USA fought a war with Spain. In the 1890s Cuba rebelled against Spanish rule and the Spanish dealt with the rebels very harshly. That enraged American public opinion. On 15 February 1898 an American battleship, Maine, blew up in Havana Harbor, killing 260 men. It is not certain what caused the explosion but many people blamed the Spanish. On 25 April 1898 the USA went to war. On 1 May Spanish ships were destroyed in Manila Harbor. US soldiers landed in the Philippines and they captured Manila on 13 August. Meanwhile a Spanish fleet was destroyed.
outside Santiago on 3 July. US soldiers landed in Cuba and captured Santiago on 17 July. The last Spanish troops in Cuba surrendered on 26 July. An armistice was signed on 14 August. By a peace treaty, which was signed in Paris on 10 December 1898, Cuba became independent while the USA took the Philippines, Puerto Rico and Guam.

The Spanish War proved the USA was now a great power. By 1910 the USA had overtaken Britain as the richest and most powerful nation in the world. By then the population of the USA had reached 92 million.

20TH CENTURY USA

In the early 20th century three new states were admitted to the union, Oklahoma in 1907 and Arizona and New Mexico in 1912.

Also in the early 20th century the USA built the Panama Canal. President Theodore Roosevelt decided to build a canal across Panama in 1902. In 1903 the USA leased a 6-mile wide canal zone for 99 years. The canal was built in the years 1904-1914.

THE USA IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

When the First World War began in 1914 the USA remained neutral. However Germany alienated American public opinion on 7 May 1915 when a German submarine sank the Cunard liner Lusitania, without warning. Among the 1,198 people killed were 128 Americans. Nevertheless Woodrow Wilson fought the 1916 election partly on the slogan 'he kept us out of the war'.

However on 1 February 1917 Germany began unrestricted submarine warfare. That meant that any neutral ship attempting to trade with Britain was a target for submarines. Furthermore British intelligence intercepted a telegram from Arthur Zimmerman, German Foreign Secretary. It stated that in the event of a war between Germany and the USA efforts should be made to persuade Mexico to attack the USA. The Mexicans were offered parts of the USA as a reward if they did so.

On 6 April 1917 the USA declared war on Germany. America had a strong navy but a relatively small army. However conscription was introduced and the USA began to raise a huge army. The first US soldiers were sent to France in June 1917 but it was the spring of 1918 before large numbers arrived. By September the US commander General John J. Pershing was able to begin an offensive against the Germans. In September 1918 US troops destroyed a German salient at St Mihiel. They then launched an attack on the Meuse-Argonne area. German troops were pushed back until Germany surrendered on 11 November 1918.

Meanwhile women gained the vote. In April 1917 only 11 states allowed women to vote. However in 1918 the House adopted the 14th amendment, which allowed women to vote. It was ratified in 1919 and came into effect in 1920.

The early 20th century saw internal migration in the USA. Many black people moved from the south to the north especially to the big cities. The National Association For The Advancements of Colored Peoples was founded in 1909 to improve conditions for black people. However there were race riots in several cities in 1919.

However immigration into the USA was severely restricted after 1921 when the Emergency Quota Act was passed.
THE 1920s

For most people (not all) the 1920s were a time of prosperity. In 1912 only 16% of homes had electric light. By 1927 it had risen to 63%. Electrical appliances became common, refrigerators, irons and fans. Radios also became common. By 1930 40% of homes had one. Cars also became common in the 1920s. Americans enjoyed the highest standard of living in the world.

The 1920s were also the era of prohibition. The eighteenth amendment was ratified in 1919 and came into force in 1920. It banned the 'manufacture, sale or transportation' of alcohol. However people simply made alcohol illegally and drank it in 'speakeasies'. Worse, prohibition boosted organized crime as gangsters tried to control the supply of alcohol. Prohibition ended in 1933.

THE WALL STREET CRASH

In 1929 the American economy began to falter. Demand for new cars fell and house building slowed down. However the stock market continued to boom in the late 1920s. Many people bought stocks with borrowed money. As a result the stock market became inflated. Prices rose to a very high level. However, inevitably, some people began to sell. From mid-September prices fell. On 24 October 1929, known as Black Thursday, panic selling began and prices fell catastrophically, an event known as the Wall Street Crash. Business confidence disappeared, banks failed and industry slumped. By 1932 industrial production in the USA had fallen by half and exports fell to one third of their 1929 level. Unemployment went through the roof. By 1932 about one quarter of the work force was unemployed. When people lost their jobs they could no longer buy goods and demand fell so more people lost their jobs. There had been economic slumps in America before but his one was more severe than anything previously experienced. It was known as the Depression.

THE DEPRESSION

President Hoover did try and help. He persuaded employers to maintain wages at their present levels. He also increased spending on roads, bridges and public buildings. However Hoover refused to introduce federal unemployment relief. He believed in what he called 'Rugged individualism'. He believed too much state help would make people dependent.

For the unemployed life during the depression was very harsh. Many were reduced to attending soup kitchens run by charities. (The soup was sometimes called 'Hoover stew'. Destitute people lived in shantytowns they called Hoovervilles. Hoover became deeply unpopular and in 1932 Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected President.

THE NEW DEAL

Roosevelt assured the American people that the only thing they had to fear was fear itself. He promised the American people 'A New Deal'. However between 1933 and 1939 he had only limited success. Unemployment fell to between 14% and 15% by 1937. However in that year the economy dipped again. (It was called the recession) and unemployment rose to 17%. However industrial production rose to its 1929 level again by 1939.

At first Roosevelt persuaded Congress to pass a number of laws in a hectic period known as 'The Hundred Days'. One of the first things Roosevelt did was to close all the banks in the USA by law. The Emergency Banking Act of 9 March 1933 meant they would only open again if the Federal government declared they were solvent. This measure persuaded people it was safe to deposit their savings in banks. Restoring faith in banks was the first step to dealing with the depression.
On 12 May 1933 the Federal Emergency Relief Act was passed to help the unemployed. The states were given grants to provide work like repairing roads and improving parks and schools.

Also in 1933 Roosevelt founded the civilian Conservation Corps, which employed young men on conservation projects. A Public Works Administration was created which built public buildings, bridges and dams. Also the Tennessee Valley Authority was created to build dams and hydroelectric plants.

The Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 tried to raise the price of farm produce by reducing supply. Land was set aside and deliberately not used. In 1937 the Farm Security Administration was formed to lend money to tenant farmers to buy their land.

However farmers on the plains suffered terribly during the depression. Over planting, overgrazing and a drought combined to create a 'dust bowl'. Many farmers abandoned the land and went to California in search of work.

In 1935 the Social Security Act created old age pensions and an unemployment insurance scheme. Also in 1935 the National Labor Relations Act or Wagner Act upheld workers right to collective bargaining. In 1938 a Fair Labor Standards Act created a minimum wage.

Despite all of Roosevelt's efforts the depression only ended with the coming of war.

THE APPROACH OF WAR

In 1940 Germany conquered Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium and France. In response Roosevelt started to expand American armed forces. He introduced conscription. Although American public opinion was opposed to joining the war Roosevelt declared that America must be 'the arsenal of democracy'. In January 1941 he introduced the lend-lease bill to Congress. It empowered him to sell, lend or lease arms, food or any other supplies to any country whose defense he deemed vital to the United States. At first lend-lease applied only to Britain but in August Roosevelt extended it to Russia. US troops also occupied Iceland.

THE USA IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR

On 7 December 1941 the Japanese attacked the American Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor. The Michael Bay film Pearl Harbor captures and illustrates a sense of what it was like to experience these events first hand. The next day Congress declared war on Japan. On 11 December 1941 Germany and Italy declared war on the USA.

The USA mobilised all its resources for war. Industrial output doubled during World War II and by 1943 there was full employment. Only 2,000 aircraft were made in 1939 but by 1944 the figure was 96,000. The American public suffered less than people in other countries because the USA escaped occupation of air raids.

During World War II many black people migrated from the south to the north and west. Black people became increasingly dissatisfied with their position in American society. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples increased its membership. The Congress for Racial Equality was formed in 1942.

From March 1942 people of Japanese descent, on the west coast, were interned. By September over
100,000 of them had been moved inland. Yet many Japanese Americans served in the US armed forces.

The USA's massive industrial strength made the defeat of the Axis powers (Germany, Italy and Japan) inevitable. Unfortunately Roosevelt did not live to see the end of the war. He died on 12 April 1945.

PART FOUR THE MODERN USA

THE TRUMAN DOCTRINE

After World War II the USA was by far the richest and most powerful nation in the world. However relations between the USA and the Soviet Union quickly cooled after 1945. By 1947 the Cold War had begun.

In 1946 the British were helping the Greek government fight communist guerrillas. However Britain was exhausted after World War II and could not continue. On 12 March 1947 Truman announced that the USA must 'support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.' Truman hoped the aid would be primarily financial. The USA gave money to both Greece and Turkey. The USA also provided massive aid for Europe, which was devastated by war. The aid given was called the Marshall Plan after Secretary of State George C. Marshall who first proposed aid for Europe in June 1947. The aid was given in 1948-1951 and it greatly assisted European recovery. However in 1950 the USA was drawn into the Korean War.

THE FAIR DEAL

In his domestic policy Truman tried to extend the New Deal (his policies became known as the 'Fair Deal', but he was frustrated by Congress which refused to pass most of his proposed laws. However in 1946 the Employment Act committed the federal government to the aim of full employment. In 1949 Congress increased the minimum wage and extended state benefits to another 10 million people. Furthermore in 1949 the Housing Act provided for slum clearance and for public housing for more than 800,000 people.

McCARTHYISM IN THE USA

The early 1950s was the era of McCarthyism. At that time there was a great fear of communist infiltration. In 1946 Winston Churchill announced that an 'iron curtain' was descending across Europe. Puppet communist regimes were installed in Eastern Europe in countries like Hungary and Bulgaria.

However in Czechoslovakia elections were held. For a time democratic government ruled the country. Yet in 1948 it was overthrown by a communist coup.

Fear was fanned by the case of Alger Hiss. He had been a high-ranking government official. In 1948 a former communist called Whittaker Chambers told the House Un-American Activities Committee (which investigated 'un-American' activity) that Hiss was a spy for the Soviet Union. Hiss denied the charge. He could not be arrested for spying because of a statute of limitation. However he was charged with perjury and he was convicted in January 1950. The case increased fears of communist subversion.
Furthermore in 1949 the Russians exploded an atomic bomb. The American people were shocked to hear that spied had helped the Russians to develop a bomb by leaking them information.

Into this atmosphere of fear stepped Senator Joseph McCarthy 1908-1957. In February 1950 McCarthy claimed that he had a list of communists employed by the State Department. McCarthy then began a witch-hunt in which many people lost their jobs. However eventually McCarthy overreached himself and he began to accuse too many important people. Public support ebbed away and in December 1954 McCarthy was finally censored by the Senate.

Despite McCarthy the 1950s were a prosperous period for America. Unemployment was low, living standards rose and TV became common. The USA launched its first satellite in 1958. However the prosperity was not shared by everyone.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN THE USA

The struggle for civil rights really began in the 1950s. In the south at that time schools were segregated. In 1896 the Supreme Court ruled that segregation was constitutional as long as equal facilities were provided for both groups. In reality, of course, facilities for black people were always inferior. In 1954 the Supreme Court recognised this and overturned the previous decision. However most white people in the south were strongly opposed to desegregation and they dragged their feet. In 1957 when Little Rock Central High School was desegregated 9 black students were prevented from entering, first by the Arkansas National Guard then by the local people. Eventually Eisenhower had to send troops to allow the black students to enter.

In the south most people did not register to vote. In 1957 and 1960 Civil Rights Acts were passed to try and remove obstacles to them doing so. Neither was very successful.

However black Americans or African Americans had great success with non-violent campaigning. In 1955 Montgomery Alabama had a law, which said black people must sit at the back of buses. In December 1955 a woman called Rosa Parks sat at the front of a bus and refused to move. She was arrested. Black people then organized a boycott of the buses. Finally segregation on buses was ruled unconstitutional. One of the leaders of the boycotts was to become famous. He was the Baptist Minister Martin Luther King 1929-1968.

In 1960 black students in Greensboro, North Carolina were refused service in a restaurant. They then staged a sit-in. The sit-in movement quickly spread to shops, hotels, theatres and parks and had some success in forcing them to desegregate.

In 1962 President Kennedy sent troops to the State University of Mississippi to enforce a court order that a black student should be admitted.

In 1963 a quarter of a million people marched on Washington to demand civil rights legislation. Martin Luther King made a speech beginning with the immortal words 'I have a dream', in which he outlined his vision of racial harmony.

However black campaigners met with violence. In 1963 a campaigner named Medgar Evers was shot and killed. Also in 1963 a bomb exploded in a Baptist church in Birmingham Alabama, killing four black girls. In 1965 the militant black leader Malcolm X was assassinated.

In 1964 Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act, which gave all people equal rights in voting, education, public accommodation and federally assisted programs.
However in 1965 black anger and resentment boiled over into rioting. Riots in Los Angeles left 34 people dead. More riots followed in 1966 and in 1967. On 4 April 1968 the great orator Martin Luther King was assassinated. His death provoked further riots.


JOHN F. KENNEDY AND LYNDON B. JOHNSON

In the early 1960s Kennedy strengthened the US armed forces. He also committed the USA to landing a man on the moon by the end of the decade. Kennedy also created the Peace Corps, which sent volunteers to help with various educational, economic and welfare schemes in poor countries.

In his foreign policy Kennedy agreed to a plan to send 1,500 Cuban refugees to overthrow Cuba. The refugees landed at the Bay of Pigs in 1961 and were quickly routed by the Cuban forces. After that fiasco came the Cuban missiles crisis. The Russians placed long-range missiles on Cuba that were capable of hitting the USA. In 1963 Kennedy also signed a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which was ratified by the Senate in June 1963. Kennedy was assassinated on 22 November 1963.

Lyndon B. Johnson called for an 'all out war on poverty', recognizing that while the USA was the richest country in the world a considerable part of her population were poor. During his presidency several important acts were passed, which it was hoped would tackle the roots of poverty. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 provided for adult education and job training. The Medicare Act of 1965 provided health and hospital insurance for over 65s. The Secondary Education Act of 1965 provided aid for schools with large numbers of poor and deprived children. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 finally removed obstacles to black people voting. It banned the use of literacy tests and gave the federal government power to oversee voter registration and elections in certain circumstances.

THE VIETNAM WAR

In the early 20th century the French ruled Vietnam but in 1941 it was occupied by the Japanese. The Americans did not approve of European colonialism and had no wish to see Vietnam handed back to the French after the war. Nevertheless after World War II the French tried to rule Vietnam again. However they were opposed by communist guerrillas.

With the onset of the Cold War American sympathy for the Vietnamese cooled and from 1950 financial aid was given to the French to prop up their rule in Vietnam. Senator John Kennedy said that the USA had 'allied itself to the desperate effort of the French regime to hang on to the remnants of an empire'. He was soon proved right. In 1954 the French were utterly defeated by the guerrillas at Diem Bien Phu. Afterwards they withdrew and Vietnam was split into north and south. In the late 1950s communist guerrillas infiltrated the south. After they attacked US installations in October 1957 the USA began to provide the South Vietnamese dictator with money and materials.

In the 1960s American policy in Vietnam was influenced by the 'domino theory', which said that if one country fell to communism neighboring states would also fall. American involvement in Vietnam really began in 1961 when Kennedy sent the first soldiers.
American involvement increased after August 1964 when North Vietnamese torpedo boats attacked US warships. Congress agreed to a resolution allowing the president to 'take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression in Southeast Asia'. As a result American forces in South Vietnam rapidly increased and reached half a million by the end of 1967. The USAF also carried out strategic bombing of the north. However the Vietcong continued to fight a successful guerrilla war. The Vietnam War became increasingly unpopular at home. From 1965 onwards anti-war demonstrations were held. Then on 30 January 1968 came the Tet offensive. The Vietcong attacked towns and cities in South Vietnam. Eventually they were repulsed but American public opinion hardened. On 3 April 1968 peace talks began. From 1970 President Nixon slowly withdrew US troops from South Vietnam proposing to let the South Vietnamese defend themselves. The last US troops left in 1973.

WATERGATE

The USA was also troubled when its President became involved in a scandal and was forced to resign.

On 17 June 1972 five men broke into the Democratic Party Headquarters in the Watergate Building. The five were arrested. Later two other men, both former White House officials, were also arrested. All the men worked for the Committee for Re-election of the President or CREEP. However President Richard Nixon denied that his administration had anything to do with the break in.

The seven men were all convicted but at the sentencing in March 1973 one of them claimed the White House had arranged a 'cover up' of its involvement in the break in. Subsequently investigations revealed that a number of White House staff were involved in planning the break in and in arranging a 'cover up'.

Nixon firmly denied that he was personally involved in any attempted 'cover up'. However he refused to surrender tapes of conversations in his private office, which would prove his guilt or innocence. In April 1974 he agreed to hand over edited versions. In July 1974 the Supreme Court ordered him to hand over all relevant tapes. On 5 August 1974 Nixon surrendered tapes which made it clear that he was involved in an attempted 'cover up'. Having lost all support Nixon resigned on 9 August 1974.

After Vietnam and the Watergate scandal the USA suffered a recession in the mid-1970s. Unemployment rose to 8.5% in 1975. Despite its troubles the United States remained by far the richest and most powerful nation in the world.

In 1980 the USA was in the grip of a recession. However in the mid and late 1980s the economy grew steadily. Unemployment was almost 11% in 1982. It fell to 7% in 1985 and 5.5% in 1988. In 1999 it stood at 4.2%. Meanwhile inflation fell from 12.5% in 1980 to 4.4% in 1988.

Meanwhile the Cold War came to a sudden end in 1989 when communism collapsed in Eastern Europe. The Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 leaving the USA the world's only superpower.

THE USA IN THE 21ST CENTURY

In the late 20th century the population of the USA grew very rapidly, partly due to immigration. Today the population of the USA is 313 million.

The USA suffered a recession in 2008-2009 but it soon recovered and it remains a very wealthy
9. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Indo-European and Germanic Influences

English is a member of the Indo-European family of languages, and it is therefore related to most
of other languages of Europe and Western Asia from India to Iceland, and to this vast region we
must now add Australia and New Zealand on the east, North and South America on the west, and
part of Africa on the South. These languages, nearly or distantly related, all derive and descend
from that parent language called Indo-European, Indo-Germanic, or Aryan, which was spoken five
thousand years ago by nomads living in the plains of what is now the Ukraine and Southern Russia.

At once we may be reminded that of all the living languages of Europe Lithuanian is the most
archaic, preserving in its structural pattern the primitive features of Indo-European most faithfully.
This broad family includes most of the European languages spoken today. The Indo-European
family includes several major branches:

Latin and the modern Romance languages;
The Germanic languages;
The Indo-Iranian languages, including Hindi and Sanskrit;
The Slavic languages;
The Baltic languages of Latvian and Lithuanian (but not Estonian);
The Celtic languages; and
Greek.

The influence of the original Indo-European language, designated proto-Indo-European, can be seen
today, even though no written record of it exists. The word for father, for example, is vater in
German, pater in Latin, and pitr in Sanskrit. These words are all cognates, similar words in different
languages that share the same root.

Of these branches of the Indo-European family, two are, for our purposes of studying the
development of English, of paramount importance, the Germanic and the Romance (called that
because the Romance languages derive from Latin, the language of ancient Rome, not because of
any bodice-ripping literary genre). English is in the Germanic group of languages. This group began
as a common language in the Elbe river region about 3,000 years ago. Around the second century
BC, this Common Germanic language split into three distinct sub-groups:

East Germanic was spoken by peoples who migrated back to southeastern Europe. No East
Germanic language is spoken today, and the only written East Germanic language that survives is
Gothic.

North Germanic evolved into the modern Scandinavian languages of Swedish, Danish, Norwegian,
and Icelandic (but not Finnish, which is related to Estonian and is not an Indo-European language).

West Germanic is the ancestor of modern German, Dutch, Flemish, Frisian, and English.

Old English (500-1100 AD)

West Germanic invaders from Jutland and southern Denmark: the Angles (whose name is the
source of the words England and English), Saxons, and Jutes, began populating the British Isles in
the fifth and sixth centuries AD. They spoke a mutually intelligible language, similar to modern
Frisian—the language of northeastern region of the Netherlands—that is called Old English. Four
major dialects of Old English emerged, Northumbrian in the north of England, Mercian in the
Midlands, West Saxon in the south and west, and Kentish in the Southeast.

These invaders pushed the original, Celtic-speaking inhabitants out of what is now England into Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, and Ireland, leaving behind a few Celtic words. These Celtic languages survive today in Gaelic languages of Scotland and Ireland and in Welsh. Cornish, unfortunately, is now a dead language. (The last native Cornish speaker, Dolly Pentreath, died in 1777 in the town of Mousehole, Cornwall.)

Also influencing English at this time were the Vikings. Norse invasions, beginning around 850, brought many North Germanic words into the language, particularly in the north of England. Some examples are dream, which had meant joy until the Vikings imparted its current meaning on it from the Scandinavian cognate draumr, and skirt, which continues to live alongside its native English cognate shirt.

The majority of words in modern English come from foreign, not Old English roots. In fact, only about one sixth of the known Old English words have descendants surviving today. But this statistic is deceptive; Old English is much more important than this number would indicate. About half of the most commonly used words in modern English have Old English roots. Words like be, water, and strong, for example, derive from Old English roots.

Old English, whose best known surviving example is the poem Beowulf, lasted until about 1100. This last date is rather arbitrary, but most scholars choose it because it is shortly after the most important event in the development of the English language, the Norman Conquest.

The Norman Conquest and Middle English (1100-1500)

William the Conqueror, the Duke of Normandy, invaded and conquered England and the Anglo-Saxons in 1066 AD. (The Bayeux Tapestry, details of which form the navigation buttons on this site, is perhaps the most famous graphical depiction of the Norman Conquest.) The new overlords spoke a dialect of Old French known as Anglo-Norman. The Normans were also of Germanic stock (Norman comes from Norseman) and Anglo-Norman was a French dialect that had considerable Germanic influences in addition to the basic Latin roots.

Prior to the Norman Conquest, Latin had been only a minor influence on the English language, mainly through vestiges of the Roman occupation and from the conversion of Britain to Christianity in the seventh century (ecclesiastical terms such as priest, vicar, and mass came into the language this way), but now there was a wholesale infusion of Romance (Anglo-Norman) words.

The influence of the Normans can be illustrated by looking at two words, beef and cow. Beef, commonly eaten by the aristocracy, derives from the Anglo-Norman, while the Anglo-Saxon commoners, who tended the cattle, retained the Germanic cow. Many legal terms, such as indict, jury, and verdict have Anglo-Norman roots because the Normans ran the courts. This split, where words commonly used by the aristocracy have Romantic roots and words frequently used by the Anglo-Saxon commoners have Germanic roots, can be seen in many instances.

Sometimes French words replaced Old English words; crime replaced firen and uncle replaced eam. Other times, French and Old English components combined to form a new word, as the French gentle and the Germanic man formed gentleman. Other times, two different words with roughly the same meaning survive into modern English. Thus we have the Germanic doom and the French judgment, or wish and desire.

It is useful to compare various versions of a familiar text to see the differences between Old,
Middle, and Modern English. Take for instance this Old English (c.1000) sample from the Bible:

Fæder ure þuþe eart on heofonum  
si þin nama gehalgod tobecume þin rice gewurþe þin willa on eorðan swa swa on heofonum  
urne gedæghwamlican hlaf syle us to dæg  
and forgýf us ure gyłtas swa we forgýfað urum gyłtendum  
and ne gelæd þu us on costnunge ac alys us of yfele soþlice.

To get a feel for Old English pronunciation, play a wav file of this Old English text (518Kb), read by Catherine Ball of Georgetown University.

Rendered in Middle English (Wyclif, 1384), the same text starts to become recognizable to the modern eye:

Oure fadir þat art in heuenes halwid be þi name;  
þi reume or kyangdom come to be. Be þi wille don in herþe as it is dounin heuene.  
yeue to us today oure ech dayes bred.  
And forguye to us oure dettis þat is oure synyys as we forguyeuen to ooure dettouris þat is to men þat han synned in us.  
And lede us not into temptation but deluyere us from euyl.

Finally, in Early Modern English (King James Version, 1611) the same text is completely intelligible:

Our father which art in heauen, hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heauen.  
Giue us this day our daily bread.  
And forgiiue us our debts as we forgiiue our debters.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliuer us from euill. Amen.

In 1204 AD, King John lost the province of Normandy to the King of France. This began a process where the Norman nobles of England became increasingly estranged from their French cousins. England became the chief concern of the nobility, rather than their estates in France, and consequently the nobility adopted a modified English as their native tongue. About 150 years later, the Black Death (1349-50) killed about one third of the English population. The laboring and merchant classes grew in economic and social importance, and along with them English increased in importance compared to Anglo-Norman.

This mixture of the two languages came to be known as Middle English. The most famous example of Middle English is Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales. Unlike Old English, Middle English can be read, albeit with difficulty, by modern English-speaking people.

Meantime the language of King Alfred was transformed but its life was at no time in jeopardy. For three centuries, indeed, the literature of England was trilingual, English, Latin and French, and we must likewise make ourselves trilingual if we would study it seriously. Anyway many Englishmen of the sixteenth century wrote their native tongue with the memory of Latin rhythms and cadences in their heads; as a proof of this just think that Sir Thomas More actually did write his Utopia in Latin (1516), which was translated into French in his lifetime (1531), but not in English until many years (1551) after his tragic death. Francis Bacon as well regarded Latin as the one permanent vehicle of learning and he took care to publish his more important treatises in that language, even though The Advancement of Learning appeared in English.
We may regard this date, October 1362, just about three centuries after the Battle of Hastings (1066), as the climacteric or turning-point in the history of English language, in fact by this period the linguistic division between the nobility and the commoners was largely over. In that year, the Statute of Pleading was adopted, which made English the language of the courts and it began to be used in Parliament.

The Middle English period came to a close around 1500 AD with the rise of Modern English. Early Modern English (1500-1800)

The next wave of innovation in English came with the Renaissance. The revival of classical scholarship brought many classical Latin and Greek words into the Language. These borrowings were deliberate and many bemoaned the adoption of these inkhorn terms, but many survive to this day. Shakespeare’s character Holofernes in Loves Labor Lost is a satire of an overenthusiastic schoolmaster who is too fond of Latinisms.

Many students having difficulty understanding Shakespeare would be surprised to learn that he wrote in modern English. But, as can be seen in the earlier example of the Lord’s Prayer, Elizabethan English has much more in common with our language today than it does with the language of Chaucer. Many familiar words and phrases were coined or first recorded by Shakespeare, some 2,000 words and countless catch-phrases are his. Newcomers to Shakespeare are often shocked at the number of cliches contained in his plays, until they realize that he coined them and they became cliches afterwards. One fell swoop, vanish into thin air, and flesh and blood are all Shakespeare’s. Words he bequeathed to the language include critical, leapfrog, majestic, dwindle, and pedant.

Two other major factors influenced the language and served to separate Middle and Modern English. The first was the Great Vowel Shift. This was a change in pronunciation that began around 1400. While modern English speakers can read Chaucer with some difficulty, Chaucer’s pronunciation would have been completely unintelligible to the modern ear. Shakespeare, on the other hand, would be accented, but understandable. Long vowel sounds began to be made higher in the mouth and the letter e at the end of words became silent. Chaucer’s Lyf (pronounced /leef/) became the modern word life. In Middle English name was pronounced /nam-a/, five was pronounced /feef/, and down was pronounced /doon/. In linguistic terms, the shift was rather sudden, the major changes occurring within a century. The shift is still not over, however, vowel sounds are still shortening, although the change has become considerably more gradual.

