

BRITISH LITERATURE

Level 630



FUN FACT

All of Jane Austen's novels were published anonymously until after her death.



Literature

Language Arts

British Literature

by the Sonlight Team

*And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall
make you free.*

John 8:32 (NKJV)

Instructor's Guide Quick Start

The Sonlight Instructor's Guide (IG) is designed to make your educational experience as easy as possible. We have carefully organized the materials to help you and your children get the most out of the subjects covered. If you need help reading your schedule, see "How to Use the Schedule" just before Week 1 begins.

This IG includes an entire 36-week schedule, notes, assignments, readings, and other educational activities. For specific organizational tips, topics and skills addressed, the timeline schedule, and other suggestions for the parent/teacher see **Section Three**. What helpful features can you expect from the IG?

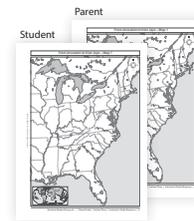


Easy to use

Everything you need is located right after the schedule each week. If a note appears about a concept in a book, it's easy to find it right after the schedule based on the day the relevant reading is scheduled.

Same View Maps

Students will plot map locations on their blank maps, while you check their answers with your answer keys of the same view.



To Discuss After You Read

These sections help you hone in on the basics of a book so you can easily know if your children comprehend the material. The questions are numbered to help you reference between the Parent Guide and the Student Guide.

To Discuss After You Read

- Q: When Henry brings food home for his siblings, the author describes the food by its color—i.e., brown bread and yellow cheese; can you think of four foods that are made more specific by describing their color?
- A: suggestions: white and dark meat [chicken]; green beans/yellow beans; yellow tomatoes; yellow squash; dark

Vocabulary

orphan: a child whose parents are dead.
children's home: an orphanage.

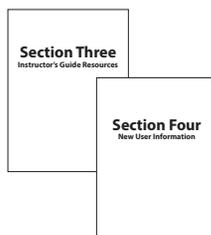
Vocabulary

These sections include terms related to cultural literacy and general vocabulary words in one easy-to-find place.

Notes

When relevant, you'll find notes about specific books to help you know why we've selected a particular resource and what we hope children will learn from reading it. Keep an eye on these notes to also provide you with insights on more difficult concepts or content (look for "Note to Mom or Dad").

Note: The Yangtze River is the third longest river in the world. The author talks about "the yellow waters of the Yangtze river." The river carries an enormous amount of silt from higher elevation in Western China. It drops the silt on the central plains which creates good soil for rice planting. In 2010, the Chinese government completed the Three Gorges Dam across the Yangtze, the world's largest dam. It generates electricity and will hopefully cut down on flooding. See [http://enr.com/story/energy/2010/03/23/yangtze-dam](#).



Instructor's Guide Resources and New User Information

Don't forget to familiarize yourself with some of the great helps in **Section Three** and **Section Four** so you'll know what's there and can turn to it when needed.

Instructor's Guide Overview

We've designed your Sonlight Instructor's Guide (IG) to make your educational experience as straightforward and helpful as possible. We have carefully organized your materials to help you and your children get the most out of the subjects covered. For help reading your schedule, see "**How to Use the Schedule**" page just before Week 1.

Your IG includes an entire 36-week schedule of all the books you'll read, followed by notes, assignments, readings, and other educational activities. For specific organizational tips, topics and skills addressed, and other suggestions for you, take a look at some of the great resources in **Section Three** so you'll know what's there and can turn to this section when needed.

If you are new to Sonlight, please look in **Section Four**, where you'll find helpful resources for new users including tips for getting organized, ideas for adapting the curriculum to your needs, record keeping suggestions, an overview of the structure of your Instructor's Guide, and more.

What helpful features can you expect from your IG?

First, everything you need is located right after your schedule each week. If a note appears about a concept in a book, it's easy to find it right after your schedule on the day the relevant reading is scheduled.

Second, using the blank maps provided, students will plot assigned locations for each book. Map answer keys are located in Section Three of the Parent's Instructor's Guide.

Third, your Instructor's Guide includes a complete ready-to-use 5-Day schedule, which has been carefully planned to optimize use of the curriculum resources.

Fourth, "To Discuss After You Read" sections help you hone in on the basics of a book so you can easily gauge how well your children have comprehended the book. The questions are numbered to help you reference between the Parent Guide and the Student Guide.

Fifth, "Vocabulary" includes terms related to cultural literacy and general usage terms [words printed in **bold**] in one easy-to-find place.

Sixth, notes labeled "**Rationale**" contain information about specific books to help you know why we've selected a particular resource and what we trust children will gain from reading it. Other notes marked with "**Note to Mom or Dad**" will provide you with insights on more difficult concepts or content from some books.

Finally, don't forget to have fun as you learn at home together!

About "British Literature"

Sonlight's exciting British Literature curriculum is packed with a significant collection of literature, suitable for college prep. Even though this largely self-guided study doesn't include history or Bible schedules, it does cover a wide variety of important ideas as expressed in some of the world's best British literature. Along the way students will learn to appreciate classic literature, prepare for college literature studies, understand how to confidently analyze literature, expand their vocabulary, and more.

A sampling of the books students will read include the epic poem *Beowulf*, Shakespeare's classic *Hamlet*, Lewis Carroll's memorable Alice stories, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and the Charles Dickens's story *A Tale of Two Cities*. Students will also read literature by thoughtful authors such as C.S. Lewis, Oscar Wilde, James Joyce, Chaucer, Emily Bronte, William Golding, J.M. Barrie, and others.

All of these books combined with Sonlight's Instructor's Guide will provide a robust British Literature that will make a lasting impact on students, equipping them for college studies and life.

Learning Objectives for the Year

Reading

- That students will love the written word and be able to discern and enjoy well-written stories, articles, and books.
- That students will be proficient in the mechanics of reading so that they will have no obstacles to appreciating the content and form of the written word itself.
- That students will recognize the various forms of literature so that they can adjust their reading speed and style in a manner appropriate to the material.
- That students will be able to discern and understand both the cognitive and affective (emotional) content in written communication.
- That students will be able to read out loud fluently and clearly, with naturally dramatic intonation and expression.

Composition and Speech

- Form: that students will communicate clearly, concisely, and logically (in an orderly fashion) in a wide range of literary forms: from formal letters to speeches, poems to fictional dialog. . . .
- Content: that students will communicate insightfully and imaginatively about matters that are of importance, and that they will either avoid altogether or, certainly, minimize attention to secondary matters.
- Style: that, while they will strive for grace and beauty of expression, students will concentrate more on making their communication interesting and easy to understand.

Literature

- That students will be familiar with key British literary works. Specifically: that they will appreciate those factors that make a work communicatively powerful, that they will be able to evaluate literature on stylistic grounds, and that they will be able to evaluate a work's message from the perspective of an evangelical Christian (biblical) ethic.

- That students will actively engage in literary analysis, both to improve their own writing and speech and to provide tools to think about the beauty of literature and why literature affects as it does.
- To focus on poetry so the student will have a deeper understanding of what poetry is and how it works, as well as a larger "repertoire" of works.

Vocabulary

- To expand vocabulary through the study of Latin and Greek roots.

Further Assistance

We trust you will heartily enjoy your homeschool journey with your children. If we can be of further assistance, please don't hesitate to contact us or visit our Sonlight Connections Community (sonlight.com/connections). This community of Sonlighter's provides a place for you to interact with other homeschoolers, seek advice, offer your insights, give words of encouragement and more.

We also recommend that you visit sonlight.com/subscribe to sign up for our free email newsletter. When you sign up, you'll receive regular homeschool encouragement, news, announcements and be the first to know about Sonlight's special offers. ■

Introductory Letter to the Student

Through this year we will read Perrine's *Sound and Sense*, a most excellent text on poetry. If you do not like poetry, or don't understand it, don't worry—this book is for you! Midway through college, as an English major who disliked poetry, I picked up an old copy of this book to see whether I should get rid of it. And I read it straight through! All of a sudden, the dull poetry I had hated to study and hated to read made sense. Poetry's purpose was to give me a new experience, to open my eyes to something I had not seen before!

I imagine you have already read some of the poems in this book, but probably many will be new to you. Soak up the poetry, understand the definitions, and enjoy the descriptions.

A few tips before you start. The notes for *Sound and Sense* provide excellent definitions for poetry terms. New words are in bold font. Make sure you understand these terms as you come across them. Right before you take the AP¹ test, I would recommend that you review all the words in the book's glossary, especially those you do not know well.

As you read, I would like you to answer all the questions, at least in your head. At the start of each chapter in your *Sound and Sense Answer Key* is a list of the questions that are the most similar to questions on the AP test. If you plan to take the test, please focus on these questions.

You might find that, as you work through a chapter, you cannot focus as well towards the end as you could when you began. The study of poetry demands mental alertness, so if you find yourself less enthusiastic as you move through the chapter, I encourage you to take a break, do another subject, and then return to *Sound and Sense*.

While you read, be sure to think about the titles of the poems. One of the disadvantages of the books this year is that, generally, their titles do not offer much opportunity for analysis (since five of them are simply the names of the main character, and another three include the name of the main character!) In poetry the titles are often significant. What do the titles mean? Do they allude to another work? Would you understand the poem without the title?

I also want you to notice which poems you especially enjoy (although, in this collection, the answer could be just about every one of them!). Is there an author you really like? Is a particular time period more pleasing to you than another? If you find an author you like, read more of his or her poems!

I hope these poetry studies will bless and enrich your life.

We assign about eight poetry **creative writing** essays during the course of the year. These are not "throw away" assignments. One of the three essays on the AP test is on

poetry, so these exercises should give you necessary practice. Please, treat these assignments as seriously—if not more so—than standard prose creative writing assignments.²

During week 2 please write a 1–2 page paper on one of the topics given on p. 20 of *Sound and Sense*. (I would recommend that, in order to let this exercise be as enjoyable as possible, you choose a poem that you really enjoyed in the past. Or Tennyson's "The Eagle" is phenomenal, and would be a good choice.) I would highly recommend that you read the "Writing about Poetry" section on pp. 289–326. It should take about an hour and a half to read, but do not feel constrained to read it all at once. If you have done previous Sonlight programs, you probably know some of the information: audience, choosing a topic, writing and revising, but these are concepts that are valuable to review periodically. I found the grammar and punctuation section quite helpful.³

If you don't get to the entire section on writing about poetry, that is fine, but I would like you to at least read the two writing samples, found on pp. 334–340.

You will also be writing two **research papers** this year, one starting in week 10, and one starting in week 24. You will find instructions on how to do these papers in **Section Three**.

We also study *Word Power Made Easy*. I hope you enjoy this study of Greek and Latin roots as much as I did when I went through it in high school. I remember my delight in the first session, and even now, many years later, can still remember off the top of my head most of the words Norman Lewis introduces. I enjoyed the definitions (so THAT'S the word for that kind of person) and the practice quizzes and the pronunciation guide. Learning the Greek and Latin roots made hundreds of words easy to remember. Of all the vocabulary books I've reviewed, this one remains my favorite (by far!).

Word Power Made Easy has 47 sessions, and I have thrown in my favorite "brief intermission" to make a round 48. This means that, in order to get through all the sessions in the 36 weeks, you need to do four sessions every three weeks. Thus, we have scheduled an extra session every third week.⁴

2. You will find the topics for these creative writing essays in the book *Sound and Sense*. They are listed at the end of the chapter as "Suggestions for Writing."

3. I enjoyed the list of "pet peeve" words on pp. 320–322. In second grade I wrote the word "seemingly" in a book report and my Dad said, "Don't use this word! It is such a weak word!" To this day I still wince whenever I see it used. Then in high school one teacher told us never to use the word "at" at the end of a sentence: "Where's my pencil at?" for example. Another problem that still makes me wince.

4. We have scheduled the sessions for every Thursday, and every third Tuesday. If, for some reason (such as another class), you find those days aggravating, PLEASE feel free to reschedule, so you do a lesson every Wednesday, for example.

1. Advanced Placement is a registered trademark of the College Board, which was not involved in the production of, and does not endorse, this product.

Please read the opening “How to Use This Book for Maximum Benefit” before you start the first session. Regarding the other introductory chapters, I offer the following advice: “How to Test Your Present Vocabulary” is not necessary, but it is fun if you have the time; “How to Start Building Your Vocabulary” is pretty dull.

I would recommend that, on the day *Word Power Made Easy* is assigned, that your parent quiz you on ten randomly chosen words from each session. The benefit (and difficulty) of this is that you need to know the right word at the right time. If your quizzer wants you to write down a noun, you should know not only the correct word (don’t use *callipygian* when you should write down *calligraphy*), but you should also know the differences between nouns and adjectives. For example, session six includes the words *cardiologist*, *cardiology*, and *cardiological*. These are all related, but the first is a person, who practices the second, and the adjective is the third. Thus, your parent-quizzer might say, “a heart specialist,” and you should write (with correct spelling), *cardiologist*. However, if the quizzer says, “the medical study of the heart,” the right answer is *cardiology*, and if the quizzer says, “pertaining to the medical study of the heart,” *cardiological* is the correct answer. You will need to know the difference between the words.⁵

As you write this year, use the words you have studied. While the lessons are short enough to do in a sitting, for greater retention, you could (for example) read the lesson on Friday, then make sure your pronunciation is proper on Monday, while also making sure you remember the words. Then do one or two of the short exercises on Tuesday and Wednesday, and take the quiz on Thursday. If you spread the lesson out, not only will it keep you from an overwhelming amount of work on one day, but the review will also keep the words fresh in your mind, and push them into permanent memory, rather than leaving them in short-term memory.

Before You Start

A few notes before you begin. First, this course **does not cover grammar**. If you are weak in grammar, we recommend that you purchase Winston Grammar and work through it.

Second, we want you to **keep a journal** this year. Not necessarily just of your thoughts and feelings about the works you read, although you should include these. This should be a journal of literature, in which you record information about the author, the plot, the main characters, the setting, and, most importantly, quotes from the text, with references so you can find them again. Whenever a quote strikes your fancy, record it. For example, Dickens’ *Pickwick Papers* has this to say about Mr. Pickwick:

5. Hints for the quizzer: it might be easiest to look through the pronunciation guide in each lesson, which gives a complete list of all words and variations in that lesson. Find ten words to quiz your student. Next, look through the questions at the end of the chapter for definitions, if you cannot find them there, try either a regular dictionary or an online dictionary.

That gentleman had gradually passed through the various stages which precede the lethargy produced by dinner, and its consequences. He had undergone the ordinary transitions from the height of conviviality to the depth of misery, and from the depth of misery to the height of conviviality. Like a gas lamp in the street, with the wind in the pipe, he had exhibited for a moment an unnatural brilliancy: then sunk so low as to be scarcely discernible: after a short interval, he had burst out again, to enlighten for a moment, then flickered with an uncertain, staggering sort of light, and then gone out together.

This quote is unnecessary to the plot, but when I first read it, I laughed out loud—what a wonderful observer Dickens must have been, not only to notice and be able to describe the lamp, but to compare it to his imaginary hero!

The quotes do not have to be so long—often a single sentence strikes me with its beauty or grace. Nor do the quotes need to be entirely prose: when I first read Tennyson’s “The Eagle” it took my breath away—what glorious language! It went in my quote book. I have kept this quote book for several years, and I cannot glance back through the pages without grinning—these quotes mean something to me, no matter how scattered another observer may find them!

We encourage you to mark your books (I would suggest always having a pencil in hand). Underline or bracket sections you like, note your impressions (even with a simple “Wow!”), and question what you do not understand. It is much easier to review a text (for a test or otherwise) when the pertinent passages are already marked. You should use quotations from the text to prove your position, both in the discussion questions and in the creative writing assignments.

Each literature book comes with study guide Notes. Read and answer the questions after you read the chapter. For comprehension questions, we provide the correct answer. Many of the questions this year, though, are discussion, intended to stretch your thought and reasoning skills. Please note that for these, the answer I give is just that—MY answer. If you come up with a completely different answer *and are able to support it*, I am thrilled! This interchange of ideas is similar to a discussion in a classroom. Each person can enrich the understanding of the other.

We introduce **literary terms** and devices when examples come up within the text. These terms are in **bold** type in the notes. Some terms appear frequently and are easy to spot, such as **simile** and **foreshadow**. Some occur less frequently, but we will offer as much practice as possible. Whenever we introduce a new term, we recommend you copy the definition, along with an example or two, in a list of literary terms. When you take a standardized test, you will have a study sheet for quick review.

You will **memorize** six poems this year. We chose six important British poets, and some of their most famous (and quoted) poems. If another poem strikes your fancy, feel free to memorize it instead. Other famous (and, perhaps, longer) British poems we recommend include “To His Coy Mistress,” “Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night,” “Museum des Beaux Arts,” and “Dover Beach.”

During weeks 1–6 please memorize George Herbert’s sonnet “Redemption.”

Having been tenant long to a rich Lord,
Not thriving, I resolvéd⁶ to be bold,
And make a suit unto him, to afford
A new small-rented lease, and cancel the old.
In heaven at his manor I him sought:
They told me there that he was lately gone
About some land which he had dearly bought
Long since on earth, to take possession.⁷
I straight returned, and knowing his great birth,
Sought him accordingly in great resorts;
In cities, theatres, gardens, parks, and courts:
At length I heard a ragged noise and mirth
Of thieves and murderers; there I him espied,
Who straight, “Your suit is granted,” said, and died.

During weeks 7–12 memorize one of Shakespeare’s poems; your choice. If you did Sonlight Curriculum’s Literature 430 course, you may have already memorized Hamlet’s famous “To be or not to be” soliloquy. If not, that would be a great choice. Other choices include “Fear no more” and three of Shakespeare’s sonnets, all found in *Sound and Sense*: “That time of year,” “Let me not to the marriage of true minds,” and “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?”

Enjoy whatever selection you choose!

During weeks 13–18 memorize a poem by John Donne. Choose either “Hymn to God the Father,” with the pun on his name, or “Valediction: Forbidding Mourning,” or one of his famous sonnets, either “Batter my heart, three-personed God,” or “Death, be not proud.”

During weeks 19–24 memorize a sonnet by William Wordsworth: “The world is too much with us.” This would be an excellent choice if you love nature. Another, companion sonnet is “Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802,” found in Chapter 15 of *Sound and Sense*, my personal preference because I love the city. Either of the two sonnets will be an excellent choice.

During weeks 25–30 memorize “Ozymandias” by Percy Bysshe Shelley, the husband of Mary Shelley.

I met a traveler from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert ... Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read,
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
“My name is Ozymandias, king of kings;
Look upon my works, ye Mighty, and despair!”
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.

6. With the accent this word is now three syllables.

7. The spelling of possession, with the double dots over the “i,” show that the pronunciation should take four syllables, not three—pos ses si on.

During weeks 31–36 memorize A. E. Housman’s “Loveliest of Trees,” which celebrates spring, with a wonderful reminder not to ignore the beauty of nature in the bustle of life.

Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.

Now, of my threescore years and ten,
Twenty will not come again,
And take from seventy springs a score,
It only leaves me fifty more.

And since to look at things in bloom
Fifty springs are little room,
About the woodlands I will go
To see the cherry hung with snow.

