British Literature, Origins to the Pre-Romantics

(British Lit 1; Updated 12/07)

This list covers British, Irish, Commonwealth, and Anglophone literature from the Medieval period to roughly the early Eighteenth Century. This list is organized chronologically by genre and includes choice selection for tailoring the list to a student’s interests. Because the list can be tailored, it must be shared and cleared with the examining faculty, who after consultation sign the tailored list along with the student.

NARRATIVE / EPIC POETRY

1. *Beowulf* (Heaney trans.)

2. OLD ENGLISH BIBLICAL VERSE (*choose one*):
   - Genesis A & B
   - Judith

3. CHAUCER, The Canterbury Tales
   
   General Prologue
   
   Knight’s Prologue and Tale
   
   Miller’s Prologue and Tale

   *Plus choose two:*
   
   - Wife of Bath’s Prologue and Tale
   
   - Pardoner’s Prologue and Tale
   
   - Reeve’s Prologue and Tale
   
   - Tale of Sir Thopas
   
   - Prioress’s Prologue and Tale
   
   - Chaucer’s Retraction

4. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Borroff trans.)

5. MIDDLE ENGLISH ROMANCES (*choose one*):
   
   - Havelok the Dane
   
   - Sir Orfeo
   
   - King Horn
   
   - The Turk and Sir Gawain
   
   - The Tale of Gamelyn
   
   - The Wedding of Sir Gawain and Dame Ragnell

6. SPENSER, *The Faerie Queene* (*choose two*):
   
   - Book 1, Cantos 1-6
   
   - Book 2, Cantos 1-6
   
   - Book 3, Cantos 1-6
   
   - Book 4, Cantos 1-6
   
   - Book 1, Cantos 7-12
   
   - Book 2, Cantos 7-12
   
   - Book 3, Cantos 7-12
   
   - Book 4, Cantos 7-12
7. MILTON, *Paradise Lost*, Books 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 10, 12
9. ALEXANDER POPE, *Rape of the Lock*
10. JAMES THOMSON, *The Seasons*, “Winter”

**LYRIC**

11. OLD ENGLISH LYRIC (in translation):
   “Dream of the Rood” (Kennedy trans.)
   
   *Plus choose one:*
   
   - “The Wife’s Lament”
   - “The Wanderer”
   - “The Ruin”
   - “Caedmon’s Hymn”

12. MARIE DE FRANCE, *Lais* (Hanning and Ferrante trans.)
   Prologue
   “Lanval”
   
   *Plus choose one:*
   
   - “Guigemar”
   - “Le Fresne”
   - “Bisclavret”
   - “Yonec”

13. SKELTON “Philip Sparrow”; “The Tunning of Elinour Rumming” (beginning to the end of the “Primus Passus”)


16. RENAISSANCE SONNETS
   Shakespeare, 3, 17, 18, 20, 73, 105, 126, 127, 130, 138
   Donne, Divine Sonnets 5, 10, 14, 19 17.

17. LYRIC SUB-SPECIALTIES (RENAISSANCE)
   Choose two of the following sub-specialties:
   
   - COUNTRY-HOUSE POEM
Aemilia Lanyer, “Description of Cooke-ham”
Ben Jonson, “To Penshurst”
Marvell, “Upon Appleton House”

- **EPITHALAMION**
  - Spenser, Epithalamion Donne,
    “Epithalamion ... on St. Valentine’s Day”
  - Jonson, “Epithalamion”

- **PASTORAL / ELEGY**
  - Spenser, *The Shepheardes Calender*, “August” and “October”
  - Marlowe, “The Passionate Shepherd to His Love”
  - Sir Walter Ralegh, “The Nymph’s Reply”
  - Milton, “Lycidas”

- **RELIGIOUS / DEVOTIONAL**
  - George Herbert, “The Collar”; “Easter Wings”; “Jordan (I)”
  - Donne, “Hymn to God, My God in My Sickness”
  - Aemilia Lanyer, Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum (lines 1-328 and 745-856)
  - Marvell, “A Dialogue between the Soul and the Body” 3 12/07

- **EPYLLION (SHORT OVIDIAN EPIC)**
  - Marlowe, “Hero and Leander”
  - John Marston, “The Metamorphosis of Pygmalion’s Image”