The last major factor in the development of Modern English was the advent of the printing press. William Caxton brought the printing press to England in 1476. Books became cheaper and as a result, literacy became more common. Publishing for the masses became a profitable enterprise, and works in English, as opposed to Latin, became more common. Finally, the printing press brought standardization to English. The dialect of London, where most publishing houses were located, became the standard. Spelling and grammar became fixed, and the first English dictionary was published in 1604.

The revival of learning. (From Our Language by Simeon Potter)

Why is it that so many of our technical terms derive from Greek? Primarily, it is because Athens once led the world in art, science, and philosophy and because the Greek language is peculiarly well adapted to supply the need in English for precise and unambiguous terms with no inherited
penumbra of meaning. Greek has, too, an unusual capacity for forming compounds by means of an extensive and regular system of suffixes. Moreover, there are historical causes. Athens reached the height of her power in the time of Pericles (c. 495-429 B.C.). Within the century following, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle lived and taught. After the decline of Athens much Greek learning was preserved in Latin and much, too, in Arabic, especially scientific treatises on medicine, astronomy, and mathematics. This Arabic learning eventually found its way into Western Europe by circuitous paths through Sicily and Spain, but much was lost until the year 1453, when the capture of Byzantium or Constantinople by the Ottoman Turks dispersed Greek-speaking clerks, who fled to the west. Eminent English scholars, like the Venerable Bede of Jarrow in the eighth century and John of Salisbury in the twelfth, certainly had some knowledge of Greek. They knew some Greek words, but it is doubtful whether they could read Greek with ease. Learning they regarded above all as the instrument of the good life, and, like most other scholars in the Middle Ages, they found in Latin all that they sought. Chaucer was content to derive his knowledge of Greek philosophy almost entirely from Boethius. Petrarch, whom he met in Italy, wept over a manuscript of Homer which he could not read. Boccaccio tried to learn Greek, we are told, without success. In thirteenth-century England, however, there had been two notable exceptions: Robert Grosseteste, the great Bishop of Lincoln, and his yet greater pupil, Roger Bacon, the Doctor Mirabilis. By more than two centuries these men anticipated the revival of Greek learning in England at the hands of William Grocyn and Thomas Linacre. Grocyn was a priest and he taught John Colet, afterwards Dean of St Paul's, who startled his hearers by expounding St Paul's Epistles as living human documents. Linacre, translator of Galen, was a physician and he taught Sir Thomas More Greek at Oxford. Under More's hospitable roof at Chelsea, Erasmus of Rotterdam was always sure of finding a warm welcome, and that cosmopolitan scholar was later induced to serve from 1511 to 1514 as Lady Margaret Reader in Greek at Cambridge. Ever since the days of Linacre and Erasmus, Greek has been taught continuously at Oxford and Cambridge. Other countries too have been no less devoted to classical scholarship, especially Scandinavia and Holland. But Greek scholarship left a far deeper mark on English because Englishmen had already acquired the speech-forming habit of borrowing words freely from other tongues. They were quite prepared to borrow Latin words through French, or Latin words direct; Greek words through Latin by way of French, Greek words through Latin, or Greek words direct. Latin and Greek words found their way into English because they were needed. Further, the boundaries of human knowledge were being rapidly extended and this new knowledge was disseminated for the first time by means of printed books. The names of the seven liberal arts of the medieval trivium and quadrivium had all been Greek-derived words: grammar, logic, and rhetoric; arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music. The word grammar, by the way, is interesting. Like beautiful and bearable, which we were considering in the previous chapter, it is a hybrid. It is made up of elements from different languages. It comes by way of Old French from Latin ars grammatica, which is itself a translation of Greek grammatikl techne, 'the art pertaining to literature, letters, or written marks'. To the Greek root gram(m)- is added the Latin suffix -anus in this particular case, although the usual Latin-derived suffixes are -ous, -an, and -al, as in analogous, amphibian, and orchestral. In his Treatise on the Astrolabe Chaucer used and explained Greek terms for the benefit of 'little Lewis', his 'dear son', and he made frequent references to both astronomy and astrology elsewhere in his works, which were copied and studied assiduously by his admirers throughout the fifteenth century. The way was thus well prepared for the importation of words like drama, first recorded in 1515, and of terms relating to the drama: theatre and amphitheatre; comedy and tragedy; catastrophe, climax, episode, scene, dialogue, prologue, and epilogue. The capacity for forming compound words may be illustrated from the Greek verb poiéo 'I make'. From this verbal form derives poiema 'something made or created, an object of making', poiesis 'the process of making', poieteos verbal adjective 'to be made', poietikos 'able or disposed to make', and poietes 'maker'. The poet, then, the maker of Middle and Tudor English, is, first and foremost, the creator, who 'bodies forth the forms of things unknown'. Poesy, now somewhat archaic, was the
earlier form in Tudor English; poem is unrecorded before the middle of the sixteenth century. From poetic was formed poetical by the addition of an extra Latin suffix in -al. As for poetry itself, it was first used by Chaucer in the form poete from late Latin poetria.

Maturity of English (From Our Language by Simeon Potter)

The revival of classical scholarship and the dissemination of the new learning by means of printed books led to an intellectual re-awakening which found its natural centre in London. It was in the shadow of Westminster Abbey that Caxton set up his printing press and it was in St Paul's Cathedral that Colet preached. At Chelsea More entertained Erasmus. Gradually, since Chaucer's day, London English had risen into prominence as the standard language and the East Midland dialect had assumed an acknowledged ascendancy. Within its borders this dialect included not only the City of London proper but also the most densely populated areas of England from Leicester to Norwich. It also contained the two universities: Oxford on its western boundary and Cambridge in its very centre. As we look back, nothing seems more obvious to us than that the language of London should have become the 'received standard speech' of England, but, had they ever given the matter a thought, it would not have seemed at all obvious to Colet and More. London was still small. The forty thousand inhabitants of Chaucer's day had grown to scarcely three times that number. Between Ludgate and Westminster lay country houses with their pleasant gardens and meadows. Within the City there was considerable diversity of pronunciation. Sir Walter Ralegh spoke with a Devonian accent all his days. Shakespeare, who was born and who died at Stratford-upon-Avon, had no need to discard his Warwickshire dialect. The notion of uniformity in speech habits was not yet prevalent. Nevertheless, from the fourteenth century onwards, no other city, with the one possible exception of Edinburgh, has vied with London seriously. Neither the large and flourishing cities of Bristol and Norwich nor the ancient university towns of Oxford and Cambridge had ever offered competition with London in the linguistic field. The other great cities of England - Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Bradford, and Sheffield - are all of later growth.

Late-Modern English (1800-Present)

The principal distinction between early- and late-modern English is vocabulary. Pronunciation, grammar, and spelling are largely the same, but Late-Modern English has many more words. These words are the result of two historical factors. The first is the Industrial Revolution and the rise of the technological society. This necessitated new words for things and ideas that had not previously existed. The second was the British Empire. At its height, Britain ruled one quarter of the earth’s surface, and English adopted many foreign words and made them its own.

The industrial and scientific revolutions created a need for neologisms to describe the new creations and discoveries. For this, English relied heavily on Latin and Greek. Words like oxygen, protein, nuclear, and vaccine did not exist in the classical languages, but they were created from Latin and Greek roots. Such neologisms were not exclusively created from classical roots though, English roots were used for such terms as horsepower, airplane, and typewriter.

This burst of neologisms continues today, perhaps most visible in the field of electronics and computers. Byte, cyber-, bios, hard-drive, and microchip are good examples.

Also, the rise of the British Empire and the growth of global trade served not only to introduce English to the world, but to introduce words into English. Hindi, and the other languages of the Indian subcontinent, provided many words, such as pundit, shampoo, pajamas, and juggernaut. Virtually every language on Earth has contributed to the development of English, from the Finnish sauna and the Japanese tycoon, to the vast contributions of French and Latin.
The British Empire was a maritime empire, and the influence of nautical terms on the English language has been great. Words and phrases like three sheets to the wind and scuttlebutt have their origins onboard ships.

Finally, the 20th century saw two world wars, and the military influence on the language during the latter half of this century has been great. Before the Great War, military service for English-speaking persons was rare; both Britain and the United States maintained small, volunteer militaries. Military slang existed, but with the exception of nautical terms, rarely influenced standard English. During the mid-20th century, however, virtually all British and American men served in the military. Military slang entered the language like never before. Blockbuster, nose dive, camouflage, radar, roadblock, spearhead, and landing strip are all military terms that made their way into standard English.

American English

Also significant beginning around 1600 AD was the English colonization of North America and the subsequent creation of a distinct American dialect. Some pronunciations and usages “froze” when they reached the American shore. In certain respects, American English is closer to the English of Shakespeare than modern British English is. Some Americanisms that the British decry are actually originally British expressions that were preserved in the colonies while lost at home (e.g., fall as a synonym for autumn, trash for rubbish, frame-up which was reintroduced to Britain through Hollywood gangster movies, and use of loan as a verb instead of lend).

The American dialect also served as the route of introduction for many native American words into the English language. Most often, these were place names like Mississippi, Roanoke, and Iowa. Indian-sounding names like Idaho were sometimes created that had no native-American roots. But, names for other things besides places were also common. Raccoon, tomato, canoe, barbecue, savanna, and hickory have native American roots, although in many cases the original Indian words were mangled almost beyond recognition.

Spanish has also been a great influence on American English. Armadillo, mustang, canyon, ranch, stampede, and vigilante are all examples of Spanish words that made their way into English through the settlement of the American West.

To a lesser extent French, mainly via Louisiana, and West African, through the importation of slaves, words have influenced American English. Armoire, bayou, and jambalaya came into the language via New Orleans. Goober, gumbo, and tote are West African borrowings first used in America by slaves. Back to Index

10. A CHRONOLOGY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

55 BCE: Roman invasion of Britain under Julius Caesar
43 CE: Roman invasion and occupation under Emperor Claudius. Beginning of Roman rule of Britain
436: Roman withdrawal from Britain complete
449: Anglo-Saxon settlement of Britain begins
450-480: Earliest Old English inscriptions date from this period
597: St. Augustine arrives in Britain. Beginning of Christian conversion of the Anglo-Saxons
731: The Venerable Bede publishes The Ecclesiastical History of the English People in Latin
792: Viking raids and settlements begin
865: The Danes occupy Northumbria
871: Alfred becomes king of Wessex. He has Latin works translated into English and begins practice of English prose. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is begun
911: Charles II of France grants Normandy to the Viking chief Hrolf the Ganger. The beginning of Norman French

c.1000: The oldest surviving manuscript of Beowulf dates from this period
1066: The Norman conquest

c.1150: The oldest surviving manuscripts in Middle English date from this period
1171: Henry II conquers Ireland
1204: King John loses the province of Normandy to France
1348: English replaces Latin as the medium of instruction in schools, other than Oxford and Cambridge which retain Latin
1349-50: The Black Death kills one third of the British population
1362: The Statute of Pleasing replaces French as the language of law. Records continue to be kept in Latin. English is used in Parliament for the first time
1384: Wyclif publishes his English translation of the Bible

c.1388: Chaucer begins The Canterbury Tales
1400: The Great Vowel Shift begins
1476: William Caxton establishes the first English printing press
1485: Caxton publishes Malory’s Le Morte d’Arthur
1492: Columbus discovers the New World
1525: William Tyndale translates the New Testament
1536: The first Act of Union unites England and Wales
1549: First version of The Book of Common Prayer
1564: Shakespeare born
1603: Union of the English and Scottish crowns under James the I (VI of Scotland)
1604: Robert Cawdrey publishes the first English dictionary, Table Alphabeticall
1607: Jamestown, the first permanent English settlement in the New World, established
1611: The Authorized, or King James Version, of the Bible is published
1616: Death of Shakespeare
1623: Shakespeare’s First Folio is published
1666: The Great Fire of London. End of The Great Plague
1755: Samuel Johnson publishes his dictionary
1776: Thomas Jefferson writes the Declaration of Independence
1782: Washington defeats Cornwallis at Yorktown. Britain abandons the American colonies
1788: British penal colony established in Australia
1803: Act of Union unites Britain and Ireland
1828: Noah Webster publishes his dictionary
1851: Herman Melville publishes Moby Dick
1922: British Broadcasting Corporation founded
1928: The Oxford English Dictionary is published

**11. SHORT SUMMARY OF THE ENGLISH LITERATURE**

**OLD ENGLISH PERIOD, C.450-1066**

Characteristics
It begins with the invasion of Celtic England by Germanic tribes (Angles, Saxons, Jutes, and Frisians) c.450 and lasts until the conquest of England by the Norman-French William the Conqueror in 1066.
Writing of this time was primarily religious verse or prose.

Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
Prose:
Writings of Alfred the Great.

MIDDLE ENGLISH PERIOD, 1066-1500

Characteristics
After the Norman invasion, there were linguistic, social, and cultural changes and also changes in the literature.
In the 15th century, literature aimed at a popular audience grew.
A range of genres emerged, including chivalric romances, secular and religious songs, folk ballads, drama, morality and miracle plays.

Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Dream of the Rood, William Langland's Piers Plowman, lyrics such as "The Cuckoo Song" ("Summer is icumen in").
Prose:
Sir Thomas Malory's Morte D'Arthur, Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, Julian of Norwich, Margery Kempe's The Book of Margery Kempe.
Drama:
The Second Play of the Shepherds, Everyman.

THE RENAISSANCE (ALSO CALLED THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD), 1500-1660

Characteristics
The Renaissance (meaning "rebirth") is used broadly to refer to the flourishing of literature, painting, sculpture, architecture, and learning in general that began in Italy in the 14th century.
The Renaissance period in British literature spans the years 1500 to 1660 and is usually divided into five subsections: Early Tudor, Elizabethan, Jacobean, Caroline, Commonwealth (or Puritan Interregnum).

Major Writers or Works
For literary works in this period, see entries in the Early Tudor, Elizabethan, Jacobean, Caroline, and Commonwealth periods.

THE RENAISSANCE, 1500-1660 EARLY TUDOR PERIOD, 1500-1558

Characteristics
The Early Tudor period is the first phase of the Renaissance period.
This period is known for its poetry and nonfiction prose.
English literature's first dramatic comedy, Ralph Roister Doister, was first performed in 1553.

Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
John Skelton, Henrty Howard, The Earl of Surrey, Sir Thomas Wyatt.
Prose:
Sir Thomas More's Utopia, Sir Thomas Elyot.
Drama: John Heywood, Nicholas Udall, Ralph Roister Doister.

THE RENAISSANCE, 1500-1660 ELIZABETHAN AGE, 1558-1603
Characteristics
The second era of the Renaissance period in British literature, spanning the reign of Elizabeth I. The Elizabethan era was a period marked by developments in English commerce, nationalism, exploration, and maritime power. It is considered a great age in literary history, particularly for drama.

Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
Sir Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser's The Faerie Queen, Elizabeth I, William Shakespeare.

Prose:
Francis Bacon, Sir Walter Raleigh.

Drama:
Christopher Marlowe's The Jew of Malta, William Shakespeare, Thomas Kydd's The Spanish Tragedy.

THE RENAISSANCE, 1500-1660 JACOBEAN AGE, 1603-1625

Characteristics
The third era of the Renaissance period in British literature defined by the reign of James I. In this era, there were significant writings in prose, including the King James Bible. Drama and poetry also flourished.

Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
John Donne, George Chapman, Lady Mary Wroth.

Prose:
Francis Bacon, Robert Burton.

Drama:
William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, John Webster, John Fletcher, Thomas Middleton, George Chapman.

THE RENAISSANCE, 1500-1660 CAROLINE AGE, 1625-1649

Characteristics
The Caroline Age marks the period of the English Civil War between the supporters of the King (called Cavaliers) and the supporters of Parliament (called the Roundheads). Literature of this period featured poetry, nonfiction prose, and the Cavalier Poets, who were associated with the court and wrote poems of gallantry and courtship.

Major Writers or Works
Poetry:

Prose:
Robert Burton, Sir Thomas Browne.

Drama:
Philip Massinger, John Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore.

THE RENAISSANCE, 1500-1660 COMMONWEALTH (OR PURITAN INTERREGNUM), 1649-1658
Characteristics
In this era, England was ruled by Parliament and, Oliver Cromwell and then briefly by his son, Richard, until 1859.
Theatres were closed on moral and religious grounds. While drama did not flourish, significant examples of nonfiction prose and poetry were written during this period.
Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
Prose:
Thomas Hobbes's Leviathan, Sir Thomas Browne, Izaak Walton, Thomas Fuller, Jeremy Taylor.

NEOCLASSICAL PERIOD, 1660-1785

Characteristics
The Neoclassical period is often divided into three sub-areas: the Restoration era, the Augustan age, and the Age of Sensibility.
Major Writers or Works
For literary works in this period, see entries in the Restoration Era, the Augustan Age, and the Age of Sensibility.

NEOCLASSICAL PERIOD, 1660-1785 THE RESTORATION ERA, 1660-1700

Characteristics
The Restoration era begins with the crowning of Charles II and the restoration of the Stuart line in 1660 and ends around 1700.
After the Puritan ban on theatres was lifted, theatre came back into prominence.
Drama of this period frequently focused upon the aristocracy and the life of the court and is characterized by its use of urbanity, wit, and licentious plot lines.
Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
John Milton's Paradise Lost, John Dryden, Samuel Butler.
Prose:
Novels:
Aphra Behn's Oroonoko.
Drama:
Sir George Etherege, William Congreve's The Way of the World, Aphra Behn's The Rover.

NEOCLASSICAL PERIOD, 1660-1785 THE AUGUSTAN ERA, 1700-1745

Characteristics
Many writers in this period identified themselves with writers in the age of the Roman Emperor Augustus.
Augustan writers imitated the literary forms of Horace, Virgil, and Ovid and drew upon the perceived order, decorum, moderation, civility, and wit of these writers.
Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
Alexander Pope, John Gay, Jonathan Swift.
Prose:
Richard Steele, Joseph Addison, Alexander Pope, Eliza Haywood, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu.
Novels:
Samuel Richardson's Pamela, Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe, Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels.
Drama:
Henry Fielding, John Gay's The Beggar's Opera.

NEOCLASSICAL PERIOD, 1660-1785 THE AGE OF SENSIBILITY, 1744-1785 (ALT. ENDING DATES 1789 OR 1798)

Characteristics
The Age of Sensibility anticipates the Romantic period.
In contrast to the Augustan era, the Age of Sensibility focused upon instinct, feeling, imagination, and sometimes the sublime.
New cultural attitudes and new theories of literature emerged at this time.
The novel became an increasingly popular and prevalent form.
Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
Thomas Gray, William Collins, Christopher Smart, William Cowper, Anne Finch, Mary Leapor.
Prose:
Novels:
Samuel Richardson, Tobias Smollet, Henry Fielding, Laurence Sterne, Frances Burney.
Drama:
Oliver Goldsmith's She Stoops to Conquer Richard Brinsley Sheridan's The School for Scandal.

THE ROMANTIC PERIOD, 1785-1837 (ALT. START DATES ARE 1789 OR 1798)

Characteristics
Many writers in the Romantic period emphasized feeling and imagination and looked toward nature for insight into the divine.
The individual and his or her subjective experiences and expressions of those experiences were highly valued.
Many scholars see the artistic and aesthetic freedoms in romanticism in contrast to the ideals of neoclassicism.
In addition to a wealth of poetry, the Romantic period featured significant innovations in the novel form, including the Gothic novel.
Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
Robert Burns, William Blake, William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Lord Byron, P.B. Shelley, John Keats, Helen Maria Williams, Anna Laetitia Barbauld.
Prose:
Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Prince's The History of Mary Prince, Charles Lamb, Dorothy Wordsworth.
Novels:
Jane Austen, Sir Walter Scott, Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, Matthew Gregory Lewis's The Monk, Ann Radcliffe.
Drama:
Joanna Baillie.

THE VICTORIAN PERIOD, 1837-1901
Characteristics
Early Victorian literature is that written before 1870.
Late Victorian literature is that written after 1870.
Varied in form, style and content, Victorian literature reflects a changing social, political, economic, and cultural climate.
Industrialization, urbanization, technological advances, and economic and political changes are just a few of the forces reflected in Victorian literature.
Recurrent issues include poverty, class, gender, philosophy, and religious issues.

Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
Alfred, Lord Tennyson, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Gerard Manley Hopkins.
Prose:
Novels:
Charlotte Brontë, Emily Brontë, Charles Dickens, George Eliot, Thomas Hardy, Anthony Trollope, William Makepeace Thackeray, Elizabeth Gaskell.
Drama:
Tom Taylor, Gilbert and Sullivan, H.J. Byron.

PRE-RAPHAELITISM, 1848-1850S

Characteristics
The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was formed by a group of visual artists who attempted to return painting to the simplicity and truthfulness of art before the High Renaissance.

Major Writers or Works
Poetry:

AESTHETICISM (AESTHETIC MOVEMENT), 1880-1900

Characteristics
Aestheticism is a literary and visual art movement in late nineteenth-century Europe.
Centered on a belief in "art for art's sake," aestheticism believed that art was not meant to serve moral or didactic or purpose; art's value was in its beauty.

Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
Charles Algernon Swinburne, Oscar Wilde, Lionel Johnson Arthur Symons.
Prose:
Charles Algernon Swinburne, Oscar Wilde, Walter Pater.
Novels:
Charles Algernon Swinburne, Oscar Wilde.
Drama:
Charles Algernon Swinburne, Oscar Wilde.

DECADENCE, 1880-1900

Characteristics
Writers perceived in this ancient literature high refinement with an element of impending decay. They felt this to be an appropriate reflection of European society.
Decadence was concerned with unconventional artistic forms and ideas. Followers often led unconventional lives.

**Major Writers or Works**

**Poetry:**
Ernest Dowson, Arthur Symons, Lionel Johnson.

**Prose:**
Oscar Wilde.

**Novels:**
Oscar Wilde.

**Drama:**
Oscar Wilde.

**EDWARDIAN PERIOD, 1901- 1910**

**Characteristics**
A period of British literature named by the reign of Edward VII and referring to literature published after the Victorian period and before WWI.

The Edwardian period is not characterized by a consistent style or theme or genre; the term generally refers to a historical period rather than a literary style.

**Major Writers or Works**

**Poetry:**
William Butler Yeats, Rudyard Kipling.

**Prose:**
Arnold Bennett, Ford Madox Ford, Alfred Noyes.

**Novels:**
Thomas Hardy, Joseph Conrad, Henry James, H.G. Wells, Ford Madox Ford, James Galsworthy.

**Drama:**
George Bernard Shaw, John M. Synge, William Butler Yeats, James Barrie.

**MODERN PERIOD, 1914-1939**

**Characteristics**
A period in British and American literature spanning the years between WWI and WWII. Works in this period reflect the changing social, political, and cultural climate and are diverse, experimental, and nontraditional.

**Major Writers or Works**

**Poetry:**

**Prose:**
Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield, T.S. Eliot.

**Novels:**

**Drama:**
Sean O'Casey, William Butler Yeats, George Bernard Shaw.

**POSTMODERN/CONTEMPORARY PERIOD, 1939-PRESENT**

**Characteristics**
In British and American literature, the postmodern period refers to literature written after WWII. The postmodern period reflects anxieties concerning, and reactions to, life in the 20th century.
Postmodern works are often highly experimental and anti-conventional.

Major Writers or Works

Poetry:
- Edith Sitwell, Dylan Thomas, Louis MacNeice, Philip Larkin, Ted Hughes, Stevie Smith, Seamus Heaney, Eavan Boland.

Prose:
- George Orwell, Jeanette Winterson, Martin Amis.

Novels:

Drama:
- Samuel Beckett, Noel Coward, Tom Stoppard, Harold Pinter, Caryl Churchill.

12. AN ENGLISH LITERARY STUDY GUIDE

This study guide is intended for GCE Advanced and Advanced Supplementary (A2 and AS) level students in the UK, who are taking exams or modules in English literature. It should be most useful right at the start of the course, or later as a resource for exercises in revision, and to help you reflect on value judgements in literary criticism. It may also be suitable for university students and the general reader who is interested in the history of literature. This guide reflects a view of literature which is sometimes described as canonical, and sometimes as a Dead White European Male view. That is, I have not especially sought to express my own value judgements but to reflect those which are commonly found in printed guides by judges whose views command more respect than mine.

I hope that students who visit this page will take issue with the summary comments here, or discuss them with their peers. But young readers will not thank teachers for leaving them in the dark about established critical opinion or the canon of English literature. (If you doubt that there is a canon, look at the degree course structure for English literature in a selection of our most prestigious universities.) Students who recognize that they have little or no sense of English literary culture have often asked me to suggest texts for them to study - this guide may help them in this process. This is NOT a tutorial, in the sense of a close reading of any text. And it is not very interesting to read from start to finish. I hope, rather, that it will be used as a point of reference or way in to literature for beginners. You will soon see if it is not for you.

And while I have made a selection from the many authors who deserve study, I have throughout presented them in a chronological sequence. At the end I consider briefly questions of genre and literary value. I have not attempted to record the achievements of writers in other languages, though these include some of the greatest and most influential writers of all time, such as Dante Alighieri, Leo Tolstoy, Franz Kafka and Bertolt Brecht. Happily, examiners of Advanced level literature have allowed students, in recent years, to study these foreign authors, in translation, in independent extended literary studies.

Literary forms

Literary forms such as the novel or lyric poem, or genres, such as the horror-story, have a history. In one sense, they appear because they have not been thought of before, but they also appear, or become popular for other cultural reasons, such as the absence or emergence of literacy. In studying the history of literature (or any kind of art), you are challenged to consider what constitutes a given form, how it has developed, and whether it has a future.

The novels of the late Catherine Cookson may have much in common with those of Charlotte Brontë, but is it worth mimicking in the late 20th century, what was ground-breaking in the 1840s? While Brontë examines what is contemporary for her, Miss Cookson invents an imagined past.
which may be of interest to the cultural historian in studying the present sources of her nostalgia, but not to the student of the period in which her novels are set. Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe is a long work of prose fiction, but critics do not necessarily describe it as a novel. Why might this be? Knowing works in their historical context does not give easy answers, but may shed more or less light on our darkness in considering such questions.

Old English, Middle English and Chaucer

Old English
English, as we know it, descends from the language spoken by the north Germanic tribes who settled in England from the 5th century A.D. onwards. They had no writing (except runes, used as charms) until they learned the Latin alphabet from Roman missionaries. The earliest written works in Old English (as their language is now known to scholars) were probably composed orally at first, and may have been passed on from speaker to speaker before being written. We know the names of some of the later writers (Cædmon, Ælfric and King Alfred) but most writing is anonymous. Old English literature is mostly chronicle and poetry - lyric, descriptive but chiefly narrative or epic. By the time literacy becomes widespread, Old English is effectively a foreign and dead language. And its forms do not significantly affect subsequent developments in English literature. (With the scholarly exception of the 19th century poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins, who finds in Old English verse the model for his metrical system of "sprung rhythm").

Middle English and Chaucer
From 1066 onwards, the language is known to scholars as Middle English. Ideas and themes from French and Celtic literature appear in English writing at about this time, but the first great name in English literature is that of Geoffrey Chaucer (?1343-1400). Chaucer introduces the iambic pentameter line, the rhyming couplet and other rhymes used in Italian poetry (a language in which rhyming is arguably much easier than in English, thanks to the frequency of terminal vowels). Some of Chaucer's work is prose and some is lyric poetry, but his greatest work is mostly narrative poetry, which we find in Troilus and Criseyde and The Canterbury Tales. Other notable mediaeval works are the anonymous Pearl and Gawain and the Green Knight (probably by the same author) and William Langlands' Piers Plowman.

