

Thu 3 - American Literature

Made with a creative frenzy

Outline/instructions

- ↻ Colonial/Early
- Romanticism
- Realism and Naturalism
- Modern/Contemporary

"beat" and "lost" (generations)

↻ Main instructions

As a group find some information and try to summarize it into a short form. (does not need to be in complete sentences)

Describe the period and choose at least one author to describe (some of their works and/or why they are the best representative of the period).

Colonial/Early

- ↻ Period of early American history, includes early religious and political writers before/during the American Revolution as well as creation of an American identity soon afterwards.

(Religious leaders were influential in early colonies/settlements/communities and their sermons and intercommunication are some of the most organized records of early American writing available.)

Political writings such as the Federalist Papers and the AntiFederalist Papers were written by the "Founding Fathers" including the most famous, although they were published as essays and anonymously at the time. (Feds - James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, Antifeds - Jefferson)

Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin - combines the political with the idealized, "rags to riches" story (mostly fictionalized)

Romanticism

- ↻ Basic info
-

- ↻ Characteristics
-

- ↻ More(?) poets, specific authors...
-

- ↻ 1830-1865

Motives:

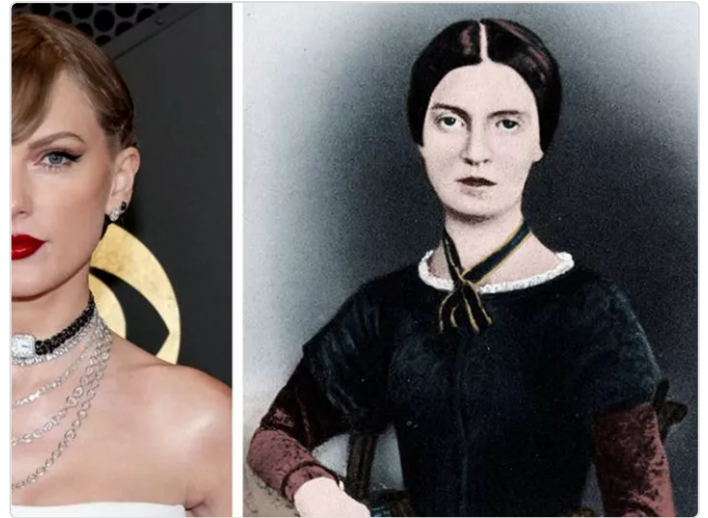
six primary characteristics:

1. celebration of nature
2. focus on the individual and spirituality
3. celebration of isolation melancholy
4. interest in the common man
5. idealization of women
6. personification and pathetic fallacy

authors:

Emily Dickinson

- She Was an Accomplished Gardener.
- She Wrote Nearly 900 Poems During the Civil War
- She and Her Brother Loved the Same Woman
- Only 10 Poems Were Published in Her Lifetime



⇒

⇒ **Famous poem**

Works:

"Hope" is the thing with feathers

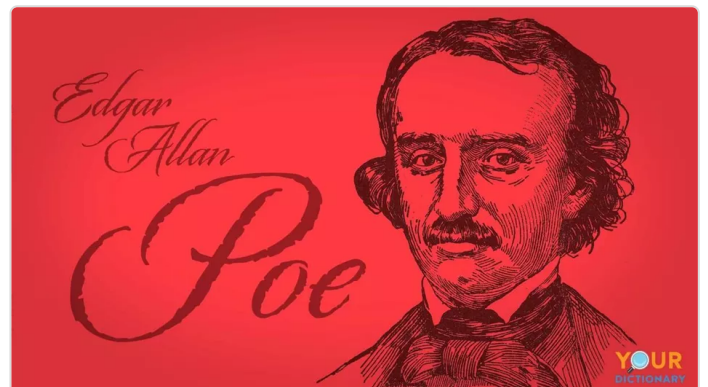
A Bird came down the Walk
I heard a Fly buzz—when I died
Success is counted sweetest
I died for beauty
As Imperceptibly as Grief
Death be not proud
I dwell in Possibility
I taste a liquor never brewed

⇒ **Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849)**

- § He Was a Champion Swimmer
- § He Published His First Book At 18
- § He Married His 13-Year-Old Cousin
- § He Created the Detective Story Genre
- § **Poe Was a College Dropout**

Works:

- § To Helen (1831)
- § The Raven (1845)
- § Annabel Lee (1849)
- § The Tell-Tale Heart (1843)



⇒ Nathaniel Hawthorne

He is best known for his novels *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851). His use of allegory and symbolism make Hawthorne one of the most studied writers. He changed his last name in part to hide his family's dark past.

