

**WESTERN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH & WRITING STUDIES**

PhD FIELD EXAMINATION READING LIST

NINETEENTH CENTURY

In order to develop a wide-ranging competency to teach and research in the field of Nineteenth Century Literature, candidates will prepare a reading list according to the instructions and requirements below.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Field Exam

Students may opt to write their field exam on the nineteenth century as a whole, or they may choose to concentrate **either** on the Romantic **or** the Victorian period.

Students who opt to cover the whole century should complete the core reading list and augment it by approximately 20% with material equally drawn from the specialist lists. **(SEE SPECIALIST LISTS)**

Students who opt to concentrate on either the Romantic or the Victorian period should reduce the core reading list from the period on which they are **not** concentrating by approximately two thirds, while supplementing with material drawn from the relevant specialist list so as to end up with a list roughly equal to the core list plus 20%. **(SEE SPECIALIST LISTS)**

2. Exam Structure

1. Students are required to answer THREE questions, one designed to test specific knowledge of texts, and the other two designed as more wide-ranging and comparative essay questions. All questions are of equal value.
2. Students must not write extensively on the same text twice.

3. Recommended Secondary Sources

Please see the **SUPPLEMENTARY LISTS** which include secondary reading sources and detailed information on selected exam expectations.

CORE TEXTS

Where this list requires students to read selections from a work, unless otherwise specified the selections from *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 11th ed., vols D and E are intended. For shorter works not included in *Norton*, students' attention is drawn to the following standard anthologies:

Armstrong, Isobel, and Joseph Bristow, eds. *Nineteenth-Century Women Poets*. (Oxford, 1996)
 Gray, Erik and Veronica Alfano, eds. *Victorian Poetry: An Anthology*. (Peterborough, 2025)
 Keen, Paul, ed. *Revolutions in Romantic Literature: An Anthology of Print Culture 1780-1832*. (Peterborough, 2004)
 Leighton, Angela and Margaret Reynolds, eds. *Victorian Women Poets : an Anthology*. (Oxford, 1995)
 Mellor, Anne, and Richard Matlak, eds. *British Literature 1780-1830*. (Boston, 1996)
 Mermin, Dorothy, and Herbert Tucker, eds. *Victorian Literature 1830-1900*. (Fort Worth, 2002)
 Perkins, David, ed. *English Romantic Writers*. 2nd ed. (Boston, 1995).
 Wu, Duncan, ed. *Romanticism: An Anthology*. 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1998)

For longer works, such as novels, students should use good modern editions. Students are expected to have basic knowledge of the textual histories of works on their lists.

ROMANTIC PERIOD

POETRY

Blake: *Songs of Innocence and of Experience; The Book of Thel; The Marriage of Heaven and Hell; The [First] Book of Urizen; Milton; "The Mental Traveller"*

Wordsworth: "Tintern Abbey"; "Michael"; "The Thorn"; "Anecdote for Fathers"; "The Old Cumberland Beggar"; "Simon Lee"; "The Idiot Boy"; "Nutting"; the Lucy Poems; "There was a Boy"; "Poems on the Naming of Places"; "Ode: Intimations of Immortality"; "Resolution and Independence"; "Elegiac Stanzas"; *The Prelude* (1805 or 1850); *The Excursion*, book 1 (or its earlier version, "The Ruined Cottage"); Prospectus to *The Recluse*

Coleridge: "The Eolian Harp"; "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner"; "This Lime-Tree Bower My Prison"; "Frost at Midnight"; "The Nightingale"; "Dejection: An Ode"; "To William Wordsworth"; "Christabel"; "Kubla Khan"; "Constancy to an Ideal Object"

Byron: *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (cantos 3 & 4); *Don Juan* (cantos 1 & 2); "Prometheus"; "She Walks in Beauty"; *The Vision of Judgment*

Shelley: “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty”; “Mont Blanc”; Alastor; “Ode to the West Wind”; Epipsychidion; Adonais; The Triumph of Life

Keats: *Endymion*, book 1; “La Belle Dame Sans Merci”; Isabella; The Eve of St. Agnes; Lamia; *Hyperion*; *The Fall of Hyperion*; the Odes; Sonnets (a selection)

Selections from THREE of the following:

Barbauld, Burns, Clare, Crabbe, Hemans, Hunt, Landor, Landon, Moore, Rogers, Scott, Smith, Southey

FICTION

Radcliffe: One of *Mysteries of Udolpho*; *The Italian*

Godwin: *Caleb Williams*

Austen: One novel

Scott: One novel

M. Shelley: One of *Frankenstein*; *Mathilda*; *Valperga*; *The Last Man*

ONE of Wollstonecraft, *The Wrongs of Woman* or Hays, *Memoirs of Emma Courtney*

ONE of Lewis, *The Monk*; Maturin, *Melmoth the Wanderer*; Hogg, *Confessions of a Justified Sinner*; Peacock, *Nightmare Abbey*; Edgeworth, *Castle Rackrent*

DRAMA

Shelley: *The Cenci*, *Prometheus Unbound*

Byron, *Manfred*

PROSE

Wordsworth: Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*; Preface to *Poems* (1815); one of the “Essays upon Epitaphs”

