



American Literature - Maximus

Topics on the list: the students are expected to have a general knowledge of the topic – the main characteristics of the period/genre/movement, its impact on the history of American literature, the major authors and works. The two main secondary sources on the topics are listed below.

Authors on the list: a general knowledge of their position in the context of the history of American literature is expected (not their biography!).

Works on the list:

- a) underlined works must be read in their entirety and detailed knowledge of them is expected.
- b) for the other works, a general knowledge of the content, themes, style and the importance in the context of the history of American Literature is expected.

Recommended secondary sources on the topics in the history of American literature:

Richard Gray. *A Brief History of American Literature*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

Robert S. Levine, ed. *The Norton Anthology of American Literature 9th Edition*, New York and London, W. W. Norton & Company, 2016. (We recommend especially the introductions to major periods and writers.)

1. American Romanticism

Washington Irving: "Rip Van Winkle", "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"

Lydia Huntley Sigourney: "Fallen Forests", "Indian Names", "To the First Slave Ship"

James Fenimore Cooper: *The Last of the Mohicans*

Edgar Allan Poe: "The Tell-Tale Heart", "The Fall of the House of Usher", "The Purloined Letter", "The Black Cat", "The Gold Bug", "William Wilson: A Tale", "The Man of the Crowd", "The Masque of the Red Death", "The Cask of Amontillado", "The Philosophy of Composition", "The Raven", "Annabel Lee"

2. Transcendentalism

Ralph Waldo Emerson: *Nature*, "Self-Reliance"

Henry David Thoreau: *Walden, or Life in the Woods*

3. Mid 19th Century Fiction

Nathaniel Hawthorne: *The Scarlet Letter*, "Young Goodman Brown", "The Minister's Black Veil", "Wakefield", "The Birth-Mark"

Herman Melville: *Moby Dick*, "Bartleby, the Scrivener"



Louisa May Alcott: *Little Women*

4. African American and Abolitionist Literature in the 19th Century

Harriett Beecher Stowe: *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

Frederick Douglass: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

Harriett Jacobs: *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

5. Birth of American Poetry

Walt Whitman: "Song of Myself" (1881 edition of *Leaves of Grass*)

Emily Dickinson: 1247 To pile like Thunder to its close, 1755 To make a prairie it takes a clover and one bee, 613 They shut me up in Prose –, 1448 How soft a Caterpillar steps –, 112 (67) Success is counted sweetest, 124 (216) Safe in their Alabaster Chambers, 260 (288) I'm Nobody, 764 (754) My Life had stood - a Loaded Gun

6. Regionalism, Realism and Naturalism

Mark Twain: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

Ambrose Bierce: "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge", "Chickamauga"

Henry James: *The Portrait of a Lady*, "The Figure in the Carpet", "The Turn of the Screw"

Kate Chopin: *The Awakening*, "At the 'Cadian Ball", "The Storm"

7. Early 20th Century Fiction

Edith Wharton: *The Age of Innocence*, "Souls Belated", "The Other Two"

Willa Cather: *My Antonia*

8. American Modernist Poetry

Robert Frost: "Mending Wall", "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening", "Desert Places", "The Road Not Taken", "After Apple-Picking", "Home Burial", "The Wood- Pile", "Fire and Ice", "The Gift Outright"

T. S. Eliot: *The Waste Land*, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock", "Tradition and the Individual Talent"

Ezra Pound: "In a Station of the Metro", "Canto I"



William Carlos Williams: “The Red Wheelbarrow”, “This Is Just to Say”, “Landscape with the Fall of Icarus”

Marianne Moore: “A Grave”, “Poetry”, “The Paper Nautilus”

9. Lost Generation and Fiction Between the World Wars

F. Scott Fitzgerald: *The Great Gatsby*, “Babylon Revisited”

Ernest Hemingway: *The Sun Also Rises*, “Hills like White Elephants”, “The Killers”, “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” “A Clean Well-Lighted Place”

William Faulkner: *As I Lay Dying*

Djuna Barnes: *Nightwood*

John Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*

10. 20th Century American Drama

Eugene O’Neill: *A Long Day’s Journey into Night*

Tennessee Williams: *A Streetcar Named Desire*

Arthur Miller: *Death of a Salesman*

Lorraine Hansberry: *A Raisin in the Sun*

Tony Kushner: *Angels in America*

11. 20th Century African American Literature

Zora Neale Hurston: *Their Eyes Were Watching God*

Langston Hughes: “I, Too”, “The Negro Speaks of Rivers”, “Harlem (2)”, “America”, “The Weary Blues”

Ralph Ellison: *Invisible Man*

Alice Walker: *The Color Purple*

Tony Morrison: *Beloved*

12. American Fiction of the Second Half of the 20th Century

J. D. Salinger: *The Catcher in the Rye*



Flannery O'Connor: *A Good Man is Hard to Find and Other Stories* (whole collection)

Vladimir Nabokov: *Lolita*

Harper Lee: *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Thomas Pynchon: *Crying of Lot 49*

Kurt Vonnegut: *Slaughterhouse-Five, or, The Children's Crusade: A Duty-Dance with Death*

Cormac McCarthy: *Child of God*

Don DeLillo: *White Noise*

13. American Poetry of the Second Half of the 20th Century

Allan Ginsberg: *Howl*

Elizabeth Bishop: "The Map", "Brazil, January 1, 1502", "Question of Travel", "Poem", "The Moose", "In the Waiting Room", "One Art", "At the Fishhouses"

Sylvia Plath: "Morning Song", "Wintering", "Tulips", "Daddy"

Adrienne Rich: "Diving into the Wreck", "Power", "Translations", "Twenty-One Love Poems XI"

Louise Glück: *The Wild Iris* (collection)

14. Native American Literature of the 19th and 20th Century

Jane Johnston Schoolcraft: "Invocation", "To the Pine Tree"

Zitkala-Sá: "The School Days of an Indian Girl"

Leslie Marmon Silko: *Ceremony*

N. Scott Momaday: *House Made of Dawn*

15. U.S. Minority Literature of the Second Half of the 20th Century

Sandra Cisneros: "Woman Hollering Creek"

Amy Tan: *The Joy Luck Club*

Jhumpa Lahiri: *Interpreter of Maladies*