Reading List - American Literature

Fachprüfung II (FP II)

For the “Zweite Fachprüfung zur Amerikanischen Literatur,” you have to prepare the whole canon of American Literature. Hand in a list of all texts to your supervisor in advance, including both required and optional reading. This list should have your name and your student ID on it and specify what you need the FP II for (Master’s, Diploma ‘Lehramt’).

All texts listed under section A (Required reading) are mandatory! Students of “Lehramt” only have to read texts marked with a *. Under section B (Optional reading), you can choose between a certain number of texts and authors. Please make sure that you read the required amount of texts. Pick at least one longer text (novel, play) from the optional list per section. (Note: Students of “Lehramt” are allowed to use texts from section A not marked with a * for the optional list.)

Should you wish to add a text to the section of optional reading which is not listed, please discuss this in advance with your examiner!

Early Encounters (15th and 16th Centuries)
Genres: Journals, Reports, Native American Tales of Origin.

Optional reading (Please choose at least one text from the list):
Christopher Columbus, “The First Voyage” (1492-93) (written by B. de Las Casas) or “The Second Voyage” (1493-96) (by Hernando Colon and D. A. Chanca) or “The Third Voyage” (1498-1500) (by Columbus himself) or “The Fourth Voyage” (1502-04) (by Columbus himself and H. Colon).
Álvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca, The Account [La Relación] (1542).

Colonial and Puritan Literature (1620s – 1760s)
Genres: Indian Captivity Narratives, Jeremiads, Sermons, Spiritual Autobiographies.

A) Required reading (Read all texts mentioned below):
Mary Rowlandson, A Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson (1682)*.
John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity” (speech held in 1630, published: 1830s)*.

B) Optional reading (Please choose at least two texts from the list):
William Bradford, excerpts from Of Plymouth Plantation (written between 1630 and 1651).
Anne Bradstreet, one poem from The Tenth Muse, Lately Sprung up in America (1678).
John Cotton, “God’s Promise to His Plantation” (1630).
Jonathan Edwards, excerpts from Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God (1741).
Cotton Mather, excerpts from Wonders of the Invisible World (1693) or excerpts from Magnalia Christi Americana (1702).
Captain John Smith, excerpts from The Generall Historie of Virginia (1624).
Michael Wigglesworth, excerpts from The Day of Doom (1662).

Early Romanticism, Revolutionary/Post-Revolutionary Texts (1770s – 1820s)
Genres: Epistolary Novels, Frontier Novels, Gothic Fiction, Pamphlets, Picaresque Novels, Political Satires, Seduction Novels, Short Fiction, Slave Narratives.

A) Required reading (Read all texts mentioned below):
Charles Brockden Brown, Edgar Huntly, or, Memoirs of a Sleepwalker (1799)*.

1 Students of “Lehramt” have to read one optional text from this section.
Washington Irving, “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” (1819); “Rip Van Winkle” (1819)*.  
Thomas Jefferson, Declaration of Independence (1776)*.  
Susanna Rowson, Charlotte Temple, A Tale of Truth (1791/94)*.  

B) Optional reading (Please choose at least three texts by different authors) ²:  
Joel Barlow, The Vision of Columbus (1787).  
Hugh Henry Brackenridge, Modern Chivalry: Containing the Adventures of Captain John Farrago and Teague O'Regan, His Servant (1792-97).  
Charles Brockden Brown, Alcuin (1798) or Wieland, or, The Transformation (1798) or Arthur Mervyn, or Memoirs of the Year 1793 (1799/1800).  
James Fenimore Cooper, The Spy, A Tale of the Neutral Ground (1821) or The Pioneers (1823) or The Last of the Mohicans (1826).  
Philip Freneau, “A Political Litany” (1775).  
Olaudah Equiano, The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano (1789).  
Hannah Foster, The Coquette (1797).  
Benjamin Franklin, excerpts from The Autobiography (1793, written 1771-1790).  
Peter Markoe, The Algerine Spy in Pennsylvania (1787).  
Isaac Mitchell, The Asylum (1804).  
Mordecai Noah, She Would Be a Soldier (1819).  
Thomas Paine, excerpts from Common Sense (1776).  
Susanna Rowson, Slaves in Algiers; or, A Struggle for Freedom (1794).  
Tabitha Gilman Tenney, Female Quixotism (1801).  
Royall Tyler, The Contrast (1787) or The Algerine Captive (1797).  
Phillis Wheatley, “On Being Brought from Africa to America” (1773) or “To His Excellency, George Washington” (1776).  