Tudor lyric poetry
Modern lyric poetry in English begins in the early 16th century with the work of Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542) and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (1517-1547). Wyatt, who is greatly influenced by the Italian, Francesco Petrarca (Petrarch) introduces the sonnet and a range of short lyrics to English, while Surrey (as he is known) develops unrhymed pentameters (or blank verse) thus inventing the verse form which will be of great use to contemporary dramatists. A flowering of lyric poetry in the reign of Elizabeth comes with such writers as Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586), Edmund Spenser (1552-1599), Sir Walter Ralegh (1552-1618), Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593) and William Shakespeare (1564-1616). The major works of the time are Spenser's Faerie Queene, Sidney's Astrophil and Stella and Shakespeare's sonnets.

Renaissance drama
The first great English dramatist is Marlowe. Before the 16th century English drama meant the amateur performances of Bible stories by craft guilds on public holidays. Marlowe's plays (Tamburlaine; Dr. Faustus; Edward II and The Jew of Malta) use the five act structure and the medium of blank verse, which Shakespeare finds so productive. Shakespeare develops and virtually exhausts this form, his Jacobean successors producing work which is rarely performed today, though some pieces have literary merit, notably The Duchess of Malfi and The White Devil by John Webster (1580-1625) and The Revenger's Tragedy by Cyril Tournier (1575-1626). The excessive and gratuitous violence of Jacobean plays leads to the clamour for closing down the theatres, which
is enacted by parliament after the Civil war.

Metaphysical poetry
The greatest of Elizabethan lyric poets is John Donne (1572-1631), whose short love poems are characterized by wit and irony, as he seeks to wrest meaning from experience. The preoccupation with the big questions of love, death and religious faith marks out Donne and his successors who are often called metaphysical poets. (This name, coined by Dr. Samuel Johnson in an essay of 1779, was revived and popularized by T.S. Eliot, in an essay of 1921. It can be unhelpful to modern students who are unfamiliar with this adjective, and who are led to think that these poets belonged to some kind of school or group - which is not the case.) After his wife's death, Donne underwent a serious religious conversion, and wrote much fine devotional verse. The best known of the other metaphysicals are George Herbert (1593-1633), Andrew Marvell (1621-1678) and Henry Vaughan (1621-1695).

Epic poetry
Long narrative poems on heroic subjects mark the best work of classical Greek (Homer's Iliad and Odyssey) and Roman (Virgil's Aeneid) poetry. John Milton (1608-1674) who was Cromwell's secretary, set out to write a great biblical epic, unsure whether to write in Latin or English, but settling for the latter in Paradise Lost. John Dryden (1631-1700) also wrote epic poetry, on classical and biblical subjects. Though Dryden's work is little read today it leads to a comic parody of the epic form, or mock-heroic. The best poetry of the mid 18th century is the comic writing of Alexander Pope (1688-1744). Pope is the best-regarded comic writer and satirist of English poetry. Among his many masterpieces, one of the more accessible is The Rape of the Lock (seekers of sensation should note that "rape" here has its archaic sense of "removal by force"; the "lock" is a curl of the heroine's hair). Serious poetry of the period is well represented by the neo-classical Thomas Gray (1716-1771) whose Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard virtually perfects the elegant style favoured at the time.

Restoration comedy
On the death of Oliver Cromwell (in 1658) plays were no longer prohibited. A new kind of comic drama, dealing with issues of sexual politics among the wealthy and the bourgeois, arose. This is Restoration Comedy, and the style developed well beyond the restoration period into the mid 18th century almost. The total number of plays performed is vast, and many lack real merit, but the best drama uses the restoration conventions for a serious examination of contemporary morality. A play which exemplifies this well is The Country Wife by William Wycherley (1640-1716).

Prose fiction and the novel
Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), wrote satires in verse and prose. He is best-known for the extended prose work Gulliver's Travels, in which a fantastic account of a series of travels is the vehicle for satirizing familiar English institutions, such as religion, politics and law. Another writer who uses prose fiction, this time much more naturalistic, to explore other questions of politics or economics is Daniel Defoe (1661-1731), author of Robinson Crusoe and Moll Flanders.

The first English novel is generally accepted to be Pamela (1740), by Samuel Richardson (1689-1761): this novel takes the form of a series of letters; Pamela, a virtuous housemaid resists the advances of her rich employer, who eventually marries her. Richardson's work was almost at once satirized by Henry Fielding (1707-1754) in Joseph Andrews (Joseph is depicted as the brother of Richardson's Pamela Andrews) and Tom Jones. After Fielding, the novel is dominated by the two great figures of Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) and Jane Austen (1775-1817), who typify, respectively, the new regional, historical romanticism and the established, urbane classical views. Novels depicting extreme behaviour, madness or cruelty, often in historically remote or exotic
settings are called Gothic. They are ridiculed by Austen in Northanger Abbey but include one undisputed masterpiece, Frankenstein, by Mary Shelley (1797-1851).

Romanticism
The rise of Romanticism
A movement in philosophy but especially in literature, romanticism is the revolt of the senses or passions against the intellect and of the individual against the consensus. Its first stirrings may be seen in the work of William Blake (1757-1827), and in continental writers such as the Swiss philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the German playwrights Johann Christoph Friedrich Schiller and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

The publication, in 1798, by the poets William Wordsworth (1770-1850) and Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) of a volume entitled Lyrical Ballads is a significant event in English literary history, though the poems were poorly received and few books sold. The elegant Latinisms of Gray are dropped in favour of a kind of English closer to that spoken by real people (supposedly). Actually, the attempts to render the speech of ordinary people are not wholly convincing. Robert Burns (1759-1796) writes lyric verse in the dialect of lowland Scots (a variety of English). After Shakespeare, Burns is perhaps the most often quoted of writers in English: we sing his Auld Lang Syne every New Year's Eve.

Later Romanticism
The work of the later romantics John Keats (1795-1821) and his friend Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822; husband of Mary Shelley) is marked by an attempt to make language beautiful, and by an interest in remote history and exotic places. George Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824) uses romantic themes, sometimes comically, to explain contemporary events. Romanticism begins as a revolt against established views, but eventually becomes the established outlook. Wordsworth becomes a kind of national monument, while the Victorians make what was at first revolutionary seem familiar, domestic and sentimental.

Victorian poetry
The major poets of the Victorian era are Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892) and Robert Browning (1812-1889). Both are prolific and varied, and their work defies easy classification. Tennyson makes extensive use of classical myth and Arthurian legend, and has been praised for the beautiful and musical qualities of his writing.

Browning's chief interest is in people; he uses blank verse in writing dramatic monologues in which the speaker achieves a kind of self-portraiture: his subjects are both historical individuals (Fra Lippo Lippi, Andrea del Sarto) and representative types or caricatures (Mr. Sludge the Medium).

Other Victorian poets of note include Browning's wife, Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861) and Christina Rossetti (1830-1894). Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889) is notable for his use of what he calls "sprung rhythm"; as in Old English verse syllables are not counted, but there is a pattern of stresses. Hopkins' work was not well-known until very long after his death.

The Victorian novel
The rise of the popular novel
In the 19th century, adult literacy increases markedly: attempts to provide education by the state, and self-help schemes are partly the cause and partly the result of the popularity of the novel. Publication in instalments means that works are affordable for people of modest means. The change in the reading public is reflected in a change in the subjects of novels: the high bourgeois world of Austen gives way to an interest in characters of humble origins. The great novelists write works
which in some ways transcend their own period, but which in detail very much explore the preoccupations of their time.

Dickens and the Brontës
Certainly the greatest English novelist of the 19th century, and possibly of all time, is Charles Dickens (1812-1870). The complexity of his best work, the variety of tone, the use of irony and caricature create surface problems for the modern reader, who may not readily persist in reading. But Great Expectations, Bleak House, Our Mutual Friend and Little Dorrit are works with which every student should be acquainted.

Charlotte Brontë (1816-1855) and her sisters Emily (1818-1848) and Anne (1820-1849) are understandably linked together, but their work differs greatly. Charlotte is notable for several good novels, among which her masterpiece is Jane Eyre, in which we see the heroine, after much adversity, achieve happiness on her own terms. Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights is a strange work, which enjoys almost cult status. Its concerns are more romantic, less contemporary than those of Jane Eyre - but its themes of obsessive love and self-destructive passion have proved popular with the 20th century reader.

The beginnings of American literature
The early 19th century sees the emergence of American literature, with the stories of Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), the novels of Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-64), Herman Melville (1819-91), and Mark Twain (Samuel Langhorne Clemens; 1835-1910), and the poetry of Walt Whitman (1819-92) and Emily Dickinson (1830-86). Notable works include Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter, Melville's Moby Dick, Twain's Huckleberry Finn and Whitman's Leaves of Grass.

Later Victorian novelists
After the middle of the century, the novel, as a form, becomes firmly-established: sensational or melodramatic "popular" writing is represented by Mrs. Henry Wood's East Lynne (1861), but the best novelists achieved serious critical acclaim while reaching a wide public, notable authors being Anthony Trollope (1815-82), Wilkie Collins (1824-89), William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-63), George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans; 1819-80) and Thomas Hardy (1840-1928). Among the best novels are Collins's The Moonstone, Thackeray's Vanity Fair, Eliot's The Mill on the Floss, Adam Bede and Middlemarch, and Hardy's The Mayor of Casterbridge, The Return of the Native, Tess of the d'Urbervilles and Jude the Obscure.

Modern literature
Early 20th century poets
W.B. (William Butler) Yeats (1865-1939) is one of two figures who dominate modern poetry, the other being T.S. (Thomas Stearns) Eliot (1888-1965). Yeats was Irish; Eliot was born in the USA but settled in England, and took UK citizenship in 1927. Yeats uses conventional lyric forms, but explores the connection between modern themes and classical and romantic ideas. Eliot uses elements of conventional forms, within an unconventionally structured whole in his greatest works. Where Yeats is prolific as a poet, Eliot's reputation largely rests on two long and complex works: The Waste Land (1922) and Four Quartets (1943).

The work of these two has overshadowed the work of the best late Victorian, Edwardian and Georgian poets, some of whom came to prominence during the First World War. Among these are Thomas Hardy, Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936), A.E. Housman (1859-1936), Edward Thomas (1878-1917), Rupert Brooke (1887-1915), Siegfried Sassoon (1886-1967), Wilfred Owen (1893-1918) and Isaac Rosenberg (1890-1918). The most celebrated modern American poet, is Robert Frost (1874-1963), who befriended Edward Thomas before the war of 1914-1918.
Early modern writers
The late Victorian and early modern periods are spanned by two novelists of foreign birth: the American Henry James (1843-1916) and the Pole Joseph Conrad (Josef Korzeniowski; 1857-1924). James relates character to issues of culture and ethics, but his style can be opaque; Conrad's narratives may resemble adventure stories in incident and setting, but his real concern is with issues of character and morality. The best of their work would include James's The Portrait of a Lady and Conrad's Heart of Darkness, Nostromo and The Secret Agent.

Other notable writers of the early part of the century include George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), H.G. Wells (1866-1946), and E.M. Forster (1879-1970). Shaw was an essay-writer, language scholar and critic, but is best-remembered as a playwright. Of his many plays, the best-known is Pygmalion (even better known today in its form as the musical My Fair Lady). Wells is celebrated as a popularizer of science, but his best novels explore serious social and cultural themes, The History of Mr. Polly being perhaps his masterpiece. Forster's novels include Howard's End, A Room with a View and A Passage to India.

Joyce and Woolf
Where these writers show continuity with the Victorian tradition of the novel, more radically modern writing is found in the novels of James Joyce (1882-1941), of Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), and of D.H. Lawrence (1885-1930). Where Joyce and Woolf challenge traditional narrative methods of viewpoint and structure, Lawrence is concerned to explore human relationships more profoundly than his predecessors, attempting to marry the insights of the new psychology with his own acute observation. Working-class characters are presented as serious and dignified; their manners and speech are not objects of ridicule.


Poetry in the later 20th century
Between the two wars, a revival of romanticism in poetry is associated with the work of W.H. (Wystan Hugh) Auden (1907-73), Louis MacNeice (1907-63) and Cecil Day-Lewis (1904-72). Auden seems to be a major figure on the poetic landscape, but is almost too contemporary to see in perspective. The Welsh poet, Dylan Thomas (1914-53) is notable for strange effects of language, alternating from extreme simplicity to massive overstatement.

Of poets who have achieved celebrity in the second half of the century, evaluation is even more difficult, but writers of note include the American Robert Lowell (1917-77), Philip Larkin (1922-1985), R.S. Thomas (1913-2000), Thom Gunn (1929-2004), Ted Hughes (1930-1998) and the 1995 Nobel laureate Seamus Heaney (b. 1939).

Notable writers outside mainstream movements
Any list of "important" names is bound to be uneven and selective. Identifying broad movements leads to the exclusion of those who do not easily fit into schematic outlines of history. Writers not referred to above, but highly regarded by some readers might include Laurence Sterne (1713-68), author of Tristram Shandy, R.L. Stevenson (1850-94) writer of Kidnapped and The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), author of The Importance of Being Earnest, and novelists such as Arnold Bennett (1867-1931), John Galsworthy (1867-1933) and the Americans F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940), Ernest Hemingway (1898-1961), John Steinbeck (1902-68) and J.D. Salinger (b. 1919). Two works notable not just for their literary merit but for their articulation of the spirit of the age are Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby and Salinger's The
Catcher in the Rye. The American dramatist Arthur Miller (b. 1915) has received similar acclaim for his play Death of a Salesman (1949). Miller is more popular in the UK than his native country, and is familiar to many teachers and students because his work is so often set for study in examinations.

Literature and culture
Literature has a history, and this connects with cultural history more widely. Prose narratives were written in the 16th century, but the novel as we know it could not arise, in the absence of a literate public. The popular and very contemporary medium for narrative in the 16th century is the theatre. The earliest novels reflect a bourgeois view of the world because this is the world of the authors and their readers (working people are depicted, but patronizingly, not from inside knowledge). The growth of literacy in the Victorian era leads to enormous diversification in the subjects and settings of the novel.

Recent and future trends
In recent times the novel has developed different genres such as the thriller, the whodunnit, the pot-boiler, the western and works of science-fiction, horror and the sex-and-shopping novel. Some of these may be brief fashions (the western seems to be dying) while others such as the detective story or science-fiction have survived for well over a century. As the dominant form of narrative in contemporary western popular culture, the novel may have given way to the feature film and television drama. But it has proved surprisingly resilient. As society alters, so the novel may reflect or define this change; many works may be written, but few of them will fulfil this defining rôle; those which seem to do so now, may not speak to later generations in the same way.

Evaluating literature
The "test of time" may be a cliché, but is a genuine measure of how a work of imagination can transcend cultural boundaries; we should, perhaps, now speak of the "test of time and place", as the best works cross boundaries of both kinds. We may not "like" or "enjoy" works such as Wuthering Heights, Heart of Darkness or The Waste Land, but they are the perfect expression of particular ways of looking at the world; the author has articulated a view which connects with the reader's search for meaning. It is, of course, perfectly possible for a work of imagination to make sense of the world or of experience (or love, or God, or death) while also entertaining or delighting the reader or audience with the detail and eloquence of the work, as in A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Rime of the Ancient Mariner or Great Expectations.

Have I missed anything out? Of course I have, in the search for brevity. But have I missed out writers or their works which are as important as those I have included, or even more important? If you would like to add a comment or section to this page, you may submit suggestions to me. I don't guarantee that I'll add them - this is NOT a forum for personal favourites (not even mine). But when I see that you are right to recall my attention to an overlooked author or work, I will be happy to edit this guide, and acknowledge your additions. If you are a teacher or student, you could see this as a task for a seminar or discussion. It will help with critical commentary tasks (sometimes called critical explorations). Back to Index

13. SHORT SUMMARY OF THE AMERICAN LITERATURE

NATIVE-AMERICAN LITERATURE, C.20,000 B.C.E.-PRESENT

Characteristics
The literature is as diverse as the cultures that created it, but there are often common elements such as stories explaining creation or natural forces.
Major Writers or Works
Oral narratives:
Myths; legends; songs; creation stories from groups such as the Zuni, Aztec, Navajo, Lakota, Seneca, Tlingit, Cherokee, Blackfoot, Cree, Inuit, and many more.

EXPLORATION PERIOD, 1492-1607

Characteristics
The first European writings about North America are written in this period.
European writings describe the explorers' travels and impressions of the continent and its Native people.
Major Writers or Works
Prose:
Christopher Columbus, Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, Bernal Diaz del Castillo, Thomas Harriot, and Samuel de Champlain.
Oral narratives:
Seneca legend "How America was Discovered."

COLONIAL PERIOD, 1607-C.1765

Characteristics
The Colonial period was dominated by Puritan beliefs and thus literature of this period is usually historical, religious, or didactic.
The most common genres were tracts, polemics, journals, narratives, sermons, and some poetry.
The first slave narratives were written at this time.
Imaginative literature was rare; in some colonies, it was banned for being immoral.
Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
Michael Wigglesworth, Anne Bradstreet, Edward Taylor.
Prose:
John Smith, Roger Williams, Cotton Mather, Jonathan Edwards' Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God, Benjamin Franklin's Poor Richard's Almanacks.
Narratives:
Mary Rowlandson's A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson

REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD, 1765-1790

Characteristics
This period begins with the passing of the Stamp Act in England and ends in 1790.
The Revolutionary period usually refers to writings that are politically motivated, either in support of British rule, in support of American patriotism and independence, or relating to the Constitution.
Major Writers or Works
Prose:
Drama:
Royall Tyler's The Contrast.
Verse and Ballads:
"Yankee Doodle," "The Liberty Song."
EARLY NATIONAL PERIOD, 1775-1828

Characteristics
During this period, a body of distinctly American imaginative literature began to emerge. As with the novel, poetry, essays, and sketches also began to flourish. The publishing world and readership in America also began to grow. Slave narratives were published with increasing frequency. This period is sometimes called the Federalist period after the conservative federalists in power at the time.

Major Writers or Works
Poetry: Phillip Freneau, William Cullen Bryant, Phillis Wheatley.
Prose: Judith Sargent Murray, Mercy Otis Warren, Washington Irving, Lydia Maria Child
Narratives: Olaudah Equiano's The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano.
Novels: Hannah Webster Foster's The Coquette.

ROMANTIC PERIOD, 1828-1865

Characteristics
The Romantic period covers the period between Jacksonian democracy to the end of the Civil War. This period was the first major explosion of a distinctly American body of literature; for this reason, this period is also referred to as the American Renaissance. Many of American literature's most well-known writers emerged during this time. Readership increased significantly and the 1850s saw a number of immensely popular novels. Issues and subjects addressed in the literature of this time ranged from the American identity, to the slavery debate, to historical narratives, to poems and narratives inspired by romanticism, to prose works examining national unity.

Major Writers or Works
Prose: Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Rebecca Harding Davis, William Lloyd Garrison.
Narratives: Frederick Douglass, Harriet Jacobs Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl.
Drama: George Aiken's play, Uncle Tom's Cabin, based on Stowe's novel.

THE AGE OF TRANSCENDENTALISM, 1836-1860

Characteristics
Transcendentalism, though varied, investigated the relationship between nature, humanity, society, and the divine.

Major Writers or Works
Prose:

Realism, 1865-1900
Characteristics
The post-Civil War period was an era of increased industrialization and urbanization as the nation attempted to recover emotionally, culturally, and politically from the aftermath of the war. Though there were still elements of romanticism, this period was considered realistic in its emphasis on unidealized and truthful depictions.

Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
Walt Whitman, Paul Laurence Dunbar, Emily Dickinson's poems published posthumously.
Prose:
Sarah Orne Jewett, Mary E. Wilkins Freeman, Zitkala-Sa, Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper," George Washington Cable, Kate Chopin.
Novels:

NATURALISM, 1900-1914
Characteristics
An offshoot of realism, naturalism claimed to give an even more realistic and unflinching depiction of contemporary life. Naturalism was characterized by a pessimistic view of humanity and human existence.

Major Writers or Works
Prose:
Novels:

MODERN PERIOD, 1914-1939
Characteristics
A period in British and American literature spanning the years between WWI and WWII. Works in this period reflect the changing social, political, and cultural climate and are diverse, experimental, and nontraditional.

Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
Robert Frost, Carl Sandburg, Wallace Stevens, William Carlos Williams, T.S. Eliot, Edna St. Vincent Millay, e.e. cummings, H.D.
Novels:
Drama:
Eugene O'Neill's The Emperor Jones, Susan Glaspell's, Trifles, Clifford Odets.

HARLEM RENAISSANCE, 1920S AND 1930S

65
Characteristics
The Harlem Renaissance was the first major burgeoning of visual, literary, and performing arts by African Americans concerned with African-American life, art, culture, and politics. The influence of the Harlem Renaissance remained strong for the remainder of the 20th century.

Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, James Weldon Johnson, Claude McKay.
Prose:
W.E.B DuBois, Jean Toomer.
Novels:
Zora Neale Hurston, Nella Larsen, Passing, Jessie Redmon Fauset, James Weldon Johnson, Claude McKay.
Drama:
Randolph Edmonds, Langston Hughes.

LOST GENERATION, 1920S

Characteristics
After WWI, a group of American writers grew increasingly disillusioned by, and resistant to, what they saw as hypocrisy in dominant American ideology and culture. Many of these writers left America in search of a more artistic life in London or Paris.

Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot.
Prose:
Gertrude Stein, T.S. Eliot.
Novels:
F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises.

BEAT WRITERS, 1950S

Characteristics
Beat Writers' writing was generally anti-traditional, anti-establishment, and anti-intellectual.

Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
Allen Ginsberg's Howl, Lawrence Ferlinghetti.
Prose:
Gertrude Stein, T.S. Eliot.
Novels:
William Burroughs, Jack Kerouac's On the Road.

POSTMODERN OR CONTEMPORARY, 1940-PRESENT

Characteristics
In British and American literature, the postmodern period refers to literature written after WWII. The postmodern period reflects anxieties concerning, and reactions to life in the 20th century. Postmodern works are often highly experimental and anti-conventional.

Major Writers or Works
Poetry:
Prose:
Eudora Welty, Raymond Carver, John Cheever, Alice Walker.
Novels:
Saul Bellow, Ralph Ellison, John Updike, Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., Richard Wright, Thomas Pynchon,
E.L Doctorow, James Baldwin, Toni Morrison.
Drama:
Edward Albee, Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams, Lorraine Hansberry, August Wilson, David Mamet.
1215 Magna Carta signed by England's King John (limits power of crown)
1273 Thomas Aquinas' Summa Theologica (systematizes Christian theology using Aristotelean concepts of reason)
1265 First English Parliament established
c. 1280 Moses de Leon's The Zohar (Jewish cabalistic text)
1300s-1500s Aztec culture flourishes in Mexico
1300 Beginning of classical revival in Europe
1310 Dante's Comedy written (Italian)
1338-1453 Hundred Years War between England and France
1348-1375 Black Death (bubonic plague) kills one-third of Europe's population.
1375 Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (Middle English)
1386 Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales

LITERATURE TIMELINE 1400-1640

1400s Beginning of the Atlantic slave trade. Spain and Portugal claim parts of Asia, Africa, the Americas
c. 1400 Beginning of Italian Renaissance
c. 1400-1425 Red Book of Hergest (Wales; collection of Celtic stories and mythology)
1405 Christine de Pizan's Book of the City of the Ladies (French)
c. 1420 The Second Shepherd's Play (Middle English)
1432-1438 Margery Kempe's The Book of Margery Kempe (England)
c. 1450 German printer Johannes Gutenberg develops movable type; printing revolution follows
1455-1461 War of the Roses; Henry VII wins English crown
1469 Sir Thomas Malory's Morte D'Arthur (England)
1471-1493 Peak of Inca Empire in what is now Peru, Ecuador and Chile
c. 1480 Everyman (Dutch)
1492-1504 Columbus makes four exploration voyages to the Americas
1493-1520 Further Spanish exploration and colonizing in Caribbean
1500 Beginning of the Northern European Renaissance
1500 French, English, and Dutch begin to explore North America
1500-1530 High Renaissance in Italy; Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper," Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel frescoes
c. 1500-1550 Native American populations devastated by epidemic diseases brought by Europeans
1501 Spain authorizes first shipment of African slaves to the Caribbean
1513 Political theorist Niccolo Machiavelli's The Prince (Italy)
1516 Sir Thomas More's Utopia (England)
1517-1541 Protestant Reformation in Europe
1519-1521 Spanish explorer Magellan circumnavigates the globe
1534 First French explorations of Canada
1540-1542 Spanish Conquistador Coronado explores southwestern North America
1542 Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca's The Journey of Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca (American southwest)
1558-1603 Reign of Queen Elizabeth I of England
1562 English slave trade begins
1564 Spanish establish St. Augustine in Florida
1588 England defeats Spanish Armada
1588 Thomas Harriot's A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia (England)
1589-1596 Edmund Spenser's The Faerie Queen (England)
1592 Christopher Marlowe's Dr. Faustus and Thomas Nashe's Pierce Penniless, His Supplication to the Devil (England)
c. 1601 Shakespeare's Hamlet first performed (England)
1603-1625 Reign of James I, beginning of Stuart dynasty in England
1605 Francis Bacon's Advancement of Learning (England)
1607 First permanent English colony in North America at Jamestown, Virginia
1608 First French Colonies in North America
1606 Ben Jonson's Volpone (England)
1611 King James Bible published (England)
1616-1621 European diseases decimate Native Americans in New England
1618-1648 Thirty Years War in Europe
1619 First Africans brought to Virginia
1620 Pilgrims establish colony at Plymouth, Massachusetts
1623 John Webster's The Duchess of Malfi (England)
1630 Puritans establish Massachusetts Bay Colony
1633 John Donne's poems published (England)
1637 Thomas Morton's New English Canaan
1637 Pequot War in Connecticut, New England

LITERATURE TIMELINE 1640 - 1749

1640 Bay Psalm Book is the first book published in the American colonies
1640-1660 English Civil War and Revolution (King Charles I beheaded; revolutionary Oliver Cromwell leads the English commonwealth as Lord Protector)
1641 French mathematician and philosopher Rene Descartes' Meditations on First Philosophy (establishes Cartesian dualism, or the philosophical distinction between mind and matter)
1642 Theaters closed in England under Cromwell
1646 Sir John Suckling's Fragmenta Aurea (England)
1647 Roger Williams compiles the first American dictionary of an Indian language (New England)
1648 Robert Herrick's poems published (England)
1650 Anne Bradstreet's The Tenth Muse (New England)
1651 Thomas Hobbe's Leviathan (England)
1660 Stuart Monarchy restored in England
1662 Virginia law decrees slavery for children born to slave mothers
1662 Michael Wigglesworth's The Day of Doom (New England)
1666 Molière's The Misanthrope (France)
1676 Sir George Etherege's The Man of Mode (England)
1676 Increase Mather's A Brief History of the War with the Indians in New England (New England)
1677 John Dryden's All For Love(England)
1675-1678 King Philip's War destroys power of remaining New England Native American tribes
1681 William Penn founds Pennsylvania
1682 LaSalle claims Louisiana for France
1682 Mary Rowlandson, The Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson (New England)
1685 Cotton Mather's Memorable Providences Relating to Witchcraft and Possessions (New England)
1687 Isaac Newton's Principles of Mathematics (England), most influential text of the scientific revolution
1688 Glorious Revolution (James II replaced by William and Mary on the English throne)
1689-1697 King William's War (colonial war between England and France)
1690 Political and moral philosopher John Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding
England: writes of the mind as a "tabula rasa," or blank slate, and finds all knowledge rooted in external, sensory experience.

