

Masters Reading List

retyped 2006

British Literature

Beginnings to 1500

- “Beowulf”
- “The Battle of Maldon”
- “Deor’s Lament”
- “The Wanderer”
- “The Seafarer”
- “Pearl”
- Piers Plowman
- “Sir Gawain and the Green Knight”
- Chaucer: Troilus and Criseyde; The Canterbury Tales
- Malory: Morte D’Arthur
- Henryson: Testament of Cresseid
- The Second Shepherd’s Play
- Cain and Abel
- Everyman
- Widsith
- The Dream of the Rood
- The Romance of the Rose

Sixteenth Century

Poetry:

- Skelton: “Philip Sparrow,” “Colin Clout.”
- Surrey: “Complaint of A Lover that Defied Love and Was By Love After the More Tormented”; “Description of a spring”; “Description and Praise of His Love Geraldine”; “Complaint of a Lover Rebuked.”
- Wyatt: “The Lover for Shamefastedness Hideth His Desire Within his Faithful Heart”; “The Lover Compareth his State to a Ship In a Perilous Storm Tossed On the Sea”; “To a Lady to Answer Directly with Yea or Nay”; “Of the Mean and Sure Estate.”
- Sackville: “Induction to The Mirror for Magistrates.”
- Sir John Davies: “Orchestra”; Nosce Teipsum.
- Spenser: “The Shepherdes Calendar” (April, June, October); Sonnets 1-10 in the Amoretti; “An Hymne in Honor of Love”; “Prothalamion”; Sonnets “Epithalamion”; “The Faerie Queene” (Books I and III).
- Sidney: Astrophil and Stella; Sonnets 1-10.
- Shakespeare: Sonnets 2, 28, 29, 55, 73, 116, 129, 130, 144, and 146.

- Drayton: Idea, Sonnets 1, 6, 61.
- Chapman: “The Shadow of the Night.”
- Marlowe: “Hero and Leander.”
- Marston: “The Scourge of Villainy,” Satyre 11.
- Hall: from “Virgidemiarum” Book 1, “the prologue,” “the postscript,” and “satire VII.”

Prose:

- More: Utopia.
- Elyot: The Book Named the Governor, Book 1, Chapter XIII.
- Lyly: Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit; read the preface to the “Gentleman Readers,” and the first five pages in any anthology for style.
- Nashe: The Unfortunate Traveler.
- Hooker: Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, the first ten pages of any standard anthology.

Prose Criticism:

- Sidney: The Defense of Poesy.
- Campion: Observation in the Art of English Poesy.
- Daniel: “A Defense of Rhyme.”

Drama:

- Sackville and Norton: Gorboduc.
- Lyly: Endymion.
- Kyd: The Spanish Tragedy.
- Marlowe: Tamburlaine part I; Dr. Faustus.
- Shakespeare: The Second Historical Tetralogy (Richard II-Henry IV); A Midsummer Night’s Dream; The Merchant of Venice; As You Like It; Twelfth Night; Measure for Measure; The Winter’s Tale; The Tempest; Julius Caesar; Hamlet; Othello; King Lear; Macbeth; Antony and Cleopatra.

Seventeenth Century

Poetry:

- Donne: Song (“Go and Catch a Falling Star”); “Woman’s Constancy”; “The Indifferent”; “The Canonization”; “Twickenham Garden”; “The Flea”; “The Ecstasy”; “The Relic”; Holy Sonnets 5, 7, 10; “Good Friday 1613, Riding Westward.”
- Jonson: “On My First Daughter”; “On My First Son”; “To John Donne”; “To Penshurst”; “Song (To Celia)”; “Come, My Celia.”