A note on **British currency**, included here for lack of a better place. British denominations are pounds, shillings, and pence (as opposed to dollars and cents). Inflation and a change in 1971 to a decimal system makes any sort of understandable conversion quite tricky. Please visit our IG Links web page for quick conversions of British money in the past to British money today 📄. Thus, when we learn that Emma Woodhouse, of Jane Austen’s *Emma*, is worth 30,000 pounds in 1813, she would be worth 988,000 pounds now, which is over 1.5 million U.S. dollars⁸ 📄. (If you do try a conversion on this website, make sure you put a number in each of the blanks: thus for our example, 30,000 in the pounds spot, 0 in the shillings, 0 in the pence.)

An additional note: if you plan to take the **Advanced Placement⁹ English Literature and Composition Test** in May (and I would strongly urge you to do so, as it can give you free¹⁰ college credits), you should start to prepare now. We designed this course to prepare you as much as possible. For example, one-third of the AP test is multiple choice questions on short reading they provide. To give you practice, we cover both the literary terms you will need to know and include comprehension questions. These are not simple “What is the main character’s name?” questions, but questions that require careful reading and the ability to interact with what you have read.

The other two-thirds of the AP test consist of three essays, two on passages they provide, and one on a topic for which you choose the book. Books this year that are appropriate for the third choice essay are noted (AP) on the Booklist in Section Three. We also assign creative

8. Please visit our IG Links web page for quick conversions from one type of currency to another. As of November 2016, the exchange rate \$1.00 equaled .80 pounds.

9. Advanced Placement, Advanced Placement Program, and AP are registered trademarks of the College Board, which was not involved in the production of, and does not endorse, this product.

10. The AP exam does have a fee, although it is less than the cost of college credits, and may be waived in certain circumstances. Visit the AP website for more information: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/subjects.html>. Check the College Board’s link: <http://collegesearch.collegeboard.com/apcreditpolicy/index.jsp>, where you can look up your school and their college credit policy.

writing 1–2 times a week. Please don't neglect these assignments—in order to improve your writing you must practice, practice, practice.

Also, experts recommend you keep a journal of lines or passages that stand out to you (this is slightly different than the daily journal assignment). Besides the reference information (lines and pages), also record the speaker and the circumstances, and any comments you may have on the lines. Try to record at least ten references for each full-length work. Different AP prep books recommend knowing two to five books well, one of which should be a work by Shakespeare.

To fully prepare for the AP exam, we recommend you get a study guide.¹¹ This should answer your questions, give you helpful hints on how best to take the test (for example, whether it makes sense to answer all the multiple choice, even the ones you don't know), explain the essay scoring, and, best of all, give you some practice tests.

You can find a link to practice tests on our IG links web page, but you will find more helpful information in books than on this site . ■

11. I would highly recommend the Princeton Review's *Cracking the AP English Literature Study Guide*.

Section Two

Schedule and Notes

How to Use the Schedule

Write in the week's date for your records.

130 Parent Guide
Literature / Language Arts

Date: _____ to _____ **Days 1–5**

Week 1

Date:	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Literature					
<i>Peace Child</i>	chaps. 1–2  	chaps. 3–4	chap. 5 	chaps. 6–7  	chaps. 8–9
<i>A Treasury of Poetry for Young People</i>	pp. 9–13	p. 14	p. 15	pp. 16–17	
Language Arts					
Creative Expression	Literary Analysis Overview & Two Perspectives 				
Spelling					
Alternative Spelling	Pretest	Write	Write	Sentences	Posttest
Optional: Wordly Wise 3000 Book 8	Lesson 1A		Lesson 1B		Lesson 1C
Other Notes					

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The  symbol indicates you will find a map assignment in the notes for that day.

The  symbol indicates there is a timeline suggestion in the notes for that day.

Additional space for your record keeping.

Peace Child

Day 1 Chapters 1–2

Initial Comments

Note to Mom or Dad: Please be aware that the people group in this book, the Savi of New Guinea, engage in killing, cannibalism, and horrible acts with corpses. These acts are described to share the experiences of the author. Why include a book with such incredible darkness? Because the light of God shines brighter, and He can completely change a culture.

Although chronologically this book takes place near the end of American history studies (in the 1960s), the people group the Richardsons went to lived a primitive life, a Stone Age existence, probably similar to how some of the original inhabitants of America lived. Hence, we include this in the beginning of the course to correspond to readings on the first settlers on the North American continent. The power of the Gospel transforms. Prepare to be amazed.

Overview

When Don Richardson and his wife and growing family go to live among a cannibal tribe in New Guinea, they need to find a connection to the people, a “redemptive analogy.” The Savi valued treachery above all other “virtues,” so in their view, Judas was the hero.

But when Don demanded peace, or he (and his axes) would leave, the enemy peoples each took a child and exchanged them. As long as these adopted children lived,

 Note to Mom or Dad  Map Point  Timeline Suggestion

More notes with important information about specific books.

The  symbol on the Schedule provides you with a heads-up about difficult content. We tell you within the notes what to expect and often suggest how to talk about it with your kids.

Week 1					
Date:	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Literature					
Sound and Sense	"Introductory Letter to the Student"				
Beowulf (AP)	lines 1–687	lines 688–1250	lines 1251–1865	lines 1866–2537	lines 2538–3182
Language Arts					
Daily Journaling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creative Writing	Start the Journal				Five Paragraph Essay
Word Power Made Easy				Session 1	
Memorization	"Redemption"				
Other Notes					

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Sound and Sense

Day ALL "Introductory Letter to the Student"

Please read the "Introductory Letter to the Student" located in Section One for instructions.

Beowulf (AP)

Day 1 Lines 1–687

Introductory Comments

Please read the "Old English" section in "A Brief History of British Literature" in Section Three.

An unknown *scop*, or court poet, wrote *Beowulf* between the mid seventh and late tenth centuries (some place the date more precisely between AD 700 and 750). He did not invent the poem entirely himself, but synthesized earlier, oral poetry into the first English **epic**, similar

to Homer's synthesis of oral poems into the great epics *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. The actual date of the events of the poem may be set in the mid-500s, since one historical raid mentioned in *Beowulf* occurred in AD 520 (while *Beowulf* was still a young man). This was also the first European epic written in the vernacular, or common language.

An epic poem is a **narrative poem**, or a poem that tells a story. C. S. Lewis, in his excellent text *A Preface to Paradise Lost*, differentiates between two types of epics. The following notes concerning epics are a summary of Lewis's definition of primary epic.¹

Beowulf—like Homer's works—is an example of the first type of primary epic, and *Paradise Lost*, which we will read later this year, is an example of the second.

In order to be an epic, the poem should be, in some measure, tragic and true, although today we would not consider *Beowulf* "true." The tone of the poem must be se-

1. Lewis, C. S. *A Preface to Paradise Lost*. London: Oxford University Press, 1942, pp. 13–32.

rious: we would not consider ribald poetry or comedy, no matter how sad the ending, an epic. The seriousness of *Beowulf* is not exactly “solemn,” though, in the modern sense of the term. The Middle English had the word “solempne,” that encapsulates the meaning of epic. Think of a graduation ceremony: it is the opposite of an ordinary school day, and is not relaxed and familiar. It is serious, but it is not sad or gloomy (as today we think of solemn). It is a celebration, but a celebration with pomp. Or, as Lewis says, “Easter is *solempne*, Good Friday is not” (p. 17). This is the style of an epic: elevated language, while somewhat unfamiliar to the reader, wholly appropriate to its subject.

The epic poems *The Aeneid* and *Paradise Lost* have “greatness of subject”—they cover the past and look ahead to the future, of either the Roman race or the human race. The Homeric poems and that of *Beowulf* are different. These epics focus instead on individuals. Odysseus’ trials as he returns home and *Beowulf*’s fights with monsters are personal struggles, and what makes these protagonists commendable are their efforts to live wise, heroic lives in times of uncertainty and constant change. *Beowulf* and Odysseus, in the end, do not change history. They live good lives like the Judges in the Bible, but, after their deaths, their peoples are captured or killed—until (or unless) another hero comes along. Their lives make no difference in the end—*Beowulf*’s existence, for example, merely forestalls his nation’s coming destruction.²

Poetry in the Middle Ages had a very different rhythm than what we are used to today. We are used to poems that sound like da DUM da DUM da DUM (my MISTress EYES are NOthing LIKE the SUN, to quote from Shakespeare). In the original *Beowulf*, each line has a **caesura**, or break. Look at p. 2 and notice the space in each line that marks the caesura. Each half of the caesura had two emphasized (or **stressed**) syllables, so four emphasized syllables per line. The first of the two emphasized syllables after the break should have the same sound as at least one of the emphasized syllables before the break. When initial consonants sound the same, this is called **alliteration**. In Heaney’s translation, look at line 25: “is the path to power among people everywhere.” Or, to show the stressed syllables, the caesura, and the alliteration: “is the **PATH** to **POWER** among **PEOPLE** Everywhere.”

As with many of the texts we will read this year, *Beowulf* has an obvious sequence of events, or **plot**. (This comment may seem obvious, but some books, especially in the 20th century, try to eliminate plot and focus on the lead character’s thoughts. Another type of book that would not have a plot is a travel narrative, in which the character describes the things and people he sees on his journeys.) **Exposition** is the first part of a plot. To take the

familiar example of Beauty and the Beast, the exposition tells how the Beast became a beast, and why Beauty has to come to the Beast’s castle. If the reader began the story with Beauty and the Beast’s initial clashes, the story would not make much sense, so the author needs to fill in the reader. **Rising action** increases the excitement in a plot. In Beauty and the Beast, the rising action begins when the two initially dislike each other and fight, then gradually come to enjoy each other’s company, and finally become friends enough that Beauty is free to leave. The **climax** (or **crisis**) is the high point in the excitement, and often comes near the end of the action. When Beauty searches for the Beast and cannot find him, the dread and excitement reach their peak. When she finds him, she realizes she loves him, and this decision is the **falling action**. This moment releases all the tension the reader feels from the climax. After this decision, everything else is included in the **resolution**, or **denouement** (day new ma). She kisses the Beast, he transforms into a prince, and they get married and live happily ever after. Some people, to get a better grasp of the plot, will draw a **plot line** that sketches the plot. Flat for the exposition, mountain peaks for the rising action (since each specific episode or complication has its own climax), the tallest peak for the climax, followed by a swift drop (the falling action) to the denouement. (*Writers Inc.* has an example on p. 239.) As you read *Beowulf*, I’d like you to make a plot line.

I would also like you to underline the references to God and to fate. Some commentators believe that the *scop* (the poet) was a Christian, although he wrote about the past, in a time when the warriors did not yet know Christ. The *scop* also does not make any references to the New Testament or the atoning work Christ did on the cross. The interplay between Christianity, the warrior, and the fatalistic society enhances the beauty of the work.

This poem is beautiful in translation. Frequently works lose much of their beauty in translation, since different languages do not have the same rhyme or meter or double meanings of the words. *Beowulf*, though, avoids some of this loss as it incorporates **parallelism**. In parallelism, the same phrase is repeated in a slightly different way. The Psalms are full of examples, such as this from Psalm 100:1–2: “Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the lands! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! Know that the LORD is God! It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.” Notice how the same basic idea is expressed two (or even three) times.

Beowulf frequently uses the same technique. In lines 4–5, we read of Shield Sheafson, “scourge of many tribes / a wrecker of mead-benches, rampaging among foes.” The basic meaning of this is that Shield Sheafson was a hero to his people, but how much more wonderful is the elaborated version with its parallelism. Notice examples of this as you read—the text is full of them.

2. The other type of epic is different—the characters in these poems do make a difference to history. Adam and Eve’s sin affects all people that only Christ’s incarnation will change. This type of epic has a view of all of history, and the effects one man can have on that history. The first type of epic is like the book of Judges, while the second type is like the person with the whole Bible, who sees how the Old Testament always points ahead to Christ, and the New Testament also points to him. The second type of epic has historical perspective, which the first type lacks.

Note: This excellent translation (done by a Nobel Prize winner) includes the Old English text opposite the modern English—notice how different the two are! I encourage you to note the word “gold” in the translation, and compare it to the Old English.

The translator does not shy away from using **archaic diction**, words that are not part of today’s regular vocabulary; I include definitions at the beginning of each day’s reading for some of the more obscure words.

The Geats lived in Southern Sweden, and Beowulf came from Denmark. You can reference the family trees on p. 217. Please check the family tree as you read the poem. It helps keep the unfamiliar names in order.

You might be interested in the notes on p. xxx in the Introduction and “A Note on Names” immediately following.

Note: As you read today, underline all the references to Beowulf. Put a box around the first use of his name.

Vocabulary

(line 7) A **foundling** to start with, he would flourish later on ...

(line 14) ... by God to that nation. He knew what they had **tholed**, ...

(line 140) ... to bed in the **bothies**, for who could be blind ...

(line 163) ... where these **reavers** from hell roam on their errands.

(line 194) When he heard about Grendel, Hygelac’s **thane** ...

(line 324) ... in their grim war-**graiht** and gear at the hall, ...

(line 419) They had seen me **boltered** in the blood of enemies ...

(line 596) ... of your blade making a **mizzle** of his blood ...

To Discuss After You Read

1. Why does Beowulf come to Heorot? ➔
2. What is the exposition in today’s reading? ➔
3. What rising action occurs? ➔
4. (lines 20–25) Compare Luke 16:1–13 to *Beowulf*. ➔
5. (lines 28–50) Shield’s funeral sounds very similar to Viking funerals. Research a Viking funeral and compare the two.
6. Hrothgar gave gifts to people that served him. What did he give to people who built his hall and how does that differ from a lord in the feudal system? ➔
7. An **allusion** refers (or alludes) to a familiar thing, event, or person. The key to allusions is to draw on all of your knowledge, since the author expects the reader to know about the referred-to thing. For example, in his poem “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” T. S. Eliot wrote, “No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be; / Am an attendant lord, one that will do / To swell a progress, start a scene or two, / Advise the prince;” Eliot alludes

to *Hamlet*, but does not offer specifics. Eliot expects the reader to think, “Okay; Prufrock is saying that he is not the star of the show, with all its attendant drama, passion, and questioning; instead he is like Horatio, willing to offer advice, show up on occasion, not be the center of attention, nor really have a life of his own. Prufrock thinks of himself as flat and only vaguely interesting.” Do you see how, though, with the allusion, Eliot was able to express his meaning swiftly and compactly? What allusion can you find in lines 100–115, and what information do you know that helps you understand this allusion? ➔

8. Can you think of an Old Testament character who, like Grendel, lived or ruled “in defiance of right, / one against all” (lines 144–145)? ➔
9. Grendel takes over Heorot. Is his triumph and conquest complete? Can Grendel go wherever he wants to? Why or why not? ➔
10. When is Beowulf’s name first used? ➔
11. What is Beowulf called before this, and why might his name be kept “secret” as long as it is? ➔
12. Is Beowulf a really strong man or more like a superhero? Prove your view from the passage. ➔
13. **Diction** is the author’s choice of words. When Unferth speaks, the *Beowulf* poet uses inflammatory or sneering words. Find three examples in lines 506–512. ➔
14. The poet says, “The King of Glory / (as people learned) had posted a lookout / who was a match for Grendel, a guard against monsters” (lines 665–667). Look at the context around these lines. Do you think the poet refers to Hrothgar or God? ➔

Day
2

Lines 688–1250

Note: As you read, be on the lookout for examples of Beowulf as a savior or Christ-like figure.

The text in italic type is separate from the story. The minstrel sings songs about other heroes.

Vocabulary

(line 688) Then down the brave man lay with his **bolster** ...

(line 819) ... under the **fen**-banks, fatally hurt, ...

(line 845) ... hauling his doom to the demon’s **mere**.

(line 965) ... in my bare hands, his body in **thrall**.

(line 975) He is **hasped** and **hooped** and hirpling with pain, ...

(line 1119) ... and sang **keens**, the warrior went up.

To Discuss After You Read

15. What was the climax of today’s reading? ➔
16. What is the falling action? ➔

17. What is the resolution? ➔

Keep in mind that, in perspective of the whole book, all of this is just rising action.

18. (lines 690–700) When an author gives a nonhuman item (a dog) or a thing (the wind) human characteristics we say the author uses **personification**. For example, “When I came home, my dog smiled” or “The wind ran through the treetops and bit into my skin.” Find an example of personification. ➔

19. In yesterday’s reading, Beowulf says the following: “I can show the wise Hrothgar a way / to defeat his enemy and find respite—/ if any respite is to reach him, ever. / I can calm the turmoil and terror in his mind. / Otherwise, he must endure woes / and live with grief for as long as his hall / stands at the horizon, on its high ground” (lines 279–285). Notice how similar this sounds to the words of Christ: I am the way, the truth, and the life; Come to me and you shall find rest for your soul; Peace, be still. Find at least one example from today’s reading in which Beowulf, either in words or actions, is a savior-figure. ➔

20. Christ often ends his parables like this: “cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth” (Matthew 25:30). I think the *Beowulf* poet does an amazing job describing what this might sound like. Can you find the description? ➔

At an evangelistic retreat, my friends were challenged to think about a close friend of theirs who was not a Christian, then to think of this friend crying, then weeping uncontrollably. This is a part of hell. They were asked, “Is this what you want for this friend?” If you try this exercise, or even read this description in *Beowulf*, I hope that you, too, will be spurred to spread the gospel.

21. What is the one way Grendel can be killed? ➔

22. Why does the poem do this? ➔

23. (lines 814ff) Why do you think the poet decided to have Grendel’s arm torn off? In terms of fatal wounds with the hands, Beowulf could perhaps have choked the monster, snapped his neck, or broken his back. A torn off arm, though, as far as I can tell, is a wound unique in literature. Why this wound? ➔

24. **Foreshadowing** hints at what is to come later. The Old Testament, with its promise of a redeemer, is an example. When Isaiah states, “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth” (53:7, RSV), the ancient Israelite would not know this text relates to Jesus. The ancient could guess that a Messiah would come, and that this Messiah would suffer wordlessly, but nothing more exact. We, though, who have the New Testament as well, know that this passage refers to Jesus, and specifically to his suffering before and on the cross. Thus, you will not always rec-

ognize foreshadowing (you might miss it completely), or you will not understand foreshadowing (the author probably included this for some reason, but you do not know why). Later, though, when you are finished reading a text, you can see how foreshadowing enhanced the work. With all of this said, read the back cover of *Beowulf* (if you haven’t already). Then find the foreshadowing in lines 880–900. ➔

25. After Sigemund kills the dragon, “He loaded a boat: / Wael’s son weighted her hold / with dazzling spoils” (lines 894–896). Based on other boats we’ve seen so far in this text (lines 28–52, 210–216), is this good or bad? (Presuming this is foreshadowing, is the hint positive or negative?) ➔

26. Hrothgar (like other lords) is called the “ring-giver” (see line 1011 et al.). This strikes me because rings still have significance. Can you think of at least three examples, whether in literature or in life, that a ring means something? ➔

27. (lines 1070–1158) What do you think is the purpose of the Finn story? ➔

28. When Grendel approaches Hrothgar, we read of Beowulf, “One man, however, was in fighting mood, / awake and on edge, spoiling for action” (lines 708–709). These lines hint at glory to come. Late in today’s reading, we read of a **foil**, or a contrast, to Beowulf, in the midst of lines that hint at misery to come. Can you find this foil? ➔

29. Notice the alliteration (or similar sounds) at the beginnings of words in lines 975–976. What gifts did King Hrothgar give Beowulf? ➔

30. Why did the King give Beowulf’s men gifts? ➔

Day 3 Lines 1251–1865

Vocabulary

(line 1283) ... only by as much as an **amazon warrior’s** ...

