

Year 8 – Romantics (Term 3)

1792 – 1837

The Poems

Grammar

Why do we call them "Romantics," then, if these guys weren't, you know, romantic? Well, because they were really into emotions: happiness, sadness, joy, loneliness...you know the drill. They got especially emotional about Nature (capital N!) They were coming off the heels of the Enlightenment, when folks decided to value reason over emotion, & they were not cool with it.

What is Romanticism?

During the Romantic period major changes took place in society, as dissatisfied intellectuals and artists **challenged the Establishment**.

In England, the Romantic poets were at the very heart of this movement.

They were inspired by a **desire for liberty**, and they **denounced the exploitation of the poor**.

There was an emphasis on **the importance of the individual**; a conviction that people should follow **ideals rather than imposed conventions** and rules.

The Romantics renounced the rationalism and order associated with the preceding Enlightenment era, stressing the importance of expressing **authentic personal feelings**.

They had a real sense of responsibility to their fellow men: they felt it was their duty to use their poetry to inform and inspire others, and to change society.

More key features of the period:

- The healing power of the imagination
- Voices of those who tended to be marginalised and oppressed by society: the rural poor; discharged soldiers; 'fallen' women; the insane; and children.
- Nature and the sublime
- The Byronic hero

Key Writers

- William Blake, John Keats, William Wordsworth, John Clare, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Lord Byron, Percy Shelley, Mary Shelley.

What are the features of a Gothic novel?

Gothic fiction sought to explore the darker side of human nature & the theme of the supernatural.

- Strange places
- Scientific Progression
- Doppelganger (someone's double)
- The Uncanny (something strangely familiar)
- Characters in moral or ethical turmoil (huge confusion/doubt)

Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792)

Written as a response to Paine's *Rights of Man* (1791)

One of the earliest works of **feminist writing**.

Wollstonecraft responds to those educational and political theorists of the 18th century who believed that women should not receive a rational education. She argues that women's education ought to match their position in society, and that they are essential to the nation because they raise its children and could act as respected "companions" to their husbands. **Wollstonecraft maintains that women are human beings deserving of the same fundamental rights as men, and that treating them as mere ornaments or property for men undermines the moral foundations of society.**

The Tyger by William Blake is from Songs of Innocence and Experience written in rhyming couplets. Blake wrote this poem of experience as a contrast to the innocence portrayed in The Lamb. He explores the harsh realities of adulthood.

The Mask of Anarchy by Percy Bysshe Shelley is a British political poem, following the Peterloo Massacre. Written in rhyming couplets, it is perhaps a statement on the principle of non-violent resistance.

To Toussaint L'Ouverture by William Wordsworth is a sonnet. In this poem, Wordsworth acknowledges the accomplishment of political change.

Ode to a Nightingale by John Keats an Ode written in eight stanzas. Keats looks closely at the mortality of human life; the transience of life and the tragedy of old age.

England in 1819 by English Romantic poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, a political sonnet. Throughout this poem, Shelley uses metaphors to break down views of a political system. Yet he stills concludes with optimism.

Darkness by Lord Byron is written in blank verse (pentameter). Byron's poem opens as a dream and imagines the end of the world through a series of natural, social, and possibly supernatural events.

The Destruction of Sannacherib by Lord Byron is written in rhyming couplets. Death and war are key themes of this poem with God's power demonstrated through nature.

Summer by John Clare is written in rhyming couplets. This poem explores feeling through the portrayal of nature.

Digging by Seamus Heaney is written in free verse. Heaney writes about his father and grandfather before him and, using imagery and sound, he can metaphorically follow in their footsteps.

Nettles by Vernon Scannell is written in a single stanza and has alternately rhyming lines. The use of emotive language explores a parents impulse to protect a child.

Possible layouts/types of text

Speech (text only)

- a clear address to an audience
- effective/fluent linked sections to indicate sequence
- rhetorical indicators that an audience is being addressed
- a clear sign off e.g. 'Thank you for listening'.

