A. PRIMARY TEXTS

The following two anthologies are often used as text books at U.S. American universities:


You may also consult the following general collections of key texts:


Historical Outline of Important Literary Texts

I. Early American, Colonial & Puritan Literature (1620s – 1760s)

a. Primary Literature
Mather, Cotton. (1702). Magnalia, Christi Americano.
Rowlandson, Mary (1682). A Narrative of the Captivity and Restauration [sic] of Mrs. Mary

b. Secondary Literature

c. Other Primary Literature
Anne Bradstreet, The Tenth Muse, lately Sprung up in America, or, Several Poems Compiled with Great Variety of Wit and Learning (1678).
Ebenezer Cooke, The Sot-Weed Factor (1708).
John Cotton, “God’s Promise to His Plantation” (1630); The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution, for Cause of Conscience, Discussed (1644).
Jonathan Edwards, Resolutions (1822/23); A Faithful Narrative of the Surprizing Work of God in the Conversion of Many Hundred Souls in Northampton (1737),
John Eliot, Primer or Catechism in the Massachusetts Indian Language (1654).
Cotton Mather, Wonders of the Invisible World (1693); The Biblia Americana (1693-1728).
Samson Occom, Short Narrative of My Life (1768).
Michael Wigglesworth, “The Day of Doom” (1662).
Roger Williams, A Key into the Language of America (1643).

II. Revolutionary Writings, Romanticism, Gothic Fiction (1770s – 1820s)

a. Primary Literature

b. Other Primary Literature
Henry Brackenridge, Modern Chivalry (1792-1815).
Joel Barlow, The Vision of Columbus (1787).
Charles Brockden Brown, Arthur Mervyn, or Memoirs of the Year 1793 (1799/1800).
Olaudah Equiano, *Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African* (1789).
Hannah Foster, *The Coquette* (1797).
Philip Freneau, “A Political Litany” (1775); “To Sir Toby” (1784); “The Indian Burying Ground” (1877).
Mordecai Noah, *She Would be a Soldier* (1819); *The Grecian Captive, or the Fall of Athens* (1822).
Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (1775); *The Age of Reason* (1794).
Susanna Rowson, *Slaves in Algiers, or, A Struggle for Freedom* (1794).
Tabitha Tenney, *Female Quixotism* (1801).
Royall Tyler, *The Contrast* (1787); *The Algerine Captive* (1797).
Phillis Wheatley, “On Being Brought from Africa to America” (1773); “To His Excellency General Washington” (1776).

III. Dark Romanticism, Transcendentalism, and Sentimental Fiction (1820-1865)

a. Primary Literature

Beecher Stow, Harriet (1852). *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*.
Brown, William Wells (1853). *Clotel, or, The President’s Daughter*.
Cooper, James Fenimore (1826). *The Last of the Mohicans*.
Cummins, Maria S. (1854). *The Lamplighter*.
Emerson, Ralph Waldo (1836). “Nature”.
Emerson, Ralph Waldo (1841). “Self-Reliance”.
Hawthorne, Nathaniel (1835). “Young Goodman Brown”.
Hawthorne, Nathaniel (1850). *The Scarlet Letter*.
Melville, Herman (1853/56). “Bartleby the Scrivener”.
Poe, Edgar Allan (1839). “The Fall of the House of Usher”.
Poe, Edgar Allan (1843). “The Black Cat”.
Thoreau, Henry David (1854). *Walden, or Life in the Woods*.
Whitman, Walt (1855/1892). *Leaves of Grass*.