(line 1304) ... to the afflicted **bawn**. The bargain was hard, ...

(line 1352) ... in the shape of a man, moves **beyond the pale** ...

(line 1359) ... and treacherous **keshes**, where cold streams ...

(line 1363) ... above a **mere**; the overhanging bank ...

(line 1374) ... makes clouds **scud** and the skies weep, ...

(line 1409) ... up **fells** and **scree**s, along narrow footpaths ...

(line 1456) ... the **brehon** handed him a hilted weapon, ...

(line 1519) ... the **tarn**-hag in all her terrible strength, ...

(line 1641) ... fourteen Geats in fine **fettle**, ...

(line 1666) ... the dwellers in that den. Next thing the **damascened** ...

(line 1674) ... for a single thane of your **sept** or nation, ...

(line 1714) ... killed his own comrades, a **pariah** king ...

(line 1861) ... the other with gifts; across the **gannet's** bath, ...

To Discuss After You Read

31. I hope you are enjoying this poem! The language itself is gorgeous, and the relationships between characters subtle and powerful. Because this is a poem, so much lies beneath the surface, not stated directly. For example, who gave Beowulf his sword? ➔
32. Why is this shocking? ➔
33. Another example: does Hrothgar thank Beowulf for killing Grendel's mother? ➔
34. What does this say about them both? ➔
35. What is the rising action of this section? ➔
36. What is the climax? ➔
37. What is the falling action? ➔
38. What is the denouement? ➔
39. Beowulf claims, "It is always better / to avenge dear ones than to indulge in mourning" (lines 1384–1385). Do you agree with this statement? Look at this quote in context—does your opinion change? Beowulf encourages a king to stamp out Grendel's mother, who killed a member of, basically, the state department. Does your opinion change whether this quote is directed to you, personally, or to the government? (This has definite ramifications for today. Does Israel have the right to go to war with the Arabs who support suicide bombers? Does the United States have the right to go against terrorists who kill thousands of Americans in peacetime? Are these equivalent scenarios? Know what your opinions are and why!)
40. (lines 1450–1500) Remember the term foil? Who is a foil to Beowulf? ➔
41. In order for Beowulf to fight Grendel's mother, he "dived into the heaving / depths of the lake. It was the best part of a day / before he could see the solid bottom" (lines 1494–1496). What adventure before he came to Denmark prepared him for this feat (see lines 550–560)? ➔
42. What is this literary term, when the earlier episode reflects on the later? ➔
43. (lines 86–90) When Beowulf killed Grendel, was his action justified? ➔
44. When Beowulf killed Grendel's mother, was his action justified? (Be careful here. Remember this society operates on revenge, and that the proper way to revenge a murder was through either the man-price or a killing.) Support your answer with the text. ➔

45. (lines 1497–1569) Besides a murkier motive, Beowulf's second fight is not as straight-forward, either. What makes the fight less black and white? (Remember, in the first, Beowulf maintained the upper hand—no pun intended—the whole time. The fight was hand-to-hand, which is most primitive and most simple. What is different this time?) ➔

46. (lines 1588–1590) How do you feel about Beowulf's "revenge," when he cuts off Grendel's head? ➔
47. Beowulf's "revenge" could be an allusion to what biblical character, and why might this character have done so? ➔
48. (lines 1600–1605) At "the ninth hour of the day," the cynical, disbelieving Danes return to their palace and Beowulf's faithful retainers stay by the mere. Read Matthew 27:45–54 to find out what also happened at the ninth hour of the day. Draw some parallels. ➔
49. Hrothgar warns at one point that "the soul's guard, its sentry, drowns, / grown too distracted" (lines 1742–1743). What literary device is this? ➔
50. (line 1801) The men are awakened by what bird? ➔

Day
4

Lines 1866–2537

Vocabulary

(line 1926) ... **ensconced** in his hall; and although Hygd, his queen, ...

(line 2085) ... a strange **accoutrement**, intricately strung ...

(line 2107) At times some hero made the **timbered** harp ...

(line 2172) I heard he presented Hygd with a **gorget**, ...

(line 2303) ... hoard-watcher, waited for the **gloaming** ...

(line 2321) He had **swinged** the land, swathed it in flame, ...

(line 2529) "Men at arms, remain here on the **barrow**, ..."

To Discuss After You Read

51. As you read, please underline the descriptive words the poet uses to describe the dragon. ➔
52. This section has several **anecdotes**, or short stories. Which anecdote is your favorite? ➔
53. (lines 1931–1941) Why does Great Queen Modthryth condemn men to death? ➔
54. What do you think is proper for looks? Obviously, this Queen's idea was too extreme, but ogling is not good, either. How should you look at people of the opposite sex? (How can you honor them and God in your sights?)
55. What does Beowulf mean when he says, "I have never seen mead enjoyed more / in any hall on earth" (lines 2017–2016)? ➔

56. (lines 2020–2069) Beowulf discusses at length Hrothgar’s daughter and her upcoming marriage. Why does he think her marriage is doomed? ➔
57. What proof from earlier in the text can you find to support Beowulf’s view? ➔
58. The man who died right before Beowulf killed Grendel is first named in line 2076 (he died in line 740). Why do you think the poet decided not to name him until Beowulf himself tells the story of his fight with Grendel? ➔
59. What do you think of this line: “each was concerned for the other’s good” (line 2171)? How is it true? ➔
60. How many of Beowulf’s gifts from Hrothgar did Beowulf keep? ➔
61. (lines 2210ff) Is the dragon justified in scorching and ruining the land? Why or why not? ➔
62. What do the following lines foreshadow? “The first to suffer / were the people on the land, but before long it was their treasure-giver who would come to grief” (lines 2309–2311). ➔
63. When Beowulf’s hall burns, the text says this: “threw the hero / into deep anguish and darkened his mood: / the wise man thought he must have thwarted / ancient ordinance of the eternal Lord, / broken His commandment” (lines 2327–2331). Read Luke 13:1–5 and John 9:1–4. What does Christ say about Beowulf’s idea? ➔
64. Write three such descriptive words for another animal (similar to the descriptive manner in which the dragon is described): dog. ➔

Day 5	Lines 2538–3182
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Vocabulary

- (line 2661) Then he waded the dangerous **reek** and went ...
- (line 2673) ... charred it to the **boss**, and the body armour ...
- (line 2714) ... deadly poison **suppurating** inside him, ...
- (line 2774) ... plundered the hoard in that immemorial **howe**, ...
- (line 2988) “... and carried the **graith** to King Hygelac; ...”
- (line 3026) ... tidings for the eagle of how he **hoked** and ate, ...
- (line 3073) ... **hasped** in hell-bonds in heathen shrines.

To Discuss After You Read

65. How old is Beowulf as he fights the dragon (make an educated guess)? ➔
66. Does Beowulf seem this old as he fights? Why or why not? ➔
67. What rising action occurs in this section? ➔

68. What is the climax of this section (and, thus, of the book)? ➔
69. What is the falling action? ➔
70. What happens in the denouement? ➔
71. When he went into battle, did Beowulf want help? ➔
72. Because of this, should his comrades be chastened as they are? Why or why not? ➔
73. What are the larger repercussions in the future for the Geat nation of their actions? ➔
74. How does the dragon kill Beowulf? Does this method surprise you? ➔
75. What do you think of Beowulf’s final words: “You are the last of us, the only one left / of the Waegmundings. Fate swept us away, / sent my whole brave high-born clan / to their final doom. Now I must follow them” (lines 2813–2816)? ➔
76. Reread lines 3077–3086. Does Wiglaf think Beowulf should have fought the dragon? Why or why not? ➔
77. (lines 3160–3168) The lord gives treasure to his retainers. When Beowulf dies, the people bury the dragon’s treasure with him, instead of sharing the treasure among themselves. What is the significance of this? ➔
78. Beowulf’s funeral pyre stood “four-square” (line 3138). Line 358 says: “the valiant follower stood four-square.” What do you think four-square means? ➔
79. At Beowulf’s funeral, a woman sings about her fears. Is this the best perspective to have at a funeral? If you had to speak (or sing) at a loved one’s funeral, what would you hope to impart to the listeners? ➔

Summary and Analysis

To Discuss After You Read

Did you make the plot line? I hope so. I did not just assign it in order to give you busy work. My main hope is that, for this book and all the books you read this year, you will have data and summaries for each text so that in the future, you will have a quick reference. As the years pass, I realize how poor my memory is of books I read in high school and college. I hope for you that you will have these notes to jog your memory. So, if you haven’t already done so, make your plot line!

80. Also record the **setting**, the time and place where *Beowulf* occurs. ➔

Daily Journaling

Day
ALL

Write in your journal

Write in your journal daily about the literature you are reading. See the “Introductory Letter to the Student” in the front of this guide for instructions. When you have completed the assignment each day, check the box on the schedule page.

Creative Writing

Day
1

Start the Journal

For today, start your literature journal. Include information about *Beowulf*, any reminders you may need about literary terms, what you think about *Beowulf* so far, and your favorite lines from today’s reading. Remember to do this every day for the rest of the week!

Day
5

Five Paragraph Essay

I would like you to write a five paragraph essay about *Beowulf*. This is generally the most generic essay you can write, but, as a form, you should practice it. This form is straight-forward. Some books advise that you use this form on essay tests (such as the AP exam).

How do you start the essay? First think of something that you enjoyed in the text (see my suggestions below). If you enjoyed several things, write them all down. This brainstorming process is quite helpful. For example, I think the comparison between King David and Beowulf deserves a closer look. I make a David column and a Beowulf column and draw comparisons: David fought a giant, Beowulf fought a monster; Goliath defied God and the armies of Israel, Grendel defied the Danes, and not God so much; David was a youth when he fought and not terribly fearsome, Beowulf was unimpressive and unproven (lines 2183–2189); David went on to become a war hero and then king, and Beowulf followed the same pattern. Based on this brainstorming, I think about what I can prove with what I have. In this example, I think I want to prove that the poet wanted to establish a parallel between the heroes, and that both characters point to another savior, Christ.

Next I should make an outline. Here, though, my plan falls apart a bit. A five paragraph essay should have three main points, so if I prove first that the parallel exists and then that the parallel points to Christ, that is only two points. So I re-think a bit and decide that David and Beowulf both point to Christ, that they foreshadow or echo why He came to earth. I will seek to prove this point based on the similarities between the three before the fight, during the fight, and after the fight. I still need to think of a hook—in this case perhaps a generic retelling of the fight (“The young, untried boy looked up at the monster. He was ready to stamp out the taunts and defiance”)—and a conclusion.

The five paragraph essay starts with an introductory paragraph. Make sure you include the author’s name and the title of the work. Most students are not required to use hooks, but, for the sake of good writing, you should. You will have three main points. Prove each point in each paragraph of the body. Include the three main points in your introductory paragraph. For my example, I might say, “David and Beowulf, both unimpressive characters as youths, each conquer the biggest threat that faces their people. Later, they go on to become kings.” Close the paragraph with your thesis statement, what you are trying to prove: “The *Beowulf* poet draws parallels between Beowulf and David in order to point the readers to another savior, Christ.”

The next three paragraphs, the body paragraphs, focus on your points. Start each paragraph with a summary of what you intend to prove in that paragraph. The introduction to my first paragraph could be, “As youths, David and Beowulf both were unimpressive, not characters one would guess would conquer a nation’s enemy single-handedly.” Then I could use quotes from *Beowulf* about how he was taken as less than he was worth, from the Bible about David being small and young. To tie this in with Christ, I could use the verse from Isaiah 53 that he had no form or comeliness that we should look at him, or the verses from the New Testament when Christ’s neighbors wondered, “Isn’t this just Jesus, son of Joseph? And isn’t his mother Mary?” All were (or seemed to be) just average people.

I would then write a similar paragraph about the fight: Goliath and all the people did not expect David to win; no one expected Beowulf to win (lines 691–693); when Christ died, everyone thought that was the end, and the Savior could not save. In my last body paragraph I would talk about the outcome: all did triumph, two became kings already and Christ will yet come and rule the world (again, using Scriptures and quotes from *Beowulf* to back my points).

Anytime you include quotes from the book, make sure you talk about them—don’t just use the quote and assume your reader concludes what you did: you are the expert, and you want to make things as easy as possible for your reader. Also, make sure you use connective words! Since all your body paragraphs are about your thesis, these paragraphs should flow from one to the next, which means you can start the paragraph with connectives such as also, therefore, moreover, because, etc.

The fifth paragraph sums up your points and draws a further conclusion from them. Why is this paper important? What difference do your findings make? I might conclude that the story of *Beowulf*, though unfamiliar, seems quite familiar because of the echoes of the familiar story of King David. Better yet, I might conclude that the poet wanted to show off Christ as much as possible, because the society was just becoming Christianized. This could have been an evangelistic tool: *Beowulf*, a hero the people know and identify with, points the way to Christ.

I hope this example helps you as you write both this essay and other essays to come.

Here are some ideas you may consider. Feel free to choose a different one if something else has interested you as you read.

- The first woman does not appear in this poem until line 612. What is the role of women in this story?
- How does Heremod, mentioned in the second half of the Sigemund song (lines 897–914) and again when Beowulf returns from killing Grendel’s mother (lines 1709–1724) figure into this story? What is his purpose here (why did the poet include him)?
- Talk about the opening of this poem, or the ending, or compare the two.
- Is Wiglaf a foil of Beowulf? If so, how? If not, what is his role in the text?

Word Power Made Easy

Day
1

Session 1

Please read the “Introductory Letter to Student” in the front of this guide for instructions.

Memorization

Day
ALL

“Redemption”

You will **memorize** six poems this year. We chose six important British poets, and some of their most famous (and quoted) poems. If another poem strikes your fancy, feel free to memorize it instead. Other famous (and perhaps, longer) British poems we recommend include “To His Coy Mistress,” “Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night,” “Musee des Beaux Arts,” and “Dover Beach.”

During weeks 1–6 please memorize George Herbert’s sonnet “Redemption.”

Having been tenant long to a rich Lord,
Not thriving, I resolvéd³ to be bold,
And make a suit unto him, to afford
A new small-rented lease, and cancel the old.
In heaven at his manor I him sought:
They told me there that he was lately gone
About some land which he had dearly bought
Long since on earth, to take possession.⁴
I straight returned, and knowing his great birth,
Sought him accordingly in great resorts;
In cities, theatres, gardens, parks, and courts:
At length I heard a ragged noise and mirth
Of thieves and murderers; there I him espied,

Who straight, “Your suit is granted,” said, and died. ■

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3. With the accent this word is now three syllables.

4. The spelling of possession, with the double dots over the “i,” show that the pronunciation should take four syllables, not three—pos ses si on.

Week 2

Date:	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
Literature					
<i>Sound and Sense</i>	Foreword to Students–Chapter 1				
<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i>		lines 1–669	lines 670–1371	lines 1372–1997	lines 1998–2530
Language Arts					
Daily Journaling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creative Writing	Poetry Paper				Description Paper
<i>Word Power Made Easy</i>				Session 2	
Memorization	"Redemption" (cont.)				
Other Notes					

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Sir Gawain and the Green Knight

Day 7 Lines 1–669

Introductory Comments

Please read the "Middle English" section in "A Brief History of British Literature" found in Section Three.

Like *Beowulf*, another unknown poet wrote the alliterative poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* between AD 1350 and 1400. Only one manuscript survives with this story, and it was not discovered until the nineteenth century, when the library where it was stored caught fire. Three other poems, *Pearl*, *Purity*, and *Patience* are on the same manuscript, and most believe the same poet wrote all four works. *Sir Gawain* is the best of the bunch, and is acclaimed as "the most important existing English account of the adventures of King Arthur's court."¹ When first writ-

ten, this poem was not chic, since the poet did not write in French, the language of high society. Nor did the poet write in the language of London, as Chaucer, his contemporary, did. Rather, the poet uses a dialect of northwest England, with only an occasional word taken from French. A tenth of his words come from Scandinavian languages, sources Chaucer scarcely knew.

The poet utilizes a more complex poetic scheme than we saw in *Beowulf*.

Read these first four lines out loud as best you can.

Sithen the sege and the assaut watz sesed at Troye,
The borgh brittened and brent to brondez and askez,
The tulk that the trammes of tresoun ther wrought
Watz tried for his tricherie, the trewest on erthe.

Here again we have **alliteration** (the same initial consonant of a word) with a **caesura** in the middle (a break, not marked here, though, as it was in *Beowulf*). Again, the first half of the line has two **stressed** syllables, and the second half has two more, for four total per line. A key difference is that BOTH the stressed syllables in the first half alliterate

1. Mumbach, Mary. "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight." *Invitation to the Classics*. Ed. Louise Cowan and Os Guinness. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1998, p. 103.

with the first (and occasionally the second) stressed syllables in the second half. (If you remember, in *Beowulf*, EITHER of the syllables in the first half had to alliterate with the first syllable in the second half.) Mark the first line thus, “Sithen the **SEGE** and the as **SAUT** watz **SESED** at **TROYE**.” You mark the next line before you look at my answer in the footnotes.²

The poet adds another level of poetic difficulty with the “bob and wheel” construction at the end of each stanza. Look at lines 15–19 on page 20. The words “wyth wyne” are the “bob” and the other four lines are the “wheel.” The bob has two syllables, with an unstressed and a stressed syllable, called an **iamb**. The wheel has three stressed syllables in each line. Also, the five lines of the bob and wheel rhyme in the following pattern: ababa (which is short-hand to mean lines 1, 3, and 5 rhyme and lines 2 and 4 rhyme). Can you hear the rhyme if you read it out loud? Can you hear the stressed and unstressed syllables? The total poem has 101 of these stanzas.

One modern translation retains the alliteration, the stress, and the rhyme scheme of the original. I opted not to use this text because of its archaic diction, although I love it. If you really like *Sir Gawain*, I would highly recommend a copy of the Marie Borroff translation, which maintains the alliterative pattern, though sometimes at the expense of strict accuracy.³ Here is her first stanza.

Since the siege and the assault was ceased at Troy,
The walls breached and burnt down to brands
and ashes,
The knight that had knotted the nets of deceit
Was impeached for his perfidy, proven most true,
It was high-born Aeneas and his haughty race
That since prevailed over provinces, and proudly
reigned
Over well-nigh all the wealth of the West Isles.
Great Romulus to Rome repairs in haste;
With boast and with bravery builds he that city
And names it with his own name, that it now bears.
Ticius to Tuscany, and towers raises.
Langobard in Lombardy lays out homes,
And far over the French Sea, Felix Brutus
On many broad hills and high Britain he sets,
most fair.
Where war and wrack and wonder
By shifts have sojourned there,
And bliss by turns with blunder
In that land's lot had share.⁴

As you look at the Middle English text, can you understand the words more easily than the Old English text in *Beowulf*?

During Fall Semester 1999 at the University of Idaho, I was fortunate to take a class on King Arthur, called “Arthur is Everywhere,” taught by the wonderful professor Rick

Fehrenbacher. Many of the following notes and ideas about this text came from his course.

Although we know little about him, King Arthur lived around AD 500, after the collapse of the Roman Empire in Britain. He caught the popular imagination—in fact, the Neoclassical period is the only period since the Middle Ages that King Arthur was not popular. You have probably heard of the Knights of the Round Table, and probably of Lancelot, the greatest knight. However, Lancelot did not gain popularity until the 1100–1200s, when French speech and customs also gained popularity in England. Lancelot, with his French name and French chivalry, overshadowed the formerly most popular knight. Gawain—a Celt—up until then had been the most popular hero.

