



U.S. American Literature

Literature Study Guide Version 3.1

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Authors are listed roughly chronologically by the publication of their listed works.

Colonial

Answer	Major Works	Details
Anne Dudley Bradstreet	"To My Dear and Loving Husband" "Verses Upon the Burning of Our House, July 10, 1666"	poems collected in <i>The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America</i>
Jonathan Edwards	Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God	
Phillis Wheatley	"On Being Brought from Africa to America" "To His Excellency, George Washington"	Wheatley was enslaved in West Africa as a child and became a writer in New England; the listed poems are collected in <i>Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral</i>

Early 1800s

Answer	Major Works	Details
Washington Irving	"The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" "Rip Van Winkle"	"Sleepy Hollow" and "Rip Van Winkle" are stories collected in <i>The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon</i> , one of the pen names Irving wrote under; in the book, some stories were collected by fictional historian Diedrich Knickerbocker
William Cullen Bryant	Thanatopsis To a Waterfowl	
James Fenimore Cooper	The Last of the Mohicans	<i>The Last of the Mohicans</i> is part of the collection <i>Leatherstocking Tales</i> , which are about Natty Bumppo
Edgar Allan Poe	"The Cask of Amontillado" "The Tell-Tale Heart" "Murders in the Rue Morgue" "The Fall of the House of Usher" "The Pit and the Pendulum" "The Raven" (*) "Annabel Lee" (*)	(*) starred works are narrative poems; the rest are horror-themed short stories; "The Cask of Amontillado" follows Montressor's murder of Fortunato ; "The Tell-Tale Heart" follows an unnamed man's murder of his " vulture-eyed " house-mate; "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" follows an investigation by early fictional detective C. Auguste Dupin , who finds the murderer is an orangutan
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	The Song of Hiawatha Paul Revere's Ride Evangeline	Longfellow was one of the Cambridge Poets
Nathaniel Hawthorne	The Scarlet Letter "Young Goodman Brown" "The Minister's Black Veil" The House of the Seven Gables	<i>The Scarlet Letter</i> is about Hester Prynne who, thinking her husband, Roger Chillingworth , is dead, has her daughter, Pearl , out of wedlock through an affair with Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale ; "Young Goodman Brown" is collected in the book <i>Mosses from an Old Manse</i> , and "The Minister's Black Veil" is collected in the book <i>Twice-Told Tales</i>
Herman Melville	Moby-Dick Billy Budd "Bartleby, the Scrivener"	<i>Moby-Dick</i> is named for a white sperm whale , the focus of Captain Ahab's obsessive pursuit aboard the ship <i>Pequod</i> with a crew that includes Ishmael and Queequeg

Late 1800s

Answer	Major Works	Details
Walt <u>Whitman</u>	Leaves of Grass "Song of Myself" "O Captain! My Captain!" "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd"	<i>Leaves of Grass</i> is a poetry collection containing the poems on this sheet; it was Whitman's life's work, and he often revised it; "Song of Myself" says, " I celebrate myself and sing myself ;" both "O Captain! My Captain!" and "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" are about Abe Lincoln
Louisa May <u>Alcott</u>	Little Women	about sisters Meg, Jo, Beth, and Amy March
Harriet Beecher <u>Stowe</u>	Uncle Tom's Cabin	
Kate <u>Chopin</u>	The Awakening "Desiree's Baby" "The Story of an Hour"	set many of her works in Louisiana
Emily <u>Dickinson</u>	"Because I could not stop for Death" "I heard a Fly buzz—when I died" "I'm Nobody! Who are you?" "Wild nights - Wild nights!"	Dickinson was a recluse who was nicknamed " The Belle of Amherst " (Massachusetts); she is known for her unconventional capitalization and punctuation, especially her use of dashes
Mark <u>Twain</u>	The Adventures of Tom Sawyer The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court "The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County"	Mark Twain is the pen name of Samuel Langhorne Clemens ; characters in both <i>Tom Sawyer</i> include Tom's Aunt Polly, Becky Thatcher , and Becky's father Judge Thatcher ; <i>Huck Finn</i> focuses on Jim (an escaped slave who travels with Huck), the Widow Douglas (who tries to " sivilize " Huck), and the conmen known as the Duke and the Dauphin
Stephen <u>Crane</u>	The Red Badge of Courage "The Open Boat" "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky" "The Blue Hotel"	in <i>The Red Badge of Courage</i> , Civil War soldier Henry Fleming naively wants a war wound (the title "red badge"), but learns the horror of war through meetings with Jim Conklin and a " tattered soldier "
Ambrose <u>Bierce</u>	"An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge"	
Jack <u>London</u>	The Call of the Wild White Fang	<i>The Call of the Wild</i> is about Buck , a domestic dog kidnapped to be a sled dog, who eventually joins a wolf pack
Upton <u>Sinclair</u>	The Jungle	
Henry <u>James</u>	The Turn of the Screw Daisy Miller	
W.E.B. <u>Du Bois</u>	The Souls of Black Folk	

Early 1900s

Answer	Major Works	Details
O. Henry	"The Gift of the Magi" "The Ransom of Red Chief"	"The Gift of the Magi" is in The Four Million , whose title refers to the turn-of-the-century New York City population
Edith <u>Wharton</u>	Ethan Frome The Age of Innocence	
Carl <u>Sandburg</u>	"Chicago" "Grass"	poetry; described Chicago as " hog butcher for the world " and " city of big shoulders "
Robert <u>Frost</u>	"The Road Not Taken" "Mending Wall"	"Mending Wall" includes the mantra " good fences make good neighbors ;" he read " The Gift Outright " at JFK's inauguration
Willa <u>Cather</u>	My Ántonia	set many of her works in Nebraska