- **CARPE DIEM / EROTIC / PERSUASION POETRY**
  - Elizabeth I, “Ah, Silly Pug, Wert Thou So Sore Afraid?”
  - Donne, “The Flea”
  - Marvell, “To His Coy Mistress”

- **SATIRE**
  - Skelton, “The Bowge of Court” (lines 1-182)
  - Wyatt, “Mine Own John Poynz”
  - John Marston, The Scourge of Villanie, Satyre 8

18. ROCHESTER, “The Disabled Debauchee”; “The Imperfect Enjoyment”; “Upon Nothing”
19. APHRA BEHN, “The Disappointment”
20. JOHN DRYDEN, Mac Flecknoe
22. JONATHAN SWIFT, “The Lady’s Dressing Room”
23. LADY MARY WORTLEY MONTAGU, “The Reasons that Induced Dr S to Write a Poem Call’d the Lady’s Dressing Room”
24. SAMUEL JOHNSON, “London”
25. WILLIAM COLLINS, “Ode to Evening”
26. THOMAS GRAY, “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard”
27. ANNA BARBAULD, “A Summer Evening’s Meditation”; “Washing Day”

**DRAMA**
28. SHAKESPEARE

Choose two of the following plays (you may elect to fill in one slot with a play of your own choosing):

- Titus Andronicus
- Twelfth Night
- Hamlet
- The Tempest
- 1 Henry 4
- As You Like It
- Antony and Cleopatra

29. ELIZABETHAN/JACOBEAN DRAMA (Besides Shakespeare)

Choose one play from each of the following two groups:

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE (choose one):
- Edward II
- Jew of Malta
- Dr. Faustus

BEN JONSON (choose one):
- Volpone
- The Alchemist
- Epicoene
- Bartholomew Faire

30. RESTORATION/EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DRAMA (choose one):

- Thomas Shadwell, The Virtuoso
- John Gay, The Beggar’s Opera
- Thomas Sheridan, School for Scandal

**PROSE**
31. Táin bó Cuailgne

32. Four Branches of the Mabinogi: “Pwyll, Prince of Dyfed”; “Branwen, Daughter of Llyr”; “Manawydan, Son of Llyr”; “Math, Son of Mathonwy”

33. MEDIEVAL WOMEN MYSTICS (Choose one):

- Margery Kempe, Book of Margery Kempe
- Julian of Norwich, Showings (Short Text)

34. ARTHURIAN TRADITION:
THOMAS MALORY, from *Le Morte Darthur* (Oxford World Classics ed.):
“The Noble Tale of the Sangrail” (pp. 310-402)

*Plus choose one:*

- “From the Marriage of King Uther Unto King Arthur” (selections: pp. 3-32, 50-81)
- “The Death of Arthur” (pp. 468-527)

**WELSH ARTHURIAN TRADITION (choose two):**
- Culhwch and Olwen
- Peredur
- Gereint
- The Lady of the Fountain
- The Dream of Rhonabwy

35. SIR THOMAS MORE, *Utopia* (in translation)

36. ELIZABETH I, “Response to a Parliamentary Delegation on Her Marriage” (1559, 1566); “Speech to the Troops at Tilbury”; “The Golden Speech to Parliament” (1601)

37. SIR PHILIP SIDNEY, *Defence of Poesy*

38. MISCELLANEOUS RENAISSANCE PROSE

*Choose two of the following prose groups:*

- **HUMANIST TRACTS**

- **POPULAR LITERATURE**
  - Thomas Deloney, “Jack of Newbury”
  - Thomas Nashe, “The Unfortunate Traveller”
  - Robert Green, “A Notable Discovery of Cozenage”

- **ANTI-FEMINIST CONTROVERSY**
  - Jane Anger, *Her Protection for Women*
  - Joseph Swetnam, *The Arraignment of Lewd, Idle, Froward, and Unconstant Women*  
  - *Hic Mulier* (anonymous) *Haec Vir* (anonymous)

- **RELIGIOUS / DEVOTIONAL**
  - Anne Askew, Examinations I and II
  - Donne, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*: Meditations 10, 17, 19; Expost. 19
  - Donne, Death’s Duel