Professor Fehrenbacher’s assertion (from what I remember and from my notes) is that this text is about the clash between the stolid Englishman and the French dandy (not specifically—not Gawain vs. Lancelot—but generally—simple, hearty people vs. fashionable but silly nobles). As you read, look for these contrasts.

In this text, I have highlighted a few words at the start of each day’s questions. Try to figure out the meaning of the word from the context of the quote, then check your answers to the definition.

Also, with this text, I again want you to draw a plot line. An example is provided for you in Section Three. And now, enjoy!

Vocabulary

- (line 86) He brimmed with **ebullience**, ...
- (line 161) he revealed himself veritably **verdant!**
- (line 171) ... with the **cantle** and the skirts of the saddle ...
- (line 203) Yet he wore no helmet and no **hauberk** either, ...
- (line 209) a cruel piece of **kit** I kid you not: ...
- (line 210) the head was an **ell** in length...
- (line 212) the skull-busting blade was so **stropped** and buffed ...
- (line 280) ... just bum-fluffed **bairns**.
- (line 314) **skittled** and **scuppered** by a stranger ...
- (line 398) ... you’ll dole out today in this **decorous** hall ...
- (line 575) clamped them with **greaves** ...
- (line 578) **lagging** the flesh ...

To Discuss After You Read

Aeneas was the one man to escape Troy when it fell during the Trojan War and fled to Phoenicia. He settled in Carthage, loved Queen Dido, and was commanded by the gods to leave. Dido commits suicide. Aeneas goes on to rule Rome.

(line 8) Romulus, a twin, founded Rome. He was son of the god Mars and murdered his twin when they disagreed on where Rome should be located. Romulus and his

2. “The borgh **BRIT**tened and **BRENT** to **BRON**dez and **ASK**ez.”

3. If you can find the original publication from the 1960s, that is much less expensive than the edition released in 2001. The original ISBN is 0393097544, and, at the time of this writing, they are available from amazon.com starting at \$0.39.

4. Borroff, Marie. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2001.

men killed the men of a neighboring tribe and stole the women. Do you think he was noble?

(line 37) Camelot was the name of Arthur's castle.

Queen Guinevere was Arthur's wife.

1. (line 1) Why does the poet start the poem with Troy and Rome? Isn't this text about an English king? ➔
2. (lines 26ff) In the exposition, the poet describes King Arthur's court. Do the descriptive words match the noble and chivalrous actions of King Arthur's court? Support your answer. ➔

Dramatic irony occurs when we, the audience, see a character's mistake, although the character does not. An example would be Jephthah, the judge of Israel, who promises God that, if he defeats his enemies, "whoever comes forth from the doors of my house to meet me, ... shall be the LORD's, and I will offer him up for a burnt offering" (Judges 11:31). As readers, we wince, because we know that Jephthah's daughter will come out to meet him first, and we also know that God does not delight in human sacrifice. Jephthah, though, does not realize his mistake—yet.

3. During the rising action, the description of King Arthur's court is full of dramatic irony. Underline three examples found during the rising action. ➔
4. How does the Green Knight insult King Arthur? (Think about when Beowulf arrived on the coast of Denmark—did the guard recognize him as leader?) ➔
5. Is the color green indicative of good or evil? Defend your answer. ➔
6. What does the Green Knight carry and why? ➔
7. Repeat the challenge in modern English. ➔
8. Write a two sentence description of each of the seasons as does the poet on pp. 37–39.
9. Are Gawain's clothes suitable for travel and battle? ➔
10. (line 367) How does Gawain move? ➔
11. (line 431) How does the Green Knight move? ➔
12. Who, based on my introduction, is more British, and who is more French? ➔
13. (line 626) Why does Gawain have a pentangle on his shield? ➔

Day
8

Lines 670–1371

In the 1300s when this story takes place, one of the duties of knights was to hunt. They needed to kill game not just for food but to protect the crops: deer eat crops; boars rip up hedgerows, or bushes around the crops that shelter little game and offer wind protection; and foxes kill chickens. The lord of the castle fulfills his place in society, whereas Gawain, separated from men and lounging among women, does not.

This story weaves together three previously unconnected traditional stories: the beheading challenge, the exchange of earnings, and the attempted seduction.

Vocabulary

(line 721) here he tangles with **wodwos** ...

(line 730) **bivouacked** in the blackness ...

(line 804) to **inveigle** a visit ...

(line 886) and **cruets** of salt and silver spoons.

(line 946) and in the **chancel** of the church... .

(line 1129) trussing and tying all the **trammel** and tack.

(line 1340) and they went to work on the **gralloching** ...

(line 1347) ... and its name is the **numbles** ...

(line 1354) and the choice meat of the flanks chopped away from the **chine** ...

(line 1359) ... and the dogs **pogged** out ...

To Discuss After You Read

14. (lines 672ff) Do Arthur's knights support Gawain as he leaves the court? Support your answer. ➔

15. (lines 691–762) As Gawain leaves his ideal life in King Arthur's court, how does his life change? (How is it no longer ideal?) ➔

Note: In lines 755–758 Gawain desires to attend mass on Christmas Day. During "mass," Catholics celebrate the Lord's supper. "Matins" is the worship service in the morning. The "Pater" is the Lord's prayer, and the "Ave" is the Ave Maria or a prayer addressed to Mary. Ave Maria means "Hail Mary" and the prayer begins "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee" (see Luke 1:28). The Ave is used during the discipline of the rosary. The "Creed" is the Apostle's Creed.

16. (lines 807ff) Compare Gawain's arrival at the mysterious castle with the Green Knight's arrival at King Arthur's castle. If the mysterious castle is the height of hospitality, how did Arthur fail? ➔

17. (lines 833ff) Read Luke 14:12–14. Does the lord of the castle obey these words? Why or why not? ➔

18. Is Gawain known for his fighting prowess, as would befit a knight? ➔

19. What is he known for? ➔

20. Early in this text, we meet Guinevere (French), with eyes so lovely "not one [precious] stone outshone / the quartz of the queen's eyes" (line 81). Who in today's passage is better-looking than Guinevere? Find the passage. ➔

21. Compare the Christmas celebrations at Camelot described in lines 37–135 with those in the mysterious castle, lines 995–1026. Based on the two descriptions,

do you think Dr. Fehrenbacher is correct, and that the poet compares the Frenchified Arthurian court to the standard English castle, to the detriment of the court, or do you think the two are the same? ➡

Note: St. John's Day (line 1022) is December 27th.

22. What promise does the lord of the castle exchange with Sir Gawain? ➡
23. Earlier in the text, Gawain pretends humility. Reread lines 1241–1247. Is he again fishing for compliments? If not, how do you read his tone? ➡

Day
9

Lines 1372–1997

Today's reading probably strikes you as odd—why is the woman so forward? In modern society, the man is believed to have a greater sexual appetite. However, when this story was written, people believed otherwise: women were sex-crazed, while men were thinkers, above physical pleasure. Which time believes correctly? My guess is, it depends on the individual.

Vocabulary

(line 1470) ... and, **cosseted** in costly quiled covers ...

(line 1481) ... I am **galled** ...

(line 1529) or does he deem me too duncelike to hear of **dalliances**?

(line 1586) Aware that the man was **wafting** a weapon ...

(line 1701) A young **harrier** ...

(line 1706) **haranguing** him with horrific ranting howls.

To Discuss After You Read

24. On the first day, both Gawain and the lord exchange the gifts they received that day. Do both truly give what they received? ➡
25. After the second day do Gawain and the lord exchange equal gifts? ➡
26. Is the lord impressed with Gawain? Defend your answer. ➡
27. Compare the game captured each day to the lady's actions toward Gawain. ➡
28. (lines 1469–1470) Why do you think that, after the events of the first day, Gawain greets the lady in bed again? ➡
29. (lines 1770–1776) What dilemma does Gawain face on all three days? ➡
30. On the second day, "So the lady tempted and teased him, trying / to enmesh him in whatever mischief she had in mind. / But fairly and without fault he defended himself, / no evil in either of them, only ecstasy / that day" (lines 1549–1553). Is this practice wise? Do you think that, if you were constantly tempted, you would feel delight? Why or why not? ➡

31. (lines 1648–1656) Why do you think the lord's company can celebrate with a clear conscience at night? ➡
32. The lord tells Gawain, "Now, a lord can feel low whenever he likes, / so let's chase cheerfulness while we have the chance" (lines 1681–1682). Is this idea Scriptural? Read Ecclesiastes 11:7–10 and Luke 12:15–21 (and any other Bible verses you know) to answer this question. ➡
33. (lines 1782–1784) A broad definition of **irony** includes anything that is incongruous or irregular. With this definition, what is odd about the lord's wife accusing Sir Gawain of having plighted troth with another lady? ➡
34. (line 1832) What color is the girdle the lady offers Sir Gawain? Why might this make you suspicious? ➡
35. (lines 647–650) Who is painted on the inside of Gawain's shield? Which woman do you think Gawain trusts in more? ➡
36. (lines 1876–1884) When Gawain goes to confession, he should confess all. What sin does he hold back? ➡

Day
10

Lines 1998–2530

Most long poems contain three or five divisions, not four, as is *Sir Gawain*—one more twist the author includes.

The green chapel is a burial mound, or barrow, like we saw in *Beowulf*.

To Discuss After You Read

37. What is the climax of this text? Think about this—the answer may not be obvious. ➡
38. What is the falling action, and what is the denouement? ➡
- Note:** (line 2102) The Hector referred to was the strong, courageous, and well-loved prince of Troy—the heir to the throne.
39. How does the Green Knight build up this encounter to make it as scary as possible? ➡
40. What does the Knight think about Gawain's failure? ➡
41. Reread lines 2369–2438. Gawain is caught in wrongdoing. Does he repent? Support your answer. ➡
- Note:** (line 2446) Morgan le Fay was Arthur's half-sister who hated Arthur and sought to defeat his rule. She (according to legend) taught herself magic to gain power over Arthur.
42. (line 2513) When the court heard about Gawain's failure, "laughter filled the castle." Is this an appropriate reaction? Remember earlier in the story that the Green Knight compares them to children. What do you think of the court's response? ➡
43. How does the poem end and why? ➡

Note: HONY SOYT QUI MAL PENCE means “Shame be to him who thinks ill of it.” This is the motto of the Order of the Garter, assumed to be a later addition.

Summary and Analysis

To Discuss After You Read

44. Finish your plot line.
45. What is the setting? ➔
46. A **quest** is the pursuit of a goal. The most famous quest in King Arthur’s court is the “Quest for the Holy Grail,” a drinking cup that, when found, will heal the king and the land. What is Gawain’s quest in this text? The hero is supposed to return wiser and more experienced after a quest. Do you think this is the case? ➔

Now I want you to record the **theme** of the book. The theme is the central idea of the work, the statement about life that the author wants to express. If you have used previous Sonlight® programs, you may have heard the same idea called the “Purpose” of the book.⁵

Stating the theme is tricky—only occasionally does the author explicitly state the theme (for example, Aesop’s fables, that end with a **moral**, a lesson the author wants to elaborate). Most often, though, the author does not directly state the theme, and the reader must piece together what the author wants to show you about life. For an example, let’s look at *Beowulf*. I pulled several quotes that might be the author’s theme.

- “But death is not easily / escaped from by anyone: / all of us with souls, earth-dwellers / and children of men, must make our way / to a destination already ordained / where the body, after the banqueting, / sleeps on its deathbed” (lines 1001–1008).
- “So, while you may, / bask in your fortune, and then bequeath / kingdom and nation to your kith and kin, / before your decease” (lines 1176–1179).
- “For every one of us, living in this world / means waiting for our end. Let whoever can / win glory before death. When a warrior is gone, / that will be his best and only bulwark” (lines 1386–1389).

I think that at its core, *Beowulf* is about the realities of life in this world, whether you are Beowulf or Hrothgar or Wiglaf or another. Thus, any of the above quotes could be the theme, from my perspective. To determine the theme there is no one right answer. You might think that *Beowulf* is actually about bravery and defeating obstacles, or about the triumph of good over evil, or something else. Thus, when, in the future, I ask you to record the theme, I will give my best guess, but I hope that you will answer as well.

Some think that the **epigram** (a concise poem dealing pointedly and often satirically with a single thought

or event and often ending with an ingenious turn of thought) “True men pay truly / Then they have nothing to fear” (lines 2354–2355) is the theme of the poem. This idea certainly recurs throughout, and could very well be the theme. I think “Pride goeth before a fall” is another possible example.

(By the way, themes do not have to be pre-established quotes! I just have used quotes because, up until now, I have found them easily.)

I have pulled two quotations from an article about *Sir Gawain*. Read them and think about them. Do you agree? Why or why not? (In the future I may have you write a paragraph or two in response, but for now, just analyze them in your mind.)

“[W]hen a married noblewoman tempts [Gawain], he must not only avoid adultery but refuse a lady graciously. His solution is to pretend to mistake her seductive proposals for polite flattery. Gawain’s conduct demonstrates that the true virtues of Camelot have been passed on to his generation. He protects the lady’s honor as carefully as his own.”⁶

“*Sir Gawain* distinguishes between the mere avoidance of sin and the actual practice of charity. It makes clear that the Christian does better to serve, even at the risk of making errors, than to remain a mere spectator in life. But the hero is not excused from the sins he may commit in the course of his extraordinary efforts. If he repents seriously and humbly, however, each fall may prove a *felix culpa* (a happy fault) that gives rise to greater progress toward spiritual maturity.”⁷

Creative Writing

Day
6

Poetry Paper

Find a topic for your Creative Writing Poetry Essay at the end of the chapter in *Sound and Sense*. Suggested topics are labeled “Suggestions for Writing.”

Day
10

Description Paper

This text has some wonderful step-by-step detailed instructions. One example is Gawain’s dressing, found, among other places, in lines 568–591. In my mind, the most stand-out example is the deer butchering, lines 1325–1364. Describe an event or a ritual that you do, using words that are as precise and descriptive as possible. Do you make bagels? Play golf? Brush your teeth a particular way? When you are finished, have someone else read the description. Can they duplicate your actions? (Meaning, you probably wouldn’t want to cut up a deer based solely on the *Sir Gawain* description, but you might be able to in a pinch!) Have fun!

5. Some sources define theme as the underlying ideas in a work. Some of these ideas in *Sir Gawain* would be chivalry, honesty, and courage. At Sonlight, we would call these **motifs**, and you do not need to worry about that term yet.

6. Mumbach, Mary. “Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.” *Invitation to the Classics*. Ed. Louise Cowan and Os Guinness. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1998, p. 105.

7. Mumbach, *ibid.*, p. 106.

Memorization

Day
ALL

“Redemption” (continued)

Continue to memorize George Herbert’s sonnet
“Redemption.” Refer to Week 1 notes for the sonnet. ■

Week 3

Date:	Day 11	Day 12	Day 13	Day 14	Day 15
Literature					
Canterbury Tales (AP)	"The Prologue" 	"The Miller's Tale"— pp. 86-94, first paragraph break	"The Miller's Tale" pp. 94-end	"The Wife of Bath's Prologue"— pp. 258-270	"Wife of Bath's Pro- logue," pp. 270-end
Language Arts					
Daily Journaling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Creative Writing	List of Various People				Response Paper
Word Power Made Easy		Session 3		Session 4	
Memorization	"Redemption" (cont.)				
Other Notes					

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Canterbury Tales (AP)

Day 11	"The General Prologue"
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Introductory Comments

Note to Parent and Student: Although this book is universally recognized as a classic work of literature, the morals and actions of characters are decidedly un-Christian, and much of the humor is bawdy. I do not think this text is much naughtier than parts of Shakespeare, nor more morally reprehensible than some Old Testament stories. One commentator has this to say: one of "Chaucer's most important themes is the power of sex in people's lives and its capacity for perversion. As Chaucer looks at the pilgrims, he sees sex everywhere. In doing so, he is only being true to life. It is not necessarily evidence of a perverse imagination or diseased moral sensibility that leads a writer to choose this for a subject. The Bible also has its share of the portrayal of eros defiled."¹ Nevertheless, please read at your own discretion.

Geoffrey Chaucer (1342–1400) invented **iambic pentameter**, a type of poetry found in English. In iambic pentameter poetry, the cadence always goes unstressed, then stressed: "my MAN and I were MARried YESTerDAY." Much of spoken English falls into this pattern. This pattern of unstressed, stressed syllables is called **iambic** (with a single unstressed, stressed pattern, like the bob in *Sir Gawain*, called an **iamb**); other sequences have their own names that you will study in *Sound and Sense*.

Each individual recurrence of unstressed and stressed syllables is called a **foot**. Thus, "my MAN" is a foot, "and I" is another, "were MAR" the third, "ried YES" the fourth, "ter-DAY" the fifth. The pentameter part of iambic pentameter tells how many feet are in a line: in this case, five (penta means five, as a pentagram is a five-sided star and a pentagon is a shape with five sides). Other lines with more or less iambic feet have other names.

Iambic pentameter was the line of choice for all pre-twentieth century English poetry. When we get to Shakespeare, you will see that most of his plays are written in iambic pentameter; all sonnets in English are in this form, as well as most other poetry.

1. Ryken, Leland. "Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*." *Realms of Gold*. Wheaton, Illinois: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1991, p. 47.

 Note to Parent

None of that existed before Chaucer. Every English poet after him had a great poet to refer to, learn from, borrow from. Only Chaucer had no predecessor. He invented the form, and defined what great English poetry should be.

The *Canterbury Tales* is a collection of twenty-four stories, bound together within a larger plot. Twenty-nine pilgrims travel from London toward Canterbury, and along the way they agree to tell four stories each (obviously, Chaucer's collection of twenty-four tales falls far short of the total number expected). Whoever tells the best story wins a free lunch. Supposedly, then, these stories are told as the pilgrims travel. This is not terribly realistic, for I doubt anyone's voice can speak loudly enough that twenty-nine pilgrims on horseback can hear, but the idea is charming, nonetheless. This text, then, includes the common literary idea of the journey. In this case, the pilgrims make a physical journey; other texts might focus on a spiritual journey. A journey is a common thread in literature.

As with the *Sir Gawain* poet, Chaucer wrote the *The Canterbury Tales* in Middle English. This version is a translation, which makes it far easier to read.

During his life, Chaucer lived mostly in London and worked in various administrative posts. He served three kings, and was generally in favor in court. Early in his life he fought in the Hundred Years War,² and was taken prisoner. The king ransomed him, but for less money than another man's horse!

Chaucer lived during a time of upheaval. The plague killed at least one third of the English population. (Think about this—how many people in your extended family would die? What would your church look like?) The Peasants' Revolt and other more minor rebellions threatened society. The corrupt church left many people dissatisfied.

Chaucer wrote his poetry in the evenings after work. (What do you do when your schoolwork is done? Probably not write world-class poetry!) When he died, he was the first man buried in the Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey (Tennyson and Robert Browning are also buried there, and monuments stand to Milton, Shakespeare, Keats, and Shelley, among others).

