# AMERICAN ROMANTICISM 1800-1860

American Romanticism: now with 20% more symbolism! Deeper interpretation and analysis are a huge part of this unit on American Romantic and Gothic writers. Also, the horror genre - super fun.

### COMMON CORE STANDARDS

L.11-12.1; L.11-12.2; L.11-12.3; L.11-12.4; L.11-12.5; RI.11-12.2; RL.11-12.4; RL.11-12.5; RL.11-12.6

#### SKILLS/TERMS

- Paraphrasing
- Summarizing
- Mood
- Allegory
- Symbolism
- Theme

## **ESSENTIAL** QUESTIONS

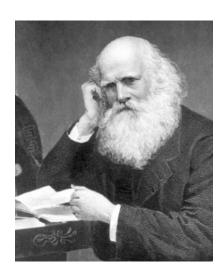
- What role(s) do(es) symbolism play in American Literature?
- How can my understanding of specific literary devices aid my comprehension of a text?
- Why can't, or why don't, people just say exactly what they mean?

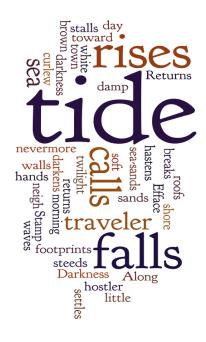
#### **TEXTS**

- "The Tide Rises, the Tide Falls", Longfellow
- "Thanatopsis", Bryant
- "To a Waterfowl", Bryant
- "The Raven", Poe

Quoth the raven, "Bro, you cray."







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Pages 138-145

Name\_\_\_\_\_

1.	The American Romanticism era was from		to	(years).
2.	What did the city represent to Rationalists	?		
3.	What did the city represent to Romantics?			
4.	The Romantic journey is a flight both		something and	something.
	Romantics value	_ and		over
	The Romantic era had influence not only o	on literat	ure, but also on	and
7.	Romanticism developed as a		against Rationa	lism.
	Romantics believed thatt reach.		_ was able to discove	r truths that the rational mind could
9.	What was the highest embodiment of the i	imaginat	ion to the Romantics	?
10	. How did the Romantics rise above "dull real.	ealities"'	?	
	b.			
11	. Why were Americans able to discover dif	ferent s	ubject matter than the	Europeans?
12	. How did the Europeans imagine the typic	cal Amer	ican?	
13	. Did the Romantics mind being viewed as	unsoph	isticated? Explain yo	ur answer.
14	. A typical American Romantic hero would	be desc	cribed as	
15	. Do we still create Romantic heroes? Giv	e a mod	lern example of a Roi	nantic hero.

#### William Cullen Bryant

### Thanatopsis

To him who in the love of Nature holds Communion with her visible forms, she speaks A various language; for his gayer hours She has a voice of gladness, and a smile And eloquence of beauty, and she glides Into his darker musings, with a mild	5	Are but the solemn decorations all Of the great tomb of man! The golden sun, The planets, all the infinite host of heaven, Are shining on the sad abodes of death, Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread The globe are but a handful to the tribes That slumber in its bosom.—Take the wings	<i>4</i> 5
And healing sympathy, that steals away Their sharpness, ere he is aware. When thoughts Of the last bitter hour come like a blight Over thy spirit, and sad images Of the stern agony, and shroud, and pall,	10	Of morning, pierce the Barcan wilderness, Or lose thyself in the continuous woods Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound, Save his own dashings,—yet the dead are there: And millions in those solitudes, since first	55
And breathless darkness, and the narrow house, Make thee to shudder, and grow sick at heart;— Go forth under the open sky, and list To Nature's teachings, while from all around— Earth and her waters, and the depths of air—	15	The flight of years began, have laid them down In their last sleep—the dead reign there alone. So shalt thou rest; and what if thou withdraw In silence from the living, and no friend Take note of thy departure? All that breathe	60
Comes a still voice—Yet a few days, and thee The all-beholding sun shall see no more In all his course; nor yet in the cold ground, Where thy pale form was laid, with many tears, Nor in the embrace of ocean, shall exist Thy image. Earth, that nourished thee, shall claim	20	Will share thy destiny. The gay will laugh When thou art gone, the solemn brood of care Plod on, and each one as before will chase His favorite phantom; yet all these shall leave Their mirth and their employments, and shall	65
Thy growth, to be resolved to earth again, And, lost each human trace, surrendering up Thine individual being, shalt thou go To mix forever with the elements; To be a brother to the insensible rock, And to the sluggish clod, which the rude swain	25	come And make their bed with thee. As the long train Of ages glide away, the sons of men, The youth in life's green spring, and he who goes In the full strength of years, matron and maid, The speechless babe, and the gray-headed	70
Turns with his share, and treads upon. The oak Shall send his roots abroad, and pierce thy mold. Yet not to thine eternal resting-place	30	man— Shall one by one be gathered to thy side By those, who in their turn shall follow them.	
Shalt thou retire alone, nor couldst thou wish Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down With patriarchs of the infant world,—with kings, The powerful of the earth,—the wise, the good, Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past, All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun; the vales	35	So live, that when thy summons comes to join The innumerable caravan which moves To that mysterious realm, where each shall take His chamber in the silent halls of death, Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night, Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and	75
Stretching in pensive quietness between; The venerable woods—rivers that move In majesty, and the complaining brooks That make the meadows green; and, poured round all,	40	soothed By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.	80

Old Ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—

- What happens to us when we die?
- What do you think or feel about death?
- How should we think or feel about death?

