Romanticism

What is Romanticism? What do you think it means when someone describes literature as "romantic"?





Think about the word **Transcendentalism**. Break it apart. What do you think this word means?

What do you think Transcendentalist literature

will be about?



American Romanticism 1800-1860



American Renaissance
A Literary Coming of Age
1840-1860

Definition

- Romanticism refers to a movement in art, literature, and music during the 19th century.
- Romanticism is characterized by the 5 "I"s
 - Imagination
 - Intuition
 - * Idealism
 - Inspiration
 - Individuality



Imagination

- Imagination was emphasized over "reason."
- This was a backlash against the rationalism characterized by the Neoclassical period or "Age of Reason."
- Imagination was considered necessary for creating all art.
- British writer Samuel Taylor Coleridge called it "intellectual intuition."

Intuition

- * Romantics placed value on "intuition," or feeling and instincts, over reason.
- Emotions were important in Romantic art.
- British Romantic William Wordsworth described poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings."

Idealism

- Idealism is the concept that we can make the world a better place.
- ❖ Idealism refers to any theory that emphasizes the spirit, the mind, or language over matter thought has a crucial role in making the world the way it is.
- ❖ Immanuel Kant, a German philosopher, held that the mind forces the world we perceive to take the shape of space-and-time.



Inspiration

- The Romantic artist, musician, or writer, is an "inspired creator" rather than a "technical master."
- What this means is "going with the moment" or being spontaneous, rather than "getting it precise."



Individuality

- * Romantics celebrated the individual.
- During this time period, Women's Rights and Abolitionism were taking root as major movements.
- Walt Whitman, a later Romantic writer, would write a poem entitled "Song of Myself": it begins, "I celebrate myself..."

Romanticism

- NOT about love
- Values feeling and intuition over reason
- Romantics believed that imagination could discover truths that the rational mind could not
- Nature is very important

Those who dream by day are cognizant of many things which escape those who dream only by night.

-Edgar Allan Poe



Frederick Edwin Church, Twilight in the Wilderness

ENLARGE

The essence of romanticism is the ability to wonder and to reflect. In searching the meaning of the known, the human spirit reaches for the unknown; in trying to understand the present, it looks to the past and to the future."

Robert E. Spiller

The Arts

- * Romanticism was a movement across all the arts: visual art, music, and literature.
- * All of the arts embraced themes prevalent in the Middle Ages: chivalry, courtly love. Literature and art from this time depicted these themes. Music (ballets and operas) illustrated these themes.
- Shakespeare came back into vogue.

Visual Arts

 Neoclassical art was rigid, severe, and unemotional; it hearkened back to ancient Greece and Rome Romantic art was emotional, deeplyfelt, individualistic, and exotic. It has been described as a reaction to Neoclassicism, or "anti-Classicism."

Art in the American Renaissance: Hudson River School

- First group of landscape painters to emerge in the United States after independence from Great Britain.
- Flourished between 1820 and 1880.
- Many of the artists in the group lived and painted in the Catskill Mountains region of New York State, particularly along the Hudson River.
- Early members of the school include Thomas Cole, Asher
 B. Durand, Thomas Doughty, and Albert Bierstadt.
- Their work is characterized by meticulous and realistic attention to detail and a poetic feeling for a nature characteristic of romanticism.

Thomas Cole

- You have probably seen some of the works by Thomas Cole.
- His paintings are still in high demand today.
- Even reproductions of his work sell for thousands of dollars.

Hudson River School Artwork









More HRS Artwork









Music

"Classical"
 musicians included
 composers like
 Wolfgang Amadeus
 Mozart and Franz
 Josef Haydn.

Romantic
 musicians included
 composers like
 Frederic Chopin,
 Franz Lizst, Pyotr
 Il'yich Tchaikovsky

Music: Components

- 1730-1820.
- Classical music emphasized internal order and balance.

Song

http://imslp.org/wiki/Divertimento_in_E-flat_major,_K.113_(Mozart,_Wolfgang_Amadeus)

- 1800-1910.
- Romantic music emphasized expression of feelings.