The style of *The Canterbury Tales*, a collection of short stories bound together by a running plot, is also found in the Italian work by Boccaccio, the *Decameron*. Like Boccaccio (and Shakespeare), Chaucer probably did not invent most of the stories. At that time, though, without copyrights or the printing press, if a storyteller retold a story, it was an honor to the story's inventor, not a theft. After all, the more storytellers, the wider the story spreads. And Chaucer's *Tales* spread widely. More than eighty manuscripts survive from the Middle Ages. Compare that to *Sir Gawain's* one surviving manuscript, and you can see how popular Chaucer's work was.

2. The 100 Years' War was a series of conflicts between France and England that lasted from 1337 to 1453. At its start, Edward III claimed to be King of England and King of France as well. In the end, England had added only the town of Calais to its holdings.

We classify *Canterbury Tales* chronologically as a work of Middle English in the Middle Ages. Thematically, though, this work falls mainly into the **realism** category.³

Realist authors try to describe life the way it actually is. Realism is not normally about the upper class, but about middle or lower classes in everyday life. Thus, in Chaucer, we read about the actual appearance of the Wife of Bath—she has a gap-tooth, for example—instead of an idealized version. Chaucer does not say, "The beautiful Wife of Bath approached." Chaucer tells the truth (the truth of his imagination, that is), and, to make his writings seem as believable as possible, he uses details: description, character interaction, character mindset.

Most of his physical descriptions come in the General Prologue. Character interaction occurs in between the stories. Thus we get rivalries (i.e., you insult me in your story, I'll insult you even worse in mine) and debates (what is the ideal wife?), all believable and appropriate. I can imagine having a similar debate and, although I hope I do not wish to trade insults, I can recognize that others might. Chaucer's characters also sometimes tell their psychology, or their mindset. The Pardoner states that he desires money above all, even his soul, and the Wife of Bath explains that she wants control in a marriage, as do all women.

To Discuss After You Read

1. Chaucer sets himself up as the **narrator**, the person who tells the story (or the **narration**). When the narrator tells events from an "I" perspective—I was at an inn in Southwark—this is called the **first person point of view**. What can the narrator know if the story is written in the first person? What does he not know? ➔
2. Which of all these character descriptions do you like the most? Why?
3. If you were riding with the company, which four stories would you tell? Remember, you do not have to invent the stories (although you could, if you wanted to). If four is too many, can you think of one? Why would you choose the one(s) you did?

3. People usually associate realism with the mid-nineteenth century, with authors such as Gustave Flaubert, George Eliot, and the dramatist Henrik Ibsen, even though Chaucer offers a reasonable example from the late 1300s.

I prefer to think of novelists the way E. M. Forster does, as if they are all "seated together in a room, a circular room, a sort of British Museum reading-room—all writing their novels simultaneously. They do not, as they sit there, think 'I live under Queen Victoria, I under Anne, I carry on the tradition of Trollope, I am reacting against Aldous Huxley.' The fact that their pens are in their hands is far more vivid to them. They are half mesmerized, their sorrows and joys are pouring out through the ink ..." (*Aspects of the Novel*, 9).

Day
12

"The Miller's Tale"—pp. 86-94

To Discuss After You Read

4. A word you should remember, that *Sound and Sense* mentioned, is the word cuckold. A cuckold is a man whose wife has cheated on him, and traditionally the sign of a cuckold is horns growing on his forehead. Thus, whether in this story or in Shakespeare or anywhere else, if a character mentions horns, the character is not necessarily referring to the devil! Who will be the cuckold in this story? ➔
5. This story offers detailed descriptions of Handy Nicholas, the jolly scholar, Alison, the lovely and seductive young wife, and Absalom, the dandy. Chaucer neglects to describe the carpenter, however. Write a brief description of how you imagine the carpenter (either a paragraph or a few lines of iambic pentameter).

Day
13

"The Miller's Tale"—pp. 94-end

To Discuss After You Read

6. Literature occasionally makes sport of jealous husbands (another example that comes readily to mind is Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor*). What do you think: is the jealous husband at fault, because by keeping her in a cage, the wife turns to others for fun and spite, or is the husband jealous with good reason? (Keep in mind, Alison did not immediately go off with Nicholas, but turned him away at first.) How should a husband treat his wife? Do you agree with the Miller's opinion initially, that he would rather not know his wife's actions, as long as she satisfies him (88)? Why or why not?
7. Do you think the carpenter provides well for his wife? Think back to her clothing.
8. Chaucer seems to say that the carpenter was at fault for marrying Alison (89). What do you think?
9. What is your favorite part of this **farce** (a story with a humorous and improbable plot)? ➔
10. Based solely on this story, what do you presume about the state of the Church at this time? ➔
11. What is the plot of this story: the exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and denouement? ➔

Day
14

"The Wife of Bath's Prologue"—pp. 258-270

To Discuss After You Read

12. Is the Wife of Bath a moral woman and a good wife? Support your answer with the text. ➔
13. Discuss with your parents what, ideally, godly marriage should look like.

14. The Wife of Bath knows the Bible well. What biblical references does she use, and do you agree with her inferences or not? ➔

15. Alison explains the reasons men complain about their wives, whether the woman be rich or poor, pretty or ugly. What are the reasons? ➔

Day
15

"The Wife of Bath's Prologue"—pp. 270-end

To Discuss After You Read

16. How did the Wife of Bath repay her philandering fourth husband (271)? ➔
17. What kind of a grave does this husband get (272)? ➔
18. The Wife of Bath claims that women want what they cannot have. Is this true of you? (Guys can answer this, too!)
19. Different ages have different ideas of beauty. The Greeks admired symmetry of form (notice how precise their statues are). Today our culture admires slender young women. How does the Wife of Bath's appearance differ from our ideas of beauty? ➔
20. What wrong behavior does the Wife of Bath's fifth husband exhibit? ➔
21. One description says that this prologue is "the first and funniest feminist manifesto and handbook in English." Did you find it funny? Does any part make feminism attractive to you? Why or why not?

Creative WritingDay
11

List of Various People

To understand more wholly how amazing Chaucer's list of characters is, spend some time making a list of the varied people you know. Do you know any very poor, or very rich? Do you know widows and newly-weds, bachelors and students, people of different ages, jobs, areas of the country (or of different countries)? Write down brief descriptions of twenty-nine varied people. For example: Nicole, a young newlywed who works in a coffee shop and Wanda, an elderly widow who gardens. After you make your list, choose three and write one paragraph description that involves all three characters. Try to include details about their appearance, their personality, and their profession. (I did this and was shocked to find most of the people I know are middle or upper middle class, and most have standard jobs. Chaucer's realistic portrait of so many varied individuals is phenomenal—I couldn't do it!)

Read the following quote: “A comic treatment of adultery or sodomy in a funny story or a bawdy piece of literature is most likely to be thoroughly moral; for the force of humour is frequently dependent upon stirring our sense of the incongruity between what people do and what they ought to do. Humour can rarely afford to dispense with the yardstick of traditional morality.”⁴

Part of my hope for you this year is that you will be able to understand commentary about various texts, as well as the texts themselves. Apply this quote to “The Miller’s Tale” and “The Wife of Bath’s Tale.” Have you enjoyed these readings? If you were immoral, would you still find these stories humorous?

What about your own emotions? Do you feel sinful reading these stories? Should you? (After all, Jesus does not laugh at sin.⁵) Write down your reactions.

Continue to memorize George Herbert’s sonnet “Redemption.” Refer to Week 1 notes for the sonnet. ■

4. Ryken, *ibid.*, p. 60, quote of Harry Blamires, *The Christian Mind* (London: S.P.C.K., 1963), p. 99.

5. Keep in mind, however, what Chaucer’s perspective is. Do you think he advocates sexually voracious wives, or adultery? As Ryken points out, what is a matter of taste is not necessarily a matter of morality. If you are offended by the stories, your taste in literature does not prefer bawdy tales. The morality of the work, though, is not necessarily compromised through bawdy stories.

Section Three

Instructor's Guide Resources

The Middle Ages

Old English

In the first century AD, the Roman Empire conquered the Britons, who lived in what today we call England. The Romans successfully assimilated the Britons, so that, when Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity, so did the Britons. In the fifth century, though, the Romans withdrew from England, while vainly trying to protect Rome from Germanic invaders. These invaders—the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes—also gradually conquered Britain.¹ These Anglo-Saxon conquerors brought oral poetry.

In AD 597, the Benedictine monk later called St. Augustine of Canterbury came to England. Within 75 years, the people were again predominantly Christian, and along with Christianity came literacy. Most of the Old English writings we have today pertain to the church. The church had the desire, time, and people to produce expensive hand-written manuscripts on parchment. One of the few examples of secular poetry that remains from this time is *Beowulf*.

The story of *Beowulf* originally came from the Anglo-Saxon invaders (which is why the story involves the Danes and the Geats and not the Britons). It takes place in a heroic society, in which kinship, not location, determines a nation. The lord of the nation has retainers, to whom he generously provides gifts and spoils from battle. In return, the retainers must fight to the death for their lord. If the lord dies, the retainers must avenge him. Blood vengeance is their duty, and honor comes only to those who heroically pursue this goal.

Old English poetry uses formal speech, not the common, daily language of Anglo-Saxons. During the three hundred years or so of written English, the serious tone did not alter. (Think about this—how different is the English we speak today compared to that of the founding fathers, let alone back to the time of Jonathan Swift [we'll read part of his *Gulliver's Travels* later this year]. But the Old English lasted three hundred years with virtually no variation.) Unlike later poetry, romance and love are almost unmentioned. God's glory and the struggles and triumph of his followers are the important topics.

Middle English

The division between Old English and Middle English came in AD 1066, with the Norman Conquest. The Normans (a name derived from “Norsemen,” or Vikings) descended from Germanic ancestors who captured much of northern France in the early 900s. The Normans learned to speak French and became Christians.

For over a century after the conquest, most literature again became oral, and very few English texts exist before the end of the twelfth century. However, although no one wrote in English, authors did write texts in Latin—the international language of scholarship—and in French—the language of the conquerors. The universities Oxford and Cambridge date from this period.

Middle English has a wide variety of writers, written to a wide variety of audiences: educated and uneducated, court and commoners, male and female. Overall, the works are lighter than the Old English, with humor throughout.

Again, the largest body of work is religious. A large percentage of secular works, though, that survived until the present are romances. These romances have their roots in France (the word “Romance” originally meant anything written in a romance language, like French). Romances often have battles between men and monsters, the supernatural (or at least improbable), and, in addition, romantic love.

The fourteenth century was particularly turbulent. The One Hundred Years War began in 1336, and continued intermittently over the next hundred years, as England tried to take over parts of France. The bubonic plague ravaged all of Europe starting in 1348 and killed a quarter to a third of the population. Labor shortages and high prices resulted. Social mobility also resulted, as the peasants now had a chance to become middle class and, eventually, even higher.² The stories of the time reflect the social climbing ambition, as the romance heroes value high birth less than noble character and brave deeds.

In the second half of the fourteenth century, English began to displace French as the language of the court. (Both the Middle English texts in the Sonlight® program date from this period.) Chaucer's decision to write his *Canterbury Tales* in English greatly helped raise the status of the vernacular. For the first time, great works of literature did not require Latin or French!

From 1399 until 1485, the kingship bounced between several families, during the War of the Roses (so called because the house of Lancaster took the red rose as their emblem and the house of York took the white rose). The symbolic end of the Middle English period came in 1485 when Henry VII took the throne and founded the Tudor dynasty.

1. Condensed and modified from the *Norton Anthology of English Literature*.

2. The Britons told stories of King Arthur, who fought the Anglo-Saxon invaders, and stories of this heroic king persist till this day.

2. Chaucer's family possibly traces this rise. Chaucer's father was a wine merchant; Chaucer held a variety of government posts; Thomas Chaucer (probably Chaucer's son) was an important man, and his daughter married an earl and then a duke, which made her aristocracy.

The Sixteenth Century

Seven years after Henry VII came to power, Columbus discovered America. England no longer bred sheep, but increased their commercial trade with the Continent. They produced and exported cloth. The sheep needed more grazing ground, so former farmers made their way to London. This city grew from about 50,000 people in the time of Chaucer, to 93,000 in 1563, to 225,000 in 1605. With the rise of gunpowder, knights became obsolete (but the court continued to have jousts for a century, just for fun!).

The Renaissance, a rebirth of classical learning, began in Italy. In the 1400s, some Englishmen went to Italy and observed the new methods of architecture and the new models for poetry and art. However, with the long-term wars the English monarchs waged, the Renaissance could not take hold in England until Henry VII provided stability with his reign, which began in 1485. Under his successor, Henry VIII, the Renaissance flourished.

The other major ideological change at this time was the Reformation. Martin Luther nailed up his 95 theses in 1517, and the debate began. For the Protestants, the Reformation happily overthrew the corrupt power of the Roman Catholic Church and provided a way for man to be right before God. For the Catholics, the new line of thought was heresy and those who practiced it schismatics. Either way, the all-controlling power the Church wielded was no more.

Initially, the Reformation did not affect England. However, when pro-Catholic Henry VIII wanted an heir, he sought a divorce from Catherine of Aragon. The Pope refused to grant this, so Henry VIII divorced her anyway and established himself as Supreme Head of the English (Anglican) Church. His nobles had to swear that Henry had the right to do this—and when Sir Thomas More refused, he lost his head. One nobleman helped dissolve the monasteries; Henry gave the former Church property to his courtiers, which made them more willing than ever to agree to his spiritual headship.

The next ruler was the boy-king Edward VI, who ruled only six years, from 1547–1553. During his reign, Lutheran and Calvinist theologians came to England to provide proper doctrine. Among the Protestant ideas that they established were the following: *sola Scriptura*, which means believers only look to the Bible for their beliefs, not the Church or tradition; salvation through grace (and faith), not through works; and personal conscience dictates one's actions. The Book of Common Prayer (which includes the traditional wedding service) dates from Edward VI's reign.

Mary Tudor (Bloody Mary) ascended the throne on Edward's death. She ruled five years, and in that time burned many Protestants at the stake, and many more fled England. She could not undo all of what her father, Henry VIII, had done, though—the Church's property she could not retrieve. She had no heir, and on her death, her half-sister, Elizabeth Tudor, ascended the throne.

Queen Elizabeth ruled from 1558–1603. She was a Protestant, so the Roman Catholics did not like her, but she was a moderate Protestant, so the Puritans did not like her. The majority of the people, tired of squabbles and unrest, approved of her.

She was a political genius. She knew England's strengths and weaknesses, and refused to marry (all the while leading her foreign suitors along). By the time she was past the age of childbirth, England was strong and united. Elizabeth encouraged flatterers, but she chose wisely the men who helped her govern. When she died in 1603, James VI of Scotland took the throne peacefully, as James I of England, and the Elizabethan Age ended.

In 1493, the Pope split the New World between Spain and Portugal. The English began to explore the New World and Asia, and some ships turned pirate. Sir Francis Drake was one of the most famous. In his voyage on *The Golden Hind*, from 1577 to 1580, Drake sailed through the Strait of Magellan, raided Spanish towns along the Pacific (as far north as San Francisco!), then sailed to the Philippines, circled the Cape of Good Hope, and reached England again laden with treasure. His investors earned a dividend of 5,000 percent, and Elizabeth knighted him.

England began to colonize during Elizabeth's reign. In Ireland, the English wanted to get rid of Roman Catholics and Celtic culture and take over land. Bloody rebellions led to open war; England won and subjugated and impoverished all of Ireland.

The prevailing educational philosophy of the time was the classical model of the *trivium* (grammar, logic, rhetoric) and the *quadrivium* (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music). Young men studied Latin, the language of higher learning and diplomacy—one exercise they had to do was translate an English line into Latin and then back again to English. The vernacular, especially at the beginning of the century, had not yet taken hold, since, compared to the ancient Latin, English seemed too new and unstable. Young ladies did not attend school but studied modern languages, religion, music, and art at home.

In the world of literature, the first movable type printing press came to England in about 1475.³ All the printing presses, printers, and booksellers were in London, where they worked under strict guidelines. The availability of inexpensive books gradually produced an increase in literacy—in the early 1400s, only 30% of the population could read. By 1530, that percentage had doubled.

The profession of “writer” did not yet exist. Writing was a side hobby, an accomplishment the upper class needed to have, but certainly not meant for profit. A good poem might circulate through the court, and various people would copy it into their manuscript books, often without the author's name—authorship made little difference without copyright laws.

Some people earned a little money for their writings through wealthy patrons, although this system was not perfect (for example, one man had 16 patrons for 17 books!).

3. Europeans had made paper from the 1100s—good thing they did not still use parchment, as in the Old English period!

Why did anyone write at that time? In some ways, this is a mystery. No author received royalties from book sales: generally they sold their manuscripts outright to a publisher for forty shillings (which, when I did the conversions in March 2003, equaled a little more than \$730. This is not much money, considering the time that goes into writing a book). Writers and publishers both had to follow strict guidelines, and harsh penalties followed disobedience. One man had his hand cut off when he wrote something against the Queen's projected French marriage.

The Elizabethans wrote many types of poetry. They ordered them from the least important to the most, with pastoral poetry the least and epic poetry the most. Some of the types are as follows.

Pastoral poetry idealized the lives of shepherds and shepherdesses, who lived simple lives watching sheep, falling in love, and reciting poetry. In the poems they had free time and contentment, and their country life was preferable to city life, with its artificiality and hypocrisy. Probably the most famous example is Christopher Marlowe's "Passionate Shepherd to His Love," that you can find in the Poetry appendix in this section.

Satiric poetry contained a sting to make a point. A common form was the epigram (two or four line poem). Ben Jonson published an entire book of them, and here is one example, titled "On Sir Cod the Perfumed:" "That Cod can get no widow, yet a knight, / I scent the cause: he woos with an ill sprite."

Lyric poetry expresses praise for God or love or nature. The best are hymns in praise to God (Psalm 23 is an ancient example) and odes in praise of good men. One type that has a fun name is the epithalamium, a poem in praise of marriage. Sonnets are, perhaps, the most important example (and Shakespeare's sonnets are some of the best). In the Elizabethan age, many lyrics were meant to be sung while accompanied by instrumentation.

In a **tragic** poem, a ghost commonly grieves his or her fate and warns others (like Dicken's *Christmas Carol*), or a woman writes to her lover who abandoned her.

The top of the scale was the **heroic** poem. These poems value honor, courage, loyalty, leadership, perseverance, or nationalism. An epic is the usual form a heroic poem takes. (Think about how *Beowulf* had elements of most, if not all, of the values in a typical heroic poem.)

The Sixteenth Century had different ideas of beauty and aesthetics. The word "artificial" to us has unpleasant connotations—something "natural" is preferable. However, in the Sixteenth Century, artificiality was good, since it meant that human creativity enhanced nature, not harmed it. This shows up in their gardens, that had elaborate designs; in their houses, that might be built in the shape of the letter "E" (for Elizabeth) or in their own initials (!); in their dances, that had elaborate and intricate steps; in their music, that used several voices and interwoven

lines of melody and harmony; and, of course, in their writing, that had abundant words, plenty of ornamentation, and allegories.⁴

English drama developed significantly in this period. The earliest actors in England were the clergy, who produced the medieval mystery and miracle plays. They were amateur actors who performed on wagons in the town square. Later, semi-professional actors traveled and performed in various locations. People considered them idlers of questionable character, along with jugglers and acrobats, and they received no respect. In 1545, a statute made them susceptible to arrest as vagabonds.

To perform without fear, actors became "servants" of a nobleman (and, thus, had titles such as "the Lord Chamberlain's men"). They wore their master's livery and badge and could perform at will. Although technically servants, they spent their time working for the public, and their wages came from their performances.

