Masters Reading List
retpyped 2006

British Literature

Beginnings to 1500

- “Beowulf”
- “The Battle of Maldon”
- “Deor’s Lament”
- “The Wanderer”
- “The Seafarer”
- “Pearl”
- Piers Plowman
- “Sir Gawain and the Green Knight”
- Chaucer: Troilus and Criseyde; The Canterbury Tales
- Malory: Morte D’Arthur
- Henryson: Testament of Cresseid
- The Second Shepherd’s Play
- Cain and Abel
- Everyman
- Widsith
- The Dream of the Rood
- The Romance of the Rose

Sixteenth Century

Poetry:

- Skelton: “Philip Sparrow,” “Colin Clout.”
- Surrey: “Complaint of A Lover that Defied Love and Was By Love After the More Tormented”; “Description of a spring”; “Description and Praise of His Love Geraldine”; “Complaint of a Lover Rebuked.”
- Wyatt: “The Lover for Shamefastedness Hideth His Desire Within his Faithful Heart”; “The Lover Compareth his State to a Ship In a Perilous Storm Tossed On the Sea”; “To a Lady to Answer Directly with Yea or Nay”; “Of the Mean and Sure Estate.”
- Sackville: “Induction to The Mirror for Magistrates.”
- Sir John Davies: “Orchestra”; Nosce Teipsum.
- Spenser: “The Shepherdes Calendar” (April, June, October); Sonnets 1-10 in the Amoretti; “An Hymne in Honor of Love”; “Prothalamion”; Sonnets “Epithalamion”; “The Faerie Queene” (Books I and III).
- Sidney: Astrophil and Stella: Sonnets 1-10.
- Shakespeare: Sonnets 2, 28, 29, 55, 73, 116, 129, 130, 144, and 146.
• Drayton: Idea, Sonnets 1, 6, 61.
• Chapman: “The Shadow of the Night.”
• Marlowe: “Hero and Leander.”
• Hall: from “Virgidemiarum” Book 1, “the prologue,” “the postscript,” and “satire VII.”

Prose:

• More: Utopia.
• Elyot: The Book Named the Governor, Book 1, Chapter XIII.
• Lyly: Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit; read the preface to the “Gentleman Readers,” and the first five pages in any anthology for style.
• Nashe: The Unfortunate Traveler.
• Hooker: Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, the first ten pages of any standard anthology.

Prose Criticism:

• Sidney: The Defense of Poesy.
• Campion: Observation in the Art of English Poesy.
• Daniel: “A Defense of Rhyme.”

Drama:

• Sackville and Norton: Gorboduc.
• Lyly: Endymion.
• Kyd: The Spanish Tragedy.
• Marlowe: Tamburlaine part I; Dr. Faustus.
• Shakespeare: The Second Historical Tetralogy (Richard II-Henry IV); A Midsummer Night’s Dream; The Merchant of Venice; As You Like It; Twelfth Night; Measure for Measure; The Winter’s Tale; The Tempest; Julius Caesar; Hamlet; Othello; King Lear; Macbeth; Antony and Cleopatra.

Seventeenth Century

Poetry:

• Crashaw: “Music’s Duel”; “St. Mary Magdalene, or The Weeper”; “The Flaming Heart.”
• Marvell: “To His Coy Mistress”; “Upon Appleton House”; “To My Lord Fairfax”; “The Definition of Love”; “A Horatian Ode upon Cromwell’s Return from Ireland.”
• Suckling: “Out Upon It! I Have Loved…”; “Song (Why so pale and wan, fond Lover)”; “A Ballad Upon A Wedding.”
• Carew: “An Elegy Upon the Death of Dr. Donne, Dean of Paul’s”; “A Song (Ask Me No More Where Jove Bestows)”; “To A Lady that Desired I Would Love Her.”
• Vaughan: from Silex Scintillans: “Regeneration,” “The Retreat,” “Corruption,” “They Are All Gone Into a World of Light,” “Cock-Crowing.”
• Milton: “L’Allegro”; “Il Penseroso”; “Comus”; “Lycidas”; Paradise Lost; Samson Agonistes; Sonnet VII; Sonnet VIII.
• Phineas Fletcher: The Locusts or Apollyonists, Canto I.
• Giles Fletcher: Christ’s Triumph After Death, Canto IV.