- Herrick: “Delight in Disorder”; “Corinna’s Going A-Maying”; “To Anthea, Who May Command Him Anything”; “Upon a Child That Died”; “The Night Piece”; “To Julia”; “Upon Julia’s Clothes”; “Upon Prue His Maid.”
- Herbert: “The Altar”; “Easter Wings”; “Easter”; “The Collar”; “The Pulley”; “Love” (3).
- Crashaw: “Music’s Duel”; “St. Mary Magdalene, or The Weeper”; “The Flaming Heart.”
- Marvell: “To His Coy Mistress”; “Upon Appleton House”; “To My Lord Fairfax”; “The Definition of Love”; “A Horatian Ode upon Cromwell’s Return from Ireland.”
- Suckling: “Out Upon It! I Have Loved...”; “Song (Why so pale and wan, fond Lover)”; “A Ballad Upon A Wedding.”
- Carew: “An Elegy Upon the Death of Dr. Donne, Dean of Paul’s”; “A Song (Ask Me No More Where Jove Bestows)”; “To A Lady that Desired I Would Love Her.”
- Vaughan: from Silex Scintillans: “Regeneration,” “The Retreat,” “Corruption,” “They Are All Gone Into a World of Light,” “Cock-Crowing.”
- Milton: “L’Allegro”; “Il Penseroso”; “Comus”; “Lycidas”; Paradise Lost; Samson Agonistes; Sonnet VII; Sonnet VIII.
- Phineas Fletcher: The Locusts or Apollyonists, Canto I.
- Giles Fletcher: Christ’s Triumph After Death, Canto IV.

Prose:

- Bacon: Essays (“Of Truth,” “Of Parents and Children,” “Of Love,” “Of Travel,” “Of Friendship,” “Of Studies”).
- Jonson: from “Timber, or Discoveries Made Upon Men and Matter”: “Censura de Poetis”; “De Shakespeare Nostrati”; “De Malignate Studentium”; “Poesis et Pictura”; “De Pictura”; “De Stilo et Optimo Scribendi Generi”; “Praecipendi Modi”; “What is a Poet?”
- Bible: A selection from the gospel of St. Matthew in at least two different translations.
- Burton: from the Anatomy of Melancholy: “Democritus Junior to the reader,” “The Utopia of Democritus Junior,” “Love of Learning, or Overmuch Study,” “How Love Tyrannized Over Men.”
- Browne: Religio Medici: read up to the statement “Nature hath made one world, and art another. In brief, all things artificial; for nature is the art of...”
- Milton: “Of Education”; Areopagitica.
- Bunyan: Pilgrim’s Progress.
- Pepys: Entry in his diary for 2 September 1665/1666 (The London Fire).
- Jeremy Taylor: The Rules and Exercise of Holy Dying, Chapter 1, sections 1 and 2.
- John Earle: from Microcosmography, or A Piece of the World Discovered In Essays and Characters: “A Plodding Student”; “A Young Gentleman of the University”; “A Plain Country Fellow.”

Drama:

- Jonson: Every Man in His Humor; Volpone; The Alchemist; Bartholomew Fair; Cynthia's Revels.
- Webster: The White Devil; The Duchess of Malfi.
- Beaumont and Fletcher: The Knight of the Burning Pestle; Philaster.
- Middleton and Rowley: The Changeling.

Restoration and Eighteenth Century

Poetry:

- Dryden: "Mac Flecknoe"; "Absalom and Achitophel"; "Religio Laici"; "To the Pious Memory of the Accomplisht Young Lady Mrs Anne Killigrew."; "St. Cecilia's Day"; "A Song for Alexander's Feast."
- Wilmot: "Satire Against Mankind."
- Swift: "Description of the Morning"; "Verse on the Death of Dr. Swift."
- Pope: "An Essay on Criticism"; An Essay on Man (I, III); "Epistle to the Earl of Buckingham"; "The Rape of the Lock"; "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot."
- Thomson: "Winter."
- Gray: "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard"; "The Bard."
- Johnson: "The Vanity of Human Wishes."
- Butler: Hudibras (I, i).