Early theaters were oval in shape, and could hold about 2,000 people. For performances, "groundlings," the poor, servants, and apprentices stood near the center stage in an uncovered area. Better paying patrons sat in three tiers of covered balconies around the yard. The stage jutted into the yard, and sometimes the groundlings sat on the edges of the stage.

Performances then were different from today. Actors used no scene breaks or act breaks or intermissions. They recited the words much faster (so a typical Shakespeare play lasted about two hours, instead of between two and a half and three and a half). Performances occurred in the afternoon, and could be (and were) cancelled for weather or epidemics. The costumes were gorgeous and elaborate, but they did not worry about scenery or props.

The acting companies became repertory companies where the actors in the company filled all the roles—they did not hire outsiders to act with them. Young boys became apprentice actors (just as they might become apprentice smiths), and they played female roles until their voices changed.

The Early Seventeenth Century

Historians often use special names to refer to historical periods. The "Early Seventeenth Century" may refer, generally, to any time within the first half of the Seventeenth Century (i.e., the early 1600s), but in British history, most historians will think of the period from the coronation of the first Stuart king, James I, in 1603⁵, to the coronation of the third Stuart king, Charles II, in 1660. And the most significant events of this period are usually referred to by the name "Puritan Revolt."

4. Two common ideas of writers were the macrocosm-microcosm analogy, in which everything in the vast universe is replicated (much smaller) in the human body, and that of the Great Chain of Being, in which all orders of being, from speck of dust to animal to man to highest angel are ordered according to their divinely ordained stations.

5. This is the James of the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible, published in 1611.

To fully understand the entire period, but most especially the Puritan Revolt, we should look back to 1588, the year a storm providentially destroyed the Spanish Armada, and we should look ahead to 1688, when the results of the Revolt were finally known.

To go back in time, during the 1560s and '70s, Spain and England seemed to find themselves in almost constant conflict. There were religious overtones to the conflicts—England's crown had gone Protestant, while Spain remained faithful to Rome. But, far more, England was determined to wrest from Spain as much of the wealth as possible that Spain was taking from the New World. Drake, the “master-robber of the New World” according to the Spaniards, was knighted by Queen Elizabeth in 1580 after he returned from a pirateering/privateering voyage that produced for the Crown a 47-to-1 return on investment.

By 1586, the Spanish Crown had become desperate and had determined to attack England with what was called the Great or Invincible Armada—a fleet that would eventually consist of nearly 130 ships and 30,000 men. The Armada left Lisbon in May of 1588 and reached the shores of England in late July. On Monday, July 29th, the Spaniards were routed, losing one ship by capture, three by sinking, and four or five by running aground. As the remnant fled north around Scotland and then south again off the coast of Ireland, they lost many more of their number so that, when they returned to their base, barely half the ships and only a quarter of the men remained.

Queen Elizabeth hoped that once she had destroyed the threat from the Armada, her subjects would become more loyal and unified. The court and the upper class had political and economic privileges, and the established Anglican Church maintained a religious monopoly, and various groups in ever greater numbers demanded change.⁶ Unfortunately, the temporary show of unity against a common threat soon vanished, and the anger of the underprivileged came to the fore.

More discontent followed during the reign of the second Stuart king, Charles I. Charles tried to force the Church of Scotland, which follows a Presbyterian (local-church, elder-led) form of government, to “conform” to Church of England standards. The Church of England follows an episcopal—or bishop-led—form of government. In November 1638, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland defied Charles's orders and abolished the office of bishop.

Twice—once in 1639, and again in 1640—Charles attempted to force the Scots into submission by means of arms. In both cases, however, Charles lacked the funds to underwrite the adventures, and in both cases, his troops were defeated by the Scots. Meanwhile, the English Parliament filled more and more with Puritans, who refused to support Charles in what they perceived as his pro-Catholic tendencies. Eventually, the tensions grew so great that, in 1642, an army raised by Parliament—the Puritan or

“Roundhead” army—fought against an army raised by the king—the Royalist or Cavalier forces.

The rebel (Puritan or Roundhead) armies, with help from the Scottish Presbyterians, eventually wrested power from Charles. The Scots captured Charles in 1646, and then turned him over to the English Parliament who subsequently tried and convicted him for treason. Charles was executed in 1649.

The Puritans reached the height of their power from 1649 to 1658 when, with the special aid of Oliver Cromwell (1599–1658), their party came to control all of England. Cromwell died in 1658. As he lay dying, he nominated his son Richard to rule in his place. But lacking the same force of character his father had exhibited, Richard was soon forced from power (in 1659), and in 1660, the third Stuart king, Charles II ascended the throne.⁷ James II (1633–1701; ruled from 1685–1688), the fourth and last Stuart king, was eventually deposed for his outspoken support of Roman Catholics. Mary, the daughter of James II, married William of Orange, a Dutch Protestant, and this couple came to rule England in 1688.

No definite decisions ended the Puritan Revolt. Instead, politics and religion merely became less rigid. The court was no longer the center of the world. The monarchy, apart from Parliament, had little power indeed. In religion, the Anglican church was no longer the center of the religious world. Now it existed as merely one option among many. Each different religious group reformed its own church as far as it pleased.

During the Puritan Revolt, censorship stopped, and political pamphlets—more than 20,000 of them!—began to circulate. For the first time, newsletters, and then newspapers, existed. No longer did all the literature that mattered emanate from and circulate in the court. The general public wanted (and was permitted to acquire) information that suited its tastes, preferences, and desires.

This was an enormous switch. During Elizabeth's reign courtiers wrote courtly items for other courtiers. By the Restoration (the period that began in 1660, when Charles II came to power), courtly patrons no longer financed written works (and, thus, no longer dictated what was available to be read). Booksellers now hired authors to produce specific works, whether about politics or religion or something else. The booksellers themselves now guided public preference.

This change from the court to the general public affected the style of literary works. In the court, prior to the Revolt, all readers possessed the same general knowledge, classical learning, and courtly conventions. Thus, the literature could be quite artificial and long-winded (but elegant!). The general public, though, did not enjoy lengthy love stories with superfluous verbiage; they wanted straightforward narratives that provided information. This new kind

6. The American Pilgrims were one of the discontented groups. These Puritans first fled to Amsterdam, then to Plymouth, Massachusetts to avoid persecution and what they believed was false teaching in the established church, the Church of England.

7. The return to monarchical rule and Charles' coronation, together, are referred to in English histories as “The Restoration.”

of audience is the foundation of modern English. (Think about this: do you like flowery or straightforward language? Probably the latter. If you had been born before the Restoration there was no easy-to-read literature available.)

The intellectual tone shifted dramatically as well. At the start of the century, lawyers and theologians, as the great thinkers of the day, produced treatises. By the end of the century, the great thinkers were scientists (in physics, anatomy, or astronomy), mathematicians, and philosophers. Instead of a Puritan ideal community of the saints, the more modern, secular, materialist view (that matter is all that exists, and everything can be explained by physical phenomena) took hold.

Some old literary forms vanished, and some new ones took their places. The sonnet, a popular poem form, vanished until its resurrection in the Romantic era (Wordsworth and company). An allegory, that we will see briefly in *Paradise Lost* (and which you may have once read in John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*), also became infrequently used. Madrigals, a combination folk and art song, also vanished, as Puritans suspected them of being worldly.⁸ Rounds, carols, dances around the maypole, and rural pageants also vanished at this time, and psalms and sermons took their places as "entertainment." After the Restoration, imported music such as the oratorio or the opera took the place of traditional English music.

In poetry, the form gradually moved to rhymed couplets (two lines of poetry that rhyme) with a regular meter. The first novels appeared. Satire no longer just sought to sting, it tried to amuse readers while still delivering a dart. Burlesques also became popular. (The Nun's Priest's Tale in *Canterbury Tales* is an example of a burlesque, in which a silly subject is treated in a grand style.) The theater closed during the Puritan Revolt, and when it opened again, many of the former playwrights were dead. The theater produced either heroic tragedies or bawdy comedies, neither of which endured the test of time.

Only two Puritan poets produced works popular enough that we still read them today. They are John Milton and Andrew Marvell (you will read Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress" in *Sound and Sense*). Other Puritan writers wrote religious tracts and sermons, which were popular in their day but have fallen out of favor as modern society prefers the temptations of this world and does not want to focus on the world to come—the exact opposite of the Puritan teachings.

Two different schools of poetry developed in this time. All the people in this paragraph have poems in *Sound and Sense*, if you would like to reference them. John Donne ("A Hymn to God the Father") and his follower George Herbert were "Metaphysical" poets: they liked and experimented with the traditional lyrics that focused on love and devotion. The "Cavalier" poets included Ben Jonson ("On My First Son") and his followers Robert Herrick and Edmund Waller. The Cavalier poets wanted polished poems that did not have too large a scope.

8. These charming (and sometimes bawdy) songs used complex harmonies, and families would sing them together.

The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century

The Restoration began with Charles Stuart's return from exile and ascension to the throne in 1660, and lasted until roughly 1785. This period covers a vast change in British power: in 1665 the plague killed thousands, and in 1666, a massive fire in London burned the houses of two-thirds of the population in four days. From these wretched events, Britain became an empire over the course of the next century. First it defeated Holland's navy in 1680, then it defeated France (this took time, from 1689 to 1763) for control of Canada and India. The Act of Union in 1707 formed Great Britain where England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales all owe allegiance to the same government.

Charles Stuart was a dissolute ruler, with plenty of mistresses and friends, and this behavior led to dissolution among the upper class and court. (Those not so closely connected with the king disliked this sinful behavior.) Those with money still patronized the arts, though, so the upper class dictated much of the art of the time.

Charles was also a shrewd politician—he skillfully managed to avoid crises. His subjects happily welcomed him back, as they hoped for peace and order. With the return of the monarchy came the return of the established church. In 1662, the law required all churches and ministers to use the Book of Common Prayer. By 1664, a religious meeting that did not follow the established church form was illegal. (It was at this time that Nonconformist John Bunyan went to jail, where he wrote *Pilgrim's Progress*.) The next restriction was the Test Act that in 1673 forced all in civil and military positions to take Communion as Anglicans and to disbelieve in transubstantiation. The first requirement excluded Protestant Nonconformists from public life and the second requirement excluded Roman Catholics. These laws did not bother the majority of people, who scorned Dissenters as subversive and irrational, and hated Catholics as traitors.

Around this time the two political parties, Tories and Whigs, began. The Tories liked the court and supported the crown. These were the conservatives of the time, who opposed change to the social structure: landed gentry (those who had owned land for generations), and the country clergy. The crown and the church promised stability, and that is what the Tories wanted. The Whigs, the liberals of the day, were against the king. Those who had recently acquired wealth, the middle class, jealous nobles, merchants and bankers, and Dissenters, all wanted toleration and commerce, and a change in the former class system.

James II took the throne in 1685. He wanted the Roman Catholics to advance, and this created a major crisis. He overturned the Test Act in 1687, and tried to fill the army, government, and universities with Roman Catholics and Dissenters. His unhappy nation asked the Dutchman William of Orange to come and rule instead, so James II fled to the mainland (where he lived at the court of Louis XIV!).

William of Orange had married James' Protestant daughter Mary, and they came to the throne in December of 1688.⁹ William signed the Bill of Rights to limit the powers of the crown in 1689. This affirmed that Parliament was supreme, and gave legal rights to individuals. The Dissenters could worship as they pleased. (The law did not change much until the Reform Bill of 1832—over 130 years later!) The Act of Settlement in 1701 gave the throne to Sophia, Electress of Hanover (a granddaughter of James I).

The last Stuart Monarch, Anne, ruled from 1702–14. England led her allies Holland, Austria, and Bavaria in a war against France and Spain. The Whigs supported the war, and they, being interested in commerce, profited by it. The hero of the war was the dashing duke of Marlborough, and he controlled Anne until 1710, when Anne dismissed her Whig counselors and brought in Tory advisers. Jonathan Swift served these Tories. When the Whigs regained control over the throne in 1714, they dashed Swift's hopes of advance.

England continued to grow wealthier not only through war, but also through trade and the start of industrialism. George I (son of Sophia, Electress of Hanover, who had since died) ruled from 1714–27, and then George II ruled from 1727–1760. Neither man spoke English well, and they preferred to visit Hanover (in Germany), than rule the up-and-coming nation. Because of their weak control, Swift's nemesis prime minister Walpole (who kept control from 1721–1742) established a strong minister system that continues to the present. (Politically, Winston Churchill or Margaret Thatcher or Tony Blair are much more important than whatever figure-head monarch rules in Britain.) Walpole and his cronies were extremely corrupt, but, oddly, they maintained peace and increased prosperity. Their money no longer went to patronage, however, but to bribes. This was not a huge blow for the arts, though, since publishers, able to make more money because of more readers, paid authors better. For example, Milton earned 10 pounds for *Paradise Lost*, equal to about \$1,700 today (think how many politicians now earn millions for their memoirs). When John Dryden translated Virgil, he earned over 100 times what Milton had received, although only 30 years separated the two works. (You can read one of Dryden's epigrams in the poetry appendix in this section.)

In the 1740s, religious feeling became en vogue, as John Wesley founded Methodism with George Whitefield. They preached conviction of sin, conversion to Christ, and joy in the blessed assurance of salvation. Thousands attended their meetings, and the established church, in a sense, woke up, and urged faith, but faith that produced good works.

George III ruled for sixty years, from 1760–1820. This is the hated King George of the American Revolution, but he was a popular ruler in England, as he was the first Hanoverian monarch born in England. He survived the Gordon Riots in 1780, when a mob took control of London. (Although Britain was a world power, the money from colonial endeavors did not reach the working class, but merely made the upper class wealthier.)

Scholars used their intellect during this period to challenge orthodoxy. The philosopher Thomas Hobbes in his work *Leviathan* posited that an absolute government was the only way to control humanity, for he believed humanity blindly followed its self-interested and predatory passions.

Another new idea was philosophic skepticism that declared all knowledge comes from the senses. Since the senses do not interpret the world accurately, reliable knowledge is impossible, and, therefore, absolute truth does not exist (the ideas of relativism are not new). Also, the skeptics claim that most beliefs are opinions, and thus the only way to believe is to accept information on faith. This is quite a switch from the pervasive doctrines of the Church noted earlier in this course.

Science tended to the physical sciences: astronomy, chemistry, and physics. At this time, all science pointed to the order and natural laws in the universe, which then also proved a Creator.

A belief in a Creator, though, did not in itself make anyone a Christian: Deism was a popular belief at this time. This is the "watchmaker in the sky" belief system, in which a Deist realizes that if you see a watch, the watch presupposes a watchmaker—no watch simply comes into being without a creator. According to this analogy, Nature is like the watch, and God must exist in order to create the watch. Furthermore, even as a watchmaker does not follow around each watch he makes, neither does God care about the universe any more—he set it going, and then left. Deists also believed in an afterlife. Since a distant God obviously does not punish evil and reward good on earth, a just God needs to reward people at some point, so he must do so in an afterlife. Deists discount the Scriptures, God's revelation to man—only Nature, God's first revelation, convinced them.

Because Nature was seen as good, civilization thus became bad. Some people proposed the idea of a "Noble Savage," a person uncorrupted by society.

With the above beliefs gradually gaining popularity, society became more secular, more tolerant. People believed that good works also became a way to salvation, and they believed man was naturally good. Because people wanted to be virtuous and kind, they sought to improve jail conditions, pay debtors' debts, support parentless children in orphanages, rescue repentant prostitutes, and, eventually, end the slave trade.

The literature of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century can be roughly broken into three separate categories: Restoration (1660–1700), early Eighteenth Century (1700–1740), and late Eighteenth Century (1740–1785).

9. As you read British literature, you may sometimes come across the following names, all of which come from this time period: **the Old Pretender** is the son of James II, who staged a serious rebellion in 1715. The grandson of James II is Prince Charles Edward, or **Bonnie Prince Charlie**, who also staged a rebellion and invasion, almost successfully, in 1745. The **Jacobites**, whose name comes from the Latin word for "James," supported the return of these men (many English and even more Scots were Jacobites).

The Restoration literature sought a simple, clear, sensical, orderly style. Called “Neoclassical,” the hope was that Charles would bring in an age of peace, as Augustus, the first Roman emperor, brought peace in ancient Rome. This simpler style appealed to the common reader, as did the subject matter, often with word pictures that the reader used to fully understand the writing. The main subject matter was heroic literature, full of fierce battles and faithful lovers.

In poetry, the Restoration enjoyed the closed heroic couplet—two lines of iambic pentameter that expressed a complete thought, and thus ended with a period (or semicolon or exclamation point).

In prose, letters were the rage. In drama, the theater became so bawdy that by the 1690s, scandalized citizens demanded moral reform, and so the eighteenth century began with a respectable, though not necessarily more holy, society.

The early Eighteenth Century was the age of Jonathan Swift and Alexander Pope. (John Dryden, the main Restoration author, defined “wit” as “a propriety of thoughts and words; or, in other terms, thoughts and words elegantly adapted to the subject.”) Politically conservative, their subject matter was civilization and society, and they wrote satires about the changing society—such as the increasing Middle Class and the expanded literacy rate. No one wrote good heroic literature, but we still read some of the better mock heroic and burlesques from this time.

This was the literature for the aristocracy. The reading public also continued to expand, much to the chagrin of Swift and others. The popular press published articles on politics, science, philosophy, literature, and, of course, scandal and gossip. The intelligentsia considered the hack writers who produced these articles to be a threat to true learning—after all, even today, a person who enjoys Milton and Homer will probably not appreciate the intelligence of those who read *People* magazine or tabloids for fun!

The poetry of this time described nature, as landscape gardening also became the rage (have you ever seen a movie with an English estate, with lovely green grass and small ponds and trees?). Many of the lesser poets exaggerated their writing style, in hopes of creating poems similar to Virgil. They use “poetic diction,” artificial language, full of personification, periphrasis (use indirect words, such as “finny tribe” instead of “fish”), stock phrases (“shining sword”), Latin words (“gelid” for frost), and adjectives ending in “y” (notice “finny” in “finny tribe”). Here is an example of some of the bad poetry of the time, taken from the *Norton Anthology*. (The lines mean that men burned straw and hay in Thessalian fields.) Here is part of Glover’s *Leonidas*, published in 1737.

There at his words devouring Vulcan feasts
On all the tribute which Thessalian meads
Yield to the scythe, and riots on the heaps
Of Ceres, emptied of the ripened grain.

In prose, the novel as we know it today—a narrative about the world and the men and women who live in it—began at this time. The increasing wages for writers and the larger reading public both contributed to this. The author Samuel Richardson basically created the modern novel, and his work, unlike Daniel Defoe (*Robinson Crusoe* and others), was popular with the middle class and the aristocracy. Richardson’s first novel is *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*, published in 1740 and is an epistolary novel or one that tells the story through letters. Many later authors also used this style, including Jane Austen and Fyodor Dostoevsky.

In drama, no tragedy written in the eighteenth century endures today. Comedy took the place of tragedy, and the comedies satirize the upper class, as a nobleman often licentiously pursued an emancipated lady.

