



Unit 1: The American Journey: New Beginnings, Sad Endings

20
Days

Students will understand the motivation behind the earliest styles of American literature. Students will identify the reasons for the conflation of European, African, and Native American cultures on the North American continent. Students will learn that the Puritans were a radical branch of Protestantism who sought the New World for religious freedom. Students will understand and trace the four main Puritan beliefs through the poetry of Anne Bradstreet and prose of William Bradfords and Johnathan Edwards.



Unit 2: Revolution and the Age of Enlightenment

20
Days

Students will understand how growing tensions between Britain and the colonies led to the Revolutionary War. Students will make connections between the literary conventions of speeches made by Patrick Henry and Thomas Paine. Students will paraphrase passages from eighteenth-century writing to improve clarity and modernize the style. Students will understand why aspects of the writings of Ben Franklin and Crèvecoeur are characterized as “American,” contributing to the origination of “the melting pot.”



Unit 3: The First Harvest: American Romanticism

20
Days

Students will learn the elements of American Romantic literature and how it differs from American classicist literature. Students will identify remnants of Romantic writing in America today. Also, students will appreciate the role assigned to nature in American Romantic writings and how writers of this period, especially Washington Irving, show an interest in the national past. Furthermore, students will identify literary techniques that Edgar Allan Poe uses to create tone and establish mood in his tales.



Unit 4: The Transcendental Vision

20
Days

Students will understand the concept of Transcendentalism and how that movement departed from Romanticism. Students will understand Emerson's emphasis on individualism and how his philosophy connects with today's world. Also, students will understand why Thoreau felt it necessary to live as a nonconformist. In addition, students will understand the importance of symbolism in the world of Hawthorne.



Unit 5: Local War and Local Color: Realism and Naturalism

25
Days

Students will understand how the American vernacular influenced the literary movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries and be able to compare and contrast these eras with others that they studied earlier in the year. Furthermore, students will understand the role the Civil War played in influencing the writing of this period across the country. Students will study about American life during this time as they read works from authors such as Emily Dickinson, Walt Whitman, and Mark Twain.



Unit 6: Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

25
Days

In this unit, students will understand that Twain's approach to literature was the first real attempt to divorce America from European styles of literature. Students will understand the importance of Twain's wit and his use of a distinctly "American vernacular." Moreover, students will analyze Huck's dilemma through the socio-political context of antebellum America. In terms of modern connections, students will understand how race can influence the way *Huckleberry Finn* is taught by teachers and read by students.



Unit 7: One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*

25-30
Days

Overall, students will understand Kesey's use of point of view, themes, characterization, and symbolism in the novel, as well as how the nonconformity, rebellion, drug use, and free love of the 1960's influenced the writing of the novel.

Specifically, students will develop an understanding of McMurphy's role and sacrifice, the Chief's role and his conception of "the fog," various conceptions of sanity and insanity, the dynamics of gender and race struggles, and the role/portrayal of females.



Unit 8: The Great Gatsby*

15-20
Days

Students will understand how the corruption and extravagance of the 1920s influenced Fitzgerald's writing. Students will negotiate the differences between money and love in the novel, while recognizing that love and money will never be divorced in Gatsby's version of the American dream. Students will connect Gatsby's character to other Americans such as Ben Franklin. Students will also analyze qualities of the modern novel in relation to previous works.



Unit 9: Modernism: The Capture of a Culture

20
Days

Students will understand that modernism was a departure from the American literary tradition. Students will understand the motivations behind the literature written in the 20th century and how World War I changed Americans' view of the world. Students will recognize the role of the Harlem Renaissance in the writing of this period. Students will compare and contrast the various literary movements learned throughout the school year. Student will read works from a variety of authors including Carl Sandburg, Robert Frost, Langston Hughes, e.e. cummings, and Zora Neale Hurston.

*Note: Not all novels are taught in all classes. Teachers can choose which works to use in class.