1692 Witchcraft trials and executions in Salem, Massachusetts
1700 William Congreve's The Way of the World (England)
1702-1713 Queen Anne's War (colonial war between Britain and France)
1707 Act of Union unites England, Scotland, and Wales to form Great Britain
1709-1711 Joseph Addison's Tatler (England)
1711 Alexander Pope's "An Essay on Criticism" (England)
1711-1712 Richard Steele's Spectator (England)
1719 Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe (England)
1726 Jonathan Swift's Gulliver's Travels (England)
1728 John Gay's The Beggar's Opera (England)
1730s First Great Awakening (series of Protestant revivals) begins in New England and middle colonies
1730-1850 Agricultural revolution; tremendous growth in Western Europe's population
1732 Benjamin Franklin begins publishing Poor Richard's Almanac in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
1739 Stono River slave uprising in South Carolina
1739 Moral philosopher and historian David Hume's Treatise of Human Nature (offers a skeptical reading of Locke's empiricism)
1741 Jonathan Edwards' Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God (New England)
1744-1748 King George's War (Britain and France vie for power in American colonies)
1746 Lucy Terry writes "Bars of Flight," the first known poem by an African American
1749-1761 Cherokee war against the British in the American South

LITERATURE TIMELINE 1750 - 1814

1751 Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard"
1751-72 French philosophers Denis Diderot and Jean Le Rond d'Alembert edit Encyclopédie
1754-1763 Seven Years' War (Britain and France vie for control of North American colonies)
1755 Samuel Johnson publishes Dictionary of the English Language (England)
1757 Britain gains control of India
1759 Voltaire's Candide (France)
1763 Treaty of Paris ends Seven Years' War; Britain acquires New France
1769 James Watt patented the steam engine. Beginning of industrialization
1773 Phìls Wheatley's Poems on Various Subjects (New England)
1773 Tea Act and Boston Tea Party (colonial American protest against British trade policy)
1773 Oliver Goldsmith's She Stoops to Conquer (England)
1775 Battle at Lexington-Concord opens the American Revolution with the "shot heard round the world"
1775 First anti-slavery society formed in Philadelphia
1776 Scottish economist Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations (describes the invisible hand" of market forces guiding unrestricted capitalist economies)
1776 Second Continental Congress of American colonies adopts the Declaration of Independence
1776 Revolutionary Thomas Paine's Common Sense (Philadelphia)
1781 British commander Lord Cornwallis surrenders to General George Washington at Yorktown, Virginia; states approve nation's first constitution
1781 German philosopher Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason (emphasizes innate rationality of the mind, rather than Locke's idea of a "blank slate")
1786 Robert Burns' Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect (Scotland)
1787 Political philosophers James Madison, John Jay, and Alexander Hamilton publish Federalist Papers to defend the Constitution (U.S.)
1788 U.S. Constitution ratified
1789-1799 French Revolution (overthrow of Louis XVI; revolutionary republic established)
1790 First textile factory opens in U.S.
1790 Toussaint-L'Ouverture leads revolution in Haiti
1790 William Blake's Songs of Innocence and Experience (England)
1791 William Bartram's Travels (U.S.)
1792 Mary Wollstonecraft's A Vindication of the Rights of Women (England; influential feminist reading of Enlightenment liberalism)
1793 Reign of Terror in France
1793 First Fugitive Slave Law is enacted in U.S.
1793 Cotton gin perfected by Eli Whitney in U.S.; cotton production and plantation slavery expand in American South
1796 Frances Burney's Camilla (England)
1798 Wordsworth and Coleridge's Lyrical Ballads (England)
1801 United Kingdom formed
1803 Louisiana Purchase (U.S. President Thomas Jefferson pays France 15 million dollars for vast territory between the Mississippi and the Rockies)
1803 Charles Brockden Brown's Memoirs of Carwin the Biloquist (U.S.)
1804-1806 Lewis and Clark explore from St. Louis to the Pacific
1807 German idealist Georg Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit (posits the dialectical advancement of human consciousness)
1808-1825 Latin American wars of independence
1810-1826 Rise of democratic suffrage in the U.S.
1812-1814 War of 1812 (Britain and U.S.)
1813 Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice (England)
1814 Francis Scott Key writes lyrics for "Star-Spangled Banner" during British attack on Fort McHenry (War of 1812)

LITERATURE TIMELINE 1815 - 1849

1815 Britain defeats Napoleon at Waterloo, the last battle of the Napoleonic Wars
1815 Philip Freneau's Poems(U.S.)
1815 Folktales collected by the Brothers Grimm (Germany)
1818 Mary Shelley's Frankenstein (England)
1819 John Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale" (England)
1819 Washington Irving's "Rip Van Winkle" (U.S.)
1819 Lord Byron's Don Juan (England)
1820 Beginning of industrialization in the U.S.
1820 Revolutions in Spain and Greece and the rise of nationalism and liberalism
1821 Mexico declares independence from Spain
1823 James Fenimore Cooper publishes the first of his Leatherstocking tales, The Pioneers (U.S.)
1824 Lydia Maria Child's Hobomok (U.S.)
1826 Sequoyah devises Cherokee alphabet
1827 The first African American newspaper, Freedom's Journal, begins publication in U.S.
1827 Edgar Allan Poe's Tamerlane and Other Poems (U.S.)
1828 The first Native American newspaper, Cherokee Phoenix, begins publication (U.S.)
1831 Nat Turner's slave rebellion, Northampton, Virginia
1831 The History of Mary Prince, first slave narrative published by a black woman in the Americas
1831 William Lloyd Garrison begins publishing the abolitionist paper The Liberator (U.S.)
1832 Passage of British Parliamentary Reform Bill makes British Parliament more democratic
1833 Abolition of slavery in the British Empire
1835 British establish English education system and English as language of the courts in India
1836 Texas declares independence from Mexico
1837-1901 Reign of Queen Victoria in Britain
1837-1842 Political rebellions in Upper and Lower Canada; Britain's Union Act (1840) joins the two Canadas and establishes Canadian self-government
1838-1839 "Trail of Tears" Cherokee Indians forced from their homelands by U.S. Federal troops
1839-1842 Opium War (Britain and China; China cedes Hong Kong and is opened to trade)
1840 Transcendentalist Club publishes The Dial with Margaret Fuller as editor (U.S.)
1845 Beginning of the Irish potato famine; massive immigration to the U.S. follows
1845 U.S. annexes Texas
1846-1848 Mexican-American War (raises question of slavery's expansion in Texas and U.S. newly acquired territory of California and New Mexico)
1847 Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre (England)
1848 To protest the war with Mexico's support for slavery, Massachusetts writer Henry David Thoreau refuses to pay his poll tax and is arrested; his night in jail occasions the essay "Civil Disobedience"
1848 Karl Marx and Frederich Engels' The Communist Manifesto (England; predicts overthrow of capitalism in a socialist revolution)
1848 Revolutions of 1848 in Europe (France becomes a republic; nationalist movements in Hungary, Italy, and Germany)
1848 Women's Rights convention, Seneca Falls, New York; Declaration of Sentiments signed by delegates including Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Frederick Douglass
1848 Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights (England)
1849 Harriet Tubman escapes from slavery in Maryland; she will return to conduct hundreds of others to freedom on the Underground Railroad

LITERATURE TIMELINE 1850 - 1874

1850 Tennyson's "In Memoriam" (England)
1850 Susan Warner's The Wide, Wide World (U.S.)
1850 U.S. Federal Fugitive Slave Law; African American migration to Canada increases
1850 Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter (U.S.)
1851 Herman Melville's Moby Dick (U.S.)
1851 Charles Dickens's Bleak House (England)
1852 Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin (U.S.)
1854 Henry David Thoreau's Walden (U.S.)
1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act reopens question of slavery's expansion and raises tension between slave and free states
1854-1856 Crimean War (Britain, France, and Turkey allied against Russia)
1855 Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass (U.S.)
1856 Gustave Flaubert's Madame Bovary (France)
1857 Dred Scott decision (U.S. Supreme Court denies citizenship of African Americans, enslaved or free)
1857 Indian rebellion against British
1857 Elizabeth Barrett Browning's "Aurora Leigh" (England)
1858 British Parliament assumes control over India from East India Company
1858 Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas debates; Lincoln establishes his opposition to the spread of slavery in American territories
1859 Charles Darwin's Origin of Species (England; posits that plant and animal species change over time through natural selection and "survival of the fittest")
1859 Harriet E. Wilson's Our Nig (first published novel by an African American)
1859 John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry, Virginia; Brown's execution for treason makes him a martyr for the abolitionist cause
1860 Abraham Lincoln elected U.S. president; South Carolina becomes the first state to secede from the Union
1861 Harriet Jacobs' Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (U.S.)
1861-1865 American Civil War; Union (free North) defeats Confederacy (Southern slave-states)
1862 Homestead Act opens American west to white settlement
1863 Emancipation Proclamation frees slaves in Confederate states
1865 Lincoln assassinated
1865 Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland
1865 Thirteenth Amendment ratified in U.S. (slavery abolished)
1865-1877 Reconstruction of former Confederate States
1866 Civil Rights Act, U.S., gives constitutional rights to African Americans; not enforced after Reconstruction ends
1866 First petition to British Parliament for female suffrage, authored by Richard Marsden Pankhurst
1867 Britain's National Association for Women's Suffrage formed
1867 Canadian Confederation
1868 Fourteenth Amendment promises rights of citizenship to African Americans
1868 Louisa May Alcott's Little Women (U.S.)
1869 Completion of the U.S. transcontinental railway
1869 English philosopher John Stuart Mill makes a classic liberal argument for woman suffrage in The Subjection of Women
1869 National Woman Suffrage Association founded
1870 Bret Harte's The Luck of Roaring Camp and Other Sketches (U.S.)
1871 George Eliot's Middlemarch (England)
1872 Christina Rossetti's "Goblin Market" (England)
1872 U.S. suffragist Susan B. Anthony arrested for trying to vote
1873 U.S. Comstock Laws prohibit use of, and distribution of information about, abortion or contraceptives
1873-1877 Global economic depression
1873 Women's Christian Temperance Union founded

LITERATURE TIMELINE 1875 - 1914

1875 Russian writer and philosopher Leo Tolstoy's Anna Karenina
1876 Battle of Little Bighorn between U.S. Cavalry and Sioux
1877 Reconstruction ends with the withdrawal of federal troops and the de facto disenfranchising of black voters across the American South
1880 George Washington Cable's Old Creole Days (U.S.)
1880 Henry Adams' Democracy, An American Novel (U.S.)
1881 Frederick Douglass' Life and Times of Frederick Douglass (U.S.)
1882 U.S. excludes Chinese immigrants
1884 Mark Twain's The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (U.S.)
1884-1885 Berlin Conference (U.S. and European powers plan colonizing of West Africa)
1885 William Dean Howells' The Rise of Silas Lapham (U.S.)
1886 German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche's Beyond Good and Evil
1886 American Federation of Labor established; Haymarket Riot
1886 Cuba abolishes slavery
1888 Brazil abolishes slavery
1890 Massacre at Wounded Knee Creek, South Dakota, destroys remaining power of Plains tribes
1890 Emily Dickinson's Poems (U.S.; published posthumously)
1891 Thomas Hardy's Tess of the D'Urbervilles (England)
1891 Mary E. Wilkins Freeman's A New England Nun and Other Stories (U.S.)
1892 Frances E. W. Harper's Iola Leroy (U.S.)
1893 Hawaii becomes a U.S. territory
1894 Rudyard Kipling's Jungle Books (England)
1895 Oscar Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest (England)
1895 Stephen Crane's The Red Badge of Courage (U.S.)
1895-1898 Spanish-American War in Cuba, Philippines
1896 Plessy vs. Ferguson decision; U.S. Supreme Court upholds constitutionality of racial segregation ("Jim Crow") laws
1896-1899 Kate Chopin's The Awakening (U.S.)
1899 Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper"(U.S.)
1899 Frank Norris' McTeague (U.S.)
1900 Austrian psychologist Sigmund Freud's The Interpretation of Dreams sets out tenets of modern psychoanalysis
1900 Theodore Dreiser's Sister Carrie (U.S.)
1902 Rise of feminist movements in Europe
1903 W.E.B. DuBois' The Soul of Black Folks (U.S.)
1903 Henry James' The Ambassadors (U.S.)
1903 Wright brothers make first successful airplane flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina
1903 Jack London, The Call of the Wild (U.S.)
1905 Edith Wharton's The House of Mirth (U.S.)
1906 Upton Sinclair's The Jungle (U.S.)
1907 J.M. Synge's Playboy of the Western World (England)
1908 Henry Ford introduces the Model T automobile
1908 E.M. Forster's A Room with a View (England)
1909 National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) founded in U.S.
1909 Gertrude Stein's Three Lives (U.S.)
1910-1920 Mexican Revolution
1910-1913 British philosophers Bertrand Russell and Alfred North Whitehead's Principia Mathematica argues for the reduction of mathematics (and ultimately other systems of knowledge) to logic
1913 Willa Cather's O Pioneers! (U.S.)
1913 D.H. Lawrence's Sons and Lovers (England)
1914 Home Rule bill passed by British Parliament; opens the way for Irish independence from Britain

LITERATURE TIMELINE 1914-1939

1915 W. Somerset Maugham's Of Human Bondage (England)
1914-1918 World War I
1916 Suffrage granted to women in Canada (except Quebec, 1940)
1916 Carl Sandburg's Chicago Poems (U.S.)
1917 U.S. enters WWI
1917 Russian Revolution (Nicholas II overthrown; Bolsheviks seize power)
1918 Suffrage granted to British women
1918 Wilfred Owen's "Dulce Et Decorum Est" (England)
1919 Treaty of Versailles ends World War I
1919 Sherwood Anderson's Winesburg, Ohio (U.S.)
1919 Ezra Pound's Quia Pauper Amavi (U.S.)
1920 Nineteenth Amendment gives American women the right to vote
1919-1920 U.S. Attorney General Mitchell Palmer's raids against suspected communists; first "Red Scare"
1920 Eugene O'Neill's The Emperor Jones (U.S.)
1921 Margaret Sanger founds the American Birth Control League
1921 Marianne Moore's Poems (U.S.)
1921 John Dos Passos' Three Soldiers (U.S.)
1922 Fascist Benito Mussolini takes power in Italy
1922 U.S.S.R. formed under Marxist revolutionary Vladimir Lenin
1922 T.S. Eliot's "The Wasteland" (U.S.)
1922 James Joyce's Ulysses (Ireland)
1922-1930 India's nationalist Mahatma Gandhi imprisoned for six years for leading civil disobedience against British rule
1923 George Bernard Shaw's Saint Joan (England)
1923 Jean Toomer's Cane (U.S.)
1923 William Carlos Williams' Spring and All (U.S.)
1925 F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby (U.S.)
1925 Franz Kafka's The Trial (Austria)
1926 Ernest Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises (U.S.)
1926 Langston Hughes' The Weary Blues (U.S.)
1927 Joseph Stalin assumes full power in Russia
1927 Virginia Woolf's To the Lighthouse (England)
1928 Nella Larsen's Quicksand (U.S.)
1928 William Butler Yeats' "The Tower" (Ireland)
1928 Erich Maria Remarque's All Quiet on the Western Front (Germany)
1929 Stock market crash in U.S.
1929 William Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury (U.S.)
1929 Countee Cullen's Black Christ and Other Poems (U.S.)
1929 Thomas Wolfe's Look Homeward, Angel (U.S.)
1929-1939 Worldwide economic depression
1930 Rise of Fascist Nazi party in Germany under Adolph Hitler
1930 Noel Coward's Private Lives (England)
1931 Indian Nationalist movement revived by Gandhi-led Salt March
1933 Hitler appointed Chancellor of Germany
1933 Gertrude Stein's The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas (U.S.)
1933-1937 New Deal in U.S. under President Franklin Roosevelt establishes far-reaching social and economic reforms to combat Great Depression
1934 Evelyn Waugh's A Handful of Dust (England)
1935 Nuremberg laws deprive German Jews of citizenship
1936 Djuna Barnes' Nightwood (U.S.)
1936-1939 Height of Stalin's purges in U.S.S.R.; millions perish
1936-1938 Spanish Civil War; right-wing Nationalist General Franco takes power
1937 Zora Neale Hurston's Their Eyes Were Watching God (U.S.)
1938 Graham Greene's Brighton Rock (England)
1939 Germany and Soviet Union invade Poland; Soviet Union invades Finland
1939-1945 World War II
1939 John Steinbeck's Grapes of Wrath (U.S.)

LITERATURE TIMELINE 1940-1959
1940 Richard Wright's Native Son (U.S.)
1940 Dylan Thomas' Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog (Wales)
1941 Japan attacks Pearl Harbor
1941 U.S. enters WWII
1942 Roosevelt authorizes internment of Japanese Americans
1942 Congress on Racial Equality founded (U.S.; leads first sit-ins to protest segregation)
1942 Albert Camus' The Stranger (France)
1942-1945 Holocaust; 6 million Jews, along with gypsies, Poles, homosexuals, and others killed
1942 "Rosie the Riveter" image popularizes women working in war-time industry. In the U.S. during WWII, 6 million women enter the paid workforce, 3 million of them in manufacturing jobs
1943 French Existentialist Jean-Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness
1944 D-Day (Allied landing at Normandy, France)
1944 Austrian philosopher Karl Popper's The Open Society and its Enemies attacks totalitarianism and the approach to history used to justify it
1945 Formation of United Nations (U.S.)
1945 George Orwell's Animal Farm (England)
1945 U.S. drops atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japan surrenders
1946-1974 Decolonization of Africa and Asia
1947 India gains independence from Britain; division of India to create Pakistan
1947 Truman Doctrine promises U.S. support for "free peoples everywhere" struggling against Communism
1947 Tennessee Williams' A Streetcar Named Desire (U.S.)
1948 Apartheid racial segregation deepens in South Africa
1948 Marshall Plan provides U.S. funding to rebuild economies of western European nations
1949 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) established
1949 Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman (U.S.)
1949 French philosopher Simone de Beauvoir's The Second Sex establishes the theoretical foundation for modern feminism
1949 Communist victory in China led by Mao Tse-tung
1950 Gwendolyn Brooks is the first African American woman to be awarded the Pulitzer Prize
1950 Senator Joseph McCarthy launches accusations of communist infiltration in U.S. government; second "Red Scare"
1950-1953 Korean War; U.S. leads United Nations forces, supporting South Korea against communist North Korea
1951 J.D. Salinger's Catcher in the Rye (U.S.)
1952 Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot; 1st performed, 1953
1952 Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man (U.S.)
1954 Brown vs. Board of Education decision finds segregation in U.S. public education unconstitutional
1954 William Golding's The Lord of the Flies (England)
1955 Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott begins in support of Rosa Parks; Montgomery's Martin Luther King, Jr. forms the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (civil rights group)
1956 Allen Ginsberg's Howl and Other Poems (U.S.)
1957 Sputnik (first artificial satellite) launched by U.S.S.R; U.S./U.S.S.R. "space race" ensues
1957 Ghana becomes the first independent African nation
1957 Jack Kerouac's On the Road (U.S.)
1957 Little Rock, Arkansas school desegregation crisis
1958 South Africa becomes independent from Great Britain
1958 Iris Murdoch's The Bell (England)
1959 Castro leads Cuban Revolution

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1959 Mordecai Richler's The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz (Canada)

LITERATURE TIMELINE 1960-1979

1960 African American college students in Greensboro, N.C. protest segregation with sit-ins at Woolworth's lunch counter; Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) founded
1960 John Updike's Rabbit Run (U.S.)
1960 Harold Pinter's The Dumbwaiter (England)
1960 Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird (U.S.)
1960s Civil Rights movement in U.S.
1960s Eighteen African nations become established as independent states
1960s Re-emergence of feminism in North America and Western Europe
1961 Berlin Wall divides the city into east (Communist) and west (democratic) sectors; built by Communist East Germany to stop flow of refugees to the west
1962 Anthony Burgess' A Clockwork Orange (England)
1962 Edward Albee's Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? (U.S.)
1963 Betty Friedan's The Feminine Mystique sparks revival of U.S. feminism
1963 U.S. President John F. Kennedy assassinated in Texas
1963 Civil Rights March on Washington; Martin Luther King makes "I have a dream" speech
1963 Sylvia Plath's The Bell Jar (U.S.)
1964 Anne Sexton's Selected Poems (U.S.)
1964 Amari Baraka's The Dutchman (U.S.)
1964 Civil Rights Act, U.S. promises to end long-standing racial discrimination in education, public accommodations, and federal programs
1965 Voting Rights Act, U.S. gives the Justice Department power to protect constitutional voting rights in districts where black voters had been historically disenfranchised
1965 James Baldwin's Going to Meet the Man (U.S.)
1965-1973 Cultural Revolution in China (attempt to purge traditional culture deemed a danger to communism)
1965-1974 U.S. and Vietnam War
1966 Tom Stoppard's Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead (England)
1966 Jean Rhys' Wide Sargasso Sea (Dominica)
1966 National Organization for Women (NOW) founded, U.S.
1967 Gabriel Garcia Marquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude
1968 Martin Luther King assassinated in Tennessee
1968-1973 U.S. students across the country protest Vietnam War
1969 U.S. astronaut Neil Armstrong walks on moon
1969 Woodstock Music and Art Festival held near Woodstock, New York
1969 Kurt Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse Five (U.S.)
1969 N. Scott Momaday's The Way to Rainy Mountain (U.S.)
1969 Margaret Drabble's The Waterfall (England)
1970 Robertson Davies' Fifth Business (Canada)
1973 Thomas Pynchon's Gravity's Rainbow (U.S.)
1974 Ted Hughes' Season Songs (England)
1974 Margaret Laurence's The Diviners (Canada)
1974 U.S. President Richard Nixon resigns in Watergate scandal
1975 Nikki Giovanni's The Women and the Men (U.S.)
1975 Ntozake Shange's for colored girls who have considered suicide when the rainbow is enuf (U.S.)
1975 E. L. Doctorow's Ragtime (U.S.)
1975-1998 Spread of democratic regimes in Latin America
1977 Leslie Marmon Silko's Ceremony (U.S.)
1979 Rise of Margaret Thatcher and new conservatism in Britain
1979 Seamus Heaney's Fieldwork (Ireland)

LITERATURE TIMELINE 1980-2000

1980 Rise of Ronald Reagan and conservatism in U.S.
1982 Equal Rights Amendment (constitutional guarantee of equality for women) fails ratification
1982 Alice Walker's The Color Purple (U.S.)
1982 Michael Ondaatje's Running in the Family (Canada)
1982 Bobby Ann Mason's Shiloh and Other Stories (U.S)
1982 Caryl Churchill's Top Girls (England)
1983 Graham Swift's Waterland (England)
1983 David Mamet's Glengarry Glen Ross (U.S.)
1984 Julian Barnes's Flaubert's Parrot (England)
1984 Julia Alvarez's Homecoming (U.S.)
1984 Anita Brookner's Hotel du Lac (England)
1985 Gorbachev leads Soviet Union and declares glasnost and perestroika policies
1985 Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale (Canada)
1985 Doris Lessing's The Good Terrorist (Zimbabwe)
1987 August Wilson's Fences (U.S.)
1987 Toni Morrison's Beloved (U.S.)
1987 Nadine Gordimer's A Sport of Nature (South Africa)
1989 Berlin Wall comes down; Communist government in East Germany collapses
1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre in China; government crushes pro-democracy demonstrators
1989-1990 End of Cold War and rise of new regimes in Eastern Europe
1990 Internet introduced
1990 A.S. Byatt's Possession (England)
1990 Tony Kushner's Angels in America, Part One: Millennium Approaches (U.S.)
1990 Tim O'Brien's The Things They Carried (U.S.)
1991 Persian Gulf War (U.S.-led coalition against Iraq, sparked by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait)
1991 Soviet Union dissolved
1992 Race riots in Los Angeles following Rodney King case verdict
1993 Toni Morrison is the first African American to win Nobel Prize for Literature
1993 Roddy Doyle's Paddy Clark Ha Ha Ha (Ireland)
1994 First democratic elections in South Africa; Nelson Mandela is elected President.
1995 Genocide in Rwanda
1996 Anne-Marie MacDonald's Fall on Your Knees (Canada)
1997 Britain returns Hong Kong to China
1998 Ian McEwan's Amsterdam (England)
1999 Alistair MacLeod's No Great Mischief (Canada)
2000 V.S. Naipaul's Half a Life (Trinidad)

15. BRITISH HISTORY THROUGHT TWENTY CENTURIES OF DIFFICULT RELATIONSHIPS

The Romans were the first invaders of Britain after the Celts conquered it about 700 BC. The first Roman soldier who set foot on Britain was Julius Caesar in 55 BC, but the Romans actually moved
into Britain only a century later under Emperor Claudius. Britain became a province of the Roman Empire and life went on peacefully until Rome fell in the 5th century AD. The Roman conquerors were not welcome at all by the Celt inhabitants. They were divided into tribes, but they managed to federate and set up a rebellion in 60 AD. The Britons were led by a queen, Boadicea, who proved a good leader. Although fearless and enthusiastic, her troops were not trained as a real army, so the Roman legions defeated them and Boadicea was killed.

In 1066, a Norman duke crossed the Channel and conquered England. He became William I. The Normans however kept their possessions on the continent: in the 14th century they had more lands in France than the French king and even possessed a part of Spain. In fact the Hundred Years' War was fought by the French king against the English to send them back to their island. The Normans were a people from Scandinavia who had conquered part of northern France in the same centuries when other Scandinavian peoples were conquering Britain: the Angles, the Saxons, the Danes, the Vikings. When the Normans conquered England in 1066 they had already taken up the French culture and they still felt French, that's why they claimed the French crown.

A second attack on Britain came from Europe at the end of the 18th century. After conquering most of Europe, Napoleon understood that his power was incomplete without Britain. He fought against the English supremacy all over Europe, but he was defeated in 1814 and kept prisoner until his death in 1821.

Napoleon had great enemies in Britain. One was William Pitt, the Prime Minister who was able to organize defence at home and provide support for the anti-Napoleon army. The others were two generals, Nelson and Wellington. The former destroyed Napoleon's fleet at Trafalgar, the latter beat his army at Waterloo, in Belgium.

Another man conquered a large part of Europe half a century ago, Adolf Hitler. And he decided to do what Napoleon had tried to do: take possession of Britain. The Battle of Britain was long and terrible, but Britain received the help of the USA and her former colonies. In the end Hitler was defeated.

Between 1939 and 1945 the British fought against Hitler, the most dangerous threat ever. A symbol of Britain's struggle for survival and democracy was Winston Churchill. He was able to unite all the parties and the people to let them feel in national unity. Back to Index

16. BRITISH HISTORY TIMELINE

500,000 B.C
People migrate to Britain from Europe.

6,500 B.C
Seas rise, cutting Britain off from mainland Europe

c.5000 B.C
Neolithic (new stone age) Period begins; first evidence of farming appears; stone axes, antler combs, pottery in common use.

3000 B.C
New Stone Age begins: farming people arrive from Europe.
First stone circles erected.

c.2500-1500 B.C
Most stone circles in British Isles erected during this period; purpose of the circles is uncertain, although most experts speculate that they had either astronomical or ritual uses.

c.2300 B.C
Construction begun on Britain’s largest stone circle at Avebury.