Prose:

• Jonson: from "Timber, or Discoveries Made Upon Men and Matter": “Censura de Poetis”; “De Shakespeare Nostrati”; “De Malignate Studentium”; “Poesis et Pictura”; “De Pictura”; “De Stilo et Optimo Scribendi Generi”; “Praecipiendi Modi”; “What is a Poet?”
• Bible: A selection from the gospel of St. Matthew in at least two different translations.
• Browne: Religio Medici: read up to the statement “Nature hath made one world, and art another. In brief, all things artificial; for nature is the art of….”
• Milton: “Of Education”; Areopagitica.
• Bunyan: Pilgrim’s Progress.
• Pepys: Entry in his diary for 2 September 1665/1666 (The London Fire).
• Jeremy Taylor: The Rules and Exercise of Holy Dying, Chapter 1, sections 1 and 2.
• John Earle: from Microcosmography, or A Piece of the World Discovered In Essays and Characters: “A Plodding Student”; “A Young Gentleman of the University”; “A Plain Country Fellow.”
Drama:

- Jonson: *Every Man in His Humor*; *Volpone*; *The Alchemist*; *Bartholomew Fair*; *Cynthia’s Revels*.
- Webster: *The White Devil*; *The Duchess of Malfi*.
- Beaumont and Fletcher: *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*; *Philaster*.
- Middleton and Rowley: *The Changeling*.

Restoration and Eighteenth Century

Poetry:

- Dryden: “Mac Flecknoe”; “Absalom and Achitophel”; “Religio Laici”; “To the Pious Memory of the Accomplish’d Young Lady Mrs Anne Killigrew.”; “St. Cecilia’s Day”; “A Song for Alexander’s Feast.”
- Wilmot: “Satire Against Mankind.”
- Swift: “Description of the Morning”; “Verse on the Death of Dr. Swift.”
- Pope: “An Essay on Criticism”; *An Essay on Man* (I, III); “Epistle to the Earl of Buckingham”; “The Rape of the Lock”; “Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot.”
- Thomson: “Winter.”
- Johnson: “The Vanity of Human Wishes.”
- Butler: *Hudibras* (I, i).

Prose:

- Addison and Steele: *Spectator* #2, 10, 62, 81, 112, 249, 409, 519.
- Johnson: *Rasselas*; *Rambler* #4, 60, 208; *Idler* #16, 60, 61; Preface to “Lives of Dryden, Pope, Milton, Cowley.”
- Boswell: *Life of Johnson* (in a modern abridgment, such as Dell or Random House).

Drama:

- Dryden: *The Conquest of Granada*; *All for Love*.
- Etherege: *The Man of Mode*.
- Wycherley: *The Country Wife*; *The Plain Dealer*.
- Congreve: *The Way of the World*.
- Farquhar: *Beaux’s Stratagem*.
- Steele: *The Conscious Lovers*.
- Gay: *The Beggar’s Opera*.
- Goldsmith: *She Stoops to Conquer*. 
Sheriden: *The Rivals; The School for Scandal.*
Buckingham: *The Rehearsal.*
Otway: *Venice Preserved.*
Lillo: *The London Merchant.*

**Novels:**

- Defoe: *Moll Flanders.*
- Richardson: *Clarissa.*
- Fielding: *Tom Jones.*
- Sterne: *Tristram Shandy.*

**Nineteenth Century**

**Poetry:**

(Selections may be found in Perkins, *English Romantic Writers,* and in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature.*

- Blake: *Songs of Innocence and Experience;* “America: A Prophecy.”
- Byron: *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* (Cantos I, IV); *Don Juan* (Dedication, Cantos I-IV); “Darkness”; “Prometheus”; “Stanzas for Music” (“There’s not a joy the world can give”).
- Percy Bysshe Shelley: *Prometheus Unbound;* “Adonais”; “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty”; “Ode to the West Wind”; “To a Sky-Lark.”
- Keats: “Ode to a Nightingale”; “Ode on a Grecian Urn”; “The Eve of St. Agnes”; “To Autumn”; “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer”; “On sitting down to read King Lear once again”; “When I have fears”; “Bright Star.”
• FitzGerald: The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.
• Swinburne: “Laus Veneris”; “Hymn to Proserpine”; “The Garden of Proserpine.”
• Elizabeth Barrett Browning: Selections from Sonnets from the Portuguese.
• Christina Rossetti: “Goblin Market.”
• George Meredith: Modern Love; “Lucifer in Starlight.”
• Wilde: “The Harlot’s House”; “The Ballad of Reading Gaol.”
• Hardy: “Hap”; “Channel Firing”; “The Convergence of the Twain.”
• Hopkins: “The Windhover”; “The Wreck of The Deutschland”; the “dark” sonnets.

Prose:

• Coleridge: Biographia Literaria (chapters I, IV, XIV, XX, XXII).
• Shelley: A Defence of Poetry.
• Keats: all letters contained in Perkins, English Romantic Writers or in The Norton Anthology (smaller selection than in Perkins, but excellent).
• Newman: “The Idea of a University” (Discourse VI); “Apologia.”
• Carlyle: from Sartor Resartus (“The Everlasting No, The Everlasting Yea”).
• Macaulay: “Samuel Johnson.”
• Ruskin: Modern Painters (a few pages of description from part II of vol. I); from The Stones of Venice (“The Nature of Gothic”); from Unto This Last (“Roots of Honor”).
• Arnold: Culture and Anarchy (Chapters 1-4); “Literature and Science”; “Literature and Dogma” (Chapter 12).
• Huxley: “Liberal Education”; “Science and Culture.”