Harlem Renaissance (1920s-1930s)

Answer	Major Works	Details
Langston Hughes	"Harlem" "The Negro Speaks of Rivers"	Hughes reworked "Harlem" into the long poem " Montage of a Dream Deferred ," since the poem asks "what happens to a dream deferred?"
Zora Neale Hurston	Their Eyes Were Watching God	Hurston was also an anthropologist

Influenced by the Harlem Renaissance (1940s-1950s)

Later writers who knew and worked with members of the movement

Answer	Major Works	Details
Richard Wright	Native Son	
James Baldwin	Go Tell it on the Mountain	
Ralph Ellison	Invisible Man	
Lorraine Hansberry	A Raisin in the Sun	play about the Younger family; the play's title is from Langston Hughes's poem "Harlem"

Other Writers 1920s-1940s

Answer	Major Works	Details
Wallace Stevens	"The Emperor of Ice-Cream"	poetry
Sinclair Lewis	Main Street Babbitt	
William Carlos Williams	"The Red Wheelbarrow" "This is Just to Say"	poetry
F. Scott Fitzgerald	The Great Gatsby Tender is the Night "The Diamond as Big as the Ritz"	<i>The Great Gatsby</i> is narrated by Nick Carraway , and is about Jay Gatsby (James Gatz), who tries to win back his love, Daisy Buchanan , by hosting parties in West Egg , New York City
Ernest Hemingway	The Old Man and the Sea A Farewell to Arms For Whom the Bell Tolls The Sun Also Rises "The Killers"	<i>The Old Man and the Sea</i> is about Santiago , an unlucky (salão) fisherman, and his helper, Manolin ; <i>A Farewell to Arms</i> is about Frederic Henry ; <i>For Whom the Bell Tolls</i> is about Robert Jordan ; <i>The Sun Also Rises</i> is about Jake Barnes
William Faulkner	The Sound and the Fury As I Lay Dying Absalom, Absalom! "A Rose for Emily"	a Southern Gothic writer; set many of his works in Yoknapatawpha County , a fictional county in Mississippi , and in its county seat, Jefferson ; <i>The Sound and the Fury</i> is about the Compson family; <i>As I Lay Dying</i> is about the Bundren family
John Steinbeck	The Grapes of Wrath Of Mice and Men East of Eden	<i>The Grapes of Wrath</i> is about the Joad family traveling to California during the Dust Bowl
E. E. Cummings	"i sing of Olaf glad and big" "anyone lived in a pretty how town"	often left capitalization and punctuation out of his poems
Thornton Wilder	Our Town	play
Shirley Jackson	"The Lottery"	short story

Beat Generation (1950s)

Answer	Major Works	Details
Allen <u>Ginsberg</u>	"Howl"	poem
Jack <u>Kerouac</u>	On the Road	
William S. <u>Burroughs</u>	Naked Lunch	

Other Writers 1950s-2000s

Answer	Major Works	Details
Eugene <u>O'Neill</u>	Long Day's Journey into Night The Iceman Cometh	plays; <i>Long Day's Journey into Night</i> is about the Tyrone family; <i>The Iceman Cometh</i> is about " Hickey " Hickman
Tennessee <u>Williams</u>	A Streetcar Named Desire The Glass Menagerie Cat on a Hot Tin Roof	plays; <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> is about Blanche DuBois and Stella and Stanley Kowalski ; <i>The Glass Menagerie</i> is about the Wingfield family; <i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i> is about the Pollitt family
Arthur <u>Miller</u>	Death of a Salesman The Crucible All My Sons	plays; <i>Death of a Salesman</i> is about the Loman family; <i>The Crucible</i> allegorizes McCarthyism through the Salem Witch Trials
Ray <u>Bradbury</u>	Fahrenheit 451 The Martian Chronicles	<i>Fahrenheit 451</i> is about Guy Montag , a fireman whose job it is to burn books
J.D. <u>Salinger</u>	The Catcher in the Rye Nine Stories	<i>The Catcher in the Rye</i> is about Holden Caulfield and his sister, Phoebe
Flannery <u>O'Connor</u>	"A Good Man is Hard to Find"	a Southern Gothic writer; characters include the Misfit , the Grandmother , and the cat Pitty Sing
Vladimir <u>Nabokov</u>	Lolita	characters include Dolores Haze , the title adolescent " nymphet " predated by Humbert Humbert
Edward <u>Albee</u>	Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? The Zoo Story	plays
Truman <u>Capote</u>	Breakfast at Tiffany's In Cold Blood	close friends with Harper Lee , who helped him research his books
Harper <u>Lee</u>	To Kill a Mockingbird	narrated by Scout Finch , whose lawyer father, Atticus , defends the black man Tom Robinson in court against the false accusations of Mayella Ewell , a white woman, in Maycomb, Alabama
Sylvia <u>Plath</u>	"Daddy" The Bell Jar	Plath was primarily a poet; "Daddy" is a poem; <i>The Bell Jar</i> is a novel
Maya <u>Angelou</u>	I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings	this is the first of Angelou's autobiographies, and is named after her poem " The Caged Bird "
Kurt <u>Vonnegut</u>	Slaughterhouse-Five Cat's Cradle "Harrison Bergeron"	<i>Slaughterhouse-Five</i> is about Billy Pilgrim , who becomes " unstuck in time " during and after World War Two
Thomas <u>Pynchon</u>	Gravity's Rainbow	
Toni <u>Morrison</u>	Beloved The Bluest Eye	
August <u>Wilson</u>	Fences	a play from the Pittsburgh Cycle
Alice <u>Walker</u>	The Color Purple	