

Romantic Elements

Use Cornell Notes to take notes
over the Romantic Period

What goes where?

Questions, subtitles, etc. go here, in the left hand column. Remember, we want higher level critical thinking questions.

Don't forget the **heading**:
Name, Class, Period, Date, Topic



Notes go here, in the large right hand column.

A 3 to 4 sentence **summary** down there on the bottom of the last page of notes





Romanticism

- When you think “Romantics” DON’T think of “romance”!
- The literary term “Romanticism” is very different from what “romantic” commonly means today.
- Romantics often wrote about sad situations (love or death).
- Or they wrote about nature
- Or they wrote fantasy stories

How did the Romantics Begin?

- Puritans came to New World in 1620. Remember that Colonial Era literature is written for the purpose of survival
- Ex: Letters, legal documents, journals, etc.
- By 1776, we were in the Revolutionary War. Writing was linked with forming a national identity.
- Ex: brochures, pamphlets, political information, etc.

How did the Romantics Begin?

- Many historians view the Romantic era as beginning between **1785 and 1798**.
- During this era, some authors, decided to **ignore/avoid the political topics**, and focus on different ideas (specifically nature) in their writings.
- They were turning away from the values and ideas of the previous era, **embracing new ways of expressing their imagination and feelings**.

Who were the Romantics?

- Instead of a concentration on "head," the intellectual focus of reason, they preferred to rely on the self, in the radical idea of individual freedom.
- Instead of striving for perfection, the Romantics preferred "the glory of the imperfect."

Romanticism Elements

- Fantasy and imagination
- Writing is fictional, fanciful and could not be true
- Picture – Rip Van Winkle's adventure...



Romanticism

- **Love of Nature**
- Nature/outdoors is showcased. The character(s) may live outside, the majority of the story takes place outside, etc.



Romanticism

- **Intense Emotion**
- Characters are very dramatic and emotional.
- Picture – Poe often wrote about intense emotions and being driven mad because of them...



Romanticism

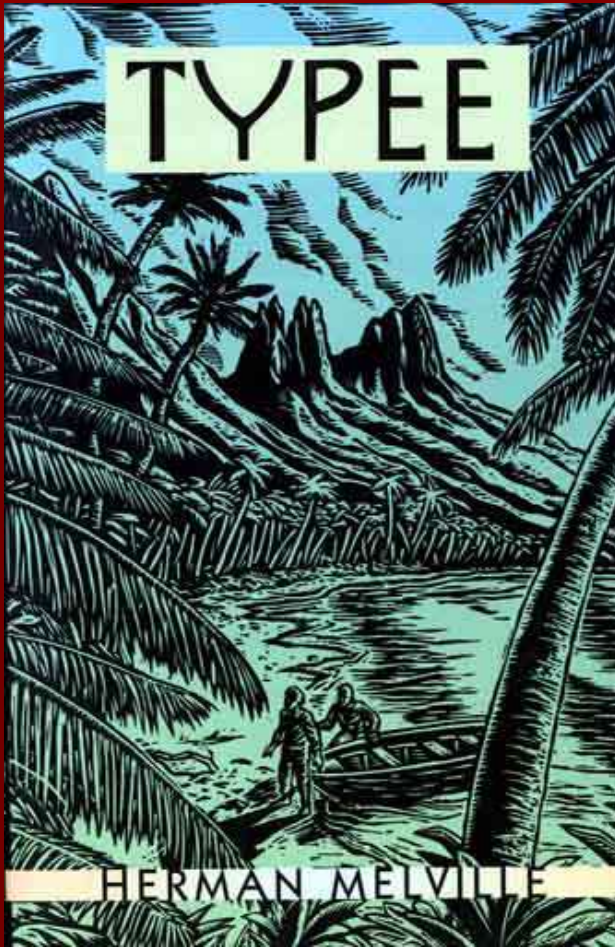
- Sympathetic interest in the past, medieval

- Characters learn from their pasts, mention the past, reflect on the past, rather than looking forward. This could be through regrets, wishes to change former decisions/actions, etc.



- Picture – In 'Young Goodman Brown', the main character cannot move on and lets the past ruin his future.

Romanticism



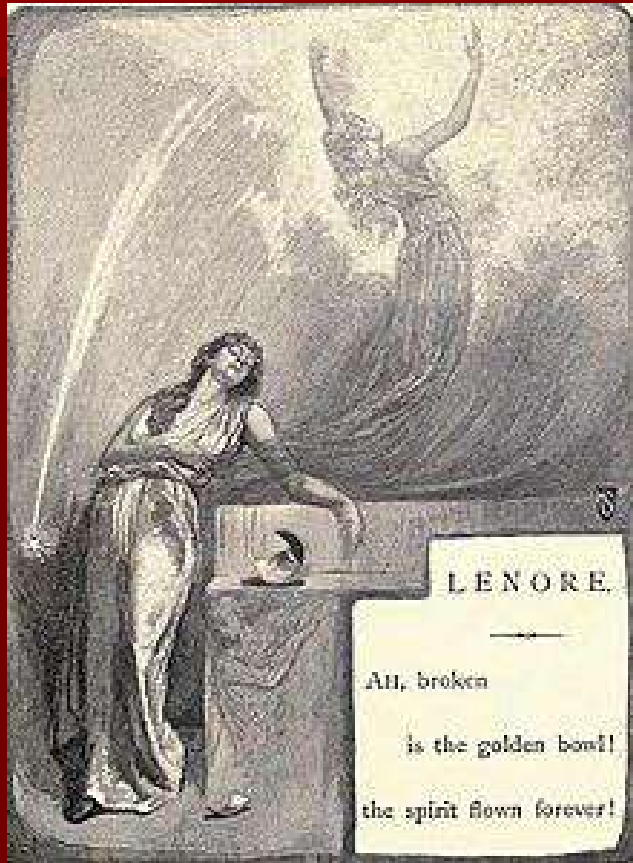
- Exotic Places
- The settings take place outside of the normal, everyday places. This could be as literal as an exotic island or more figurative like a dream world or imagination.
- Melville became famous for his stories about tropical islands and crazy adventures.