b. Other Primary Literature

William Apess, *A Son of the Forest* (1829); “An Indian’s Looking-Glass for the White Man” (1833).
Lydia Maria Child, *Hobomok* (1824).
James Fenimore Cooper, *The Spy, A Tale of the Neutral Ground* (1821); *The Pioneers* (1823); *The Prairie* (1827); *The Pathfinder* (1840); *The Deerslayer* (1841).
Emily Dickinson, Poems (written between 1861 and 1865).
Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845).
Ralph Waldo Emerson, “The American Scholar” (1837); “The Over-Soul” (1841).
Nathaniel Hawthorne, “My Kinsman, Major Molineaux” (1832); “The Minister’s Black Veil” (1836); “The Birthmark” (1843); “Rappaccini’s Daughter” (1844); “Ethan Brand” (1850); The House of the Seven Gables (1851); The Blithedale Romance (1852); The Marble Faun (1860).
Harriet Jacobs, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (1861).
Henry W. Longfellow, “A Psalm of Life” (1838); Evangeline (1847); Song of Hiawatha (1856); “Paul Revere’s Ride” (1861).
Herman Melville, Typee (1846); Mardi (1849); “Benito Cereno” (1855); Billy Budd (1891).
Francis Parkman, The Oregon Trail: Sketches of Prairie and Rocky-Mountain Life (1849).
Edgar Allan Poe, Tamerlane and Other Poems (1827); “Ligeia” (1838); Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym (1838); “The Man of the Crowd” (1840); “A Descent into the Maelström” (1841); “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” (1841); “The Tell-Tale Heart” (1843); “The Raven” (1845); “The Philosophy of Composition” (1846).
John Rollin Ridges (Yellow Bird, Cherokee), Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta (1854).
Henry David Thoreau, A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers (1849); “Resistance to Civil Government” (1849).
Walt Whitman, “America” (1892).
Harriet E.A. Wilson, Our Nig (1859).

IV. Realism and Naturalism (1865-1920s)

a. Primary Literature

Chopin, Kate (1894). “The Story of an Hour”.
Chopin, Kate (1899). The Awakening.
Crane, Stephen (1898). “The Open Boat”.
Dreiser, Theodore (1900). Sister Carrie.
James, Henry (1878). Daisy Miller.
James, Henry (1881). The Portrait of a Lady.
Norris, Frank (1899). McTeague, A Story of San Francisco.
Norris, Frank (1914). Vandover and the Brute.
Perkins Gilman, Charlotte (1892). “The Yellow Wallpaper”.
Twain, Mark (1865). “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County”.
Twain, Mark (1884). Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.
Wharton, Edith (1920). The Age of Innocence.

b. Other Primary Literature

Louisa Maria Alcott, Little Women (1869).
Mary Antin, The Promised Land (1912).
Willa Cather, *O Pioneers!* (1913).
Charles W. Chesnutt, *The Conjure Woman* (1899); *The House Behind the Cedars* (1900); *The Marrow of Tradition* (1901).
Kate Chopin, *Bayou Folk* (1894); *A Night in Acadie* (1897).
Samuel Langhorne Clemens [Mark Twain], *The Innocents Abroad* (1869); *Roughing It* (1872); *The Gilded Age: A Tale of Today* (1873); *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876); *Life on the Mississippi* (1883); *Pudd’nhead Wilson* (1894).
Stephen Crane, “A Man Said to the Universe” (1895); “The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky” (1898); *The Monster* (1898).
De Forest, William, *Miss Ravenel’s Conversion From Secession to Loyalty* (1867); “The Great American Novel” (1868).
Harold Frederic, *The Damnation of Theron Ware* (1896).
Mary Wilkins Freeman, “A Village Sinner” (1891).
Hamlin Garland, *Prairie Folks* (1892); *Rose of Dutcher’s Cooly* (1895).
Bret Harte, “The Luck of Roaring Camp” (1868); “The Outcasts of Poker Flat” (1869).
Pauline Hopkins, *Contending Forces* (1900).
William Dean Howells, *A Modern Instance* (1882); *Criticism and Fiction* (1891); *A Traveler from Altruria* (1894).
Henry James, *The American* (1877); “The Real Thing” (1892); *The Bostonians* (1886); “The Figure in the Carpet” (1896); *What Maisie Knew* (1897); “The Turn of the Screw” (1898); *The Ambassadors* (1903); “The Beast in the Jungle” (1903); *The Golden Bowl* (1904).
Sarah Orne Jewett, *A Country Doctor* (1884); “A White Heron” (1886).
Grace King, “The Crippled Hope” (1893).
Jack London, *The Iron Heel* (1908); *The Call of the Wild* (1903); *White Fang* (1906); *Martin Eden* (1909); “To Build A Fire” (1908).
Frank Norris, “Zola as Romantic Writer” (1896); *Moran of the Lady Letty* (1898); *A Man’s Woman* (1900); “A Plea for Romantic Fiction” (1901); *The Octopus* (1901).
Robert Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886).
Mark Twain → see Samuel Langhorne Clemens.
Anzia Yezierska, *Bread Givers* (1925)

