



British Literature - Major

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 British 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 British 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 British Literature is expected.

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

Sanders, Andrew. *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994.

Steven Greenblatt (ed.). *The Norton Anthology of English Literature 8th Edition*, New York and London, W. W. Norton & Company, 2006. (We recommend especially the introductions to major periods and writers.)

1. The Beginnings of British literature

Beowulf in a modern English translation

Geoffrey Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*: “General Prologue”, “The Knight’s Tale”, “The Miller’s Tale”, “The Wife of Bath’s Tale and Prologue”

2. Elizabethan Poetry and Drama

Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus*

William Shakespeare, *The Sonnets*: No. 15, 18, 20, 66, 130, 116, 149

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

William Shakespeare, *King Lear*

William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*

William Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*

William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer’s Night Dream*

3. Metaphysical Poetry

John Donne, “The Flea”, “The Good Morrow”, “A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning”

4. Restoration poetry and drama

John Milton, *Paradise Lost*: Satan’s speech from Book 1: lines 242-263.

William Congreve, *Love for Love*

5. The Rise of the Novel

Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko, or the Royal Slave*

Daniel Defoe, *Moll Flanders*

Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*



6. British Poetry of the Eighteenth century

Jonathan Swift, “Stella’s Birthday”, “The Lady’s Dressing Room”, “Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift, D.S.P.D.”

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, “The Reasons that Induced Dr. Swift to Write a Poem Called the Lady’s Dressing Room”

7. British Romanticism

William Blake, *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*

William Wordsworth: “Preface to the Second Edition of Lyrical Ballads”, “We are Seven”, “Lines written in Early Spring”, “I wandered lonely as a cloud”

Samuel T. Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*

George Gordon Byron, *Manfred*, “She Walks in Beauty”, “Darkness”

Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound*, “Ozymandias”, “Ode to the West Wind”

John Keats, “Ode on a Grecian Urn”, “Ode to a Nightingale”, “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer”

Felicia Dorothea Hemans, “England’s Dead”, “The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in New England”

Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*

8. The Gothic Tradition

Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*

Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*

9. High Victorian Literature

Alfred Lord Tennyson, “Charge of the Light Brigade”, “The Lady of Shalott”, “In Memoriam”

Robert Browning, “Porphyria’s Lover”

Christina Rossetti, “In an Artist’s Studio”, *Goblin Market*

Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*

Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre*

Charles Dickens: *Great Expectations*

10. Late Victorian Literature

Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*

Oscar Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest*

George Bernard Shaw, *Pygmalion*

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*

11. Modernism in the British Isles

W.B. Yeats, “Leda and the Swan”, “No Second Troy”, “When You Are Old”, “An Irish Airman Foresees His Death”

Katherine Mansfield, “The Garden party”, “How Pearl Button was Kidnapped”



James Joyce, *Ulysses*

James Joyce, “The Dead”

Mina Loy, “Human Cylinders”

T. S. Eliot, *The Waste Land*

Virginia Woolf, “Kew Gardens”, “A Room of One’s Own”

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway*

12. British and Irish Prose of the Second Half of the 20th Century

John Fowles, *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*

Edna O’Brien: “A Rose in the Heart of New York”

Julian Barnes, *Flaubert’s Parrot*

Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*

Hilary Mantel, *Wolf Hall*

13. British and Irish Poetry of the Second Half of the 20th Century

Philip Larkin, “Sad Steps”, “Talking in Bed”, “This Be the Verse”, “High Windows”, “Aubade”

Seamus Heaney, “Digging”, “The Grauballe Man”, “Punishment”

Carol Ann Duffy, “Standing Female Nude”, “Mrs. Lazarus”

Eavan Boland, “The Lost Land”, “Fond Memory”

14. British and Irish Drama of the Second Half of the 20th Century

John Osborne, *Look Back in Anger*

Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*

Harold Pinter, *The Birthday Party*

Tom Stoppard, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*

Caryl Churchill, *Top Girls*

15. Postcolonial literature

Wole Soyinka, “Telephone Conversation”

Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*

J.M. Coetzee, *Waiting for the Barbarians*