Coleridge: *Biographia Literaria* (selections); “On Poesy or Art”

Peacock: “The Four Ages of Poetry”

Shelley: A Defence of Poetry; “On Life”; “On Love”

De Quincey: *Confessions of an English Opium Eater* (1822) or *Suspiria de Profundis*; “The English Mail Coach”; “The Literature of Knowledge and the Literature of Power”

Keats: Letters (selections)

Wollstonecraft: *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (selections)

Selections from ONE of the following:

Hazlitt, *The Spirit of the Age*; Lamb, *Essays of Elia*; Dorothy Wordsworth, *Journals*

Selections from ONE of the following:

Godwin: *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*

Paine: *The Rights of Man*

Burke: *Reflections on the Revolution in France*

VICTORIAN PERIOD

POETRY

Tennyson: “Mariana”; “Oenone”; “The Lady of Shalott”; “The Palace of Art”; “The Two Voices”; “The Lotos-Eaters”; “Ulysses”; “The Epic”; “Morte d’Arthur”; *In Memoriam*; *Maud*; “Tithonus”

Barrett Browning: “The Cry of the Children”; “The Runaway Slave at Pilgrim’s Point”; *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (selections); *Aurora Leigh* (selections); “A Curse for a Nation”; “A Musical Instrument”

Browning: “Porphyria’s Lover”; “My Last Duchess”; “The Bishop Orders his Tomb at St. Praxed’s Church”; “Love Among the Ruins”; “Fra Lippo Lippi”; “A Toccata of Galuppi’s”; “Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came”; “Andrea del Sarto”; “Caliban upon Setebos”

Arnold: “Isolation. To Marguerite”; “To Marguerite—Continued”; “The Buried Life”; “The Scholar Gipsy”; “Thyrsis”; “Dover Beach”; “Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse”

D. G. Rossetti: “My Sister’s Sleep”; “The Blessed Damozel”; “Jenny”; “The Woodspurge”; “The Burden of Nineveh”; *The House of Life* (selections)

C. G. Rossetti: “Goblin Market”; “After Death”; “Winter: My Secret”; “Song (When I am dead, my dearest)” ; “Up-Hill”; “The Lowest Place”; “In an Artist’s Studio”; “In progress”

Selections from THREE of the following:

E. Bronte, Carroll, M.E. Coleridge, Dutt, Field, Hardy, Hopkins, Kipling, Morris, Swinburne.

NOVEL

- C. Bronte: *Jane Eyre* or *Villette*
- E. Bronte: *Wuthering Heights*
- Conrad: *Heart of Darkness*
- Dickens: *Bleak House* and one other novel
- Eliot: *Middlemarch*
- Gaskell: *Mary Barton* or *North and South* or *Wives and Daughters*
- Hardy: *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* or *Jude the Obscure*
- Stevenson: *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*
- Thackeray: *Vanity Fair* or *Henry Esmond*
- Wilde: *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

TWO of Braddon, *Lady Audley's Secret*; A. Bronte, *Agnes Grey* or *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*; Butler, *Erewhon* or *The Way of All Flesh*; Collins, *The Woman in White* or one other novel; Disraeli, *Sybil*; Doyle, *The Sign of Four*; Gissing, *The Odd Women* or one other novel; Kipling, *Kim*; Meredith, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* or *The Egoist*; Morris, *News from Nowhere* or *A Dream of John Ball*; Pater, *Marius the Epicurean*; Stoker, *Dracula*; Trollope, *The Warden* or one other novel; Levy, *Reuben Sachs*; Wells, *The Time Machine* or *The Island of Dr. Moreau*.

PROSE

- Arnold: Preface to *Poems* (1853); "On the Modern Element in Literature"; "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time"; *Culture and Anarchy* (selections)
- Browning: "An Essay on Shelley"
- Carlyle: *Sartor Resartus*
- Cobbe: "Criminals, Idiots, Women and Minors"
- Darwin: *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* (selections).
- Hallam: "On Some of the Characteristics of Modern Poetry, and on the Lyrical Poems of Alfred Tennyson"
- Newman: *The Idea of the University* (selections)

Mill: “Bentham”; “Coleridge”; “What is Poetry”; *The Subjection of Women*

Pater: *The Renaissance* (selections)

Seacole: *The Wonderful Adventures of Mrs. Seacole in Many Lands* (selections)

D. G. Rossetti: “Hand and Soul”

Ruskin: *Modern Painters* (selections) “The Nature of Gothic”

Wilde: “The Critic as Artist”; “The Decay of Lying”

TWO of the following three groups from Stephen Greenblatt et al, *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Vol. E, 11th ed., on “The Promise and Price of Industrialization”; “Victorian Debates about Woman, Gender and Sexuality”; “Great Britain’s Imperial Mission.”

DRAMA

Wilde, *The Importance of Being Earnest* or *Salomé*; Shaw, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*

Departmental regulations regarding PhD qualifying exams can be found @ the following site:
https://uwo.ca/english/graduate/programs/phd_program/phd_regulations.html