Prose:

- Dryden: "An Essay on Dramatic Poesy."
- Swift: "A Tale of the Tub"; Gulliver's Travels; "Argument Against Abolishing Christianity"; "A Modest Proposal."
- Addison and Steele: Spectator #2, 10, 62, 81, 112, 249, 409, 519.
- Johnson: Rasselas; Rambler #4, 60, 208; Idler #16, 60, 61; Preface to "Lives of Dryden, Pope, Milton, Cowley."
- Goldsmith: "Essay on the Theater"; The Citizens of the World (Letter #21, 119).
- Boswell: Life of Johnson (in a modern abridgment, such as Dell or Random House).

Drama:

- Dryden: The Conquest of Granada; All for Love.
- Etherege: The Man of Mode.
- Wycherley: The Country Wife; The Plain Dealer.
- Congreve: The Way of the World.
- Farquhar: Beaux's Stratagem.
- Steele: The Conscious Lovers.
- Gay: The Begger's Opera.
- Goldsmith: She Stoops to Conquer.

- Sheridan: The Rivals; The School for Scandal.
- Buckingham: The Rehearsal.
- Otway: Venice Preserved.
- Lillo: The London Merchant.

Novels:

- Defoe: Moll Flanders.
- Richardson: Clarissa.
- Fielding: Tom Jones.
- Sterne: Tristram Shandy.

Nineteenth Century

Poetry:

(Selections may be found in Perkins, English Romantic Writers, and in The Norton Anthology of English Literature.)

- Wordsworth: “Tintern Abbey”; The Prelude (books I and II); “Ode: Intimations of Immortality”; sonnets (“It is a Beauteous Evening”; “To Toussaint L’Ouverture”; “London, 1802”; “The World Is Too Much with Us”); “The Solitary Reaper”; “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud.”
- Coleridge: “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner”; “Christabel”; “Kubla Khan”; “Frost at Midnight”; “Dejection: An Ode.”
- Blake: Songs of Innocence and Experience; “America: A Prophecy.”
- Byron: Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage (Cantos III, IV); Don Juan (Dedication, Cantos I-IV); “Darkness”; “Prometheus”; “Stanzas for Music” (“There’s not a joy the world can give”).
- Percy Bysshe Shelley: Prometheus Unbound; “Adonais”; “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty”; “Ode to the West Wind”; “To a Sky-Lark.”
- Keats: “Ode to a Nightingale”; “Ode on a Grecian Urn”; “The Eve of St. Agnes”; “To Autumn”; “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer”; “On sitting down to read King Lear once again”; “When I have fears”; “Bright Star.”
- Tennyson: “The Lady of Shalott”; “Oenone,” “The Palace of Art”; “The Lotos-Eaters”; “Morte d’Arthur”; “Ulysses”; “The Two Voices”; “Locksley Hall”; In Memoriam A. H. H.; “Sixty Years After”; “The Last Tournament.”
- Browning: “Pippa Passes”; “My Last Duchess”; “Bishop Blougram’s Apology”; “Fra Lippo Lippi”; “Andrea Del Sarto”; “Childe Roland”; “The Bishop Orders His Tomb”; “Love Among the Ruins”; “The Statue and the Bust”; “Cleon”; “Caliban Upon Setebos”; The Ring and the Book (Book I).
- Arnold: “In Harmony with Nature”; “The Forsaken Mermaid”; “Sohrab and Rustum”; “The Scholar-Gypsy”; “Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse”; “Thyrsis”; “Dover Beach.”
- D. G. Rossetti: “The Blessed Damozel”; “Sister Helen”; selected sonnets from The House of Life.

- FitzGerald: The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.
- Swinburne: “Laus Veneris”; “Hymn to Proserpine”; “The Garden of Proserpine.”
- Elizabeth Barrett Browning: Selections from Sonnets from the Portuguese.
- Christina Rossetti: “Goblin Market.”
- George Meredith: Modern Love; “Lucifer in Starlight.”
- William Morris: “The Defense of Guenivere”; “The Haystack in the Floods.”
- Wilde: “The Harlot’s House”; “The Ballad of Reading Gaol.”
- Hardy: “Hap”; “Channel Firing”; “The Convergence of the Twain.”
- Hopkins: “The Windhover”; “The Wreck of The Deutschland”; the “dark” sonnets.