LIGHT/DARK ROMANTICISM AND AMERICAN RENAISSANCE (1820s – 1860s)  
Genres: Dark Romanticism, Detective Fiction, Epic Novels, Short Fiction, Transcendentalism, Sentimental Novel, Slave Narratives, Travel Literature.  

A) Required reading (Read all texts mentioned below):  
Emily Dickinson, “There’s a certain slant of light” (posthum. 1890)*; “I heard a Fly buzz – when I died” (posthum. 1896)*; “Much Madness is divinest Sense” (posthum. 1955).  
Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Self-Reliance” (1841)*.  
Nathaniel Hawthorne, “Young Goodman Brown” (1835); “The Birthmark” (1843); The Scarlet Letter (1850)*.  
Herman Melville, excerpts from Moby-Dick, or, The Whale (1851)*; “Bartleby, the Scrivener” (1853).  
Edgar Allan Poe, “The Fall of the House of Usher” (1839)*; “The Raven” (1845)*.  
Henry David Thoreau, excerpts from Walden, or Life in the Woods (1854)*.  
Walt Whitman, “Song of Myself” (1855)*.  

B) Optional reading (Please choose at least four texts by different authors) ³:  
William Apess, A Son of the Forest, The Experience of William Apes, A Native of the Forest (1829) or “An Indian’s Looking Glass for the White Man” (1833).  
William Wells Brown, Clotel, or, The President’s Daughter (1853).  

² Students of “Lehramt” have to read two optional texts from this section.  
³ Students of “Lehramt” have to read three optional texts from this section.
Maria Susanna Cummins, *The Lamplighter* (1854).
Lydia Maria Child, *Hobomok* (1824).
Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845).
Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Nature” (1836) or “The American Scholar” (1837).
Nathaniel Hawthorne, “My Kinsman, Major Molineaux” (1832) or “The Minister’s Black Veil” (1836) or “Dr. Heidegger’s Experiment” (1837) or “Rappaccini’s Daughter” (1844) or *The Marble Faun* (1860).
Henry W. Longfellow, *Song of Hiawatha* (1856) or “Paul Revere’s Ride” (1861).
Herman Melville, *Typee* (1846) or *Mardi* (1849) or “Benito Cereno” (1855) or *Billy Budd* (1891).
Edgar Allan Poe, “Ligeia” (1838) or *Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* (1838) or “The Man of the Crowd” (1840) or “A Descent into the Maelström” (1841) or “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” (1841) or “The Black Cat” (1843) or “The Tell-Tale Heart” (1843).
Catharine Maria Sedgwick, *Hope Leslie, or Early Times in the Massachusetts* (1827).
Henry David Thoreau, *Resistance to Civil Government (Civil Disobedience)* (1849).
Walt Whitman, “I Sing the Body Electric” or “Mannahatta” or another poem from *Leaves of Grass* (1855-92) or excerpts from *Democratic Vistas* (1871).

**REALISM AND NATURALISM (1865 – 1920s)**
Genres: Expatriate Literature, Impressionism, Local Color, Melodrama, Muckraking, Novel of Manners, Psychological Realism, Regionalism, Tales of Adventure, Tall Tales, Utopian Fiction, Western Fiction.