- **WRITING ON MELANCHOLY AND DEATH**
  - Donne, Biathanatos, “Conclusion”
Robert Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*: First Partition, Section 1 (“Of Diseases in General...”); Second Partition, Section 1 (“Cure of Melancholy in General”; Third Partition, Section 2 (“Love-Melancholy”)
Sir Thomas Browne, “Hydriotaphia, or Urn-Burial”

39. **JOHN BUNYAN**, Pilgrim’s Progress, Part 1 (including Author’s Apology)

40. **APHRA BEHN**, Oroonoko

41. **MISCELLANEOUS ENLIGHTENMENT PHILOSOPHY**

   *Choose 1 of the following prose groups:*

   - **MORAL PHILOSOPHY**
     - John Locke, *Essay upon Human Understanding*: Bk. 2, chap. 1-2; Bk. 4, chap. 19
     - David Hume, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*: Intro.; Parts 1 and 4
     - Adam Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Section 1

   - **POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY**
     - Mary Astell, *Some Reflections upon Marriage* (incl. Preface)
     - Edmund Burke, Reflections upon the Revolution in France (Norton excerpt)
     - Mary Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*: Intro.; chapters 1-4

42. **MISCELLANEOUS AUGUSTAN SATIRE (choose 1):**

   - Jonathan Swift, *Tale of a Tub*
   - John Gay, *Trivia*: Or, the Art of Walking the Streets of London
   - Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad*, Book IV

43. **MISCELLANEOUS ENLIGHTENMENT LITERARY CRITICISM (choose 1):**

   - Alexander Pope, *Essay on Criticism*
   - Edmund Burke, *Inquiry into Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*

44. **ADDISON and STEELE**, *The Spectator*, Imagination Papers

45. **DANIEL DEFOE (choose 1):**

   - *Robinson Crusoe*
   - *Moll Flanders*

46. **ELIZA HAYWOOD**, *Fantomina*

47. **JONATHAN SWIFT**, *Gulliver’s Travels*, Book 2 (Voyage to Brobdingnag)

48. **SAMUEL RICHARDSON**, *Pamela*, Vol. 1

49. **SAMUEL JOHNSON**, *Rasselas*

50. **JAMES BOSWELL**, *The Life of Johnson* (Norton excerpt)

51. **OLAUDAH EQUiano**, *Interesting Narrative* (Norton excerpt)

52. **MISCELLANEOUS EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY NOVEL (choose 2):**

   - Eliza Haywood, *Love in Excess*
Henry Fielding, *Joseph Andrews*
Horace Walpole, *Castle of Otranto*
Lawrence Sterne, *Sentimental Journey*
Frances Burney, *Evelina*
Ann Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*

53. Relevant Theory or Literary Criticism (optional write-in category)
In the space below, write in any theoretical or critical texts that inform your approach to the primary literature on the list and that you would welcome for incorporation into the examination:

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**Exam Signature Page**
Student signature: ________________________________
Date of signature: ______________________________
Examiners’ signatures/dates: ______________________
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Expected exam date: _____________________________
Special circumstances: ____________________________
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Once choices have been indicated and both the student and examiners have signed the list, photocopies should be delivered to the examiners and also to the English Dept. Office, for filing in the student’s record.

**British Literature, Pre-Romantics to Contemporary II**
*(British Lit II, Revised 28 March 2008)*
This list covers British, Irish, Commonwealth, and Anglophone literature from the Romantic period (about the middle of the Eighteenth Century) through contemporary literature. It is keyed to three of the most popular and respected modern anthologies of literature.
1780-1901: Romantic and Victorian Writers

Arnold, Matthew. “Dover Beach,” “The Buried Life,” “Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse,” and “The Scholar Gypsy”; excerpt from The Function of Criticism at the Present Time*

Austen, Jane. Pride and Prejudice

Baillie, Joanna. “Introductory Discourse” to the Plays on the Passions**

Barbauld, Anna Latitia. “Eighteen-Hundred and Eleven” **

Blake, William. Songs of Innocence and Experience; The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*

Brontë, Emily. Wuthering Heights

Browning, Elizabeth Barrett. From Aurora Leigh, excerpts “Book One” and “Book Two”*