Top Tips for Creative Writing

At least 5 zoom-ins

Keep it simple: maximum 3 characters; tell a 'small' story – make the ordinary extraordinary

Describe all 5 senses

Maximum 1 exclamation mark

Write in 3rd person

Show, don't tell

Maximum 3 sentences of direct speech

Don't 'chat' to the reader

50% description with zooms

Compound-complex sentence

A sentence which has at least 2 main clauses and at least 1 subordinate clause (a compound bit and a complex bit)

Noun phrase

A phrase which has a noun as its main word (head) and determiners and adjectives with all relate to the noun. e.g. The really tall kid in our class...

Adverb: describes a verb, adjective or another adverb.

- Manner adverb**, e.g. I walk **slowly**.
- Time adverb**, e.g. I will walk **tomorrow**.
- Frequency adverb**, e.g. I walk **often**.
- Degree adverb**, e.g. I agree **completely**.
- Place adverb**, e.g. I walk **there**.

Stretch yourself

Look up other female writers. What do they all have in common? Read Frankenstein, or just a bit of it!

Poetic Techniques

- Alliteration
- Assonance
- Caesura
- Enjambment
- Meter
- Onomatopoeia
- Personification
- Rhyme / Rhyming Couplets
- Rhythm
- Stanza
- Free Verse
- Simile
- Metaphor

Keystone Vocabulary

Emotion
Nature
Sublime
Gothic
Romantic

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American Romanticism

American Romanticism was the first full-fledged literary movement that developed in the U.S. It was made up of a group of authors who wrote and published between about 1820 and 1860, when the U.S. was still finding its feet as a new nation.

These writers were influenced by the Romantic movement that had developed back in Britain. Like the [British Romantics](#), their work emphasized emotion, a love of nature, and imagination. While the writers who made up this movement had a lot in common with their European buddies across the sea, they also developed their own distinct brand of Romanticism.

The U.S.'s unique history and landscape influenced the movement in special ways. The American Romantics were preoccupied with questions of democracy and freedom, which were rooted in [the American Revolution that had led to independence from Britain back in 1776](#).

And the U.S.'s natural landscape—very different from Europe's—also influenced the writers of this movement in special ways. "The frontier," for example, is a big idea in the work of American Romantic writers. A lot of the values and ideas we often associate with American culture—values like individualism and democracy - are reflected in American Romantic writing, which played a really important role in spreading those values.

Brontë Sisters

The Brontë sisters lived in the village of Haworth, on the edge of the moors in Yorkshire.

The sisters, [Charlotte](#), [Emily](#), and [Anne](#), are well known as poets and novelists.

Charlotte's [Jane Eyre](#) was the first to know success, while Emily's [Wuthering Heights](#), Anne's [The Tenant of Wildfell Hall](#) and other works were later to be accepted as masterpieces of literature. In the novel, Wuthering Heights, Emily Brontë expands and reworks Gothic themes. It is a novel based around revenge, dependence, violence and the supernatural - centred on the manor Wuthering Heights set in the harsh landscape of the moors. Although **Emily was writing after the main Romantic period, her work was heavily influenced by it.**

Edgar Allen Poe

Poe is best known for his poetry and short stories, particularly his tales of mystery and the macabre. He is widely regarded as a central figure of [Romanticism](#) in the United States and of American literature as a whole, and he was one of the country's earliest practitioners of the [short story](#). He is also generally considered the inventor of the [detective fiction](#) genre and is further credited with contributing to the emerging genre of [science fiction](#). Poe was the first well-known American writer to earn a living through writing alone, resulting in a financially difficult life and career.

Poe's best known fiction works are [Gothic](#). Many of his works are generally considered part of the [dark romanticism](#) genre, a literary reaction to [transcendentalism](#) which Poe strongly disliked.

The French Revolution

The French Revolution was a watershed event in modern European history that began in 1789 and ended in the late 1790s with the ascent of Napoleon Bonaparte. During this period, French citizens razed and redesigned their country's political landscape, uprooting centuries-old institutions such as absolute monarchy and the feudal system. The upheaval was caused by widespread discontent with the French monarchy and the poor economic policies of King Louis XVI, who met his death by guillotine, as did his wife Marie Antoinette. Although it failed to achieve all of its goals and at times degenerated into a chaotic bloodbath, the French Revolution played a critical role in shaping modern nations by showing the world the power inherent in the will of the people.