2100 B.C.
Bronze Age begins
2000 B.C
Stonehenge built
c.1800-1200 B.C
Control of society passes from priests to those who control the manufacture of metal objects.
c.1200-1000 B.C
Emergence of a warrior class who now begins to take a central role in society.
c.1100 B.C
Geoffrey of Monmouth suggests that Brutus arrives about this time.
c.1000 B.C
Earliest hill-top earthworks ("hillforts") begin to appear, also fortified farmsteads; increasing sophistication of arts and crafts, particularly in decorative personal and animal ornamentation.
750 B.C
Iron Age begins:
c.600 B.C
Iron replaces bronze, Iron Age begins; construction of Old Sarum begun.
c.150 B.C
Metal coinage comes into use; widespread contact with continent.
c.100 B.C
Flourishing of Carn Euny (Cornwall), an iron age village with interlocking stone court-yard houses; community features a "fogou," an underground chamber used, possibly, for storage or defense.
55 B.C
Julius Caesar’s first invasion of Britain.
54 BC-43 AD
Julius Caesar’s second invasion of Britain. British forces led, this time, by Cassivellaunus, a capable commander. Despite early Roman advances, British continued to harass the invaders, effectively. A "deal" with the Trinovantes (tribal enemies of Cassivellaunus), and the subsequent desertion of other British tribes, finally guaranteed the Roman victory. Caesar’s first two expeditions to Britain were only exploratory in nature, and were never intended to absorb Britain into the Roman sphere, at that time.
0
Jesus Christ is Born in Bethlehem
5 A.D
Rome acknowledges Cymbeline, King of the Catuvellauni, as king of Britain
51 A.D
Caratacus, British resistance leader, is captured and taken to Rome
61 A.D
Boudicca, queen of the Iceni, led uprising against the Roman occupiers, but is defeated and killed by the Roman governor, Suetonius Paulinus
63 A.D
Joseph of Arimathea came to Glastonbury on the first Christian mission to Britain.
c.75-77 A.D
The Roman conquest of Britain is complete, as Wales is finally subdued; Julius Agricola is imperial governor (to 84)
122 A.D
Construction of Hadrian’s Wall ordered along the northern frontier, for the purpose of hindering incursions of the aggressive tribes there into Britannia
133 A.D
Julius Severus, governor of Britain, is sent to Palestine to crush the revolt
184 A.D
Lucius Artorius Castus, commander of a detachment of Sarmatian conscripts stationed in Britain,
led his troops to Gaul to quell a rebellion. This is the first appearance of the name, Artorius, in
to Gaul to quell a rebellion. This is the first appearance of the name, Artorius, in
history and some believe that this Roman military man is the original, or basis, for the Arthurian
legend. The theory says that Castus' exploits in Gaul, at the head of a contingent of mounted troops,
are the bases for later, similar traditions about "King Arthur," and, further, that the name "Artorius"
became a title, or honorific, which was ascribed to a famous warrior in the fifth century.

197 A.D
Clodius Albinus, governor of Britain, another claimant to the Imperial throne, is killed by Severus
at the battle of Lyon

208 A.D
Severus goes to defend Britain, and repairs Hadrian’s Wall

209 A.D
St. Alban, first British martyr, was killed for his faith in one of the few persecutions of Christians
ever to take place on the island, during the governorship of Gaius Junius Faustinus Postumianus
(two is controversy about the date of Alban’s martyrdom. Some believe it occurred during the
persecutions of Diocletian, in the next century, although we opt for the earlier dating).

287 A.D
Revolt by Carausius, commander of the Roman British fleet, who rules Britain as emperor until
murdered by Allectus, a fellow rebel, in 293

303 A.D
Diocletian orders a general persecution of the Christians

306 A.D
Constantine (later to be known as "the Great") was proclaimed Emperor at York.

311 A.D
Persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire ends.

314 A.D
Edict of Toleration proclaimed at Milan, in which Christianity is made legal throughout the empire.

324 A.D
Constantine finally achieves full control over an undivided empire. He was a skillful politician who
is popularly believed to have made Christianity the official religion of the empire because of his
personal convictions. In actuality, that act was merely an expedient intended to harness the power of
its "God" for the benefit of the state. He re-located the imperial headquarters to Byzantium, whose
name he then changed to Constantinople.

Despite his outward enthusiasm for Christianity and its powerful God, he didn’t close many pagan
temples during his reign. He did, however, strip them of their former wealth, which was then shifted
to various Christian churches. This produced the result that many of the fledgling churches were put
on a very firm financial footing and many of their members enjoyed great prosperity. The
persecution of Christianity had stopped, perhaps, but its co-opting had just begun.

Early Christianity had no official hierarchies and functioned best as a series of small church groups
worshipping with and caring for their own members while spreading Christ’s Gospel in their local
areas. Constantine’s move created a top-heavy structure that would quickly depart from its original
purity; a church beholden to the state, out of touch with the needs of its adherents and concerned
only with its own comfort. Eusebius, the early Christian historian, has given us some additional
insights into the motivations of the Emperor Constantine in his "Ecclesiastical History"

337 A.D
Constantine received "Christian" baptism on his deathbed. Joint rule of Constantine’s three sons:
Constantine II (to 340); Constans (to 350); Constantius (to 361)
360s A.D
Series of attacks on Britain from the north by the Picts, the Attacotti and the Irish (Scots), requiring the intervention of Roman generals leading special legions.

369 A.D
Roman general Theodosius drives the Picts and Scots out of Roman Britain

383 A.D
Magnus Maximus (Macsen Wledig), a Spaniard, was proclaimed Emperor in Britain by the island’s Roman garrison. With an army of British volunteers, he quickly conquered Gaul, Spain and Italy.

397 A.D
The Roman commander, Stilicho, comes to Britain and repels an attack by Picts, Irish and Saxons

402 A.D
Events on the continent force Stilicho to recall one of the two British legions to assist with the defense of Italy against Alaric and the Visigoths. The recalled legion, known as the Sixth Victrix, was said by Claudian (in "De Bello Gallico," 416) to be "that legion which is stretched before the remoter Britons, which curbs the Scot, and gazes on the tattoo-marks on the pale face of the dying Pict." The barbarians were defeated, this time, at battle of Pollentia.

403 A.D
Victricius, Bishop of Rouen, visited Britain for the purpose of bringing peace to the island’s clergy, who were in the midst of a dispute, possibly over the Pelagian heresy.

405 A.D
The British troops, which had been recalled to assist Stilicho, were never returned to Britain as they had to stay in Italy to fight off another, deeper penetration by the barbarian chieftain, Radagaisus.

407 A.D
In place of the assassinated Marcus, Gratian was elevated "to the purple," but lasted only four months. Constantine III was hailed as the new emperor by Roman garrison in Britian. He proceeded to follow the example of Magnus Maximus by withdrawing the remaining Roman legion, the Second Augusta, and crossing over into Gaul to rally support for his cause. Constantine’s departure could be what Nennius called "the end of the Roman Empire in Britain. . ."

408 A.D
With both Roman legions withdrawn, Britain endures devastating attacks by the Picts, Scots and Saxons.

409 A.D
Prosper, in his chronicle, says, "in the fifteenth year of Honorius and Arcadius (409), on account of the languishing state of the Romans, the strength of the Britons was brought to a desperate pass."
Under enormous pressure, Britons take matters into their own hands, expelling weak Roman officials and fighting for themselves.

410 A.D
Britain gains "independence" from Rome. The Goths, under Alaric, sack Rome.

413 A.D
Pelagian heresy said to have begun, by Prosper (Tiro) of Aquitaine in his "Chronicle."

420-30 A.D
Pelagian heresy outlawed in Rome (418), but in Britain, enjoys much support from "pro-Celtic" faction. Traditionalists (pro-Romans) support Roman church. During this time, according to Prosper, Britain is ruled by petty "tyrants."

421 A.D
Honorius issued a decree forbidding any Pelagians to come nearer to Rome than the one-hundredth mile marker.

c.432 A.D
Traditional dating for the beginning of St. Patrick’s mission to Ireland

c.438 A.D
Probable birth of Ambrosius Aurelianus, scion of the leading Romano-British family on the island.
440 - 450 A.D
Period of civil war and famine in Britain, caused by ruling council’s weakness and inability to deal with Pictish invasions; situation aggravated by tensions between Pelagian/Roman factions. Vacated towns and cities in ruin. Migration of pro-Roman citizens toward west. Country beginning to be divided, geographically, along factional lines.

441 A.D
Gallic Chronicle records, prematurely, that "Britain, abandoned by the Romans, passed into the power of the Saxons."

445 A.D
Vortigern comes to power in Britain.

446 A.D
Britons (probably the pro-Roman party) appeal to Aetius, Roman governor of Gaul, for military assistance in their struggle against the Picts and the Irish (Scots). No help could be sent, at this time, as Aetius had his hands full with Attila the Hun.

446 A.D
Vortigern authorizes the use of Saxon mercenaries, known as foederati, for the defense of the northern parts against barbarian attack. To guard against further Irish incursions, Cunedda and his sons are moved from Manau Gododdin in northern Britain to northwest Wales.

447 A.D
Britons, aroused to heroic effort, "inflicted a massacre" on their enemies, the Picts and Irish, and were left in peace, for a brief time. Could this heroic effort have been led, again, by St. Germanus?

448 A.D
Death of St. Germanus in Ravenna. Civil war and plague ravage Britain.

450 A.D
In the first year of Marcian and Valentinian, Hengest arrives on shores of Britain with "3 keels" of warriors, and are welcomed by Vortigern. This event is known in Latin as the "adventus Saxonum," the coming of the Saxons.

452 A.D
Increasing Saxon settlement in Britain. Hengest invites his son, Octha, from Germany with "16 keels" of warriors, who occupy the northern lands, to defend against the Picts. Picts never heard from, again.

453 A.D
Increasing Saxon unrest. Raids on British towns and cities becoming more frequent.

457 A.D
Death of Vortigern. Vitalinus (Guitolinus) new leader of pro-Celtic Pelagian faction. Battle of Aylesford (Kent) in which Ambrosius, along with sons of Vortigern, Vortimer and Cateyrn, defeat Hengest for the first time.

458 - 460 A.D
Full-scale migration of British aristocrats and city-dwellers across the English Channel to Brittany, in northwestern Gaul (the "second migration"). British contingent led by Riothamus (perhaps a title, not a name), thought by some to be the original figure behind the legends of Arthur.

458 A.D
Saxon uprising in full-swing. Hengest finally conquers Kent, in southeastern Britain.

460 - 470 A.D
Ambrosius Aurelianus takes full control of pro-Roman faction and British resistance effort; leads Britons in years of back-and-forth fighting with Saxons. British strategy seems to have been to allow Saxon landings and to then contain them, there.

465 A.D
Arthur probably born around this time.

466-73 A.D
Period of minimal Saxon activity. Refortification of ancient hillforts and construction of the
Wansdyke possibly takes place during this time.
c.466 A.D
Battle of Wippedesfleot, in which Saxons defeat Britons, but with great slaughter on both sides. Mutual "disgust and sorrow" results in a respite from fighting "for a long time."
C. 469 A.D
Roman emperor, Anthemius, appeals to Britons for military help against Visigoths. Reliable accounts by Sidonius Apolonaris and Jordanes name the leader of the 12,000 man British force, Riothamus. The bulk of the British force was wiped out in battle against Euric, the Visigothic king, and the survivors, including Riothamus, vanished and were never heard from, again.
c.470 A.D
Battle of Wallop (Hampshire) where Ambrosius defeats Vitalinus, head of the opposing faction. Ambrosius assumes High-kingship of Britain.
473 A.D
Men of Kent, under Hengest, move westward, driving Britons back before them "as one flees fire."
477 A.D
Saxon chieftain, Aelle, lands on Sussex coast with his sons. Britons engage him upon landing but his superior force drives them into the forest (Weald). Over next nine years, Saxon coastal holdings are gradually expanded in Sussex.
c.480 A.D
Vita Germani, the Life of St. Germanus, written by a continental biographer, Constantius.
c.485-96 A.D
Period of Arthur’s "twelve battles" during which he gains reputation for invincibility.
486 A.D
Aelle and his sons overreach their normal territory and are engaged by Britons at battle of Mercredesburne. Battle is bloody, but indecisive, and ends with both sides pledging friendship.
c.490 A.D
Hengest dies. His son, Aesc, takes over and rules for 34 years.
c.495 A.D
Cerdic and Cynric, his son, land somewhere on the south coast, probably near the Hampshire-Dorset border.
c.496-550 A.D
Following the victory at Mt. Badon, the Saxon advance is halted with the invaders returning to their own enclaves. A generation of peace ensues. Corrupt leadership, more civil turmoil, public forgetfulness and individual apathy further erode Romano-British culture over next fifty years, making Britain ripe for final Saxon "picking."
c.496 A.D
Britons, under overall command of Ambrosius and battlefield command of the "war leader" Arthur, defeat Saxons at the Siege of Mount Badon.
c.500-50 A.D
Spread of Celtic monasticism throughout Europe
c.501 A.D
The Battle of Llongborth (probably Portsmouth), where a great British chieftain, Geraint, King of Dumnonia, was killed. Arthur is mentioned in a Welsh poem commemorating the battle.
508 A.D
Cerdic begins to move inland and defeats British king Natanleod near present-day Southampton.
c.515 A.D
Death of Aelle. Kingdom of Sussex passed to his son, Cissa and his descendents, but over time, diminished into insignificance.
519 A.D
Kingdom of the West Saxons (Wessex) founded with Cerdic its first ruler.
c.530-40 A.D
Mass migration of Celtic monks to Brittany (the "third migration").
c.534 A.D
Death of Cerdic. Cynric takes kingship.
c.540 A.D
Probable writing of Gildas’ "De Excidio Britanniae."
c.542 A.D
Battle of Camlann, according to Annales Cambriae. Death (or unspecified other demise) of Arthur (according to Geoffrey of Monmouth).
550 A.D
St. David takes Christianity to Wales
563 A.D
Irish monk, St. Columba founds a monastery on island of Iona and begins conversion of the Picts to Christianity
c.570 A.D
Probable death of Gildas.
584 A.D
Foundation of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Mercia in England
597 A.D
The Roman brand of Christianity is brought to Britain for the first time by St. Augustine, the missionary sent from Pope Gregory to convert the Saxons. Augustine founded a monastery and the first church at Canterbury, and was proclaimed its first Archbishop.
633 A.D
Mercians under Penda defeat Northumbrians
642 A.D
Mercians under Penda again defeat the Northumbrians
655 A.D
Oswy, king of Northumbria, defeats and kills Penda of Mercia
664 A.D
Synod of Whitby; Oswy abandons the Celtic Christian Church and accepts the faith of Rome: decline of the Celtic Church
731 A.D
Venerable Bede, British monk, completes his history of the Church in England
735 A.D
Death of the Venerable Bede
757 A.D
Offa, King of Mercia (to796): he builds Offa’s Dyke to keep out the Welsh
779 A.D
Offa, King of Mercia, becomes King of all England
782 A.D
Charlemagne summons the monk and scholar Alcuin of York to head the palace school at Aachen: revival of learning in Europe
793 A.D
Vikings invade Britain for the first time in a surprise attack on the monastic community at Lindisfarne (Holy Island).
796 A.D
Death of Offa: end of Mercian supremacy in England
802 A.D
Egbert, King of Wessex (to839)
828 A.D
Egbert of Wessex is recognized as overlord of other English kings
839 A.D
AEthelwulf, son of Egbert, King of Wessex (to 858) 844 A.D
Kenneth MacAlpine, King of the Scots, conquers the Picts; founds a unified Scotland 858 A.D
AEthelbald, eldest son of AEthelwulf, King of Wessex (to 860) 860 A.D
AEthelbert, second son of AEthelwulf, King of Wessex (to 865) 865 A.D
AEthelred I, third son of AEthelwulf, King of Wessex (to 871) 871 A.D
The Danes attack Wessex; are defeated by AEthelred at Ashdown 878 A.D
Alfred decisively defeats the Danes at Edington; by the Peace of Wedmore, England is divided between Wessex in the south and the Danes in the north, the Danelaw 886 A.D
Alfred captures London from the Danes 899 A.D
Edward the Elder, King of Wessex (to 924) 901 A.D
Edward the Elder takes the title "King of the Angles and Saxons" 913 A.D
Edward the Elder recaptures Essex from the Danes 924 A.D
Athelstan, son of Edward the Elder, becomes king of Wessex and effective ruler of most of England (to 939) 926 A.D
Athelstan annexes Northumbria, and forces the kings of Wales, Strathclyde, the Picts, and the Scots to submit to him 937 A.D
Battle of Brunanburh: Athelstan defeats alliance of Scots, Celts, Danes, and Vikings, and takes the title of "King of all Britain" 939 A.D
Edmund, brother of Athelstan, King of England (to 946) 945 A.D
Dunstan becomes abbot of Glastonbury 946 A.D
Edred, younger brother of Edmund, King of England (to 955); Dunstan is named his chief minister 955 A.D
Edwy, son of Edmund, King of England (to 959) 956 A.D
Dunstan sent into exile by Edwy 957 A.D
Mercians and Northumbrians rebel against Edwy 959 A.D
Edgar the Peaceful, younger brother of Edwy, King of England (to 975) 975 A.D
Edward the Martyr, son of Edgar, King of England (to 978) 978 A.D
Edward the Martyr murdered at Corfe Castle; AEthelred II, the Unready (ill-counselléd), younger brother of Edward the Martyr, King of England (to 1016) 980 A.D
The Danes renew their raids on England attacking Chester and Southampton
991 A.D
Battle of Maldon: Byrhtnoth of Essex defeated by Danish invaders; AEthelred II buys off the Danes with 10,000 pounds of silver (Danegeld)
992 A.D
AEthelred makes a truce with Duke Richard I of Normandy
994 A.D
Danes under Sweyn and Norwegians under Olaf Trygvessson sail up river Thames and besiege London; bought off by Aethelred
1003 A.D
Sweyn and an army of Norsemen land in England and wreak a terrible vengeance
1007 A.D
AEthelred buys two years’ peace from the Danes for 36,000 pounds of silver
1012 A.D
The Danes sack Canterbury: bought off for 48,000 pounds of silver
1013 A.D
Sweyn lands in England and is proclaimed king; AEthelred flees to Normandy
1014 A.D
The English recall AEthelred II as King on the death of Sweyn; Canute retreats to Denmark
1015 A.D
Canute again invades England; war between Danes and Saxons
1016 A.D
Edmund Ironside, son of AEthelred II, King of England: he and Canute divide the kingdom, Canute holds the north and Edmund Wessex; Edmund is assassinated; Canute, King of England (to 1035)
1017 A.D
Canute divides England into four earldoms
1019 A.D
Canute marries Emma of Normandy, widow of AEthelred II
1035 A.D
Death of Canute: his possessions are divided; Harold I, Harefoot, becomes King of England (to 1040)
1040 A.D
Hardicanute, King of England (to 1042); he dies of drink
1042 A.D
Edward the Confessor, son of AEthelred II, King of England (to 1066)
1051 A.D
Earl Godwin exiled (until 1052): he returns with a fleet and wins back his power
1052 A.D
Edward the Confessor founds Westminster Abbey, near London
1053 A.D
Death of Godwin: his son Harold succeeds him as Earl of Wessex
1055 A.D
Harold’s brother Tostig becomes Earl of Northumbria
1063 A.D
Harold and Tostig subdue Wales
1064 A.D
Harold is shipwrecked in Normandy; while there, he swears a solemn oath to support William of Normandy’s claim to England
1065 A.D
Northumbria rebels against Tostig, who is exiled
1066 A.D
Harold II is crowned king the day after Edward the Confessor dies. Tostig and Harold Hardraada of Norway invade England: Harold defeats them at the Battle of Stamford Bridge, killing both; Battle of Hastings: 19 days after battle of Stamford Bridge, William of Normandy lands at Pevensey, defeats and kills Harold; William I, the Conqueror, first Norman King of England (to 1087)
1067 A.D
Work is begun on building the Tower of London.
1068 A.D
The Norman Conquest continues until 1069: William subdues the north of England (the "Harrying of the North"); the region is laid waste
1072 A.D
William invades Scotland, and also receives the submission of Hereward the Wake.
1077 A.D
Hereward the Wake begins a Saxon revolt in the Fens of eastern England; Lanfranc, an Italian lawyer, becomes William’s formidable Archbishop of Canterbury. Lanfranc rebuilds Canterbury Cathedral and establishes the primacy of the see of Canterbury over York, but does not enforce clerical celibacy.
1080 A.D
William, in a letter, reminds the bishop of Rome that the King of England owes him no allegiance.
1086 A.D
Domesday Book is completed in England
1087 A.D
William II, Rufus, King of England (to 1100); his elder brother, Robert, is Duke of Normandy
1093 A.D
Donald Bane, King of Scots (to 1097), following the death of his brother, Malcolm III, in battle against the English
1097 A.D
Edgar, second son of Malcolm Canmore, King of Scotland (to 1107); he defeats Donald Bane with the assistance of William II of England
1099 A.D
Crusaders capture Jerusalem; Godfrey of Bouillon is elected King of Jerusalem
1100 A.D
Henry I, youngest son of William the Conqueror, King of England (to 1135), following assassination of William Rufus
1106 A.D
Henry I defeats his brother Rober, Duke of Normandy, at battle of Tinchebrai: Robert remains captive for life
1113 A.D
Founding of the Order of St. John is formally acknowledged by the papacy
1114 A.D
Matilda (Maud), daughter of Henry I of England marries Emperor Henry V
1118 A.D
Hugues de Payens founds the order of Knights of Templars
1120 A.D
William, heir of Henry I of England, is drowned in wreck of the "White Ship"
1129 A.D
Empress Matilda, widow of Henry V, marries Geoffrey the Handsome, Count of Anjou, nicknamed "Plantagenet"
1139 A.D
Matilda lands in England
1141 A.D
Matilda captures Stephen at the battle of Lincoln, and reigns disastrously as queen; she is driven out
by a popular rising and Stephen restored
1148 A.D
Matilda leaves England for the last time
1152 A.D
Marriage of Louis VII of France and Eleanor of Aquitaine is annulled on grounds of blood relationship; Eleanor marries Henry of Anjou, allying Aquitaine to his lands of Anjou and Normandy, two months after her divorce
1153 A.D
Henry of Anjou, son of Matilda, invades England and forces Stephen to make him heir to the English throne
1154 A.D
Henry II, King of England (to 1189); he also rules more than half of France; Pope Adrian IV (to 1159) (Nicholas Breakspear, the only English pope)
1155 A.D
Henry II appoints the Archdeacon of Canterbury, Thomas a Becket, as Chancellor
1159 A.D
Henry II levies scutage, payment in cash instead of military service
1162 A.D
Becket is appointed Archbishop of Canterbury and at once quarrels with Henry II over the Church’s rights
1164 A.D
Constitutions of Clarendon; restatement of laws governing trial of ecclesiastics in England; Becket is forced to flee to France
1170 A.D
Becket is reconciled with Henry II, returns to Canterbury; is murdered by four knights after Henry’s hasty words against him
1173 A.D
Rebellion of Henry’s eldest sons, Henry, Richard, and Geoffrey, supported by their mother, Eleanor of Aquitaine; Thomas a Becket canonized
1189 A.D
Richard I, Coeur de Lion, eldest surviving son of Henry II, King of England (to 1199)
1191 A.D
The bodies of King Arthur and Guinevere were reported to have been exhumed from a grave at Glastonbury Abbey; Richard I conquers Cyprus and captures the city of Acre
1192 A.D
Richard I captures Jaffa, makes peace with Saladin; on the way home he is captured by his enemy, Duke Leopold of Austria
1193 A.D
Leopold hands Richard over to Emperor Henry VI, who demands ransom
1194 A.D
Richard is ransomed and returned to England
1199 A.D
John Lackland, youngest son of Henry II, King of England (to 1216)
1203 A.D
John of England orders the murder of his nephew Arthur, Duke of Brittany
1207 A.D
Pope Innocent III appoints Stephen Langton Archbishop of Canterbury (Langton is the man who divided the books of the Bible into chapters); John refuses to let him take office
1208 A.D
Innocent III lays England under interdict
1209 A.D
89
Cambridge University is founded in England; Innocent III excommunicates John for attacks on Church property
1213 A.D
Innocent III declares John deposed; John resigns his kingship to the pope and receives it back as a holding from the Roman legate, thereby ending the interdict.
1215 A.D
Signing of Magna Carta; English barons force John to agree to a statement of their rights
1216 A.D
Henry III becomes king of England at age nine (to 1272)
1227 A.D
Henry III begins personal rule in England
1256 A.D
Prince Llewellyn sweeps English from Wales
1264 A.D
Simon de Montfort and other English barons defeat Henry III at battle of Lewes
1265 A.D
De Montfort’s Parliament: burgesses from major towns summoned to Parliament for the first time; Henry III’s son Edward defeats and kills Simon de Montfort at battle of Evesham
1269 A.D
Rebuilding of Westminster Abbey begun by Henry III.
1272 A.D
Edward I, King of England (to 1307)
1283 A.D
Edward I defeats and kills Llewellyn, Prince of Wales, and executes Llewellyn’s brother David; conquest of Wales complete
1290 A.D
Edward I expells all Jews from England
1291 A.D
Scots acknowledge Edward I of England as suzerain; he arbitrates in succession dispute
1295 A.D
Model Parliament of Edward I: knights and burgesses from English shires and towns summoned. First representative parliament
1296 A.D
Edward I of England deposes John Balliol from Scottish throne
1297 A.D
Battle of Cambuskenneth: Scottish patriot William Wallace defeats English army
1298 A.D
Edward I defeats Wallace at battle of Falkirk and reconquers Scotland
1301 A.D
Edward I of England invests his baby son Edward as Prince of Wales
1305 A.D
The English capture and execute William Wallace
1306 A.D
New Scottish rebellion against English rule led by Robert Bruce. Robert I, the Bruce crowned King of Scotland (to 1329) at Scone
1307 A.D
Edward I dies on march north to crush Robert Bruce. Edward II, King of England (to 1327)
1310 A.D
English barons appoint 21 peers, the Lords Ordainers, to manage Edward II’s household
1312 A.D
Order of Knights Templar abolished
1314 A.D
Battle of Bannockburn: Robert Bruce defeats Edward II and makes Scotland independent

1326 A.D
Queen Isabella and Roger Mortimer sail from France with an army to rebel against Edward II of England

1327 A.D
Parliament declares Edward II deposed, and his son accedes to the throne as Edward III. Edward II is hideously murdered, nine months later

1328 A.D
Charles IV dies, ending the Capetian dynasty. Philip of Valois succeeds him as Philip VI.

1329 A.D
Edward III of England does simple homage for Aquitaine (Guienne), but refuses to do liege homage.

1333 A.D
Edward III invades Scotland on Balliol’s behalf and defeats the Scots at battle of Halidon Hill

1336 A.D
Edward places an embargo on English exports of wool to Flanders.

1337 A.D
Philip declares Edward’s fiefs forfeit and begins harassing the frontiers of Aquitaine; Edward III, provoked by these attacks on his territories in France, declares himself king of France; "The Hundred Years’ War " begins (ends 1453)

1338 A.D
Treaty of Koblenz: alliance between England and the Holy Roman Empire; Edward III formally claims the French crown.