V. From Modernism to the Eve of Postmodernism (1890s – 1940s)

a. Primary Literature

Faulkner, William (1930). “A Rose for Emily”.
Hemingway, Ernest (1926). *The Sun Also Rises*.
Hemingway, Ernest (1936). “The Short, Happy Life of Francis Mocamber”.
Hemingway, Ernest (1952). *The Old Man and the Sea*.
Steinbeck, John (1939). *The Grapes of Wrath*. 
b. Other Primary Literature


James Baldwin, *Notes of a Native Son* (1955); *Giovanni’s Room* (1956); “Going to Meet the Man” (1965).

Djuna Barnes, “Smoke” (1917); *Nightwood* (1937).

Ambrose Bierce, *Tales of Soldiers and Civilians* (1891); *Can Such Things Be?* (1893); *The Devil’s Dictionary* (1911).

Pearl S. Buck, *The Good Earth* (1931); *China Sky* (1941).

H.D. [Hilda Doolittle], *HERmione* (1981 [1927]).


William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury* (1929); *Light in August* (1932); *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936); “Barn Burning” (1939).

F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Beautiful and Damned* (1922); “Tales of the Jazz Age” (1922); *Tender is the Night* (1934); *The Last Tycoon* (1941).


Ernest Hemingway, “The Killers” (1927); *Death in the Afternoon* (1932); *In Our Time* (1925); “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” (1936); “Hills Like White Elephants” (1927); *A Farewell to Arms* (1929); *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940); *A Moveable Feast* (1964); *Garden of Eden* (1986, written between 1946 and 1961).


Nella Larsen, *Quicksand* (1928); *Passing* (1929).

Sinclair Lewis, *Main Street* (1921); *Babbitt* (1922); *Elmar Gantry* (1927).


Arthur Miller, *All My Sons* (1947); *Death of a Salesman* (1949); *The Crucible* (1953); *A View from the Bridge* (1955/56).


Jean Toomer, *Cane* (1923).

Thorton Wilder, *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* (1927); *Our Town* (1938).

Tennessee Williams, *The Glass Menagerie* (1944); *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1948); *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1955); *Sweet Bird of Youth* (1959).


VI. Postmodernism and Neo-Realism (1950s – Today)

a. Primary Literature

Baldwin, James (1953). *Go Tell It on the Mountain.*
Barth, John (1968). “Lost in the Funhouse”.
Bellow, Saul (1953). *Adventures of Augie March.*

b. Other Primary Literature

John Barth, *The Sot-Weed Factor* (1960); *Chimera* (1972).
Saul Bellow, “Looking For Mr. Green” (1951); *Henderson the Rain King* (1959); *Herzog* (1964); *Humboldt’s Gift* (1975).


John Clellon Holmes; *Go* (1952); *The Philosophy of the Beat Generation* (1958).

LeRoi Jones see Amiri Baraka.


Armistead Maupin, *Tales of the City* (1979-2010).


John Updike, *The Rabbit Novels* (1960 – 1990);


B. SECONDARY TEXTS

Reference Works, Encyclopedias, and Glossaries


**Literary History**


**American History**


**American Cultural Studies**