The Late Eighteenth Century was the age of the greatest number of great prose writers in various types. Among them were Samuel Johnson, who wrote excellent literary criticism and produced the first dictionary; and his excellent biographer James Boswell.¹⁰ David Hume wrote wonderfully in philosophy, Sir Joshua Reynolds in aesthetics (if you own any art history texts, it should include one or two of his paintings), and Adam Smith in economics. The *Norton Anthology* claims that “Each of these authors is a master stylist, whose effort to express himself clearly and fully creates an art as difficult to achieve, and as precise, as poetry. Indeed, the prose style of the period often seems to build on the principles of neoclassical verse: its elaborately balanced use of parallels and antitheses; its elegant allusions to a classical literature; its public, rhetorical manner; and its craving for generality. At its best, however, such prose depends less on formal virtues than on its weight of thought.”¹¹

At this time, with the advances in science and what poets believed to be the end of all mystery, the poets no longer looked to the world where everything was explained already. Instead, poets began, as they do today, to look inward: to introspectively brood, to confess their thoughts and feelings. This produced poetry concerned with death, horror, and decay (think Emily Dickinson, not John Donne or Robert Frost). You can read one of the most famous of these poems, Thomas Gray’s “Elegy in a Country Court-yard,” in the poetry appendix in this section. The language they used returned to normal, or almost normal speech (no more poetic diction, thank goodness!), and they wrote about their inner world.

10. Johnson’s *Dictionary* was published in 1755. He hoped not to fix language but to slow changes and eliminate (what he considered to be) superfluous words. Boswell called him “the man who had conferred stability on the language of his country.”

11. “The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century.” *Norton Anthology of English Literature*. Ed. M. H. Abrams. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, p. 1781.

The Romantic Period

The Romantic Period lasted from 1785, the decade in which Samuel Johnson died and William Blake and Robert Burns published their first poetry, to 1830, when the major Romantic writers no longer wrote. At the start of this period, the power and wealth in England belonged to the landed aristocracy; by the end, England was an industrial nation, and the wealth and power belonged to the major employers, who tried to control the ever more unruly lower class workers.

This was also a period of revolutions: first the American Revolution, then the French Revolution, and, less violently, the Industrial Revolution. In the early days of the French Revolution, when the French people declared the Rights of Man and stormed the Bastille to free political prisoners, the English enthusiastically supported the Revolution. Gradually, though, as the guillotine killed the nobility, and the French invaded the Rhineland and the Netherlands, and England had to go to war with France, and Napoleon eventually surfaced as emperor, the Englishmen with liberal beliefs had no side they wanted to wholly support. Power-hungry Napoleon turned traitor to their hopes, but those who opposed him were not wholly right, either (at least, as far as the liberals viewed the matter).

The Industrial Revolution began in the mid-1700s (James Watt's invention of the steam engine in 1765 greatly contributed) and drew workers from their farms to mill towns and cities. There the people worked long hours for low wages, in foul air, often with loud noise and risk of bodily injury. (Those with land in the country, though, had little disruption of life, despite the turmoil around.)

In 1832, the first Reform Bill passed that possibly prevented a working class revolution. Among other things, this bill extended the vote—although half the middle class, most of the working class, and all women still had no say.

The Norton Anthology claims that the Romantic era “exceeds almost all other ages of English literature in the range and diversity of its achievements” (4). Romantic poetry perhaps proves (or disproves) this statement, as the Romantic Era is best-known for its poets: William Blake, William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Percy Bysshe Shelley, John Keats, Alfred, Lord Tennyson, and Robert Browning are all examples of poets found in *Sound and Sense*. (The poetry appendix in this section includes several more poems by the important Romantic poets Lord Byron and Robert Burns.)

The Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, the combined effort of the poets Wordsworth and Coleridge, explains the theory of the new poetry. First of all, the old style of writing, the artificial, highly planned style (think Milton), had to go. Instead of orderly poetry, the Romantic poet desired, as Wordsworth stated, “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.” The poet is what makes poetry, not an event or an image, or a person, but the poet's emotions and imagination. This projected first person lyric poetry to the forefront, and the epic fell by the wayside.

The poet no longer worked according to poetic rules. They wanted spontaneous poetry, produced as naturally “as the leaves to a tree” (as Keats said). Composition should not be a chore, but rather should be spontaneous. Poetry flows not from logical, reasonable choices, but from instinct.

Although many Romantic poems describe nature, they are not merely descriptive. If you can recall Keats' poem “To Autumn” at the end of *Sound and Sense* chapter four, the poem describes autumn, but the description personifies the items, and echoes a passing day, and comments (though not overtly) on beauty and transience. This is a typical Romantic poem—human ideas and experiences support the nature description.

Before the Romantic era, common people and common events were unimportant in literature. Kings and queens and wars and conquests took precedence. With the Romantics, though, the commonplace took center stage. Coleridge described genius as “To combine the child's sense of wonder and novelty with the appearances, which every day for perhaps forty years had rendered familiar”—and I can agree that this is a worthy goal (though not, perhaps, the only test of genius).

No dramas whatsoever remain from this period. Only two theaters were legally open until 1843, and they produced melodramatic, overacted plays. Several of the Romantic poets, such as Byron and Shelley, tried to write plays, but their attempts were not successful.

In prose, some writers produced essays, and some produced novels. Good writers wrote columns (or essays) for magazines (monthly publications) and reviews (quarterly publications). The “familiar essay” was especially popular: an article about a common (not technical) subject, written as if the author addressed the reader in conversation, relaxed and friendly. The best essayists could support themselves as freelance writers, without another job.

The Romantic Period enjoyed two main types of novels. One was the Gothic novel (remember *Frankenstein*), and the other was the novel of purpose that tried to spread the social and political theories popular during the French Revolution. The novelists often tried to spread these ideas hidden in Gothic novels, and thus *Frankenstein* is also an example of the novel of purpose, as the creature demonstrates the inherent goodness of man, twisted because of society.

Of the two major novelists of the time, one, Sir Walter Scott, has faded from popularity. He wrote long novels with loose plots and plenty of fantastic events. The other, Jane Austen, was less popular at the time, but has kept and increased her popularity since. Her novels are, as you will soon see, intricate, spare, and entirely concerned with her known world.

The Victorian Age

Queen Victoria ruled from 1837 to 1901—over sixty years on the throne. Only two historical periods in Britain are named for a monarch, and both are named for queens (Elizabeth and Victoria). The “official” Victorian Age begins in 1830, and extends to 1901. At Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee (sixty year anniversary), Mark Twain said of this Age, “British history is two thousand years old, and yet in a good many ways the world has moved farther ahead since the Queen was born than it moved in all the rest of the two thousand put together” (Norton 891). Such inventions as swift steam trains and iron ships allowed more speedy travel; steam also helped run looms, printing presses, and farm combines. Other inventions included the telegraph, intercontinental cable, photography, and anesthetics. This is also when required education first began.

England not only became the first industrial nation, but, at its high point of colonization controlled a quarter of the land on earth. With such enormous territory, they also needed to rule it. Joseph Conrad addresses some of the difficulty of managing such a foreign place as Africa (*Heart of Darkness*). Despite the difficulties, the English built railroads, managed governments, and fought colonial wars (especially the Boer War in South Africa, from 1899–1902).

During this period, London was the most influential city in Western civilization. It more than tripled in population during these decades. The trade and manufacture (which now dictated a man’s importance, not land ownership as previously was the case) vastly increased the wealth of the nation. The progress felt satisfactory, but at times the Victorians paused and mourned the end of traditional, relational life, as technology took over. They, in fact, were the first to deal with modernism, the feeling of isolation, even amidst wealth and power.

Politically, in 1832, the Reform Bill allowed all males to vote if they owned property worth at least 10 pounds in annual rent. (This allowed the middle class to vote, and the working class was allowed to vote in 1867 when another Reform Bill passed.) This change did not help England much, though: in the 1840s, a severe depression hit, with high unemployment and, thus, riots. Coal-mining and industry workers lived in unsanitary slums and some children by age five dragged heavy coal tubs through the mines for sixteen hours a day.

One of the necessary changes came after the potato blight ruined crops in Ireland and the people faced starvation or emigration. This is called the “Time of Troubles.” The Corn Laws kept high tariffs on foreign grains. This ensured the people bought only English grown grain (and so, therefore, the farmers and landowners liked the Corn Laws). Such governmental regulation is not a good idea, though: when the crops failed, the people starved. And if the crops didn’t fail, the poor people could still not afford the expensive grains, and they starved. When Parliament repealed the Corn Laws in 1846, tariffs on all items became minimal, and the market regulated itself enough that revolution no longer threatened England. The slums, though, remained.

After 1848, although Dickens and several other writers continued to write about societal ills, overall the country enjoyed prosperity. (One historian even claimed that the 1850s would have been the ideal decade in the history of Britain to be young.) Prince Albert sponsored the Great Exhibition in the Crystal Palace in 1851. The Crystal Palace was the first building to use modern architectural principles—glass and iron were functional structural members—and the building was a triumph of Victorian technology.

Most “thoughtful” Victorians fell into one of two major camps. Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) theorized that all institutions should promote “Utility,” which, by Bentham’s definition, meant “Happiness.” Does this government office contribute the greatest amount of happiness to the greatest number of people? If so, let it stand. If not, it should go. The Civil Service changed dramatically as a result of this theory. However, Bentham did not think religion useful for a reasonable person, and so he and his followers ignored religion.

The other group of people disagreed that religion was not useful, as they believed that people need faith as much or more than they need food or sleep. Some of these anti-Utilitarians followed Christ and the Church (such as John Henry Newman), and some discarded Christianity in favor of their own invented belief system.

Besides Bentham, another threat wounded the church—science. Advances in geology caused the age of the world to come into question, which also made humanity (if not around from the beginning) insignificant. Astronomers realized the massive expanse of the universe, which made humans more insignificant. And then Darwin, with his *Origin of Species* and later works, denied man’s status as created in God’s image, and instead claimed men descend from apes.

Near the end of the Victorian Age, although much of the country continued to live in peace and prosperity (think of Oscar Wilde’s *The Importance of Being Earnest*, written around this time), some troubles began bubbling below the surface. Parliament hotly debated the status of Ireland and Roman Catholics in general. Germany, under Bismarck, began to expand its navy and military, and threatened Britain’s superiority in trade and industry as well. The U.S., after the Civil War, increased grain production, which caused a severe depression in England, since prices there could not compete with the imports from America. Another threat was the rise of the Labor movement, which became powerful after the working class received the right to vote in 1867. The Labor movement was more or less socialism: let the government provide for the common welfare and, by “government,” what they meant is “tax the rich and give to the poor.”¹²

One system of beliefs that affected almost every Victorian writer was Evangelicalism. This does not have the same definition that we would use today—then it could loosely mean any enthusiastic desire for reform,

12. As one of my teachers said, “Democracy is two wolves and a sheep deciding what to have for lunch.”

such as the emancipation of the slaves (which occurred in 1833). Evangelicals belonged to the “Low Church” classification¹³, and they also closely matched in beliefs all Nonconformists: Baptists, Methodists, and other Protestant sects. Evangelicals also wanted strict morality and, unfortunately, often judged others for their sin. One example of this is the classic Victorian prudishness which you may have heard of—female innocence and virginity, no discussion whatsoever of sexual matters—became the norm.¹⁴

Women’s status changed at this time as well. The Industrial Revolution used hundreds of thousands of women in textile industries, which demanded long hours and difficult working conditions. Despite their increased presence in the workplace, women were not allowed to vote until 1918 (although suffragettes petitioned as early as the 1840s). Married women were allowed to own and manage their own property beginning in 1870. Factory Acts shortened the workday, which had been sixteen hours. Women sought higher education, which in 1837 was unavailable, as the universities were closed to women. The first women’s college opened in 1848; by the end of the Victorian Era, women could take degrees at twelve universities and study at Oxford and Cambridge (though not earn degrees). Women also worked to get better jobs. The “surplus” women in society (unmarried due to a shortage of men) had few options: emigrate, become prostitutes, or work as a governess. The latter option offered no job security, low wages, and isolation, as neither servant nor family. These “modern” women hoped for something better.

One advantage of Victorian novels is their respectability. Because families often read novels aloud together, novelists avoided topics that would embarrass young ladies. This makes for very “clean” stories. Often the purpose of the novels was edification, as the readers wanted guidance, and the novelists happily offered it.

Victorian authors utilized a variety of styles and subjects. *Sound and Sense* includes several Victorian poets: Tennyson, the poet laureate (“Ulysses,” “The Eagle”); Robert Browning (“My Last Duchess”); Gerard Manley Hopkins (“The Caged Skylark,” “No worst, there is none”); Thomas Hardy (“The Man He Killed,” “The Convergence of the Twain”). Even among these few is wide variety—classical antiquity, nature description, Renaissance murder, the state of the soul, grief, war, the Titanic as far as subjects; monologue, narrative, sonnet, rhyming, and unrhyming as far as styles.

The Victorians loved the theater. In London by the mid-1860s, 150,000 people went to the theater on any given day. The theater to them was like television to us—that

is how popular it was. Generally people now dismiss the Victorian theater as melodramatic (whether rightly or wrongly), until the 1890s, when Oscar Wilde and George Bernard (pronounced BURN urd) Shaw wrote and revived the theater.

The Victorian novelists produced outstanding work. Their main concern was with people: relationships, society, money, manners, family. Before the Victorian Age, novelists wrote about events. George Eliot (a woman) changed this and began to write about the inner thoughts and feelings of her characters. Thus, if a brother yells at his sister, instead of showing the external consequences of his action (sister goes to cry, perhaps parents punish boy), we read about the guilt the sister feels because she deserved the chastisement, and the brother imagines himself (as usual) self-righteous and correct, waiting for his sister to apologize for all the wrongs she has done.¹⁵ Dickens does not follow this newer style, but several of the remaining books we read this year will emphasize the inner emotions.

The Twentieth Century

By Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee (for sixty years of reigning!) in 1897, her era was ending. Artists such as Oscar Wilde wanted “art for art’s sake” that went against the established ideas of the middle class. This created a break between the artists, isolated from the general public. When elementary education became mandatory in England in 1870, the number of literate people increased dramatically, but most of these were not really “educated.” (Perhaps you know some people like this: although they CAN read, they do not have the time or attention to read classics or other quality literature.)

Thus, the reading public fragmented and the gap between the “highbrow” readers and the “lowbrows” increased. Popular works satisfied the lowbrow general public, and the educated elite kept themselves separate, as authors like Virginia Woolf and others dominated the scene.

In terms of world events, the early twentieth century was a time of the so-called women’s liberation. In 1882, married women were finally granted the right to own property themselves (meaning the ownership did not belong just to their husbands); universities gradually admitted women; full suffrage for women finally came in 1928.

The Boer War occurred during the turn of the century (1899–1902), in which the British eventually dominated the South African Boers, but their victory was bittersweet at best. They probably should not have fought at all. The British Empire developed into the British Commonwealth (an association of countries that govern themselves) that gradually developed over the first half of the century.

13. English church ran the gamut from High Church to Low Church. High Church is closest to the Roman Catholic Church, with emphasis on tradition and church hierarchy, and liturgical services. Low Church focuses more on personal inspiration and understanding of the Scriptures, with more free-form services and less emphasis on the Church itself.

14. Unfortunately, human nature does not change. When sexual sin became culturally unacceptable, it simply moved underground, in the form of pornography and a huge increase in prostitution.

15. Perhaps a better example would be *Wuthering Heights*: if, instead of noticing Heathcliff’s darkened brows (the “old” style, which shows actions), we read about his thoughts, his anger, his hurt, his ideas, we would be reading a novel in the “new” style, with internal action emphasized.

Closer to home, too, in Ireland, Irish nationalism continued to burst out until the 1920s. The Irish were sick of British control; this comes out (sometimes only subtly) in Yeats' poetry and Joyce's prose.

Edwardian England lasted from 1901–1910. Edward VII led an extravagant and self-indulgent upper class, and in general the writers and artists avoided high society. (Compare this to the poet Tennyson, whom Queen Victoria liked much.) The upper class continued as they had in Victorian times, enjoying country homes, servants, and a comfortable hierarchy between the social classes. George V took the throne in 1910, and from then until WWI began in 1914, England enjoyed a brief golden age, before WWI changed the world and took away much of the innocence of society. Georgian England was a lull before the storm.

WWI produced disillusionment. Then came the 1930s Depression (not just confined to America!) and Hitler's Nazism followed. Although eventually Great Britain was on the winning side in WWII, they gradually lost their empire. India and Pakistan gained freedom in 1947. They stayed in the British Commonwealth. However, the Irish Republic withdrew from the Commonwealth in 1949, and South Africa withdrew in 1961. West Germany and Japan began to outpace Britain in production and economics.

Right before WWI, poetry changed dramatically. Poets avoided exact metrical patterns, which helped them get rid of extraneous words (of course, the great older poets could write poetry in a sonnet form, say, without extra words—crafting a poem like this is difficult). The new poets wanted clear images, without romantic fuzziness or extra emotion. The new style of writing could not hold interest for longer poems, and, in fact, most of the earliest poetry writers of this time we no longer read.

Another change in poetry came when Sir Herbert Grierson released John Donne's poems in 1912. This forgotten poetry renewed the interest in the Metaphysical poets, and poets began to include colloquialisms, slang, irony, and puns, all of which poets had not used for two centuries. Poets who use the new style include T. S. Eliot, Gerard Manly Hopkins, and Auden. Eliot experimented with changing tone suddenly (colloquial to formal, for example); Gerard Manly Hopkins experimented with language to a new degree (see *Sound and Sense* to review a few of his poems). The other English poet of the time is Yeats. He began as a national poet for his native Ireland; later his poems become increasingly complex.

In the 1930s, the poetry produced was almost clinical (think of Auden and his "Unknown Citizen" for example). By the time WWII came, poets wanted vehemence, and Dylan Thomas, with his "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good

Night" is good example. By the 1950s, poets thought Thomas and others were verbally excessive, so they tried to get a neutral tone: Philip Larkin is the most famous. Today, Seamus Heaney continues in this vein, in which he tries to give an accurate picture of experience and pure diction.

From 1912 to 1930, English novelists also revolutionized fiction. Joseph Conrad, James Joyce, E. M. Forster, as well as D. H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf, all wrote during these years. Three changes they instituted are as follows. First, they could not assume their readers shared their assumptions about what was important. Thus, instead of looking to the outside world and institutions such as marriage and religion (as former authors did), the new authors looked to themselves and wrote about what they found important. Second, time in novels no longer moved chronologically but flowed according to the characters' thoughts (thus, instead of a distinct, "Jane remembered x," the author might have Jane's first person account: "Mrs. Dove, I loved your new suede curtains. That time I was riding with George the horse bolted and I almost fell off. I hope she gets new couches soon"). The whole sense of time vanishes. And third, the subconscious played a larger role in novels; a character's memories and thoughts became the vehicle to expose him or her, rather than a series of events. Thus came the famed "stream-of-consciousness" writing during the 1920s (more on that in *Dubliners* notes).