Read the poem closely and carefully to answer the questions below. Use the notes in the margins to help you understand allusions and vocabulary.

Note: Thanatos in Greek means death. Opsis in Greek means seeing. The title presents the poem as a way of seeing death.

- 1. In line 8, ere means "before." What does Nature do for those who communicate with her?
- 2. In line 17, Nature begins to speak. When you get to line 30, sum up Nature's advice to those who think sad thoughts of death.
- 3. In line 37, a sepulcher is a burial place. What does Nature say to those who fear the solitude of death?
- 4. In lines 40-45, what decorates the "tomb of man"?
- 5. In lines 48-57, what examples does the speaker use to explain that the dead are everywhere?
- 6. What comfort does Nature offer in lines 58-72?
- 7. The speaker's voice resumes here. When you get to the end of the poem, sum up the speaker's message in lines 73-81.
- 8. What is the theme (the insight into human experience) of this poem?
- 9. Do find the speaker's attitude toward death comforting or disturbing, or do you have some other reaction? Explain.
- 10. Identify two specific examples (quotes) of elements of Romanticism from the poem.

Element of Romanticism:

Quote from the poem:

Element of Romanticism:

Quote from the poem:

#### "The Tide Rises, The Tide Falls" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

1

6

11

The tide rises, the tide falls, The twilight darkens, the curlew<sup>1</sup> calls; Along the sea-sands damp and brown The traveler hastens<sup>2</sup> toward the town, And the tide rises, the tide falls.

Darkness settles on roofs and walls, But the sea, the sea in darkness calls; The little waves, with their soft, white hands Efface<sup>3</sup> the footprints in the sands, And the tide rises, the tide falls.

The morning breaks; the steeds in their stalls Stamp and neigh, as the hostler<sup>4</sup> calls; The day returns, but nevermore<sup>5</sup> Returns the traveler to the shore. And the tide rises, the tide falls.

"The Tide Rises, The Tide Falls"

#### VOCABULARY HELPER

- 1) curlew a common shorebird
- hasten to move or act quickly; to hurry
- 3) efface to erase, wipe out
- hostler a person who takes care of horses
- nevermore never again; never thereafter

Name \_\_\_

3, 2, 1
Paraphrase each of the THREE stanzas of "The Tide Rises, The Tide Falls".  1.
2.
3.
Identify TWO Romantic characteristics in the poem, and explain how they are Romantic.  1.

Identify the theme of this poem—its central insight into the relationship between human life and nature.

1.

2.

#### "To a Waterfowl" by William Cullen Bryant

Whither, 'midst falling dew,
While glow the heavens with the last steps of day,
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue
Thy solitary way?

Vainly the fowler's eye
Might mark thy distant flight to do thee wrong,
As, darkly painted on the crimson sky,
Thy figure floats along.

Seek'st thou the plashy brink
Of weedy lake, or marge of river wide,
Or where the rocking billows rise and sink
On the chafed ocean side?

There is a Power whose care
Teaches thy way along that pathless coast,-The desert and illimitable air,-Lone wandering, but not lost.

All day thy wings have fann'd
At that far height, the cold thin atmosphere:
Yet stoop not, weary, to the welcome land,
Though the dark night is near.

And soon that toil shall end, Soon shalt thou find a summer home, and rest, And scream among thy fellows; reeds shall bend Soon o'er thy sheltered nest.

Thou'rt gone, the abyss of heaven
Hath swallowed up thy form; yet, on my heart
Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given,
And shall not soon depart.

He, who, from zone to zone, Guides through the boundless sky thy certain flight, In the long way that I must tread alone, Will lead my steps aright.

	Waterfowl" What questions does the speaker ask in the first three stanzas?
2.	How does the third stanza fit the "mold" of Romanticism?
3.	What guides the bird?
4.	What comparison does the speaker make between the bird's flight and his own life?
5.	Knowing what you do about Romanticism, why do you think that "Power" is uppercased in the $4^{\text{th}}$ stanza?
6.	In the second to last stanza, Bryant says, "Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou hast given/And shall not soon depart" (lines 11-12). How does this express Romanticism? Look back at your notes!
7.	What characteristics from romanticism do you find in this poem?
8.	Structurally compare this poem with "Thanatopsis".
9.	What do you think the lesson is that Bryant learns?