Prose:

- Wordsworth: “Preface” to 1800 edition of Lyrical Ballads.
- Coleridge: Biographia Literaria (chapters I, IV, XIV, XX, XXII).
- Shelley: A Defence of Poetry.
- Keats: all letters contained in Perkins, English Romantic Writers or in The Norton Anthology (smaller selection than in Perkins, but excellent).
- Newman: “The Idea of a University” (Discourse VI); “Apologia.”
- Carlyle: from Sartor Resartus (“The Everlasting No, The Everlasting Yea”).
- Macaulay: “Samuel Johnson.”
- Ruskin: Modern Painters (a few pages of description from part II of vol. I); from The Stones of Venice (“The Nature of Gothic”); from Unto This Last (“Roots of Honor”).
- Arnold: Culture and Anarchy (Chapters 1-4); “Literature and Science”; “Literature and Dogma” (Chapter 12).
- Huxley: “Liberal Education”; “Science and Culture.”
- Pater: from The Renaissance (“Preface,” “Leonardo da Vinci,” “Conclusion”).

Novel:

- Austen: Pride and Prejudice.
- Dickens: David Copperfield; Great Expectations.
- Thackeray: Vanity Fair.
- Charlotte Bronte: Jane Eyre.
- Emily Bronte: Wuthering Heights.
- Trollope: Barchester Towers.
- George Eliot: Middlemarch.
- Hardy: Tess of the D’Urbervilles; The Mayor of Casterbridge.

Drama:

- Wilde: The Importance of Being Earnest.

Twentieth Century

Poetry:

- Yeats: “The Magi”; “The Wild Swans at Coole”; “Easter 1916”; “The Second Coming”; “Sailing to Byzantium”; “Byzantium”; “Leda and the Swan”; “Among School Children”; “News for the Delphic Oracle”; “The Lake Isle of Innisfree”; “Under Ben Bulbin.”
- Eliot: The Waste Land; “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”; “Gerontion”; Four Quartets.
- Dylan Thomas: “I see the boys of summer”; “The force that through the green fuse drives the flower”; “If I were tickled by the rub of love”; “And death shall have no dominion”; “When all my five and country senses see”; “After the funeral (In memory of Ann Jones)”; “A Refusal to Mourn the Death by Fire of a Child in London”; “Do not go gentle into that good night”; “Fern Hill”; “Lament.”

Criticism:

- Eliot: “Tradition and The Individual Talent”; “Hamlet.”
- Richards: Principles of Literary Criticism; Practical Criticism.

Drama:

- Shaw: Pygmalion; Major Barbara; Man and Superman; St. Joan; Heartbreak House.
- Synge: The Playboy of the Western World; Riders to the Sea.
- O’Casey: Juno and the Paycock.
- Eliot: Murder in the Cathedral.
- Yeats: The Hour Glass; Purgatory.
- Beckett: Waiting for Godot.
- Osbourne: Look Back in Anger.
- Pinter: The Homecoming; No Man’s Land.
- Stoppard: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead.
- Storey: The Contractor.

Novel:

- Conrad: Heart of Darkness; Lord Jim.
- Lawrence: The Rainbow; Sons and Lovers.
- Forster: A Passage to India.
- Joyce: A Portrait of the Artist; Ulysses.
- Greene: The Heart of the Matter.
- Woolf: To the Lighthouse.

American Literature

Nineteenth Century

Poetry:

- Whitman: "Song of Myself"; "When Lilacs Last in the Door-yard Bloom'd"; "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking"; "Passage to India."
- Dickinson: "I heard a Fly buzz - when I died-"; "Because I could not stop for Death-"; "My life closed twice before its close"; "A Bird came down the Walk"; "I started Early - Took my Dog"; "The last Night that She lived-"; "There's a certain Slant of light"; "I never saw a Moor"; "I know that He exists"; "I could not live with You."
- Poe: "The Raven"; "Ulalume"; "To Helen"; "Sonnet: To Science"; "Israfel"; "Annabel Lee."