1340 A.D
French troops commanded by Bertrand du Guesclin; Edward, the Black Prince, sacks Limoges

1340 A.D
Naval victory at Sluys gives England the command of the English Channel; English Parliament passes four statues providing that taxation shall be imposed only by Parliament

1346 A.D
Edward III of England invades France with a large army and defeats an even bigger army under Philip VI at the Battle of CrÜcy

1347 A.D
The English capture Calais

1348 A.D
Edward III establishes the Order of the Garter; Black Death (bubonic plague) reaches England

1351 A.D
The English remove the Pope’s power to give English benefices to foreigners

1353 A.D
Statue of Praemunire: English Parliament forbids appeals to Pope

1356 A.D
Edward the Black Prince, son of Edward III, defeats the French at the battle of Poitiers, capturing King John II

1358 A.D
The Jacquerie

1360 A.D
Peace of Bretigny ends the first stage of the Hundred Years’ War. Edward III gives up claim to French throne

1369 A.D
Second stage of war between England and France begins

1372 A.D
French troops recapture Poitou and Brittany; Naval battle of La Rochelle: French regain control of English Channel
1373 A.D
John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, son of Edward III, leads new English invasion of France
1374 A.D
John of Gaunt returns to England and takes charge of the government; Edward III in his dotage, the Black Prince is ill
1375 A.D
Truce of Bruges ends hostilities between England and France
1376 A.D
The Good Parliament in England, called by Edward the Black Prince, introduces many reforms of government; Death of Edward the Black Prince, aged 45; The Civil Dominion of John Wyclif, an Oxford don, calling for Church reforms
1377 A.D
Richard II, son of the Black Prince, King of England (to 1399)
1381 A.D
Peasants’ Revolt in England; John Wyclif, an Oxford theologian, publishes his "Confession", denying that the "substance" of bread and wine are miraculously changed during the Eucharist.
1382 A.D
John Wyclif is expelled from Oxford because of his opposition to certain Church doctrines
1386 A.D
John of Gaunt leads an expedition to Castile, which he claims in his wife’s name; fails 1388
1387 A.D
Geoffrey Chaucer begins work on The Canterbury Tales
1389 A.D
Richard II, aged 22, assumes power
1394 A.D
Richard II leads expedition to subdue Ireland; returns to England 1395
1396 A.D
Richard II marries the seven-year old Princess Isabella of France
1399 A.D
Death of John of Gaunt; Gaunt’s eldest son, Henry of Bolingbroke, lands in Yorkshire with 40 followers, and soon has 60,000 supporters: Richard II is deposed; Bolingbroke becomes Henry IV, King of England (to 1413)
1400 A.D
Richard II murdered at Pontefract Castle; Owen Glendower proclaims himself Prince of Wales and begins rebellion
1401 A.D
Persecution of Lollards for revolting against clergy.
1402 A.D
Henry IV enters Wales in pursuit of Glendower
1403 A.D
Battle of Shrewsbury; rebellion by the Percy family: Henry IV defeats and kills Harry "Hotspur" Percy
1406 A.D
Henry, Prince of Wales, defeats Welsh
1413 A.D
Henry V, King of England (to 1422)
1415 A.D
Henry V invades France, and defeats the French at Agincourt
1416 A.D
Death of Owen Glendower
1420 A.D

Treaty of Troyes
1422 A.D

Deaths of Henry V of England and Charles VI of France; Henry VI, King of England (to 1461)
1424 A.D

John, Duke of Bedford, regent for Henry VI of England, defeats the French at Cravant
1428 A.D

Henry VI begins siege of Orleans
1429 A.D

A French force, led by military commander Joan of Arc (Jeanne d’Arc), relieves the siege of Orleans; Charles VII crowned king of France at Rheims
1430 A.D

Burgundians capture Jeanne d’Arc and hand her over to the English
1431 A.D

Jeanne d’Arc burned as a witch at Rouen; Henry VI of England crowned king of France in Paris
1453 A.D

Bordeaux falls to the French, Hundred Years’ War ends; England’s only French possession is Calais; In England, Henry VI becomes insane
1454 A.D

Richard, Duke of York, is regent of England while Henry VI is insane; Printing with movable type is perfected in Germany by Johannes Gutenberg
1455 A.D

Henry VI recovers. Richard of York is replaced by Somerset and excluded from the Royal Council; War of the Roses - civil wars in England between royal houses of York and Lancaster (until 1485); Battle of St. Albans. Somerset defeated and killed
1460 A.D

Battle of Wakefield. Richard of York is defeated and killed; Earl of Warwick (the Kingmaker) captures London for the Yorkists; Battle of Northampton: Henry VI is captured by Yorkists
1461 A.D

Battles of Mortimer’s Cross and Towton: Richard’s son, Edward of York, defeats Lancastrians and becomes king; Edward IV, King of England (to 1483)
1465 A.D

Henry VI imprisoned by Edward IV
1466 A.D

Warwick’s quarrels with Edward IV begin; forms alliance with Louis XI
1470 A.D

Warwick turns Lancastrian: he defeats Edward IV and restores Henry VI
1471 A.D

Battle of Barnet. Edward IV defeats and kills Warwick; Henry VI dies, probably murdered in the Tower of London
1475 A.D

Edward IV invades France; Peace of Piequigny between England and France
1476 A.D

William Caxton sets up printing press at Westminster
1483 A.D

Death of Edward IV; Edward V, King of England; he is deposed by his uncle, Richard Duke of Gloucester; Richard III, King of England (to 1485); Edward V and his brother are murdered in the Tower of London
1484 A.D

Caxton prints Morte D’Arthur, the poetic collection of legends about King Arthur compiled by Sir
Thomas Malory
1485 A.D
Battle of Bosworth Field: Henry Tudor, with men, money and arms provided by Charles VIII of France, defeats and kills Richard III in the decisive (but not final) battle of the Wars of the Roses.
1486 A.D
1486 A.D
Henry VII joins the Holy League; commercial treaty between England and Netherlands.
1487 A.D
Battle of Stoke Field: In final engagement of the Wars of the Roses, Henry VII, defeats Yorkist army "led" by Lambert Simnel (who was impersonating Edward, the nephew of Edward IV, the only plausible royal alternative to Henry, who was confined in the Tower of London).
1497 A.D
John Cabot discovers Newfoundland
1502 A.D
Margaret, daughter of Henry VII, marries James IV of Scotland.
1509 A.D
Henry VIII, becomes king.
1513 A.D
Battle of Flodden Field (fought at Flodden Edge, Northumberland) in which invading Scots are defeated by the English under their commander, 70 year old Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey; James IV of Scotland is killed.
1515 A.D
Thomas Wolsey, Archbishop of York, is made Lord Chancellor of England and Cardinal
1517 A.D
The Protestant Reformation begins; Martin Luther nails his "95 Theses" against the Catholic practice of selling indulgences, on the church door at Wittenberg
1520 A.D
Field of Cloth of Gold: Francois I of France meets Henry VIII but fails to gain his support against Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V
1521 A.D
Henry VIII receives the title "Defender of the Faith" from Pope Leo X for his opposition to Luther
1529 A.D
Henry VIII dismisses Lord Chancellor Thomas Wolsey for failing to obtain the Pope’s consent to his divorce from Catherine of Aragon; Sir Thomas More appointed Lord Chancellor; Henry VIII summons the "Reformation Parliament" and begins to cut the ties with the Church of Rome
1530 A.D
Thomas Wolsey dies
1532 A.D
Sir Thomas More resigns over the question of Henry VIII’s divorce
1533 A.D
Henry VIII marries Anne Boleyn and is excommunicated by Pope Clement VII; Thomas Cranmer appointed Archbishop of Canterbury
1534 A.D
Act of Supremacy: Henry VIII declared supreme head of the Church of England
1535 A.D
Sir Thomas More is beheaded in Tower of London for failing to take the Oath of Supremacy
1536 A.D
Anne Boleyn is beheaded; Henry VIII marries Jane Seymour; dissolution of monasteries in England begins under the direction of Thomas Cromwell, completed in 1539.
1537 A.D
Jane Seymour dies after the birth of a son, the future Edward VI
1539 A.D
Dissolution of Glastonbury Abbey; buildings torched and looted by king’s men; Abbot Richard Whiting is executed by hanging atop Glastonbury Tor.
1540 A.D
Henry VIII marries Anne of Cleves following negotiations by Thomas Cromwell; Henry divorces Anne of Cleves and marries Catherine Howard; Thomas Cromwell executed on charge of treason
1542 A.D
Catherine Howard is executed
1543 A.D
Henry VIII marries Catherine Parr; alliance between Henry and Charles V (Holy Roman Emperor) against Scotland and France
1544 A.D
Henry VIII and Charles V invade France
1547 A.D
Edward VI, King of England: Duke of Somerset acts as Protector
1549 A.D
Introduction of uniform Protestant service in England based on Edward VI’s Book of Common Prayer
1550 A.D
Fall of Duke of Somerset; Duke of Northumberland succeeds as Protector
1551 A.D
Archbishop Cranmer publishes Forty-two Articles of religion
1553 A.D
On death of Edward VI, Lady Jane Grey proclaimed queen of England by Duke of Northumberland, her reign lasts nine days; Mary I, daughter of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon, Queen of England (to 1558); Restoration of Roman Catholic bishops in England
1554 A.D
Execution of Lady Jane Grey
1555 A.D
England returns to Roman Catholicism: Protestants are persecuted and about 300, including Cranmer, are burned at the stake
1558 A.D
England loses Calais, last English possession in France; Death of Mary I; Elizabeth I, daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, becomes Queen; Repeal of Catholic legislation in England
1560 A.D
Treaty of Berwick between Elizabeth I and Scottish reformers; Treaty of Edinburgh among England, France, and Scotland
1563 A.D
The Thirty-nine Articles, which complete establishment of the Anglican Church
1564 A.D
Peace of Troyes between England and France
1567 A.D
Murder of Lord Darnley, husband of Mary Queen of Scots, probably by Earl of Bothwell; Mary Queen of Scots marries Bothwell, is imprisoned, and forced to abdicate; James VI, King of Scotland
1568 A.D
Mary Queen of Scots escapes to England and is imprisoned by Elizabeth I at Fotheringay Castle
1577 A.D
Alliance between England and Netherlands; Francis Drake sails around the world (to 1580)
1584 A.D
William of Orange is murdered and England sends aid to the Netherlands; 1586 Expedition of Sir
Francis Drake to the West Indies; Conspiracy against Elizabeth I involving Mary Queen of Scots
1587 A.D
Execution of Mary Queen of Scots; England at war with Spain; Drake destroys Spanish fleet at Cadiz
1588 A.D
The Spanish Armada is defeated by the English fleet under Lord Howard of Effingham, Sir Francis Drake, and Sir John Hawkins: war between Spain and England continues until 1603
1597 A.D
Irish rebellion under Hugh O’Neill, Earl of Tyrone (finally put down 1601)
1600 A.D
Elizabeth I grants charter to East India Company
1601 A.D
Elizabethan Poor Law charges the parishes with providing for the needy; Essex attempts rebellion, and is executed
1603 A.D
Elizabeth dies; James VI of Scotland becomes James I of England
1604 A.D
Hampton Court Conference: no relaxation by the Church towards Puritans; James bans Jesuits; England and Spain make peace
1605 A.D
Gunpowder Plot; Guy Fawkes and other Roman Catholic conspirators fail in attempt to blow up Parliament and James I.
1607 A.D
Parliament rejects proposals for union between England and Scotland; colony of Virginia is founded at Jamestown by John Smith; Henry Hudson begins voyage to eastern Greenland and Hudson River
1610 A.D
Hudson Bay discovered
1611 A.D
James I’s authorized version (King James Version) of the Bible is completed; English and Scottish Protestant colonists settle in Ulster
1614 A.D
James I dissolves the "Addled Parliament" which has failed to pass any legislation
1618 A.D
Thirty Years’ War begins, lasts until 1648
1620 A.D
Pilgrims land at Plymouth Rock on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, in the "Mayflower"; found New Plymouth
1622 A.D
James I dissolves Parliament for asserting its right to debate foreign affairs
1624 A.D
Alliance between James I and France; Parliament votes for war against Spain; Virginia becomes crown colony
1625 A.D
Charles I, King of England (to 1649); Charles I marries Henrietta Maria, sister of Louis XIII of France; dissolves Parliament which fails to vote him money
1628 A.D
Petition of Right; Charles I forced to accept Parliament’s statement of civil rights in return for finances
1629 A.D
Charles I dissolves Parliament and rules personally until 1640
1630 A.D
England makes peace with France and Spain
1639 A.D
First Bishops’ War between Charles I and the Scottish Church; ends with Pacification of Dunse
1640 A.D
Charles I summons the "Short " Parliament ; dissolved for refusal to grant money; Second Bishops’ War; ends with Treaty of Ripon; The Long Parliament begins.
1641 A.D
Triennial Act requires Parliament to be summoned every three years; Star Chamber and High Commission abolished by Parliament; Catholics in Ireland revolt; some 30,000 Protestants massacred; Grand Remonstrance of Parliament to Charles I
1642 A.D
Charles I fails in attempt to arrest five members of Parliament and rejects Parliament’s Nineteen Propositions; Civil War (until 1645) begins with battle of Edgehill between Cavaliers (Royalists) and Roundheads (Parliamentarians)
1643 A.D
Solemn League and Covenant is signed by Parliament
1644 A.D
Battle of Marston Moor; Oliver Cromwell defeats Prince Rupert
1645 A.D
Formation of Cromwell’s New Model Army; Battle of Naseby; Charles I defeated by Parliamentary forces
1646 A.D
Charles I surrenders to the Scots
1647 A.D
Scots surrender Charles I to Parliament; he escapes to the Isle of Wright; makes secret treaty with Scots.
1648 A.D
Scots invade England and are defeated by Cromwell at battle of Preston Pride’s Purge; Presbyterians expelled from Parliament (known as the Rump Parliament); Treaty of Westphalia ends Thirty Years’ War
1649 A.D
Charles I is tried and executed; The Commonwealth, in which ; England is governed as a republic, is established and lasts until 1660; Cromwell harshly suppresses Catholic rebellions in Ireland
1650 A.D
Charles II lands in Scotland; is proclaimed king.
1651 A.D
Charles II invades England and is defeated at Battle of Worcester; Charles escapes to France; First Navigation Act, England gains virtual monopoly of foreign trade
1653 A.D
Cromwell dissolves the "Rump" and becomes Lord Protector
1654 A.D
Treaty of Westminster between England and Dutch Republic
1655 A.D
England divided into 12 military districts by Cromwell; seizes Jamaica from Spain
1656 A.D
War with Spain (until 1659)
1658 A.D
Oliver Cromwell dies; succeeded as Lord Protector by son Richard; Battle of the Dunes, England and France defeat Spain; England gains Dunkirk
1659 A.D
Richard Cromwell forced to resign by the army; "Rump" Parliament restored
1660 A.D
Convention Parliament restores Charles II to throne
1661 A.D
Clarendon Code; "Cavalier" Parliament of Charles II passes series of repressive laws against
Nonconformists; English acquire Bombay
1662 A.D
Act of Uniformity passed in England
1664 A.D
England siezes New Amsterdam from the Dutch, change name to New York
1665 A.D
Great Plague in London
1666 A.D
Great Fire of London
1667 A.D
Dutch fleet defeats the English in Medway river; treaties of Breda among Netherlands, England,
France, and Denmark
1668 A.D
Triple Alliance of England, Netherlands, and Sweden against France
1670 A.D
Secret Treaty of Dover between Charles II of England and Louis XIV of France to restore Roman
Catholicism to England; Hudson’s Bay Company founded
1672 A.D
Third Anglo-Dutch war (until 1674); William III (of Orange) becomes ruler of Netherlands
1673 A.D
Test Act aims to deprive English Roman Catholics and Nonconformists of public office
1674 A.D
Treaty of Westminster between England and the Netherlands
1677 A.D
William III, ruler of the Netherlands, marries Mary, daughter of James, Duke of York, heir to the
English throne
1678 A.D
'Popish Plot’ in England; Titus Oates falsely alleges a Catholic plot to murder Charles II
1679 A.D
Act of Habeas Corpus passed, forbidding imprisonment without trial; Parliament’s Bill of Exclusion
against the Roman Catholic Duke of York blocked by Charles II; Parliament dismissed; Charles II
rejects petitions calling for a new Parliament; petitioners become known as Whigs; their opponents
(royalists) known as Tories
1681 A.D
Whigs reintroduce Exclusion Bill; Charles II dissolves Parliament
1685 A.D
James II of England and VII of Scotland (to 1688); rebellion by Charles II’s illegitimate son, the
Duke of Monmouth, against James II is put down
1686 A.D
James II disregards Test Act; Roman Catholics appointed to public office
1687 A.D
James II issues Declaration of Liberty of Conscience, extends toleration to all religions
1688 A.D
England’s ‘Glorious Revolution’; William III of Orange is invited to save England from Roman
Catholicism, lands in England, James II flees to France
1689 A.D
Convention Parliament issues Bill of Rights; establishes a constitutional monarchy in Britain; bars Roman Catholics from the throne; William III and Mary II become joint monarchs of England and Scotland (to 1694), Toleration Act grants freedom of worship to dissenters in England; Grand Alliance of the League of Augsburg, England, and the Netherlands

1701 A.D
James II dies in France. Act of Settlement directs succession, should Anne die childless, to the (Protestant) House of Hanover--unless "the Old Pretender," James (son of James II) or, later, Bonnie Prince Charlie, "the Young Pretender," would abjure Roman Catholicism.

1707 A.D
Act of Union between Scotland and England.

1714 A.D
Anne dies; Dynastic crisis; George I (of Hanover) succeeds unopposed.

1715 A.D
Jacobite rebellion.

1720 A.D
Charles Edward Stuart (a.k.a. Bonnie Prince Charlie or the Young Pretender) born in France to James (the Old Pretender).

1721-42 A.D
Robert Walpole Prime Minister.

1727 A.D
George I dies; George II crowned.

1733 A.D
John Kay’s flying shuttle.

1745 A.D
Jacobite rising in support of Bonnie Prince Charlie.

1754 A.D
Anglo-French war begins in North America.

1759 A.D
Clive captures India from the French.

1760 A.D
British Museum opens.

1763 A.D
Treaty of Paris ends the Seven Years’ War. France cedes Canada and the Mississippi Valley to Britain.

1764 A.D
Hargreaves invents the spinning jenny.

1766 A.D
James "the Old Pretender" dies in France.

1769 A.D
Arkwright invents a spinning machine.

1773 A.D
Boston Tea Party.

1775 A.D
American Revolution begins.  
Watt’s first efficient steam engine.  
1776 A.D  
American colonies declare their independence.  
1783 A.D  
Peace treaty signed in Paris between Great Britain and the United States.  
1785 A.D  
Cartwright builds power loom.  
1788 A.D  
Bonnie Prince Charlie dies in France.  
1801 A.D  
Union of Great Britain and Ireland.  
1805 A.D  
Battle of Trafalgar.  
1811 A.D  
Prince of Wales named Regent to act for George III, now insane.  
1811-12 A.D  
Luddite riots in the North and the Midlands. Laborers attack factories and break up the machines which they fear will replace them.  
1812-14 A.D  
War of 1812 between England and the United States.  
1814 A.D  
Treaty of Ghent ends Anglo-U.S. War.  
England and allies invade France.  
Napoleon exiled to Elba.  
1815 A.D  
Napoleon escapes Elba; begins the "Hundred Days."  
Battle of Waterloo; Napoleon exiled to St. Helena in the South Atlantic.  
Corn Laws passed.  
1820 A.D  
George III dies; succeeded by Prince Regent as George IV. Cato Street Conspiracy  
1822 A.D  
Irish Free State established.  
1829 A.D  
Catholic Emancipation Act.  
Peel establishes the Metropolitan Police.  
1830 A.D  
George IV dies; his brother William IV succeeds.  
Manchester - Liverpool Railway (first in England).  
1832 A.D  
1st Reform Bill: adds £10/year householders to the voting rolls and reapportions Parliamentary representation much more fairly, doing away with most "rotten" and "pocket" boroughs. Adds 217,000 voters to an electorate of 435,000.  
1833 A.D  
Slavery abolished throughout the British Empire.  
Factory Act.  
1834 A.D  
New Poor Law.  
Houses of Parliament burn down.  
1837 A.D  
William IV dies; succeeded by his niece, Victoria.
1840 A.D
Queen Victoria marries her cousin Albert, who becomes Prince Consort.
Penny post started.
S.F.B. Morse invents the Telegraph.
Grammar Schools Act.
1842 A.D
Copyright Act
1845-6 A.D
Potato Failure in Europe; starvation in Ireland.
1850 A.D
Telegraph cable laid under English Channel.
1851 A.D
Great Exhibition ("Crystal Palace").
1855 A.D
Livingston discovers Victoria Falls.
1858 A.D
First Atlantic cable laid
1861 A.D
Albert dies; Victoria retires into mourning.
1864 A.D
Geneva Convention establishes Red Cross.
1866 A.D
Telegraph cable laid under the Atlantic.
1867 A.D
Second Reform Bill: enfranchises many workingmen; adds 938,000 to an electorate of 1,057,000 in England and Wales. (Disraeli’s legislation)
1876 A.D
Victoria named Empress of India.
1880 A.D
War with Transvaal.
1884-5 A.D
Third Reform Act and Redistribution Act extend vote to agricultural workers; electorate tripled.
1885 A.D
Fall of Khartoum.
1886 A.D
First (Irish) Home Rule bill rejected.
1887 A.D
Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee.
1897 A.D
Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee.
1899-1902 A.D
Boer war.
1901 A.D
Victoria dies; Edward Prince of Wales succeeds.
1914-18 A.D
The "Great War" (World War I).
1916 A.D
Easter Rising in Dublin.
1938 A.D
Chamberlain cedes Czech territory to Hitler at Munich.
1939-45 A.D
World War II.
1940 A.D
Battle of Britain.
The battle of Britain was the attempt by the German Luftwaffe to gain air superiority over the Royal Air Force (RAF), before a planned sea and airborne invasion of Britain (Operation Sealion).
The failure of Nazi Germany to destroy Britain's air forces to allow for an invasion or to break the spirit of either the British government or people is widely considered the Third Reich's first major defeat.
1947 A.D
Britain’s coal industry is nationalised
1947 A.D
India gains independence from Britain
1948 A.D
National Health Service is established
1949 A.D
Republic of Ireland comes into being
1950 A.D
British troops arrive to support US forces in the Korean War
1951 A.D
Conservatives under Winston Churchill win the general election
1952 A.D
Elizabeth II succeeds her father, George VI. 6 February 1952
1953 A.D
Watson and Crick publish their discovery of the structure of DNA
1955 A.D
Commercial television starts with the first ITV broadcast
1955 A.D
Winston Churchill retires as prime minister
1956 A.D
’Cambridge spies’ surface in Moscow after disappearing in 1951
1956 A.D
Britain switches on its first nuclear power station
1956 A.D
Britain and France invade Egypt after nationalisation of the Suez Canal
1957 A.D
Britain tests its first hydrogen bomb
1958 A.D
Motorway system opens with the M6 Preston bypass
1965 A.D
Comprehensive education system is initiated
1965 A.D
Death penalty is abolished
1966 A.D
England win the football World Cup
1967 A.D
Abortion and homosexuality are legalised
1969 A.D
Concorde, the world’s first supersonic airliner, makes its maiden flight
1971 A.D
Decimalised currency replaces ‘pounds, shillings and pence’
1973 A.D
Britain joins the European Economic Community
1978 A.D
World’s first test-tube baby is born in Oldham
1978/79 A.D
Strikes paralyse Britain during the so-called ’Winter of Discontent’
1979 A.D
Conservative Margaret Thatcher becomes Britain’s first female prime minister
1979 A.D
IRA kill the Queen’s cousin Lord Mountbatten
1981 A.D
Humber Bridge opens, the longest single-span bridge in the world
1982 A.D
Argentina invades the British territory of the Falkland Islands on 2 April and are beaten on 14 June
1982
1984 A.D
12-month ’Miners’ Strike’ over pit closures begins
1984 A.D
IRA bombers strike at the Conservative conference in Brighton
1986 A.D
Major national industries are privatised
1989 A.D
Tim Berners-Lee invents the World Wide Web
1990 A.D
Introduction of new local taxes sparks ’poll tax’ riots in London
1991 A.D
Liberation of Kuwait begins as Allies launch Operation Desert Storm
1992 A.D
Channel Tunnel opens, linking London and Paris by rail
1994 A.D
First women priests are ordained by the Church of England
1997 A.D
Britain hands Hong Kong back to China
1997 A.D
Diana, Princess of Wales, dies in a car crash in Paris
2000 A.D
The Queen Mother celebrates her 100th birthday, the first member of the Royal Family to reach her centenary.
2001 A.D
Foot-and-mouth disease wreaks havoc on rural Britain
2001 A.D
Islamic terrorists crash aircraft on targets in New York and Washington
2001 A.D
Britain joins the US in strikes on Taleban-controlled Afghanistan
2003 A.D
Britain joins the US in an invasion of Iraq
2005 A.D
Kyoto Protocol on measures to control climate change comes into force
2005 A.D
Suicide bombers kill 52 people on London’s transport system
2005 A.D
Civil partnerships give same-sex couples legal rights
2005 A.D
Ellen MacArthur becomes the fastest person to sail single-handed around the world and at 28 years old, the youngest person to receive a damehood. 

17. GLOSSARY OF LITERARY TERMS, PLACE AND HISTORICAL REFERENCES

**Acrostic:** a verse or arrangement of words in which certain letters in each line, such as the first or last, when taken in order spell out a word, motto, etc. Etymology: Gr akrostichos < akros (see acro-) + stichos, line of verse.

**Act:** (From Latin "Thing done") A division in the Action of a Play, often further divided into Scenes. Frequently these divisions correspond with changes in the development of the play. On the stage the divisions of the action may be evidenced by exits and entrances of actors, changes of scenery, lighting effects or by closing the stage with a curtain. Elizabethan dramatists copied the five-act structure from Seneca and other roman playwrights, and this became the standard form for all plays till Ibsen and Cekhov experimented with four-act plays in the late nineteenth century. Nowadays playwrights are more free to organize their works and the three-acts plays are most common.

**Adonis:** in classical mythology, a young man of remarkable beauty; a handsome young man loved by Aphrodite; he is killed by a wild boar.

**Alexandrinc:** prosody: an iambic line having normally six feet; a line of poetry containing regularly six iambic feet (12 syllables) with a caesura after the third. iambic hexameter. Etymology: Fr alexandrin: so called from being used in OF poems on Alexander (the Great)

**Alienation Effect:** also called a-effect or distancing effect, German Verfremdungseffekt or V- effekt; idea central to the dramatic theory of the German dramatist-director Bertolt Brecht. It involves the use of techniques designed to distance the audience from emotional involvement in the play through jolting reminders of the artificiality of the theatrical performance.