Novel:

• Austen: Pride and Prejudice.
• Dickens: David Copperfield; Great Expectations.
• Thackeray: Vanity Fair.
• Charlotte Bronte: Jane Eyre.
• Emily Bronte: Wuthering Heights.
• Trollope: Barchester Towers.
• George Eliot: Middlemarch.
• Hardy: Tess of the D’Urbervilles; The Mayor of Casterbridge.

Drama:

• Wilde: The Importance of Being Earnest.
Twentieth Century

Poetry:

- Dylan Thomas: “I see the boys of summer”; “The force that through the green fuse drives the flower”; “If I were tickled by the rub of love”; “And death shall have no dominion”; “When all my five and country senses see”; “After the funeral (In memory of Ann Jones)”; “A Refusal to Mourn the Death by Fire of a Child in London”; “Do not go gentle into that good night”; “Fern Hill”; “Lament.”

Criticism:

- Richards: Principles of Literary Criticism; Practical Criticism.

Drama:

- Shaw: Pygmalion; Major Barbara; Man and Superman; St. Joan; Heartbreak House.
- Synge: The Playboy of the Western World; Riders to the Sea.
- O’Casey: Juno and the Paycock.
- Eliot: Murder in the Cathedral.
- Yeats: The Hour Glass; Purgatory.
- Beckett: Waiting for Godot.
- Osbourne: Look Back in Anger.
- Pinter: The Homecoming; No Man’s Land.
- Stoppard: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead.
- Storey: The Contractor.

Novel:

- Conrad: Heart of Darkness; Lord Jim.
- Lawrence: The Rainbow; Sons and Lovers.
- Forster: A Passage to India.
- Joyce: A Portrait of the Artist; Ulysses.
- Greene: The Heart of the Matter.
- Woolf: To the Lighthouse.
American Literature

Nineteenth Century

Poetry:

- Whitman: “Song of Myself”; “When Lilacs Last in the Door-yard Bloom’d “Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking”; “Passage to India.”
- Dickinson: “I heard a Fly buzz - when I died-”; “Because I could not stop for Death-”; “My life closed twice before its close”; “A Bird came down the Walk”; “I started Early - Took my Dog”; ”The last Night that She lived-”; “There’s a certain Slant of light”; “I never saw a Moor”; “I know that He exists”; “I could not live with You.”

Prose:

- Emerson: Nature.
- Thoreau: Walden.

Novel:

- Cooper: The Deerslayer; The Pioneers.
- Melville: Moby Dick; “Bartleby the Scrivener”.
- Twain: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.
- Henry James: Portrait of a Lady; The Sacred Fount; The Ambassadors.
- Crane: The Red Badge of Courage.
- Norris: The Octopus.

Twentieth Century

Poetry:

- Pound: Cantos I-IV, XLV: Hugh Selwyn Mauberley.
- Stevens: “Peter Quince at the Clavier”; “Le Monocle de Mon Oncle”; “Anecdote of the Jar”; “Fabliau of Florida”; “The Man Whose Pharynx Was Bad”; “The Snow
Man”; “The Comedian as the Letter C”; “The Emperor of Ice Cream”; “Sailing After Lunch”; “Of Mere Being.”


Novel:

- Hemingway: The Sun Also Rises; A Farewell to Arms.
- Faulkner: The Sound and the Fury.
- Fitzgerald: The Great Gatsby.
- Dreiser: An American Tragedy; Sister Carrie.
- Bellow: Seize the Day.
- Nabokov: Lolita.

Drama:

- Odets: Waiting for Lefty.
- Hellman: The Little Foxes.
- O’Neill: The Emperor Jones; Mourning Becomes Electra; The Iceman Cometh; Long Day’s Journey Into Night.
- Wilder: Our Town.
- Miller: Death of a Salesman.
- Jones: A Texas Trilogy.
- Rabe: Streamers.

Literary Theory and Criticism:

While this grouping should not be considered as a category in the same sense as those above, the following should be minimally required in addition to those included in the various historical periods.

1. Aristotle: Poetics.
4. Herbert Read: “Psychoanalysis & Criticism” from Twentieth-Century Criticism (Handy and Westbrook, etc.).
7. Wimsatt and Brooks: Literary Criticism: A Short History, Chapters 7, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 18 through 21, and 26.
10. Sartre: “Why Write?” from *What is Literature?*