Prose:

- Emerson: Nature.
- Thoreau: Walden.

Novel:

- Cooper: The Deerslayer; The Pioneers.
- Hawthorne: The Scarlet Letter; "Young Goodman Brown"; "The Artist of the Beautiful"; "Rappaccini's Daughter"; "The Celestial Railroad"; "Ethan Brand"; "The Maypole of Merrymount."
- Melville: Moby Dick; "Bartleby the Scrivener".
- Twain: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.
- Henry James: Portrait of a Lady; The Sacred Fount; The Ambassadors.
- Crane: The Red Badge of Courage.
- Norris: The Octopus.

Twentieth Century

Poetry:

- Frost: "Mending Wall"; "The Road Not Taken"; "The Death of the Hired Man"; "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"; "Two Tramps in Mud Time"; "Home Burial"; "Birches"; "The Wood-Pile"; "Hyla Brook"; "After Apple-Picking"; "To Earthward"; "I Have Been One Acquainted with the Night."
- Pound: Cantos I-IV, XLV: Hugh Selwyn Mauberley.
- Stevens: "Peter Quince at the Clavier"; "Le Monocle de Mon Oncle"; "Anecdote of the Jar"; "Fabliau of Florida"; "The Man Whose Pharynx Was Bad"; "The Snow

Man”; “The Comedian as the Letter C”; “The Emperor of Ice Cream”; “Sailing After Lunch”; “Of Mere Being.”

- William Carlos Williams: “A Ball Game”; “Danse Russe”; “El Hombre”; “January Morning”; “Overture to a Dance of Locomotives”; “The Parable of the Blind”; “St. Francis Einstein of the Daffodils”; “The Attic Which Is Desire”; “The Botticellian Trees”; “The Dance”; “The Red Wheelbarrow”; “To A Poor Old Woman”; “This Is Just to Say”; “Elsie.”

Novel:

- Hemingway: The Sun Also Rises; A Farewell to Arms.
- Faulkner: The Sound and the Fury.
- Fitzgerald: The Great Gatsby.
- Dreiser: An American Tragedy; Sister Carrie.
- Bellow: Seize the Day.
- Nabokov: Lolita.

Drama:

- Rice: The Adding Machine.
- Odets: Waiting for Lefty.
- Hellman: The Little Foxes.
- O’Neill: The Emperor Jones; Mourning Becomes Electra; The Iceman Cometh; Long Day’s Journey Into Night.
- Wilder: Our Town.
- Miller: Death of a Salesman.
- Jones: A Texas Trilogy.
- Rabe: Streamers.

Literary Theory and Criticism:

While this grouping should not be considered as a category in the same sense as those above, the following should be minimally required in addition to those included in the various historical periods.

1. Aristotle: Poetics.
2. Wellek and Warren: Theory of Literature, 3rd ed.; 1956, Chapters 2, 3, 12, through 17.
3. Cleanth Brooks: “The Formalist Critics” From The Kenyon Review, XIII (Winter 1951), 72-81; “Irony as a Principle of Structure” from Literary Opinion in America (M.D. Zobel, ed.) and Critical Theory Since Plato (H. Adams, ed.).
4. Herbert Read: “Psychoanalysis & Criticism” from Twentieth-Century Criticism (Handy and Westbrook, etc.).
5. Northrop Frye: “The Archetypes of Literature” from Fables of Identity.
6. Martin Esslin: “The Significance of the Absurd” from The Theater of the Absurd.
7. Wimsatt and Brooks: Literary Criticism: A Short History. Chapters 7, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 18 through 21, and 26.

8. Dahlstrom: Strindberg's Dramatic Expressionism. Chapters on the general characteristics of Expressionism.
9. A Grammar of Literary Criticism (L.S. Hall, ed.) Chapters on Surrealism.
10. Sartre: "Why Write?" from What is Literature?