Browning, Robert. “My Last Duchess,” “Love Among the Ruins,” “Two in the Campagna,” “Caliban upon Setebos,” “Rabbi Ben Ezra,” and “Fra Lippo Lippi” *

Byron, Lord (George Gordon). “Manfred,” excerpt from “Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,” excerpt from “Don Juan.” *

Carlyle, Thomas. Excerpt from Sartor Resartus *

Clare, John. “Clock a Clay,” “I Am,” “The Mores” **

Coleridge, Samuel. “Kubla Khan,” “The Time of the Ancient Mariner,” “The Eolian Harp,” “Frost at Midnight,” “Christabel”; excerpt from Biographia Literaria*

Dickens, Charles. Great Expectations

Eliot, George. Middlemarch

Equiano, Olaudah. Excerpt from The Interesting Narrative of the Life **

Fitzgerald, Edward. The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam

Hardy, Thomas. Jude the Obscure

Hemans, Felicia. “Casabianca” *


Keats, John. “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” “To Autumn,” “To a Nightingale,” “On First Looking Into Chapman's Homer,” “La Belle Dame Sans Merci,” and “Lamia” *

Radcliffe, Ann. The Italian

Rossetti, Christina. “Goblin Markett” *

Scott, Sir Walter. Waverley

Shelley, Mary. Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus *

Shelley, P.B. “Ozymandias,” “Mont Blanc,” “England in 1819,” “Adonais,” “Alastor” *

Smith, Charlotte. Excerpt from “Beachy Head” **


Wilde, Oscar. The Importance of Being Earnest *
Wollstonecraft, Mary. Excerpt from *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* **
Wordsworth, Dorothy. Excerpt from *The Grasmere Journal* **

1901–Present: Edwardian to Contemporary Writers (British Lit II)
Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*
Amis, Kingsley. *Lucky Jim*
Beckett, Samuel. *Waiting for Godot*
Breeze, Jean. “Binta,” “Riddyn Ravings (The Mad Woman's Poem),” “Cherry Tree Garden” ***
Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*
Duffy, Carol Ann. “Standing Female Nude,” “And How Are We Today?,” “Psychopath,” “Translating the English, 1989,” “Poet for Our Times” ***
Golding, William. *Lord of the Flies*
Hardy, Thomas. “The Darkling Thrush,” “Channel Firing” *
Hughes, Ted. “View of a Pig,” “Pike,” “Out,” “Pibroch,” “Wodwo,” “Crow Hears Fate Knock on the Door,” “Flounder” ***
Joyce, James. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*
Kinsella, Thomas. “Baggot Street Deserta,” “Ritual of Departure” ***
Lawrence, D.H. *Women in Love*
Lessing, Doris. *The Golden Notebook*
Mansfield, Katherine.
Monk, Geraldine. “La Quinta del Sordo,” “Where?” ***
Murdoch, Iris. *Under the Net*

O’Casey, Sean. Juno and the Paycock

O’Sullivan, Maggie. “Starlings,” Garb,” “Hill Figures” ***

Pinter Harold. The Caretaker

Ray, Jackie. From “The Adoption Papers, Chapter 7: Black Bottom” ***

Riley, Denise. “Affections Must Not,” “Lure, 1963,” “When it’s Time to Go,” “Pastoral” ***

Rushdie, Salman. Midnight’s Children

Shaw, George Bernard. Major Barbara

Silken, Jon. “Death of a Son,” “First it was Singing,” “Dandelion,” “A Daisy,” “A Word About Freedom and Identity in Tel-Aviv” ***

Stoppard, Tom. Arcadia; Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead

Thomas, Dylan. “The Force That Through the Green Fuse Drives the Flower,” “Fern Hill,” and “Do Not Go Gently Into That Good Night” *


Woolf, Virginia. To the Lighthouse; excerpt from A Room of One’s Own *


Some selections are found in these readily available anthologies of British Literature; the number of asterisks indicates the preferred excerpt or selections:

*Norton Anthology of English Literature, Volume 2 (7th Ed.)

**Longman Anthology of English Literature, Volume 2 (2nd Ed.)

***Anthology of Twentieth-Century British and Irish Poetry (Oxford, 2001)

Novels and plays are available in a number of editions and can be found in the UNO Library. Poems, as well, can be found in collected in editions and era-specific anthologies in the UNO Library.