Romanticism

- Legends and myths
- A legend is a story that begins as truth, but gets told so many times and exaggerated so much that it becomes fiction. (Fish story)
- A myth is sacred history. It tells a specific culture/group of people - where they came from and their past.
- “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” was based on real events and real places, but with fictional elements.



Romanticism



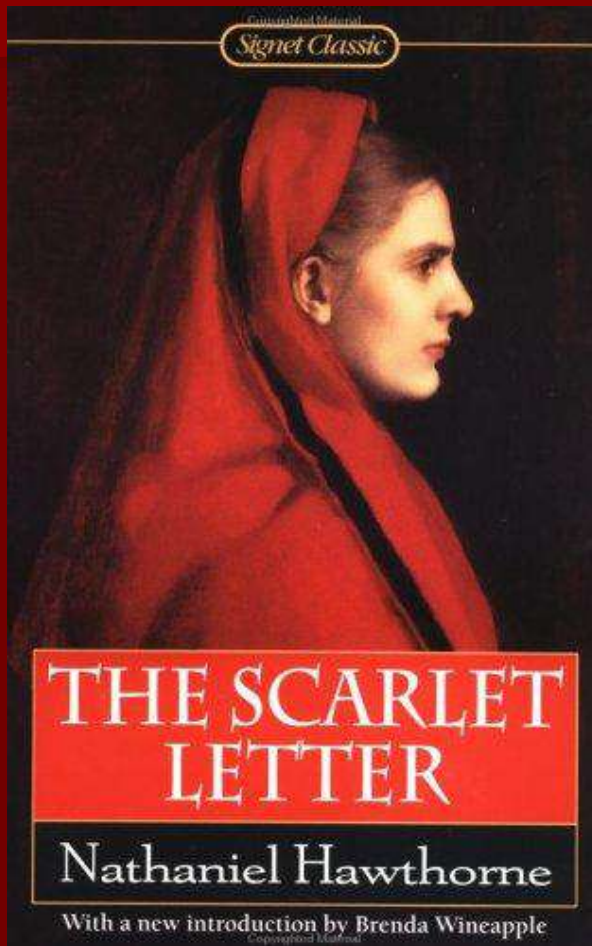
- Death
- Characters die or are obsessed with death. Often depressing.
- Picture – In many of the poems/stories written by Poe, the love of his life has died.

Romanticism



- Morbid melancholy; Insanity
- Characters are depressed and/or insane.
- The story takes place within the character's mind/depression
- Picture – In “The Black Cat” by Poe, the main character literally goes insane...

Romanticism



- **The Supernatural**
- Could be religious, superstitious, involve gods and/or mystical figures.
- Picture –Nathaniel Hawthorne’s stories are grounded in Puritan culture & religion & often involve mystical characters.

Romanticism

- **Failed Love**
- Mourning the loss of love, a break up, the death of someone special, cheating, unfaithfulness, etc.
- Picture – “The Raven” by Poe; he is tormented by the loss of his love.



Romanticism

- **Mysticism (spiritual intuition beyond ordinary understanding)**
- A sense/prediction of the future, and “un-earthly” understanding, spiritual insight, etc.
- “The Minister’s Black Veil,” the main character understands a spiritual concept that the rest of the community cannot grasp...



Romanticism



- Rural Life and the Common Man –
- The main characters are average, “every man” characters.
- The stories are not written about kings, queens and celebrities, but rather common, average, middle/lower class citizens.
- In “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” the main character is a simple school teacher...

5 I's of Romanticism

- Intuition over fact (trust instincts, gut)
- Imagination over reason (psychological)
- Innocence over education (worldly knowledge, not scholarly)
- Inspiration from nature/supernatural
- Inner experience over dull reality (escape into the mind/dreams)

The Romantic Hero

- Young or possesses youthful qualities
- Sense of honor (internal, not social)
- Knowledge of people/life based on experience (intuition)
- Loves nature/avoids town life
- Quest for a higher truth in the natural world (getting back to the simple life)

The American Dream

- America = the new Eden
 - Land of beauty, bounty, and unlimited promise
- Self-made man/woman
 - Independent, self-reliant individual will succeed
- Anything is possible for a person who trusts his/her own potential/power
- Progress is good and we expect every generation to improve

The Journey

- Quest for the American Dream
- Rationalist's view: the city held opportunity and improvement for society
- Romantic's view: the city was corrupt, but the frontier/nature holds beauty
- Dark Romantic's :the dark hidden soul/imagination was an escape from reality and its harsh lessons