Modern drama in England begins with George Bernard Shaw, whose *Pygmalion* we will read in a few weeks. He did not write as Oscar Wilde did in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, full of witty (and trite) sayings. Instead, he wrote brilliant plays intended to instruct, and he instructs beautifully. J. M. Barrie (author of *Peter Pan*) also wrote popular sentimental plays, now mostly ignored. But the real changes in drama did not come until after WWII; since then, drama has been the literary form with the most innovation. The most successful playwright is Samuel Beckett, the friend and amanuensis of James Joyce. Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (g'DOE) is his most famous work, and if you ever get a chance to see it, go. It is a very different experience than a Shakespeare play. In it, two men are on the road waiting for Godot (God?); they have a banal, circular conversation, both with each other and with the few who pass by. Another famous playwright is Tom Stoppard, who wrote both *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* (based on the minor characters in *Hamlet*) and the script for the famous movie *Shakespeare in Love*. (I do not, however, recommend Stoppard.) ■

“A Modest Proposal” by Jonathan Swift

A Modest Proposal

FOR PREVENTING THE CHILDREN OF POOR PEOPLE
IN IRELAND FROM BEING A BURDEN TO THEIR PARENTS
OR COUNTRY, AND FOR MAKING THEM BENEFICIAL
TO THE PUBLIC.

It is a melancholy object to those who walk through this great town or travel in the country, when they see the streets, the roads, and cabin doors, crowded with beggars of the female sex, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags and importuning every passenger for an alms. These mothers, instead of being able to work for their honest livelihood, are forced to employ all their time in strolling to beg sustenance for their helpless infants; who as they grow up either turn thieves for want of work, or leave their dear native country to fight for the pretender in Spain, or sell themselves to the Barbadoes.

I think it is agreed by all parties that this prodigious number of children in the arms, or on the backs, or at the heels of their mothers, and frequently of their fathers, is in the present deplorable state of the kingdom a very great additional grievance; and therefore whoever could find out a fair, cheap, and easy method of making these children sound, useful members of the commonwealth, would deserve so well of the public as to have his statue set up for a preserver of the nation.

But my intention is very far from being confined to provide only for the children of professed beggars; it is of a much greater extent, and shall take in the whole number of infants at a certain age who are born of parents in effect as little able to support them as those who demand our charity in the streets.

As to my own part, having turned my thoughts for many years upon this important subject, and maturely weighed the several schemes of our projectors, I have always found them grossly mistaken in their computation. It is true, a child just dropped from its dam, may be supported by her milk for a solar year, with little other nourishment; at most not above the value of two shillings, which the mother may certainly get, or the value in scraps, by her lawful occupation of begging; and it is exactly at one year old that I propose to provide for them in such a manner as instead of being a charge upon their parents or the parish, or wanting food and raiment for the rest of their lives, they shall on the contrary contribute to the feeding, and partly to the clothing, of many thousands.

There is likewise another great advantage in my scheme, that it will prevent those voluntary abortions, and that horrid practice of women murdering their bastard children, alas! too frequent among us, sacrificing the poor innocent babes, I doubt, more to avoid the expense than the shame, which would move tears and pity in the most savage and inhuman breast.

The number of souls in this kingdom being usually reckoned one million and a half, of these I calculate there may be about two hundred thousand couple whose wives are breeders; from which number I subtract thirty thousand couples who are able to maintain their own children, (although I apprehend there cannot be so many under the present distresses of the kingdom;) but this being granted, there will remain an hundred and seventy thousand breeders. I again subtract fifty thousand for those women who miscarry, or whose children die by accident or disease within the year. There only remain an hundred and twenty thousand children of poor parents annually born. The question therefore is, how this number shall be reared and provided for? which, as I have already said, under the present situation of affairs is utterly impossible by all the methods hitherto proposed. For we can neither employ them in handicraft or agriculture; we neither build houses (I mean in the country) nor cultivate land; they can very seldom pick up a livelihood by stealing, till they arrive at six years old, except where they are of towardly parts; although I confess they learn the rudiments much earlier; during which time they can however be looked upon only as probationers: as I have been informed by a principal gentleman in the county of Cavan, who protested to me that he never knew above one or two instances under the age of six, even in a part of the kingdom so renowned for the quickest proficiency in that art.

I am assured by our merchants that a boy or a girl before twelve years old is no saleable commodity; and even when they come to this age they will not yield above three pounds, or three pounds and half a crown at most on the exchange; which cannot turn to account either to the parents or the kingdom, the charge of nutriment and rags having been at least four times that value.

I shall now therefore humbly propose my own thoughts, which I hope will not be liable to the least objection.

I have been assured by a very knowing American of my acquaintance in London, that a young healthy child well nursed is at a year old a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome food, whether stewed, roasted, baked, or boiled; and I make no doubt that it will equally serve in a fricassee or a ragout.

I do therefore humbly offer it to public consideration that of the hundred and twenty thousand children already computed, twenty thousand may be reserved for breed, whereof only one fourth part to be males; which is more than we allow to sheep, black cattle, or swine; and my reason is, that these children are seldom the fruits of marriage, a circumstance not much regarded by our savages, therefore one male will be sufficient to serve four females. That the remaining hundred thousand may, at a year old, be offered in sale to the persons of quality and fortune through the kingdom; always advising the mother to let them suck plentifully in the last month, so as to render them plump and fat for a good table. A child will make

two dishes at an entertainment for friends, and when the family dines alone, the fore or hind quarter will make a reasonable dish, and seasoned with a little pepper or salt will be very good if boiled on the fourth day, especially in winter.

I have reckoned upon a medium that a child just born will weigh twelve pounds, and in a solar year, if tolerably nursed, increaseth to twenty-eight pounds.

I grant this food will be somewhat dear, and therefore very proper for landlords, who, as they have already devoured most of the parents, seem to have the best title to the children.

Infant's flesh will be in season throughout the year, but more plentiful in March, and a little before and after: for we are told by a grave author, an eminent French physician, that fish being a prolific diet, there are more children born in Roman Catholic countries about nine months after Lent than at any other season; therefore, reckoning a year after Lent, the markets will be more glutted than usual, because the number of Popish infants is at least three to one in this kingdom: and therefore it will have one other collateral advantage, by lessening the number of Papists among us.

I have already computed the charge of nursing a beggar's child (in which list I reckon all cottagers, laborers, and four-fifths of the farmers) to be about two shillings per annum, rags included; and I believe no gentleman would repine to give ten shillings for the carcass of a good fat child, which, as I have said, will make four dishes of excellent nutritive meat, when he hath only some particular friend or his own family to dine with him. Thus the squire will learn to be a good landlord, and grow popular among his tenants, the mother will have eight shillings net profit, and be fit for work till she produces another child.

Those who are more thrifty (as I must confess the times require) may flay the carcass; the skin of which artificially dressed will make admirable gloves for ladies, and summer boots for fine gentlemen.

As to our city of Dublin, shambles may be appointed for this purpose in the most convenient parts of it, and butchers we may be assured will not be wanting; although I rather recommend buying the children alive, and dressing them hot from the knife, as we do roasting pigs.

A very worthy person, a true lover of his country, and whose virtues I highly esteem, was lately pleased in discoursing on this matter to offer a refinement upon my scheme. He said that many gentlemen of this kingdom, having of late destroyed their deer, he conceived that the want of venison might be well supplied by the bodies of young lads and maidens, not exceeding fourteen years of age nor under twelve; so great a number of both sexes in every county being now ready to starve for want of work and service; and these to be disposed of by their parents, if alive, or otherwise by their nearest relations. But with due deference to so excellent a friend and so deserving a patriot, I cannot be altogether in his sentiments; for as to the males, my American acquaintance assured me from frequent experience, that their flesh was generally tough

and lean, like that of our schoolboys, by continual exercise, and their taste disagreeable; and to fatten them would not answer the charge. Then as to the females, it would, I think, with humble submission, be a loss to the public, because they soon would become breeders themselves: and besides, it is not improbable that some scrupulous people might be apt to censure such a practice, (although indeed very unjustly) as a little bordering upon cruelty; which, I confess, hath always been with me the strongest objection against any project, how well soever intended.

But in order to justify my friend, he confessed that this expedient was put into his head by the famous Psalmanazar, a native of the island Formosa, who came from thence to London above twenty years ago, and in conversation told my friend that in his country when any young person happened to be put to death, the executioner sold the carcass to persons of quality as a prime dainty; and that, in his time, the body of a plump girl of fifteen, who was crucified for an attempt to poison the emperor, was sold to his Imperial Majesty's prime minister of state, and other great mandarins of the court, in joints from the gibbet, at four hundred crowns. Neither indeed can I deny, that if the same use were made of several plump young girls in this town, who without one single groat to their fortunes cannot stir abroad without a chair, and appear at the playhouse and assemblies in foreign fineries which they never will pay for, the kingdom would not be the worse.

Some persons of a desponding spirit are in great concern about that vast number of poor people who are aged, diseased, or maimed, and I have been desired to employ my thoughts what course may be taken to ease the nation of so grievous an encumbrance. But I am not in the least pain upon that matter, because it is very well known that they are every day dying and rotting by cold and famine, and filth and vermin, as fast as can be reasonably expected. And as to the younger laborers, they are now in almost as hopeful a condition. They cannot get work, and consequently pine away for want of nourishment to a degree that if at any time they are accidentally hired to common labor, they have not strength to perform it; and thus the country and themselves are happily delivered from the evils to come.

I have too long digressed, and therefore shall return to my subject. I think the advantages by the proposal which I have made are obvious and many, as well as of the highest importance.

For first, as I have already observed, it would greatly lessen the number of Papists, with whom we are yearly overrun, being the principal breeders of the nation as well as our most dangerous enemies; and who stay at home on purpose to deliver the kingdom to the Pretender, hoping to take their advantage by the absence of so many good Protestants, who have chosen rather to leave their country than stay at home and pay tithes against their conscience to an Episcopal curate.

Secondly, the poorer tenants will have something valuable of their own, which by law may be made liable to distress, and help to pay their landlord's rent, their corn and cattle being already seized, and money a thing unknown.

Thirdly, whereas the maintenance of an hundred thousand children, from two years old and upwards, cannot be computed at less than ten shillings a piece per annum, the nation's stock will be thereby increased fifty thousand pounds per annum, besides the profit of a new dish introduced to the tables of all gentlemen of fortune in the kingdom who have any refinement in taste. And the money will circulate among ourselves, the goods being entirely of our own growth and manufacture.

Fourthly, the constant breeders, besides the gain of eight shillings sterling per annum by the sale of their children, will be rid of the charge of maintaining them after the first year.

Fifthly, this food would likewise bring great custom to taverns, where the vintners will certainly be so prudent as to procure the best receipts for dressing it to perfection, and consequently have their houses frequented by all the fine gentlemen, who justly value themselves upon their knowledge in good eating; and a skillful cook, who understands how to oblige his guests, will contrive to make it as expensive as they please.

Sixthly, this would be a great inducement to marriage, which all wise nations have either encouraged by rewards or enforced by laws and penalties. It would increase the care and tenderness of mothers toward their children, when they were sure of a settlement for life to the poor babes, provided in some sort by the public, to their annual profit instead of expense. We should see an honest emulation among the married women, which of them could bring the fattest child to the market. Men would become as fond of their wives during the time of their pregnancy as they are now of their mares in foal, their cows in calf, or sows when they are ready to farrow; nor offer to beat or kick them (as is too frequent a practice) for fear of a miscarriage.

Many other advantages might be enumerated. For instance, the addition of some thousand carcasses in our exportation of barreled beef, the propagation of swine's flesh, and improvement in the art of making good bacon, so much wanted among us by the great destruction of pigs, too frequent at our tables; which are no way comparable in taste or magnificence to a well-grown, fat, yearling child, which roasted whole will make a considerable figure at a lord mayor's feast or any other public entertainment. But this and many others I omit, being studious of brevity.

Supposing that one thousand families in this city would be constant customers for infants' flesh, besides others who might have it at merry meetings, particularly at weddings and christenings, I compute that Dublin would take off annually about twenty thousand carcasses, and the rest of the kingdom (where probably they will be sold somewhat cheaper) the remaining eighty thousand.

I can think of no one objection that will probably be raised against this proposal, unless it should be urged that the number of people will be thereby much lessened in the kingdom. This I freely own, and it was indeed one principal design in offering it to the world. I desire the reader will observe, that I calculate my remedy for this one individual kingdom of Ireland and for no other that ever was, is, or I think ever can be upon earth. Therefore let no man talk to me of other expedients: of taxing our absentees at five shillings a pound: of using neither clothes nor household furniture except what is of our own growth and manufacture: of utterly rejecting the materials and instruments that promote foreign luxury: of curing the expensiveness of pride, vanity, idleness, and gaming in our women: of introducing a vein of parsimony, prudence, and temperance: of learning to love our country, in the want which we differ even from Laplanders and the inhabitants of Topinamboo: of quitting our animosities and factions nor acting any longer like the Jews, who were murdering one another at the very moment their city was taken: of being a little cautious not to sell our country and conscience for nothing: of teaching landlords to have at least one degree of mercy toward their tenants: lastly, of putting a spirit of honesty, industry, and skill into our shopkeepers; who, if a resolution could now be taken to buy only our native goods, would immediately unite to cheat and exact upon us in the price, the measure, and the goodness, nor could ever yet be brought to make one fair proposal of just dealing, though often and earnestly invited to it.

Therefore I repeat, let no man talk to me of these and the like expedients, till he hath at least some glimpse of hope that there will ever be some hearty and sincere attempt to put them in practice.

But as to myself, having been wearied out for many years with offering vain, idle, visionary thoughts, and at length utterly despairing of success, I fortunately fell upon this proposal, which, as it is wholly new, so it hath something solid and real, of no expense and little trouble, full in our own power, and whereby we can incur no danger in disobliging England. For this kind of commodity will not bear exportation, the flesh being of too tender a consistence to admit a long continuance in salt, although perhaps I could name a country which would be glad to eat up our whole nation without it.

After all, I am not so violently bent upon my own opinion as to reject any offer proposed by wise men, which shall be found equally innocent, cheap, easy, and effectual. But before something of that kind shall be advanced in contradiction to my scheme, and offering a better, I desire the author or authors will be pleased maturely to consider two points. First, as things now stand, how they will be able to find food and raiment for an hundred thousand useless mouths and backs. And secondly, there being a round million of creatures in human figure throughout this kingdom, whose sole subsistence put into a common stock would leave them in debt two millions of pounds sterling, adding those who are beggars by profession to

the bulk of farmers, cottagers, and laborers, with their wives and children who are beggars in effect; I desire those politicians who dislike my overture, and may perhaps be so bold to attempt an answer, that they will first ask the parents of these mortals whether they would not at this day think it a great happiness to have been sold for food at a year old in the manner I prescribe, and thereby have avoided such a perpetual sense of misfortunes as they have since gone through by the oppression of landlords, the impossibility of paying rent without money or trade, the want of common sustenance, with neither house nor clothes to cover them from the inclemencies of the weather, and the most inevitable prospect of entailing the like or greater miseries upon their breed for ever.

I profess, in the sincerity of my heart, that I have not the least personal interest in endeavoring to promote this necessary work, having no other motive than the public good of my country, by advancing our trade, providing for infants, relieving the poor, and giving some pleasure to the rich. I have no children by which I can propose to get a single penny; the youngest being nine years old, and my wife past childbearing. ■

Poetry

In this poetry appendix I've included Coleridge's "Metrical Feet," a poem that will help you memorize poetic meters, a few extra poems mentioned in the history notes, and a few extra poetry vocabulary words that you should probably review before taking the AP test.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Metrical Feet"

Trochee trips from long to short.
From long to long in solemn sort
Slow Spondee stalks; strong foot! yet ill able
Ever to come up with Dactyl trisyllable.
Iambics march from short to long;
With a leap and a bound the swift Anapests throng.

Christopher Marlowe's "Passionate Shepherd to His Love"

Come live with me, and be my love;
And we will all the pleasures prove
That hills and valleys, dales and fields,
Woods or steepy mountain yields.

And we will sit upon the rocks,
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses,
And a thousand fragrant posies;
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroider'd all with leaves of myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair-lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy-buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me, and be my love.

The shepherds' swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me, and be my love.

John Dryden's "Epigram on Milton"

Three poets,¹ in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed,
The next in majesty, in both the last:
The force of Nature could no farther go;
To make a third, she joined the former two.

Thomas Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard"

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.
Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike the inevitable hour.
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye Proud, impute to these the fault,
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honor's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

1. Homer, Virgil, Milton.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood;
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet even these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by the unlettered muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply:
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee who, mindful of the unhonored dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
'Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

'There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

'Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove,
Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

'One morn I missed him on the customed hill,
Along the heath and near his favorite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

The next with dirges due in sad array
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne.
Approach and read (for thou can'st read) the lay,
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.'

The Epitaph

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth
A youth to fortune and to fame unknown.
Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty and his soul sincere,
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:
He gave to Misery all he had, a tear,
He gained from Heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

George Gordon, Lord Byron's "She Walks in Beauty"

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impair'd the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent!

George Gordon, Lord Byron's "The Destruction of Sennacherib"

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he passed;
And the eyes of the sleepers waxed deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever
grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there rolled not the breath of his pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail:
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal;
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

Robert Burns' "A Red, Red Rose"

O my Luve's like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June:
O my Luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune!
As fair thou art, my bonnie lass,
So deep in love am I:
And I will love thee still, my dear,
Till a' the seas gang dry:
Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt with the sun;
I will luve thee still my dear,
When the sands of life shall run.
And fare thee weel, my only Luve,
And fare thee weel a while!
And I will come again, my Luve,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile.

Extra Poetry Vocabulary

Canto: a major division of a long poem.

Elegy: a type of poem that laments a death or loss (see Gray's "Elegy in a Country Church Yard").

Enjambment: the continuation of a line of poetry from one line to the next without a punctuation break.

Idyll: a poem that praises an "ideal" time or place, such as Tennyson's lengthy *Idylls of the King*, about King Arthur.

Lyric Poetry: a lyric, generally a short poem, focuses on an emotion, feelings, and reflection; lyrics have meter and rhyme; they are not epics, as they do not tell a lengthy story.

Metaphysical Poetry: poems that ponder complex philosophical ideas through extended metaphors; John Donne is an example of a metaphysical poet.

Narrative Poetry: tells a story.

Ode: a lengthy poem that celebrates a subject (see Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn").

Sestina: a poem of 39 lines (six sets of six, with a three line concluding stanza); the end words of the first six lines repeat in a set pattern throughout the rest of the poem, with all six showing up in the last stanza, two per line, as in Elizabeth Bishop's "Sestina" .

September rain falls on the house.
In the failing light, the old grandmother
sits in the kitchen with the child
beside the Little Marvel Stove,
reading the jokes from the almanac,
laughing and talking to hide her tears.

She thinks that her equinoctial tears
and the rain that beats on the roof of the house
were both foretold by the almanac,
but only known to a grandmother.
The iron kettle sings on the stove.
She cuts some bread and says to the child,

It's time for tea now; but the child
is watching the teakettle's small hard tears
dance like mad on the hot black stove,
the way the rain must dance on the house.
Tidying up, the old grandmother
hangs up the clever almanac

on its string. Birdlike, the almanac
hovers half open above the child,
hovers above the old grandmother
and her teacup full of dark brown tears.
She shivers and says she thinks the house
feels chilly, and puts more wood in the stove.

It was to be, says the Marvel Stove.
I know what I know, says the almanac.
With crayons the child draws a rigid house
and a winding pathway. Then the child
puts in a man with buttons like tears
and shows it proudly to the grandmother.

But secretly, while the grandmother
busies herself about the stove,
the little moons fall down like tears
from between the pages of the almanac
into the flower bed the child
has carefully placed in the front of the house.

Time to plant tears, says the almanac.
The grandmother sings to the marvelous stove
and the child draws another inscrutable house. ■