**Allegory:** is a narrative in which an abstract and, sometimes, complex moral message is made more concrete and simple by the means of characters and incidents that represent abstract qualities and problems. A story in which people, things, and happenings have a hidden or symbolic meaning: allegories are used for teaching or explaining ideas, moral principles, etc. A narrative using symbolic names or characters that carries underlying meaning other than the one most apparent. The stories are usually long and complex, and are meant to explain or teach a moral idea or lesson to the reader. The ideas are presented in a concrete and imaginative manner, and incidents usually represent political, spiritual, or romantic situations. The characters are types (Mr. Stingy Cheapo) or they are moral characteristics (Kindness, Jealousy). One character can represent a whole bunch of people. For example, in Dante Alighieri's Divine Comedy, Dante symbolizes mankind and is guided by the poet Virgil through Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise. During this journey, he learns about the punishments of sin, and the process of salvation. There are also allegories in the story Young Goodman Brown by Nathaniel Hawthorne in which the character Faith is used to represent good fighting evil. Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress and Spenser's "The Faerie Queen" are famous allegories in English. Allegories can also be found in parables and fables. In fables, inanimate objects or animals take on human characteristics in order to point out their weaknesses and desired traits. There is usually a short, simple, commonly cliched lesson (that your parents love to quote for you) which is stated at the end. A famous example is Aesop's fables about the hare and the tortoise (slow and steady wins the race) and the one about the grapevine. A parable is a concise story using
everyday situations making a point through comparisons. In the Bible, Jesus uses parables to simplify ideas for his disciples. For example, he compares the kingdom of God to the mustard seed. He says it is the smallest seed planted in the ground, yet when it grows, it becomes the largest garden plant providing shade and comfort. [Pearl Chang, '99]

**Alliteration:** the use, within a line or phrase, of words beginning with the same consonant or accented vowel sound, e.g. "safe and sound", "spick and span". This technique is used to give emphasis or create a pleasant, singing effect. Originated in the early 17th century from medieval Latin allitterato; used for poetic effect; the repetition of the initial sounds in two or more neighboring words or syllables. It can also be referred to as head rhyme or initial rhyme. (Example: "Aunt Jennifer's Tigers" -Adrienne Rich pg. 471 "Aunt Jennifer's fingers fluttering through her wool" "We'll go on prancing, proud and unafraid" and "Hymn To God the Father" -John Donne pg. 505 "Shall shine as he shines now . . ." [Jessica Sharron, '99]

**Allusion:** an indirect or implied reference to another work of literature, historical event, famous quotation, etc. The desired effect is to enhance the meaning of the author's work by the reference. This can only be achieved by the level of the reader's knowledge of the work being alluded to. For example: in the novel Animal Farm, there is a revolution which takes place when the animals overthrow their human owners. The leader of the animals is a monarchic pig name Napoleon. The story alludes to the Bolshevik Revolution during World War I, allowing for the reader to better see the level of power a single ruler can reach. [Kristin Pesceone, '99]

**Ambiguity:** In literary criticism ambiguity refers to the exploitation for artistic purposes of language which has usually two but possibly multiple meanings. Ambiguity gives a state of doubt and indistinction to words or expressions that make them capable of being interpreted and understood in more than one way. It should be noted that ambiguity is not necessarily negative in literature and literary criticism. Examples: In Charlotte Bronte’s Jane Eyre, during the discussion between Jane and Mr. Rochester that eventually ends in him asking her to marry him, it is ambiguous as to whether Mr. Rochester is referring to Blanche Ingram, or some other woman whom he holds such deep affection for. In this very same novel, there is another example of ambiguity in much a similar situation. When St. John asks Jane to be his wife and come with him on his mission, it is ambiguous as to whether he truly loves her or whether he wants her along for some other reason. [Joel Carlson, '99]

**Amoretti:** "little cupids".

**Amplification:** (rhetoric), a figure of speech that adds importance to increase its rhetorical effect.

**Analogy:** a comparison or similarity between two things that are alike in some way. Anti-Climax: a sudden drop in tension, often amusing. It was used as advice for satire and ridicule by many of the Augustan poets.

**Analogue:** An analogue is a piece of writing that is similar in some aspect to another. When one work is like another because it is intentionally derived from it, it is not called an analogue. The second work is just called a source. The plays Antigone by Sophocles and Hamlet, Prince of Denmark by William Shakespeare are analogues because they are both tragedies written in verse in which the hero sets out to make peace for the death of a loved one, but ultimately dies himself. "The Story of an Hour" by Kate Chopin and "Astronomer's Wife" by Kay Boyle can also be thought of as analogues because both are short stories which deal with a woman's liberation from her husband, although the results of the stories are quite different. [Erin Hyun, '99]

**Anapest:** In poetry, a foot composed of two short, unstressed syllables followed by a long, stressed
An example of anapestic meter is Lord Byron's "The Destruction of Sennacherib."

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee. [Nora Quiros, '99]

**Anaphora:** In rhetoric, an anaphora (Greek: "carrying back") is a rhetorical device that consists of repeating a sequence of words at the beginnings of neighboring clauses, thereby lending them emphasis. In contrast, an epistrophe (or epiphora) is repeating words at the clauses' ends. See also other figures of speech involving repetition. One author well-known for his use of anaphora is Charles Dickens. Some of his best-known works constantly portray their themes through use of this literary tool.

**Anecdote:** A very brief story or tale told by a character in a piece of literature. The story usually consists of an interesting biographical incident. This is seen in The Canterbury Tales. It is also seen in the beginning of Kurt Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse-Five when the author is speaking of how he came to write the succeeding story. [Micah Bedrosian, '99]

**Antagonist:**

**Aphorism:** [French aphorisme, from Old French, from Late Latin aphorismus, from Greek aphorismos, from aphorizein, to delimit, define: apo-, apo- + horizein, to delimit, define; see horizon.] A terse saying embodying a general truth, as "Time flies." — aphorist, n. — aphoristic, aphorismical, aphoristic, adj. A tersely phrased statement of a truth or opinion; an adage. See Synonyms at saying. A brief statement of a principle. See also apophthegm, apothegm, axiom, maxim - a saying that is widely accepted on its own merits. Usually an aphorism is a concise statement containing a subjective truth or observation cleverly and pithily written. Aphorisms can be both prosaic or poetic, sometimes they have repeated words or phrases, and sometimes they have two parts that are of the same grammatical structure. The word aphorism (literally "distinction" or "definition", from the Greek: aphorismós ap-horizein "from-to bound") denotes an original thought, spoken or written in a laconic and easily memorable form. The name was first used in the Aphorisms of Hippocrates. The term came to be applied later to other sententious statements of physical science and later still to statements of all kinds of philosophical, moral or literary principles.

The Aphorisms of Hippocrates were the one of the earliest collections, although the earlier Book of Proverbs is similar. Hippocrates includes such notable and often invoked phrases as:"Life is short, [the] art long, opportunity fleeting, experience misleading, judgment difficult. The physician must not only be prepared to do what is right himself, but also to make the patient, the attendants, and externals cooperate."

The aphoristic genre developed together with literacy, and after the invention of printing, aphorisms were collected and published in book form. The first noted published collection of aphorisms is Adagia by Erasmus of Rotterdam. Other important early aphorists were François de La Rochefoucauld, Blaise Pascal and Carl William Brown.

**Apostrophe:** When the narrator suddenly breaks his story to directly address someone or a personified abstraction which may or may not be present. Milton provides an example in his Paradise Lost:

"Hail, holy light, offspring of Heaven first born." [Nathan Westhoff, '99]

**Aside:** An aside is a short speech made by a character in a play--it is heard only by the
audience; the rest of the characters cannot hear it. In many instances an aside is a way for a playwright to voice his or her character's thoughts and feelings.

In Shakespeare's Othello, the villainous Iago, spying on Cassio and Desdemona, speaks this aside: "He takes her by the palm. Ay, well said, whisper! With as little a web as this I will ensnare as great a fly as Cassio. Ay, smile upon her, do! I will gyve thee in thine own courtship...."

In Shakespeare's Hamlet, the king, weighed down by conscience, speaks this aside: "How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek is, beautied with plast'ring art, Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O heavy burthen!" [Leah Porter, '99]

**Assonance:** a vowel sound repeated in literary work. This echoing effect is used to enhance the tone and feeling the author is trying to convene in the work.

In Walt Whitman's "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer, " the last four lines has assonance from the words "tired, "sick," "rising," "gliding," "myself," "night," "time to time," and "silence."

In the "Stopping by Woods," the lines

"The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake."

The e sound is echoed in "sweep," "easy," and "downy" and the ow sound in "sound and downy." [Alisso Ko, '99]

**Autobiography:** A biography about a person written by that person. It is usually written and narrated in the first person and recounts the life, or significant details from the life, of the author. Two famous examples of autobiographies are Bad as I Want to Be by Dennis Rodman, and The Autobiography of Malcolm X by Malcolm X. Both of these novels recount the authors' lives in first-person narrative. [Phillip Tadlock, '99]

**Ballad:** (Latin word "ballare " meaning "to dance") an anonymous poem in short stanzas often sung to a traditional tune, and telling a popular story. It is in common language and has often lines which are repeated at the end of each verse. Banquo: the reputed ancestor of the Stuarts, who was well known during the first years of James I's reign.

Beast fable: a short story, either in verse or prose, which teaches a lesson (or a moral and in which animals are endowed with the mentality and speech of human beings.

Becket Thomas: martyr and Archbishop of Canterbury. In 1170 he was murdered in the Cathedral of Canterbury by four knights inspired by some rash words of King Henry II, after some years of dissension with the King.

**Bildungsroman:** (German educational novel) a type of novel that deals with the psychological and emotional development of a youth protagonist, tracing his other life from childhood to maturity through adolescence.

**Biography:** The story of a person's life written by someone other than the subject of the work. A biographical work is supposed to be somewhat factual. However, since the biographer may be prejudiced in favor of or against the subject of the biography, critics, and the sometimes the subject of the biography himself, may come forward to challenge the accuracy of the material. [Mike Isenberg, '99]

**Blank Verse:** poetry written in meter, usually iambic pentameter, but without a rhyme scheme. It is commonly used in narrative and dramatic poetry. For example, from Shakespeare's The Merchant of
Venice:
The quality of mercy is not strain'd,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath; it is twice blessed:
It blesseth him that gies and him that takes. [Kristin Pescone, '99]

Cacaphony/Euphony: A dissonant, unpleasant combination of sounds/a harmonious, pleasant combination of sounds.

Cacophony:
I remember the neckcurls, limp and damp as tendrils ["Elegy for Jane" by Theodore Roethke]
A toad the power mower caught,
Chewed and clipped of a leg, with a hobbling hop has got ["The Death of a Toad" by Richard Wilbur]

Euphony:
The word plum is delicious
pout and push, luxury of
self-love, and savoring murmur
full in the mouth and falling
like fruit. ["The Word Plum" by Lelen Chasin][Elena Allen, '99]

Caesura:

Canto: is a section of a long narrative poem.

Carpe Diem: A descriptive term for literature that urges readers to live for the moment. It comes from the Latin phrase that means "seize the day". This theme was widely used in 16th and 17th century poetry. It is best exemplified by a familiar stanza from Robert Herrick's "To the Virgins to make Much of Time".
Gather ye rose-buds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying:
And this same flower that smiles today,
To-morrow will be dying. [Eric Frey, '99]

Catastrophe: A catastrophe is any sudden disaster that has occurred. It is the scene in a tragic drama that includes the protagonist's death or moral destruction. One such tragedy is Oedipus the King by Sophocles. In Shakespeare's tragedies such as Othello, Macbeth, and Romeo and Juliet, the catastrophe is always included in Act 5.[Ezter Takaes, '99]

Character: In the literary realm the term Character refers to any individual, object, animal, or force created by the author as a basis for his/her particular piece of work. Character is not only the person it is also the behavior and distinctive quality which places the character into a group. An author's task when composing characters for his/her story, play, etc., is to establish an initial personality, i.e. persona to the character. Once characteristics are formed, the reader/audience adheres to them and casts judgement. For example in the classic piece of work Huck Finn, Twain portrays Huck with certain distinctive qualities which are either liked or disliked by the reader. Thus creating protagonists and antagonists, which are the basis for any literary piece of work. Without conflict or contradicting characters the interest of the work will be lost. [Samantha Shelton, '99] So the character is the author's creation, through the medium of words, of a personality who takes on actions, thoughts, expressions, and attitudes unique and appropriate to that personality, and consistent with it. Character might be thought of as a reasonable facsimile of a human being, with
all the qualities and changes (whims, or any set of unusual or unexpected events that have an effect on a person) of a human being. Different types of characters: first-person narrator: is one of the characters and is inside the story. Third-person narrator: the narrator is outside the story, for instance, has nothing to do with the events presented in it. It ca be: Objective: he\she mainly observes people and events and reports what he\she sees and hears (E. Hemingway's novels are an example of objective narrator); Omniscient (all-knowledge): When the speaker describes not only the action and dialogue of the work, but also seems to know and report everything that goes on in the characters' innermost feelings and thoughts. Flat character. a simple character with little depth, built around a single quality, who always behaves in the same way without changing or developing throughout the narrative. In the theatre a stock character represents one personality trait (for example; the jealous husband, the villain etc.) Round character. a character who has a real psychological identity, develops his\her own personality during the narrative and changes his\her ways of thinking. Contrasting character: When the novelist tends to represent at least two characters, sometimes a few, who possess different or even contrasting features. In this way the novel is enriched with situation in which the two characters react in a totally different way and, of course, with totally different results.

Characterization:

Classicism: A movement to preserve and improve upon the attributes found in Greek and Roman works. The movement encompasses the many areas of art: music, visual arts, and literature. Often classicism involves the philosophies of Greek philosophers, so the movement involves much of ancient form.

There were three basic revivals of classicism. The first was during the Renaissance, wherein architecture and philosophy became Greco-Roman inspired. The second revival took place during the 18th and 19th centuries, when Pompeii was (re)discovered. This period is generally called "neoclassicism," and the Greco-Roman strain was mostly prevalent in literature (Goethe), music (Haydn, Mozart), and art (the Museum des Beaux-Arts in France). The third revival was the early 20th-century, where a renewed interest in abstracted classical art is found in Pablo Picasso, and modernized Greek literature is evident in the works of Ezra Pound and T.S. Eliot.

An example of classicism in the literature studied this year comes from Gulliver's Travels, Book III. On the sorcerer-populated island of Glubbdubdrib, Gulliver calls up Aristotle and Homer, who sneer at modern philosophy. The Travels were published in 1726, around the time of the neoclassicism revival, and this passage reflects the then-presumably prevalent attitude that ancient philosophy is moral and decent and a good thing to study. [Christa Young, '99]

Climax: In a work of literature, the most decisive and critical scene or event is the climax. The climax is the major turning point of the work; it is the culmination of the rising action, conflicts, and complications of the story.

In "Oedipus Rex," the climax occurs when Oedipus discovers the truth of the prophecies and oracles. This was the major turning point in the play which caused Oedipus to change from a glorified and honored king to a shamed and destroyed outcast. [Nicki Roberts, '99]

Comedy: A comedy is literary work which is amusing and ends happily. This work can be a play or a novel, even a movie. Modern comedies are usually funny, while Shakespearean comedies just end well. Shakespearean comedies accomplish their comedic effect by using misunderstandings or mistaken identities. Modern comedies throw their characters into peculiar situations, and must then deal with those situations. Witty and clever lines are dispensed to make the piece entertaining for
readers or viewers.
A good example of a Shakespearean comedy could be Twelfth Night. It cleverly shows its comedic air by disguising the Viola as a boy, a case of mistaken identity. [Jarrod Armour, '99]

**Conceit:** An elaborate poetic image or a far-fetched comparison of very dissimilar things. A witty or ingenious turn of phrase. An artistic device or effect.

**Conclusion:** The final outcome of main characters in a drama or novel that is based on logical events from the story. To tie the loose ends of the plot lines of the major characters together. The ending of The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne is a good example:

"...and, as Hester Prynne had no selfish ends, nor lived in any measure for her own profit and enjoyment, people brought all their sorrows, perplexities, and besought her counsel, as one who had herself gone through mighty trouble." [Nathan Westhoff, '99]

**Concrete Poetry:** A poem that visibly resembles the object which it describes. This is accomplished by arranging the words or lines of the poem so that they form the desired shape or pattern. Examples are "Easter Wings" by George Herbert and "Women" by May Swenson. [Doug Yuen, '99]

**Conflict:** Conflict occurs when the main character is opposed by some other character or force in a work of literature. The conflict can also be an internal struggle of the character versus his conscience.

Examples can be found in every work read this year. For instance Gulliver was in conflict with the Lilliputians and the giants of Brobdignagg, and Jane came into conflict with Miss Read and Mr. Brocklehurst. [Mark Kobal, '99]

**Connotation and Denotation:** connotation: an association that comes along with a particular word. Connotations relate not to a word's actual meaning, or denotation, but rather to the ideas or qualities that are implied by that word. A good example is the word "gold." The denotation of gold is a malleable, ductile, yellow element. The connotations, however, are the ideas associated with gold, such as greed, luxury, or avarice. Another example occurs in the Book of Genesis. Jacob says: “Dan will be a serpent by the roadside, a viper along the path, that bites the horse’s heels so that its rider tumbles backward” (Gen 49:17). In this passage, Dan is not literally going to become a snake. However, describing Dan as a "snake" and "viper" forces the reader to associate him with the negative qualities that are commonly associated with reptiles, such as slyness, danger, and evil. Dan becomes like a snake, sly and dangerous to the riders. Writers use connotation to make their writing more vivid and interesting to read. See A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory. Jennifer Lance, Student, University of North Carolina at Pembroke

denotation: the exact meaning of a word, without the feelings or suggestions that the word may imply. It is the opposite of “connotation” in that it is the “dictionary” meaning of a word, without attached feelings or associations. Some examples of denotations are:

1. heart: an organ that circulates blood throughout the body. Here the word "heart" denotes the actual organ, while in another context, the word "heart" may connote feelings of love or heartache.
2. sweater: a knitted garment for the upper body. The word "sweater" may denote pullover sweaters or cardigans, while “sweater” may also connote feelings of warmth or security.

Denotation allows the reader to know the exact meaning of a word so that he or she will better understand the work of literature. See Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama, A Glossary of Literary Terms, A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory, Webster’s Dictionary. Shana Locklear, Student, University of North Carolina at Pembroke
Consonance: This is one of those great literary terms to use when you are doing an AP write and you are trying to think of a sophisticated way to say that the words in the piece sound nice and harmonious with each other. It will come up most commonly with poetry or prose-like pieces of writing when words have a close correspondence of sounds. More specifically, it means the repetition of consonants (letters of the alphabet) or a consonant pattern, especially at the end of words. (Kind of like alliteration, but instead of the repeating sound in the beginning, the repetition is at the end.) Usually, it sounds good and the word is also commonly used to describe music as in agreement, or accord. So you want some examples?

"I listened, motionless and still,
And as I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more."

In these four lines from the "Solitary Reaper" by William Wordsworth, there is consonance at the end of line 1 and 2 (hill... still), and then line 3 and 4 (bore... more). :):) [Pearl Chang, '99]

**Couplet:** two consecutive lines of verse, especially when rhyming. The "heroic couplet" consists of two rhymed lines in iambic pentameter.

**Dactyl:** A dactyl (Gr. δάκτυλος dáktulos, “finger”) is a type of meter in poetry. A metrical FOOT. In quantitative verse, such as Greek or Latin, a dactyl is a long syllable followed by two short syllables, as determined by syllable weight. In accentual verse, such as English, it is a stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllables -- the opposite is the anapaest (two unstressed followed by a stressed syllable). Dactylic metres are not very common in English Verse.

**Dada:** (Fr. "hobby-horse") Adeliberately meaningless title for an anarchical literary and artistic movement begun in 1916 at the Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich by the Romanian poet Tristan Tzara with the french sculptor Hans Harp and the pacifist H. Ball. The purpose of Dada was a nihilistic revolt against all bourgeois ideas of order and rationality. By the early 1920s it was overtaken by surrealism which connected many dadaist techniques to psychological theory.

**Dialogue:** A conversational passage between characters in a narrative or play. Written discussion between two or more people.

Example [from Catch-22, p. 20]:

"The put poison in everybody's food," Clevinger explained.
"And what difference does that make?"
"And it wasn't even poison," Clevinger cried heatedly, growing emphatic as he grew more confused.

Example [from Hamlet]:

Gertrude: Hamlet, thou hast they father much offended.
Hamlet: Mother, you have my father much offended. [Kristen Fraisse, '99]

**Diction:** The way words are selected in a particular literary work, usually poetry. The appropriate selection of words in a poem is poetic diction. The choice of words, phrases, sentence structure, and even figurative language, which give regards to clarity and accuracy.

Example:

"Thy Naid airs have brought me home To the glory that was Greece, And the grandeur that was Rome." "To Helen" by Edgar Allan Poe.

Naiad refers to nymphs who lived in and gave life to rivers, lakes, springs, and fountains in Classical Greek Mythology. This is an unusual form of diction which gives a specific meaning to
the sentence. It is necessary that the reader knows the meaning of Naiad. [Sean Morin, '99]

**Didactic Literature:** Derived from the Greek word "to teach." Works that are written for the purpose of instructing or pressing some moral purpose. This has developed into the modern pedagogical novel. Examples include Nicholas Nickleby (UNDERLINED), which argues against such social abuses as youth exploitation, and "A Psalm of Life" by Henry Longfellow. I have included a segment of that poem below.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait. [Jamie Ellis-Simpson, '99]

**Dramatic Monologue:**

**Elegy:** A lyric poem lamenting death which first appeared in 1501. One famous example is Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" (1751) Another example is the final third of "Beowulf."

In ancient times an elegy was a poem written in distinct couplets. Poets such as Callimachus and Catullus used the elegiac form. But now it is content and tone that makes a poem elegiac. Key Words to remember about an elegy: Death and Sadness. [Elizabeth Trace, '99]

**Epic:** A long story usually told in poetry. Epics contain elements of myth, legend, folk tale, and history. Epics have very serious themes, and present portraits of the cultures which produced them. A larger than life hero embodies the values of the particular society and undertakes a quest to achieve something of great value for the people and himself. Some classic examples are Beowulf, Paradise Lost, the Iliad and the Odyssey. [Grant Aldrich, '99]

**Epigraph:**

**Epithet:** In literature, a word or phrase preceding or following a name which serves to describe the character of that name. Poetry is essentially a combination of the familiar and the surprising, and the most successful surprises are achieved by the use of carefully descriptive words or epithets. An epithet is a word which makes the reader see the object described in a clearer or sharper light. Normally, an epithet refers to an outstanding quality, but may also be used with a negative connotation.

Examples:
In Charlotte Bronte's Jane Eyre, as Jane first meets Mr. Brocklehurst, she refers to him as the "stony stranger."

In the same novel is a reference to Mr. Rochester by Mrs. Fairfax, as she says, "Old Mr. Rochester . . ." [Joel Carlson, '99]

**Euphemism:** A euphemism is a word used in a literary work that takes the place of another word because it is offensive, or would be used in bad taste. For example, freshman year we read The Diary of Anne Frank and learned that W.C. is a euphemism for the word "bathroom." In Jean-Paul Sartre's play, No Exit the dead people use words like "here" and "this place" to avoid saying the word Hell. They also avoid using the word Dead and refer to themselves as "absentees."[Sarah Gorback, '99]

**Exposition:**

**Fable:**

**Falling Action:**

**Farce:** a form of drama/play that narrows in on an extremely unlikely plot with
exuberant/exaggerated characters; an extreme situation, so extreme that it is to the point of becoming absurd.
Examples:
1) conversation between Milo and Yossarian about bedsheets incident (p. 68): "Why didn't you just hit him over the head and take the bedsheet away from him?" Yossarian asked. Pressing his lips together with dignity, Milo shook his head. "That would have been most unjust," he scolded firmly. "Force is wrong, and two wrongs never make a right. It was much better my way. When I held the dates out to him and reached for the bedsheet, he probably thought I was offering to trade."
"What were you doing?"
"Actually, I was offering to trade, but since he doesn't understand English, I can always deny it."
"Suppose he gets angry and wants the dates?"
"Why, we'll just hit him over the head and take them away from him," Milo answered without hesitation.
* Although this is not a farce in the sense of drama, it is definitely a farcical situation. Milo insists it's not okay to hit the guy in order to get the bedsheet, but is okay to tempt him wrongly and then unlawfully take it from him. And, if the man is then to challenge the "transaction" he may hit him to get the bedsheet.
2) situation where Yossarian claims he sees everything twice to get out of flying, and then claims he sees everything once (pp. 186-187): "I see everything twice!" the soldier who saw everything twice shouted when they rolled Yossarian in.
"I see everything twice!" Yossarian shouted back at him just as loudly, with a secret wink. . . . . . Yossarian nodded weakly too, eyeing his talented roommate with great humility and admiration. he knew he was in the presence of a master. His talented roommate was obviously a person to be studied and emulated. During the night, his talented roommate died, and Yossarian decided that he had followed him far enough.
"I see everything once!" he cried quickly.
A new group of specialists came pounding up to his bedside with their instruments to find out if it was true.
"How many fingers do you see?" asked the leader, holding up one.
"One."
The doctor held up two fingers. "How many fingers do you see now?"
"One."
The doctor held up ten fingers. "And how many now?"
"One."
The doctor turned to the other doctors with amazement. "He does see everything once!" he exclaimed. "We made him all better."
* How absurd is that? The doctors actually believed they had cured Yossarian from seeing things twice because now he "saw things once," which was not much of an improvement from before anyway. The doctors are incompetent and are able to make this normal situation quite farcical and ridiculous. [Vivian Ku, '99]

**Figurative Language:**
**Figure of Speech:** a stylistic device that compares one thing with another to convey a meaning or exaggerate a description. Similes, metaphors, and hyperbole are all considered figures of speech. An
example from Catch-22 would be: Lieutenant Scheisskopf turned while as a sheet . . . [James Chung, '99]

**Flashback:** When the current action is broken by reference to something which occurred earlier in the work or prior to its beginning. An example of a flashback occurs in Oedipus Rex when both locaste and Oedipus recall past events that happened before the play began. Most of the story "A Rose for Emilyh" is a flashback since the narrator is thinking about Emily before her death, an event which occurs at the beginning of the story. [Kim Papenhausen, '99]

**Foil:** A character in a play that offsets the main character or other characters by comparison or thwarts a plan. For example, Stanley Kowalski thwarts Blanche DuBois' plan in A Streetcar Named Desire. [Becky Sando, '99]

**Foot:** A way of measuring meter in poetry using a series of stressed and unstressed syllables. A pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables that is repeated establishes a poetic foot. Here is an example from Robert Frost's "Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening."

```
u / u / u / u /
The woods are lovely, dark and deep
u / u / u / u /
but I have promises to keep.
```

```
u / u / u / u /
And miles to go before I sleep.
```

The above lines follow a pattern known as iambic tetrameter.[Jill Chiurazzi, '99]

**Foreshadowing:** When the writer drops hints or clues in the plot that give the reader an idea of what is going to happen later in the story.

Example:
In Oedipus Rex by Sophocles, when the oracle tells Oedipus that he is the plague on the city and Oedipus does not believe him. Then the oracle says that even through Oedipus has eyes he cannot see and is blind to the truth, foreshadowing the final scene in the play where Oedipus tears out his eyes on stage. [Kristi Grewal, '99]

**Free Verse:** Poetry that is based on the irregular rhythmic cadence or the recurrence, with variations, of phrases, images, and syntactical patterns rather than the conventional use of meter. Rhyme may or may not be present in free verse, but when it is, it is used with great freedom. In conventional verse the unit is the foot, or the line; in free verse the units are larger, sometimes being paragraphs or strophes.

The poetry of the Bible, particularly in the King James Version, which attempts to approximate the Hebrew cadences, rests on cadence and parallelism. The Psalms and The Song of Solomon are noted examples of free verse. Milton sometimes substituted rhythmically constructed verse paragraphs for metrically regular lines, notably in the choruses of Samson Agonistes, as this example shows:

```
But patience is more oft the exercise
Of Saints, the trial of thir fortitude,
Making them each his own Deliver,
And Victor over all
That tyranny or fortune can inflict.
```

Walt Whitman's Leaves of Grass was a major experiment in cadenced rather than metrical versification. The following lines are typical:
All truths wait in all things
They neither hasten their own delivery nor resist it,
They do not need the obstetric forceps of the surgeon. [Sean Morin, '99]

**Genre:** A class or category of literature having a particular form, content or technique, i.e. epic poetry, comedy, an fiction. For example, Shakespeare's Othello falls in the genre of dramatic tragedy. Sophocles Antigone is an example of epic drama. Joyce's The Dead could be labeled as realistic fiction. [Wes Austen, '99]

**Haiku:** A poetic form popular in Japan. It appeared during the sixteenth century. This form of poetry is made up of 17 syllables in a 5-7-5 sequence. Usually the first line is five syllables, the second is seven syllables, and the third is five syllables.

