

AN OUTLINE OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

PERIOD	HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	LITERARY WORKS/WRITERS
OLD ENGLISH	The period of Anglo Saxon: The Age of Settlement (440-1066) Before the arrival of Anglo Saxon, Britain was under Roman Empire (55 BC – AD 440)	‘Beowulf’ - a poem - 3,000 lines - first English epic - unknown name of author
MIDDLE ENGLISH	± 1150 - ± 1400 - The Duke of Normandy from France became the king in Britain and gave influences to British Kingdom. - The use of French – high class of society The use of English – common people	-Geoffrey Chaucer wrote ‘Canterbury Tales’ -Initially plays were used in churches as the medium to explain the preaching. - Oral Literature: “Robin Hood”
TRANSITION	±1400 - ± 1550 - The period in literature to mark the transition between two great literary figures, Chaucer and Shakespeare. - The transition to modern English	-Some poets, like Robert Henrison and William Dunbar were called ‘Scottish Chaucerians.’ -Sir Thomas Wyatt wrote sonnet and Earl of Surrey wrote blank verse. -Sir Thomas Malory wrote a romance, <i>Morte d’Arthur</i> . -Two types of drama: moralities (about good or bad), e.g. <i>Everyman</i> , and interlude (to entertain), e.g. <i>Fulgen and Lucre</i> s.
ELIZABETHAN	± 1550 - ± 1620 - the period was marked by the influence of Renaissance/enlightenment. - Spirit of exploration/science/invention	- The fastest progress of drama. - Shakespeare was the key figure. - He wrote <i>Richard II</i> , <i>Macbeth</i> , <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> , <i>Othello</i> , <i>Julius Caesar</i> , <i>Mid Summer Night’s Dreams</i> , etc.
PURITAN	± 1620 - ± 1660 Religious → political movement Charles I was sentenced to death. Britain became republic under Oliver Cromwell.	-John Donne, a metaphysical poet -John Milton wrote ‘Paradise Lost.’ -King James Bible > a new version of translation -Drama was forbidden.

RESTORATION	<p>± 1660 - ± 1700</p> <p>King Charles II returned from France and became the king of Britain.</p>	<p>-John Dryden wrote 'Absalom & Architopel' → attack Charles II's enemies.</p> <p>-John Bunyam wrote <i>Pilgrim Progress</i>.</p> <p>-William Wycherley wrote plays, <i>Love in Wood</i> and <i>Country Wife</i> (exposing love affair and conspiracy).</p>
AUGUSTAN	<p>± 1700 - ± 1800</p> <p>-also known as Classical/Pope Period.</p> <p>-The power of parliament and the PM continued to grow.</p> <p>-London provided common meetings in the coffee houses where people talked about politics and other things. This could be the source of inspiration for the writers.</p>	<p>-The writers of the period tried to combined literature with public and political affairs.</p> <p>-The great poet was Alexander Pope. He wrote "Esssay on Man" and "The Dunciad" (a satire).</p> <p>-Daniel Defoe wrote <i>Robinson Crusoe</i>.</p> <p>-Jonathan Swift wrote <i>Gulliver Travels</i>.</p> <p>-Dr. Johnson wrote 'The Vanity of Human Wishes.'</p>
ROMANTIC	<p>± 1800 - ± 1850</p> <p>-The American Revolution and French Revolution influenced the atmosphere of the period.</p> <p>- Society was changing → from agriculture to industry.</p> <p>- New Middle Class became powerful.</p> <p>- Movement towards greater democracy.</p> <p>- There positive and negative impacts of industry.</p> <p>- There were a lot of unemployed people, social and political problems, and sufferings.</p>	<p>-Romantic writing was mostly poetry.</p> <p>-William Blake wrote <i>Songs of Innocence and Experience</i>.</p> <p>-His poems are simple but symbolic. He shows the contrast between the world of nature and childhood innocence and that of social control.</p> <p>-William Wordsworth wrote 'The World is too much with us', 'The Rainbow' and 'Solitary Reaper.'</p> <p>-Some other famous poets of this period were Samuel Taylor Coleridge, John Keats, and Shelley.</p> <p>-Jane Austen wrote <i>Sense and Sensibility</i>, <i>Pride and Prejudice</i>, and <i>Emma</i>.</p> <p>Sir Walter Scott wrote <i>Waverly</i> and <i>The Bride of Lammermoor</i>.</p> <p>-Mary Shelley wrote <i>Frankenstein</i>.</p>
VICTORIAN	<p>± 1850 - ± 1900</p> <p>-under the reign of Queen Victoria</p> <p>-Rapid social change and development of economy</p>	<p>-Charles Dickens was the famous writer of the period.</p> <p>-He showed the sufferings of children in most of his novels, he had social concern with the problems of society.</p>

	<p>& technology.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -the age of extremes: the poor and the rich people. -double standards: the surface, Britain was the successful society, below the surface, there were many problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -He wrote <i>Nicholas Nickleby</i>, <i>David Copperfield</i>, and <i>Hard Times</i>. Charlotte Bronte wrote <i>Jane Eyre</i>. Emily Bronte wrote <i>Wuthering Heights</i>. George Elliot (Mary Ann Evans) wrote <i>Adam Bede</i>. Thackeray wrote <i>Vanity Fair</i>. Detective novel: Wilkie Collins with <i>The Woman in White</i>. Arthur Conan Doyle wrote series of Sherlock Holmes. Lord Tennyson (a national poet) wrote "In Memoriam." Robert Browning wrote "Dover Beach." Elizabeth Barret Browning wrote "The Cry of the Children."
20 TH CENTURY	<p>People felt the progress of the country in all aspects of life, but they were also dissatisfied.</p> <p>The impacts of WW I: people became skeptical and doubtful. They also disbelieved towards social standards and ethics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Young generation tend to blame the older generation for the war. -The end of 1920s the economic depression caused serious problems. -Nazism and Facism became the threats, but solidarity among people to defend aroused. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rudyard Kipling wrote "The Seven Seas" and "The Five Nations." WB. Yeats wrote "The Tower." TS. Elliot wrote "Waste Land." DH. Lawrence wrote <i>Lady Chatterley's Lover</i>. GB. Shaw wrote a play <i>Arms and the Man</i>. He belonged to Fabian Society aiming to create democratic society.