Naturalism and Realism

⇒ Naturalism - basic info

Naturalism emphasises the influence of the environment, heredity, and social conditions in shaping human character.

Works of naturalism authors often depicted characters struggling against their environments or their own nature, frequently leading to disastrous outcomes; darker, harsher aspects of life...

It played a critical role in expanding the boundaries of literary expression and in highlighting societal issues in the 19th-century United States.

Characteristics:

Determinism = the history is repeating itself

Realistic and Detailed Depictions

Pessimism

Focus on the Lower Class

Influence of Science

Animalistic Depictions of Characters

Narrative Objectivity

Notable American naturalists include authors like:

Stephen Crane,

Frank Norris,

Theodore Dreiser,

Jack London

⇒ Realism

Realism is a kind of literature that presents ordinary day-to-day experiences as they occur in reality. Realism is conveyed through the stylistic elements and the language used in a literary text. In works of realism, language is usually accessible and succinct, depicting people one would encounter in day-to-day life and everyday experience.

The Lost Generation

⇒ ...

⇒ Basic info

This term refers to writers born around 1900 who experienced and fought in the First World War. Their feelings about the war after returning home, mostly identical to those of the soldiers, are depicted in their

works that appear in the 1920s. The term lost generation was first used by the American writer Gertrude Stein in 1924.

⇒ **Characteristics**

They often returned from the war crippled physically, but also mentally, and this led to problems with inclusion in society and with leading a normal life. Writers lose their ideals about the war itself and about their future because of the war. The adjective "lost" refers to their being lost in society and especially in the future, because their ideas have been fundamentally destroyed.

⇒ **Topics**

- feelings about the war - mainly skepticism and disappointment
 - distorting ideas about the future
 - exclusion from society and the inability to integrate into it
 - mistrust of society and disagreement with society's values
 - criticism of society
 - psychological problems of authors and protagonists
 - an introverted hero unable to communicate with old friends
 - a hero placed in a dangerous situation in which his true character will be revealed
-

⇒ **Authors**

Francis Scott Fitzgerald
Ernest Hemingway
John Steinbeck
Gertrude Stein
Thomas Stearns Eliot
William Faulkner
John Dos Passos

⇒ 1830-1865

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⇒ testing

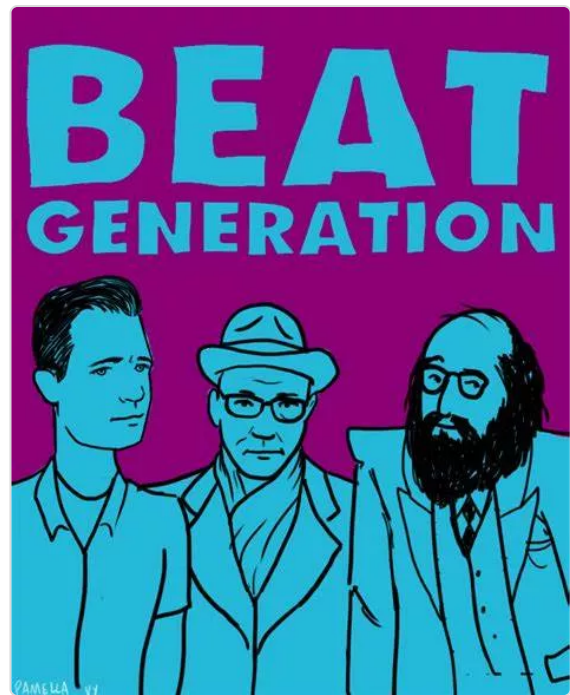
The Beat Generation

⇒ Basic info

- American social and literary movement
- self-styled as “beat” (originally meaning “weary,” but later also connoting a musical sense, a “beatific” spirituality, and other meanings)
- poets sought to transform poetry into an expression of genuine lived experience
- 1950 - 1960

