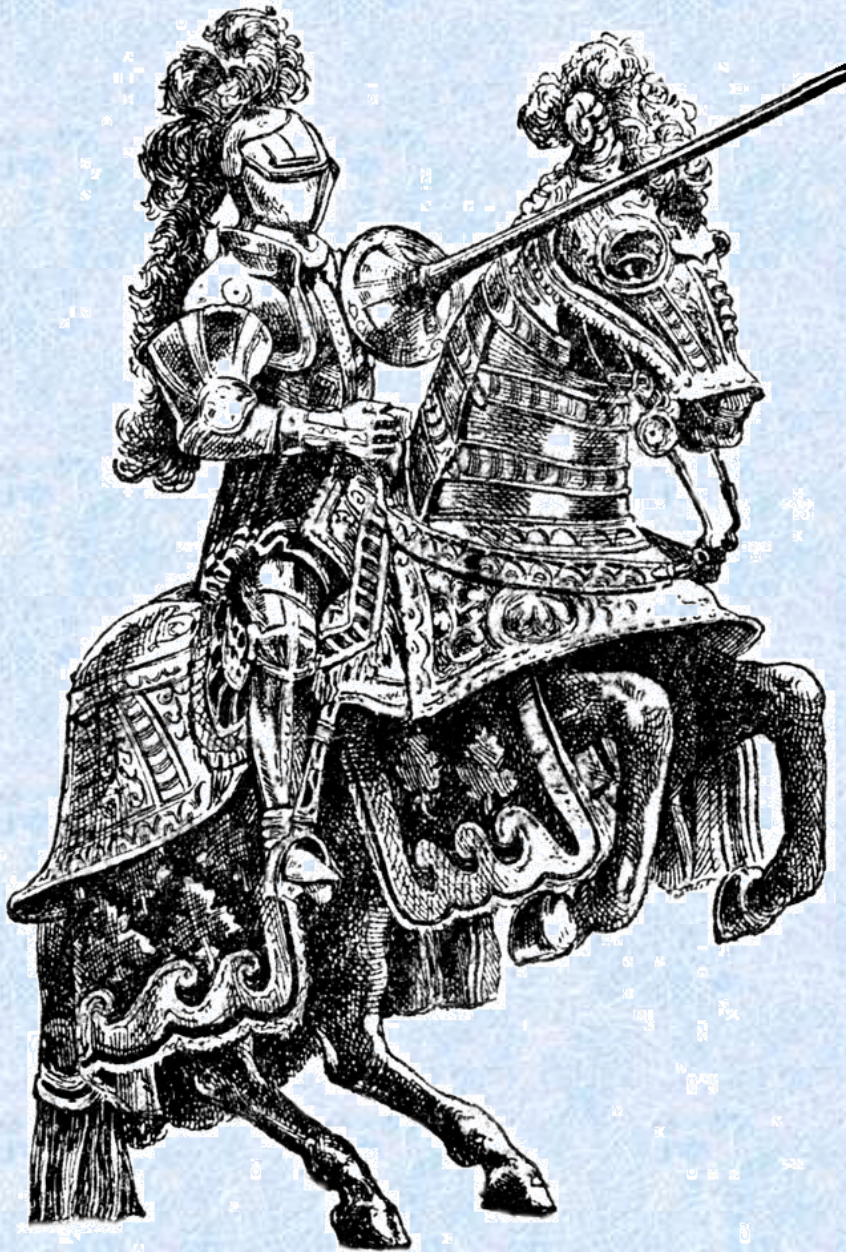


Time Periods in British Literature



ANGLO-SAXON AND MEDIEVAL PERIODS

Anglo-Saxon and Medieval

- Encompasses literature written in Old English during the 600-year period of England, from around 450 A.D. to the Norman Conquest of 1066.
- Works include genres such as epic poetry, sermons, Bible translations, legal works, chronicles, riddles, and others.

Anglo-Saxon and Medieval

- In all there are about 400 surviving manuscripts from the period, a significant corpus of both popular interest and specialist research.
- Among the most important works of this period is the poem *Beowulf*, which has achieved national epic status in Britain.



ENGLISH RENAISSANCE 1066-1660

English Renaissance

- Sometimes referred to as "the age of Shakespeare" or "the Elizabethan era," taking the name of the time period's most famous author and most important monarch, respectively; however it is worth remembering that these names are rather misleading.

English Renaissance

- Shakespeare was not an especially famous writer in his own time, and this time period covers a period both before and after Elizabeth's reign.

English Renaissance

- Important writers of the era include:
 - essayist poet Sir Phillip Sidney (*Astrophel and Stella*),
 - poet Edmond Spenser (*The Faerie Queen*),
 - playwright William Shakespeare (*As You Like It; Hamlet; Macbeth; King Lear; The Tempest*).



**ENGLISH
RESTORATION
AND
ENLIGHTENMENT
1660 to around
1750**

English Restoration and Enlightenment

- An episode in the history of Britain beginning in 1660 when the English monarchy, Scottish monarchy and Irish monarchy were restored under King Charles II after the Interregnum that followed the English Civil War.

English Restoration and Enlightenment

- The term may apply both to the actual event by which the monarchy was returned to order, and to the period immediately following the accession of Charles II.
- The period was ruled by literature that was reasoned rather than passionate.

English Restoration and Enlightenment

- John Milton wrote *Paradise Lost*.
- Jonathan Swift notably wrote “A Modest Proposal” and *Gulliver's Travels*.
- The novel rose to prominence with Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*.



ROMANTICISM

Around 1750 to
early 1800s

Romanticism

- Complex artistic, literary, and intellectual movement that originated in the second half of the 18th century in Western Europe, and gained strength during the Industrial Revolution.
- It was partly a revolt against aristocratic social and political norms of the Age of Enlightenment, and was embodied most strongly in the visual arts, music, and literature.

Romanticism

- The poet and painter William Blake is the most extreme example of this time period in Britain, epitomized by his claim “I must create a system or be enslaved by another man's.”

Romanticism

- Blake, a poet, wrote *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*
- Mary Shelley wrote *Frankenstein*
- John Keats, a poet, wrote "Ode to a Nightingale" and "Ode on a Grecian Urn."



VICTORIANISM

1800s

Victorianism

- It forms a link and transition between the writers of the romantic period and the very different literature of the 20th century.
- The 19th century saw the novel become the leading form of literature in English. Charles Dickens and the Bronte sisters are leading examples of novelists of this time period.

Victorianism

- Charles Dickens wrote novels such as *Great Expectations* and *Oliver Twist*.
- Emily Bronte wrote *Wuthering Heights*.
- Charlotte Bronte wrote *Jane Eyre*.



MODERNISM

1900s

Modernism

- Describes an array of cultural movements rooted in the changes in Western society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

Modernism

- The term covers a series of reforming movements in art, architecture, music, literature and the applied arts which emerged during this period.
- James Joyce was one of the most prominent writers of this time period.

Modernism

- Joyce's most important works include *The Dubliners*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and *Ulysses*.