Example:
Scent of plum blossoms
on the misty mountain path
a big rising sun. [Melanie Petrash, '99]

**Hyperbole:**

**Iamb:**

**Imagery:** A vivid description, in speech or writing, that produces mental images. The image produced can be an emotion, a sensation, or a visual picture.

Examples:
"A bed supported on massive pillars of mahogany, hung with curtains of deep red damask . . ." [Jane Eyre, p. 11]
"And the startled little waves that leap in fiery ringlets from their sleep." "Meeting at Night," by Robert Browning. [Kristen Fraisse, '99]

**Inference:** The act of concluding from evidence; deduction. In literature it describes the act of figuring something out by using what you already know. If you know "a" and "b" you can deduce "c."

In Catch-22 Yossarian inferred that he could get out of the war by declaring himself crazy. Yet if you are sane enough to know you're crazy, then, in reality, you aren't crazy. Yossarian thought he knew all the details, and inferred a way to escape the war. [Jarrod Armour, '99]

**Irony:** There are three forms of irony in the literary world. Verbal Irony is an expression or statement where the meaning of the words used is the opposite of their sense. Irony of Situation is where an action done by a character is the opposite of what was meant to be expected. In Dramatic Irony the audience of a play knows something that the main character does not. The most common of the three is Irony of Situation.

An example of irony can be seen in Sophicles' play Oedipus Rex. Oedipus, in trying to find the man who killed King Laios in order to life the curse, accuses the blind man of being a fraud because he cannot give Oedipus the answer he is seeking, when in fact Oedipus is the one blind because he cannot ascertain that he is the murderer of the king. [Frederick Kim, '99]

**Local Color:** The presentation of the features and characteristics of a certain locality, so that the reader can picture the setting being described.

Example from literature:
Besides the obvious description of any setting from any novel....

In Gulliver's Travels Swift used local color as he described each new land that Gulliver traveled to so that the reader would have a different feel for each new place, and so that each new land would
have a more distinct identity. [Heather Coe, '99]

**Lyric Poem:**

**Metaphor:** A literary device by which one term is compared to another without the use of a combining word such as like or as.

Two Actual Usages
1. "But soft, what light through yonder window breaks. It is the east and Juliet is the sun." [Romeo and Juliet]
2. "Oh, beware my lords, of jealousy. It is the green-eyed monster, which doth mock the meat it feeds on." [Othello] [Joel Mankey, '99]

**Meter:** A regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of poetry. The number of feet in a line forms a way of describing a meter. The standard meters are as follows:

- Monometer--a metrical line with one foot
- Dimeter--a metrical line with two feet
- Trimeter--a metrical line with three feet
- Tetrameter--a metrical line with four feet
- Pentameter--a metrical line with five feet
- Hexameter--a metrical line with six feet
- Heptameter--a metrical line with seven feet
- Octameter--a metrical line with eight feet

One example is in Theodore Roethke's poem, "The Waking." The following lines are pentameter:

I wake to sleep, and take my waking slow,
I feel my fate in what I cannot fear.

"She Walks in Beauty" by Lord Byron is written in tetrameter:

She walks in beauty like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies. [Lacey Cope, '99]

**Metonymy:** A figure of speech in which one word or phrase is substituted for a related word or phrase.

Examples:
- “count heads (or noses)” rather than “count people”
- “Washington” rather than “the United States Government”
- “warm heart” rather than “warm affections”
- “the bottle” rather than “a strong drink”
- “lands belonging to the crown” rather than “…to the king” [Emily Grider, '99]

**Mood:** The emotional ambience established by a literary work. This effect is fabricated through descriptions of feelings or objects which establish in kind feelings of fear, patriotism, sanctity, hope, et. al., in the mind and emotional perception of the reader. The writer's mood (or emotional state and feeling) may be said to have flowed from his/her hand, to the reader's eyes and from thence to the reader's mind. Mood is a transfer of emotional-substance 'coloring,' depicted in likeness to the hues woven within a writer's mind, that he/she may color attune hues in the mind of the reader.

Examples:

The poem "Dream Nocturne" by Juan Ramon Jimenez establishes a mood of sacrosanctity. Eternal life contrasted with mortality, the sea controlled by the heavens whilst the mortal shell of our Earthly life remains cold on the shore controlled by none but itself. The calm sea, the traveling soul, the voyage towards eternal life--all of these elements help to establish a mood of reverence and
religious tranquility.

"The Dead" by James Joyce creates a mood of romantic nostalgia. This mood is established specifically within the last two pages before the mention of Michael Furey. Gabriel's description of his desire towards his wife, interwoven with reminiscences of their past together--aglow with fresh flame from stoked embers of stale love--construct an emotional atmosphere within the mind of the reader that overwhelmingly feels like the sentimental sensation of love's pinnacle recalled. One experiences the mood, or feeling, of love-sick nostalgia flowing over their synaptic gaps while one is caught up in the sentimentality of the protagonist. The reader experiences the emotini of love, desire, and unmitigated, irrational bliss through the established mood. [Wes Austen, '99]

**Myth:** A story used to describe the origins of basic elements and assumptions of cultures. These myths were written to show a proper way of knowing reality. These stories take place in a time before our world came into being. All myths are different in the subjects that they deal with, but they all have the presence of gods and goddesses. These gods and goddesses control the events that take place in the story. Humans are usually present in myths. The gods can help the humans or they can punish them if they desire to.

An example of a myth is the epic poem, the Odyssey. This story deals with a man involved in the Trojan War. Finally it is time for him to see his wife and son. He starts on his journey but on the way he runs into many adventures and challenges. He cannot get home because Poseidon, the god of the sea, will not let him. [Melanie Petrash, '99]

**Namur:** city in the south-west Belgium, at the time part of France.

**Narrative:** narration is the act of telling a sequence of events, often in chronological order. Alternatively, the term refers to any story, whether in prose or verse, involving events, characters, and what the characters say and do. A narrative is likewise the story or account itself. Some narrations are reportorial and historical, such as biographies, autobiographies, news stories, and historical accounts. In narrative fiction common to literature, the narrative is usually creative and imaginative rather than strictly factual, as evidenced in fairy tales, legends, novels, novelettes, short stories, and so on. However, the fact that a fictional narrative is an imaginary construct does not necessarily mean it isn't concerned with imparting some sort of truth to the reader, as evidenced in exempla, fables, anecdotes, and other sorts of narrative. The narrative can begin ab ovo (from the start and work its way to the conclusion), or it can begin in medias res (in the middle of the action, then recount earlier events by the character's dialogue, memories, or flashbacks).

**Narrator:** The "voice" that speaks or tells a story. Some stories are written in a first-person point of view, in which the narrator's voice is that of the point-of-view character. For instance, in The Adventures of Huck Finn, the narrator's voice is the voice of the main character, Huck Finn. It is clear that the historical author, Mark Twain, is creating a fictional voice to be the narrator and tell the story-complete with incorrect grammar, colloquialisms, and youthful perspective. In other stories, such as those told in the third-person point of view, scholars use the term narrator to describe the authorial voice set forth, the voice "telling the story to us." For instance, Charles Dickens' Oliver Twist presents a narrative in which the storyteller stands outside the action described. He is not a character who interacts with other characters in terms of plot. However, this fictionalized storyteller occasionally intrudes upon the story to offer commentary to the reader, make suggestions, or render a judgment about what takes place in the tale. It is tempting to equate the words and sentiments of such a narrator with the opinions of the historical author himself.
However, it is often more useful to separate this authorial voice from the voice of the historical author.

The Narrator can be: Internal (or, inside) narrator protagonist - that who has a principal role in the novel, a play, etc. eye witness-that who is a "witness" in the development of the story.

External (or, outside) narrator Histor: The narrator who is outside the story and may not appear in the text. When he explicitly appears as the organising mind of the narrative he is given the special status of Histor, where his role is not only selecting the data on the characters and the events and arranging them but also commenting on them and guiding the reader's reactions. In this sense he is a "persona", a character outside the story, and embodies the author's vision of the world.

Unobtrusive omniscient; When the omniscient narrator remains invisible. He/she does not step into the world of the novel but he/she still guides the reader's interpretation of events narrated through his voice.

Obtrusive narrator. When the narrator is not a character in the story. Occasionally, he uses the first person "I" to step into the story to express his opinion, but he is still a third-person narrator. He shifts continually between the narrator as story teller and the narrator as commentator. He is a voice in the novel who openly addresses the reader. He is absent from the story but present in the text.

Double narrator: The novel contains two or more levels of narration.

Unreliable narrator The narrator guides the reader to make wrong assumptions only to deny them at the end of the story. It is characteristic to a detective story in which the reader is manipulated into inferring what in the end will turn out to be totally wrong, for instance, the identity of the murderer. As an extreme case, in a famous detective story by Agatha Christie the narrator himself is eventually revealed to be the unsuspected murderer.

**Nemesis:** after Nemesis, the Greek goddess of justice and vengeance, it is an act retributive justice.

**New Learning:** a literary movement generally regarded as dating from the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453. It emphasised the active role that Man plays in the universe. It gave new freshness to the study of Bible and the Greek classics in the original. It influenced both the Renaissance and the Reformation.

**Narrative Poem:** A poem that relates the events or ideas of the poem in story form. The most famous types of narrative poems are the epic poems, such as the Iliad and the Odyssey by Homer, the Aeneid by Virgil, the Divine Comedy by Dante and Paradise Lost by Milton. Ballads are the most popular form of the narrative poem and include such works as "Barbara Allan." [1st][Kristi Grewal, '99]

**Nonsense literature:** This covers several kinds of literature, which have in common that they all in some way deliberately defy logic or common sense, or both. The most important kind is undoubtedly in children's literature, especially Alice stories by Lewis Carroll, which is to be taken seriously as literature.

**Novel:** a fictional prose narrative that is usually long and complex and deals especially with human experience through a usually connected sequence of events. The characters are invented by the author and are placed in imaginary settings. A biographical novel uses historically real characters in real geographical locations doing historically verifiable things. [Kabir Affonso, '99]

**Novella:** a short narrative, generally with a structural centre represented by a surprising event.

**Ode:** A lyric poem written to praise and exalt a person, characteristic, quality, or object. It is written in a formal and exalting style. It varies in length and complexity. Examples of odes would be "To Helen" by Edgard Allan Poe, "Ode to the West Wind" by Percy Bysshe Shelley, and "Ode to a
Nightingale" by John Keats. [Kim Friel, '99]

**Omniscient narrator:** when the speaker describes not only the action and dialogue of the work, but also seems to know and report the conflicts, passions, and that go on in the minds of his characters.

**Onomatopoeia:** When the sound of a word imitates the sound it represents. The purpose of these words is to make a passage more effective for the reader or listener.

Examples:
"Mildred rose and began to move about the room: Bang!, Smash! Wallop, bong, boom." [Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury, p. 55]
"Bing, gung, s0lat--the splat being the drawer flying out." ["A. & P." by John Updike][Jill Chiurazzi, '99]

**Order of the Garter:** highest order of British knighthood, established in 1348 by King.

**Oxymoron:** a figure of speech by which a locution produces an incongruous, seemingly self-contradictory effect, as in “cruel kindness” or “to make haste slowly.” [n, pl -mora; rhetoric an epigrammatic effect, by which contradictory terms are used in conjunction: living death; fiend angelical: via New Latin from Greek oxumōron, from oxus sharp + mōros stupid.

**Parable:** A short story written to make an analogy with something unknown to the reader; it is usually used to teach a moral lesson or spiritual truth. Many parables can be found in the Bible, such as "The Prodigal Son." Another example of a parable can be found in the tale of the Grand Inquisitor from The Brothers Karamazov. [Kim Pappenhausen, '99]

**Paradox:** It is a situation in which a statement at first glance seems to contradict itself, but really does not. An example comes from a Dean Koontz book I read earlier this year in which a character says "When I was kidnapped, I was let go." At first glance it seems the character is contradicting himself, but he really means that by being kidnapped, he was set free from his strict environment. [Mike Isenberg,'99]

**Parallel Structure:** Parallel Structure Expressing two or more linked ideas, actions, or sentences in the same grammatical structure. The ideas are usually set off by commas. The parallel words in a sentence must match grammatically with their counterparts.

Examples: 1) William Shakespeare Hamlet
“…with his statues, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: is this the fine of his fines…” (Pg. 1.158)
2) Joseph Heller Catch-22
“…encased from head to toe in plaster and gauze with both strange, rigid legs, elevated from the hips and both strange arms strung up perpendicularly, all four bulky limbs in casts, all four strange, useless limbs hoisted up in the air by taut wire cables and fantastically long lead weights suspended darkly above him.” (Pg. 164)
3) Harper Lee To Kill a Mockingbird
“The tire bumped on gravel, skittered across the road, crashed into a barrier and popped me like a cork onto pavement.” (Pg. 37)

The first example deals with the parallel structure of the pronoun “his” and the nouns followed after each one. (pronoun + noun, pronoun + noun, pronoun + noun structure) The last two deal with verb parallelism. The verbs are all in past tense and are linked in the sentence. [Peter Hsu, '99]

**Parody:** A piece of work that imitates the style of another work. It can be amusing, mocking, or an exaggeration of the work. A parody is very similar to a satire in that both mock an issue. However, a satire is written to arouse contempt, while a parody is written merely to amuse the reader. There
are many examples of parodies in our English textbook from pages 569-574. These are parodies of poems. One worthy of noting is the parody of "Shall I Compare Thee to a Summer's Day." Every line in the parody takes the original line from the poem and says it in a startling or a blunt manner. One such example in the parody is the line, "People break their necks or just drop dead." On a lighter note, on a day to day basis, one may also encounter many of Weird Al Yankovic's parodies of popular songs. [Paymon Rahgozar, '99]

**Pastoral:** A type of literary work having to do with shepherds and rustic nature settings. Pastoral settings of purity and simplicity are usually contrasted with the corruption and artificiality of cities and courts. Pastoral poetry is very prevalent, but attributes of this kind are also found in drama and fiction. Jane Eyre is an example of pastoral leaning in works read this year, i.e. Jane enjoys the simple beauty of the countryside surrounding Moor House, and its inhabitants (Diana and Mary) are portrayed as kind and pure. [Christa Young, '99]

**Pathetic Fallacy:** Pathetic fallacy is when an emotion or feeling is attached to something inanimate, particularly things in nature.

Example:
1) In the poem "The Starry Night" by Anne Sexton (in reference to Van Gogh's The Starry Night) she writes "The night boils with eleven stars. . ." This is pathetic fallacy because no night could "boil eleven stars," it is a feeling or action associated or attached to the subject night.
2) In "The Sick Rose" by William Blake, he uses the phrase "howlingstorm" in describing the rose. This, too, is pathetic fallacy because Black maintains that a storm may howl, which in fact is not, and could not be, the case. [Vivian Ku, '99]

**Personification:** Giving a nonhuman object or concept a human characteristic or attribute that is not normally seen or literally associated that concept or object and used mainly for the purpose of animation or representation of that object or concept.

Example from text:
1) --Anne Sexton's "The Starry Night"--
The wind in Van Gogh's painting "Vincent" is described as: "The old unseen serpent swallows up the stars. . .That rushing beast of the night, sucked up by that great dragon." (Pg.584)
2) William Wordsworth in "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" describes that stars were: "Tossing their heads in sprightly dance." (Pg. 490)
3) Robert Browning's Poem: "Meeting at Night"
"...the startled little waves that leap."(Pg. 500) [Peter Hsu, '99]

**Plot:** The order of events and incidents that occur in the storyline of a novel. Plot usually goes from exposition to rising tension to climax to resolution.

Some examples of plot can be found in the novels Gulliver's Travels and Jane Eyre. The plot of the first describes the journey's of a seaman all ove the world and his encounters with new societies that satirize mankind. The second tells the story of a strong girl growing into a passionate woman. [Phil Tadlock, '99]

**Point of View:** the perspective the author uses to tell a story. He can use the first person perspective which is telling a story through to eyes of a character using the pronouns I or me. The author can also use the third person point of view which is telling the story as an onlooker. If the author uses the third person method and enters the mind of more then one character the style is referred to as omniscience.

John Steinbeck writes many of his novels using the third person perspective. Swift used the first
person perspective in the book Gulliver's Travels. [Mark Kobal, '99]

**Protagonist:** The main character in a literary work, i.e. a poem, play or novel. Examples would be Oedipus in Oedipus Rex by Sophocles, Guy Montag in Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury and Jane Eyre in the novel by the same name by Charlotte Bronte. Protagonists are generally opposed by forces. When the opposing force is another character, that character is referred to as the antagonist. [James Chung, '99]

**Pun:**

**Quatrain:**

**Resolution:**

**Rhyme:** A piece of verse or poetry in which there is a repetition of corresponding sounds, usually at the end of lines. Robert Frost employs a rhyme scheme in "The Road Not Taken."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Rhyme</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Internal rhyme occurs when words rhyme anywhere other than the end of the line. Eye rhyme occurs when words look similar, but do not necessarily sound the same ["trough" and "rough"]. Half rhyme occurs when the final consonants rhyme, but not the vowel sounds ["way" and "Willy"].[Doug Yuen, '99]

**Rhyme Scheme:** The pattern established by the arrangement of rhymed words at the ends of the lines in a stanza or poem. It is usually described by using letters of the alphabet to denote the recurrence of rhyming lines.

Example: Piano by D.H. Lawrence

Somewhere beneath that piano's superb sleek black A
Must hide my mother's piano, little brown, with the back A
That stood close the wall, and the front's silk both torn, B
And the keys with little hollows, that my mother's fingers had worn. B

The rhyme scheme for this stanza is AABB [Jessica Sharron, '99]

**Rhythm:**

**Rising Action:**

**Romance:**

**Saga:** Historically, it is a medieval Scandinavian story of battles, customs, and legends, written between 1120 and 1400, and is often narrated in prose. It traditionally deals with families that first settled Iceland and their descendants, and can include histories of important families of nobility. Today it is better defined as any long story of adventure or heroic deeds, telling the tales of a hero or following a family through several generations. A contemporary example of a saga would be Mario Puzo's The Godfather series. [Todd Sterhan, '99]

**Satire:** The use of mockery, irony, or wit to attack or ridicule something, such as a habit, idea or custom which is considered to be foolish or wrong. An example of satire is the novel Gulliver's Travels. Here Jonathan Swift ridicules the absurd manners and traditions of the British Empire. [Sarah Mitchell, '99]

**Scansion:**

**Setting:** The time and place in which a work of literature occurs.
Examples: One of the settings in Gulliver's Travels was the island of Lilliput. One of the settings in Jane Eyre was the Lowood Institution. [Nicki Roberts, '99]

**Short Story:** A fictional narrative shorter than a novel. It aims at creating mood and effect rather than plot. Typical features of a short story are: its plot is based on probability, its characters are human and have normal human problems, its time and place are established in realistic settings, and its elements work toward unifying the story. An example is "The Yellow Wallpaper" by Charlotte Perkiss Gilman and "Battle Royal" by Ralph Ellison, a short story created out of an excerpt from the longer novel Invisible Man [Samantha Shelton, '99]

**Simile:** A figure of speech which makes a comparison between two unlike things using words "like" or "as". An example would be the line "Like the circle of a throat/ The night on every side was turning red," from Louis Simpson's poem "The Battle." Simpson is using the circle that would appear if one were to choke someone's throat, to make a comparison with the night. [Paymon Rahgozar]

**Soliloquy:** When a character in a play or novel is alone and talking to himself outloud. Example: From "Hamlet":

To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. ..'

From: Hamlet, Prince of Denmark by William Shakespeare[Nora Quiros, '99]

**Sonnet:** The sonnet is usually made up of fourteen lines, and expresses an emotion. There are two types of sonnets: the English sonnet, often used by William Shakespeare, and the Italian sonnet, or the Petrarchan. An Italian sonnet is composed of an eight-line octave and a six-line sestet, and the English sonnet is composed of three four line quatrains and a concluding two-line couplet. The thought or feelings of the poem is evident through their structure. For example in the English sonnet a subject will develop in the first twelve lines and conclude in the last two. An Italian sonnet may state a problem at the beginning and present a solution in the last six lines. Here is an example of an English, or Shakespearean sonnet on pg. 503 of the lit book:

That time of year thou may'st in me behold
That time of year thou may'st in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by - and - by black night doth take away,
Death's second shelf that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the deathbed whereon it must expire,  
Consumed with that which it was nourished by.  
This thou perceiv'st, which makes thy love more strong,  
To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

-William Shakespeare, [Sarah Gorback, '99]

**Spondee:** A metrical foot consisting of two long or stressed syllables, used to draw the reader's attention to some noteworthy phenomenon within the literary work, either to illuminate or to intensify. [Kabir Affonso, '99]

**Stanza:** An Italian word derived from Latin which denotes a group of lines in a poem considered as a unit. Many poems are divided into stanzas which are commonly separated by spaces. They often symbolize a different idea or thought, possibly a different subject in a poem, much like a paragraph in prose represents. Each one, again like a paragraph in prose, states and develops a main idea. This division in a poem consisting of a series of lines arranged together often have a recurring pattern of meter and rhyme. Stanza is the Italian word for "stopping place," which makes sense considering a poem or a song stops between stanzas, each of which has a further thought about the poem's subject. Stanzas, also another literary term for verses, comes in:
- couplets: two line stanzas
- tercets: three line stanzas
- quatrains: four line stanzas
- cinquains: five line stanzas
- sestets: six line stanzas
- heptastichs: seven line stanzas
- octaves: eight line stanzas

Stanzas are seen in almost all forms of poetry, such as William Wordsworth's poem "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud," which has four stanzas, each one of them being sestets, or six line stanzas. The stanzas have a "ababcc" rhyme scheme. [Marc Gentzler, '99]

**Stereotype:** A stereotype is a conventional and oversimplified opinion or image of a person or group of people. An author often stereotypes a character so that the person is readily identified with a distinct group of individuals. This literary device is most often used in a negative, and sometimes derogatory, fashion. A few examples are a person of Asian descent being likened to martial arts, a Harvard student being thought of as a "bookworm", or an Alaskan that is envisioned as living in an igloo. In "A & P" by John Updike, Sammy is stereotyped as an irresponsible teen who would rather chase girls than keep a steady job. Ralph Ellison also stereotypes the Negro teens in "Battle Royal." They are identified as being poor and uneducated as they tumble for mere pocket-change while continuously shocking themselves on an electrified rug. [Todd Sterhan, '99]

**Style:** A writer's typical way of writing. Style includes word choice [diction], tone, degree of formality, figurative language, rhythm, grammatical structure, sentence length, organization and every other feature of a writer's use of language. Simple prose, aphoristic, and reflective are some examples of style. Styles can be plain, ornate, metaphorical, sparse or descriptive. Style is determined by such factors as sentence length and complexity, syntax, use of figurative language, imagery, and diction, and possibly even the use of sound effects. Style is also known as a way in which a writer uses language.

Style can be found in every piece of literature. One example would be the poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" by Robert Frost. He uses plenty of imagery when he talks about...
sleep and about the snow falling, and uses such sound effects as the bells on the horse and the wind, and emphasizes the tranquillity when the wind stops and the snow flakes fall. Frost uses syntax when repeating the last two lines of the poem, and pays close attention to diction when describing the evening and the forest as dar, metaphorically meaning gloomy and dismal. [Marc Gentzler, '99]

**Subtext:** What something really means, not just what it appears to mean. Irony is the primary example, with diction and meaning different, often opposite.

Example [from Catch-22]: The meaning of the term derives from the fact that anyone desiring to get out of combat duty because of craziness really isn't crazy. The subtext is the only way out of combat duty is death. [Anthony Gurvitz-Shaw, '99]

**Suspense:** The growing of excitement felt by an audience or individual while awaiting the climax of a movie, book, play, etc. due mainly to its concern for the welfare of a character they sympathize with or the anticipation of a violent act.

An example of suspense can be found in the short story "A Good Man is Hard to Find" in the AP literature textbook. When the family is systematically killed off one by one, the reader cannot help but have a sense of sympathy for the poor unfortunate souls of the unlucky family members thus adding to the suspense of the story. [Frederick Kim, '99]

**Symbolism:** A device in literature where an object represents an idea. In the poem "The Sick Rose" by William Blake, the rose symbolizes perfection. The worm is a symbol of death. The storm is a symbol of chaos. Night represents darkness and evil, and the bed symbolizes the vulnerability of innocence and sleep.

The Sick Rose
O Rose, thou art sick!
The invisible worm
That flies in the night
In the howling storm,
Has found out thy bed
Of crimson joy,
And his dark secret love
Does thy life destroy. [Eric Frey, '99]

**Synecdoche:**

**Synesthesia:**

**Theatre of the Absurd:** A drama based upon some absurd idea or situation. It is often derived from the themes of Existentialism. These plays typically express man's feelings of isolation and frustration, among others, and are often allegorical. Though not a play, the best example we have read of the absurd is the nouvelle The Metamorphosis by Franz Kafka. Another example is Jean Paul Sartre's short play No Exit, which begins with three souls dropped into a hell that has been economizing on labor. Eugene Ionesco's The Lesson is also an example from this theatre. [Jamie Ellis-Simpson, '99]

**Theme:**

**Tone:** The tone of a work is the attitude of the author toward the subject he is writing about. It is the style or manner of a piece of work, an inflection of the mood of the piece. For example, the tone of Joseph Heller's Catch-22 is one of sarcasm and humor, as well as indifference. Joseph Heller seems neither to approve or disapprove of his characters' actions; he simply records the foolishness and mindlessness of what they say and do. [Leah Porter, '99]
**Tragedy:** Tragedy, as defined by Aristotle in the Poetics is “the imitation of an action that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself.” Aristotle set down the guidelines for tragedy which consists of:

1. the tragic hero who should be of high worth or standing, but not perfect.
2. a tragic flaw, weakness, or transgression (hubris) in the hero which leads to the hero’s downfall.
3. the recognition scene where the hero realizes what he has done.
4. the effect of the inevitable disaster (catastrophe) on the spectators is the cleansing (catharsis.) The cleansing process is due to the emotions of pity for the tragic hero and terror through what they have seen.

In the "The Tragedy of Othello," Othello was the tragic hero of high standing. A general of the army his tragic flaw was he allowed rumors spawn his jealousy into a violent rage. He recognizes his blinded rage when the truth unfolds before him and he takes his own life. The audience should feel a cleansing process from the terrible and tragic ending with the death of Desdemon and Othello. [Alisso Ko, '99]

**Trochee:**

**Understate:**

**Understatement:** Understatement is a form of speech in which a lesser expression is used than what would be expected. This is not to be confused with euphemism, where a polite phrase is used in place of a harsher or more offensive expression. Understatement is a staple of humor in English-speaking cultures, especially in British humor.

**Zeugma:** (Greek "yoking" or "bonding"): Artfully using a single verb to refer to two different objects grammatically, or artfully using an adjective to refer to two separate nouns, even though the adjective would logically only be appropriate for one of the two. For instance, in Shakespeare's Henry V, Fluellen cries, "Kill the boys and the luggage." (The verb kill normally wouldn't be applied to luggage.) If the resulting grammatical construction changes the verb's initial meaning, the zeugma is sometimes called syllepsis. Examples of these syllepses abound—particularly in seventeenth-century literature:

"If we don't hang together, we shall hang separately!" (Ben Franklin).
"The queen of England sometimes takes advice in that chamber, and sometimes tea."
". . . losing her heart or her necklace at the ball." (Alexander Pope).
"She exhausted both her audience and her repertoire." (anonymous)
"She looked at the object with suspicion and a magnifying glass." (Charles Dickens)

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