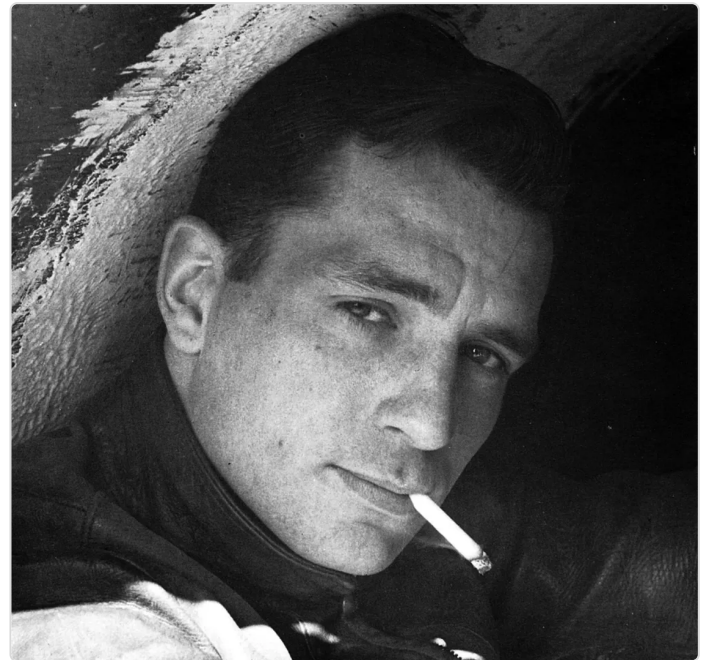
key beliefs, influences, typical features:

- influenced by jazz
 - use of drugs [marijuana, lsd]
 - free love and sexual liberation
[many were openly gay and bisexual]
-



↳ **Authors**

Allen Ginsberg, William S. Burroughs,
Lawrence Ferlinghetti as well



Jack Kerouac ;D <3

↳ **The most famous works**

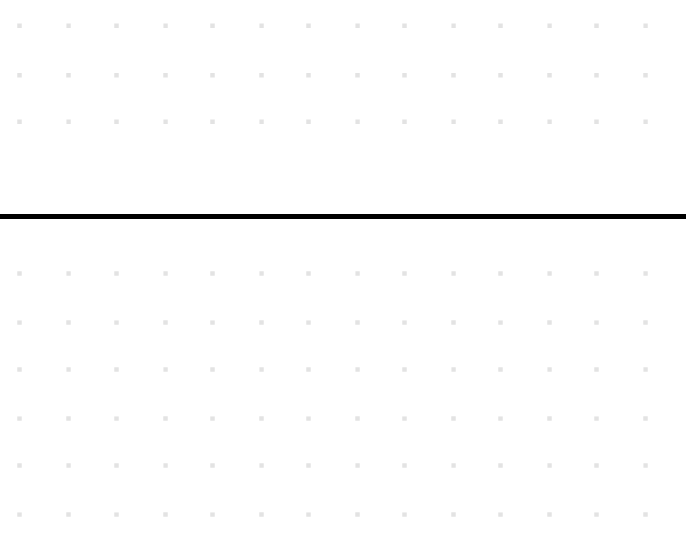
- ON THE ROAD - Jack Kerouac
- William S. Burroughs - Naked Lunch
- Allen Ginsberg - Howl

Modern/Contemporary

↳ **Modernism and contemporary literature**

Modernism:
 - Characteristics: Individualism, Experimentation,
 Absurdity, Symbolism, Formalism, Advances in science
 and technology
 Period: 1910 - 1945

Contemporary lit.:



- literature that is being written in the now about the
now
Characteristics:
reality-based stories, strong characters, believable story