Song

 $https://ia800304.us.archive.org/25/items/SaintsaensCarnivalOfTheAnimalsbernstein/25Saintsans_CarnivalOfTheAnimalsAquarium.mp3$

1800 - 1860

What's going on in the World:

- 1810 Mexico begins it's war of independence from Spain
- 1812 British attempt to take back America in the War of 1812
- 1815 Napoleon defeated at Waterloo
- 1837 Queen Victoria rules England
- 1858 England takes over rule of India

Historical Context

- What major events or changes happen in the **U.S**. between 1800 and 1860?
 - Westward Expansion—Jefferson Purchase is made and Lewis and Clark are exploring the west
 - The debate over slavery kicks off. Some states outlaw slavery, others hold fast to the practice of using slaves.
 - Advances in technology make it possible to mass produce steel, and machinery. This takes place primarily in the Northern states.

Effects of the Historical Events

- How do these events influence the lives of Americans?
 - Many give up their homes and move west in search of land, gold or silver.
 - Conflicts occur between both family members and neighbors over the slavery debate.

Many families move to the cities in search of higher paying factory jobs.

American Literature Renaissance

- For the first time writers journeyed to nature. They let their imaginations run free.
- They created America's first literary hero Natty Bumpo. Natty is the hero in a series of stories called The Leatherstocking Tales, written by James Fenimore Cooper.
- Romanticism dared to explore the supernatural.

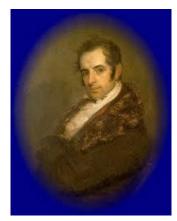


American Literature Renaissance (cont.)

- Romanticism was spontaneous. Writers and readers could explore individual feelings, wild nature and AVOID rational thought, logic, planning, and cultivation.
- Through their poetry, short stories, novels, and other works, writers during this period established a clear American voice.

American Writers of the Period

- Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*
- Washington Irvin, Rip Van Winkle, The Devil and Tom Walker, The Legend of Sleepy Hollow
- James Fenimore Cooper, *The Last of the Mohicans*
- Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*
- Henry David Thoreau, On Walden Pond
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, Civil Disobedience
- Emily Dickinson—poetry
- Walt Whitman—poetry





Characteristics of American Romanticism

- 1. Values feeling and intuition over reason
- 2. Shuns the artificiality of civilization and seeks unspoiled nature
- 3. Prefers youthful innocence to educated sophistication
- 4. Champions individual freedom and the worth of the individual
- 5. Places faith in inner experience and the power of the imagination

- 6. Looks backward to the wisdom of the past and distrusts progress
- 7. Finds beauty and truth in exotic locals, the supernatural realm, and the inner world of the imagination
- 8. Sees poetry as the highest expression of the imagination
- 9. Finds inspiration in myth, legend, and folk culture
- 10. Contemplates nature's beauty as a path to spiritual and moral development

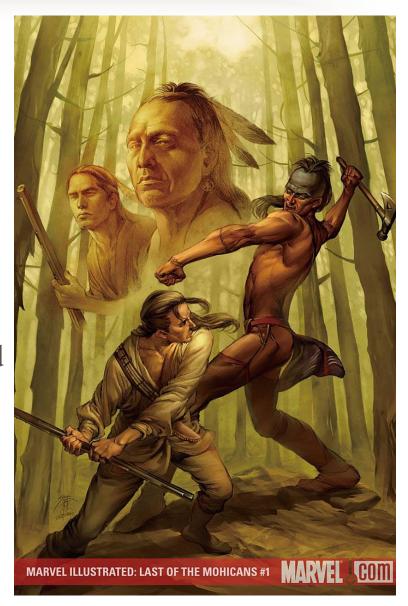
The FIRST American Hero

- During the Romanticism period, authors are creating the first truly American hero.
- Who would we call an American hero in our culture today? Name and describe three.
- What characteristics do these heroes have in common?



The American Hero

- Young (or at least acts young)
- Innocent and pure
- Sense of honor higher than society's honor
- Has knowledge of people and life based on a deep understanding, not based on education
- Loves nature
- Quests for a higher truth

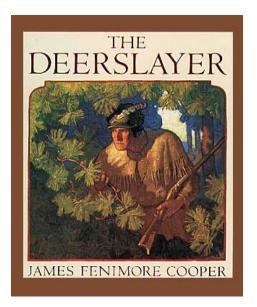


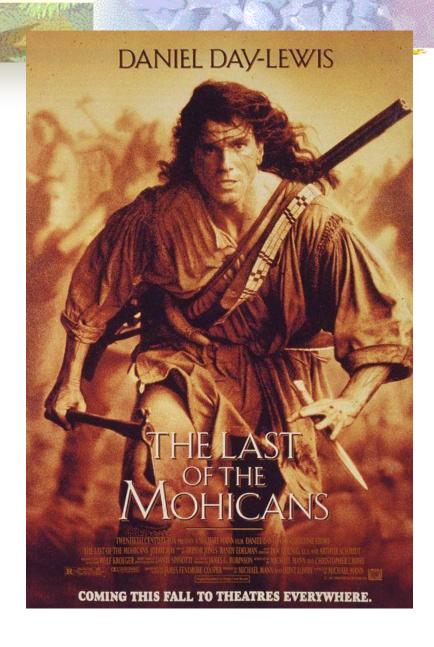
The Hero

■ First American Hero – created by James Fennimore Cooper:

Natty Bumppo

(went by other names – Hawkeye, Deerslayer, and Leatherstocking)





How are these heroes different from our heroes today?



Dakota Meyer, Medal of Honor recipient from Greensburg, KY.

Breakdown of American Romanticism

- Keep in mind that during this period there are several different subgroups that fall into the American Romantics. All categories fall under the umbrella of American Romance.
 - Transcendentalists
 - Dark Romantics
 - Fireside Poets

The Transcendentalists: True Reality Is Spiritual

- Transcendentalism is the idea that in determining the ultimate reality of God, the universe, the self, and other important matters, one must transcend or go beyond, everyday human experience in the physical world.
- During this philosophical movement individuals sought to "transcend" or go beyond to a higher spiritual level.
- To achieve this goal, the individual had to seek spiritual, not material, greatness and the essential truths of life through intuition.
 - It comes from the very oldest of thoughts—Idealism—found as far back as the Greek times.

Transcendentalism (cont.)

- Transcendentalists viewed nature as a doorway to a mystical world holding important truths.
- They believed even tragic natural events could be explained on a spiritual level.
 - Death is simply a part of the circle of life.
 - We are capable of evil because we are separated from a direct intuitive knowledge of God.
 - However, if we trust ourselves—trust in the power each of us has to know God directly—then we will realize that each of us is also a part of the Divine Soul, the source of all good.

A Transcendentalist's View of the World

- Everything in the world, including human beings, is a reflection of the Divine Soul
- The physical facts of the natural worlds are a doorway to the spiritual or ideal world
- People can use their intuition to behold God's spirit revealed in nature or in their own souls.

- Self-reliance and individualism must outweigh external authority and blind conformity to custom and tradition
- Spontaneous feelings and intuition are superior to deliberate intellectualism and rationality.

Let's break down those fancy definitions. The core concepts of Transcendentalist thought...Simplified:

- Self-reliance
- Non-conformity
- Free Thought
- Confidence
- Importance of Nature

A Challenge to the Transcendentalists

- Not all writers and thinkers of this time period agreed with Transcendentalist thought.
- These people were seen as anti-Transcendentalists because their view of the world seems so profoundly opposed to their optimistic view.

Utopian Societies

- What is a utopian society?
- A perfect, harmonious society
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, a famous writer from this time was a member of one of the most influential utopian groups.
 - He helped inspire numerous reform movements that aimed to improve public education, end slavery, elevate the status of women, and smooth the edges of rough social conditions of the time.

Dark Romantics

■ The people with the anti-Transcendentalist view were called Dark Romantics.

More on later!! them later!!

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Fireside Poets

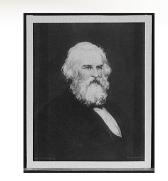
People liked to read their works by the fireside at night

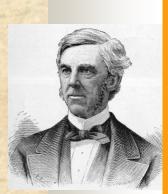
For a very long time were known as the most popular poets ever

Very un-Romantic in their style

The Fireside Poets

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow





More on them later!!



Partner Discussion Questions

- 1. How are you affected by nature? Do you find comfort in it? Do you reflect the moods of nature?
- 2. What is the role of nature in your life?
- 3. What is meant by an individual's spiritual side? How do you define it?
- 4. Is there a connection between the individual's spirit and nature? If so, what is that connection?

Rationalist or Romantic?

- 5. What does it mean to know something intuitively? For example, has a parent or a sibling ever known something was wrong with you without having talked with or seen you? What do we mean when we say "I just know it"?
- 6. How do you demonstrate that you are an individual? Do you think independently of others or do you follow the crowd?
- 7. If you had to classify yourself as either a rationalist or a romantic, which would you be? Would you be a practical, ambitious, worldly Ben Franklin or an intuitive, feeling driven, close-to-nature romantic?
- 8. Which traits of either era do you truly value and think you would like to encourage in your own life?