A) **Required reading (Read all texts mentioned below):**
- Stephen Crane, “The Open Boat” (1898)*.
- Samuel Langhorne Clemens [Mark Twain], *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884)*.
- Henry James, excerpts from *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881)*.
- Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “The Yellow Wallpaper” (1892)*

B) **Optional reading (Please choose at least six texts by different authors)**:
- Mary Antin, *The Promised Land* (1912).
- Ambrose Bierce, “An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge” (1890).
- Abraham Cahan, *Yekl: A Tale of the New York Ghetto* (1896) or “A Ghetto Wedding” (1898) or “The Imported Bridegroom” (1898) or *The Rise of David Levinsky* (1917).
- Willa Cather, *O Pioneers!* (1913) or *My Ántonia* (1918) or “Paul’s Case” (1920) or *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927).
- Charles Chesnutt, “The Gophered Grapevine” (1899) or “The Passing of Grandison” (1899) or *The House Behind the Cedars* (1900) or *The Marrow of Tradition* (1901).
- Kate Chopin, “Desiree’s Baby” (1893) or “The Story of an Hour” (1894) or “The Storm” (1898) or *The Awakening* (1899).
- Samuel Langhorne Clemens [Mark Twain], “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County” (1865) or *The Innocents Abroad* (1869) or *Roughing It* (1872) or *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court* (1889) or *Pudd’nhead Wilson* (1894).

Students of “Lehramt” have to read five optional texts from this section.
Theodore Dreiser, *Sister Carrie* (1900) or *The Titan* (1914) or *An American Tragedy* (1925).
Paul Laurence Dunbar, “We Wear the Mask” (1896) (or another poem from *Collected Poetry*, 1993) or “The Lynching of Jube Benson” (1902) or *The Sport of the Gods* (1902).
Bret Harte, “The Luck of Roaring Camp” (1868) or “The Outcasts of Poker Flat” (1869).
Pauline E. Hopkins, *Contending Forces* (1900).
William Dean Howells, *A Modern Instance* (1882) or *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1885) or *A Traveler from Altruria* (1894).
Henry James, *The American* (1877) or *Daisy Miller* (1878) or “The Real Thing” (1892) or “The Figure in the Carpet” (1896) or *The Turn of the Screw* (1898) or “The Beast in the Jungle” (1903) or *The American Scene* (1907).
Sarah Orne Jewett, “A White Heron” (1886) or *The Country of the Pointed Firs* (1896).
Jack London, *The Call of the Wild* (1903) or *Sea-Wolf* (1904) or *White Fang* (1906) or *The Iron Heel* (1908) or “To Build a Fire” (1908) or *Martin Eden* (1909) or *The Abysmal Brute* (1913).
Frank Norris, *Moran of the Lady Letty* (1898) or *Mc Teague, a Story of San Francisco* (1899) or *A Man’s Woman* (1900) or *The Octopus* (1901) or *Vandover and the Brute* (1914).
Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* (1906) or *Oil!* (1927).
Ernest Thompson Seton, one story from *Wild Animals I Have Known* (1898).
Edith Wharton, *The House of Mirth* (1905) or *Ethan Frome* (1911) or *The Age of Innocence* (1920).

MODERNISM (1900s – 1950s)

A) Required reading (Read all texts mentioned below):
William Faulkner, “A Rose for Emily” (1930)*.
F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (1925)*.
Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises* (1926)*; “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber” (1936).
Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937)*.

B) Optional reading (Please choose at least four texts by different authors) 5:
E.E. Cummings, “in just –” (1920) or “since feeling is first” (1951).

5 Students of “Lehramt” have to read three optional texts from this section.
William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) or *Light in August* (1932) or *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936) or “Barn Burning” (1939) or *A Fable* (1955).

Robert Frost, “The Road Not Taken” (1916) or “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening” (1922).

Susan Glaspell, *Trifles* (1916) or *Alison’s House* (1931).


Ernest Hemingway, “Indian Camp” or another story from *In Our Time* (1925) or *Men without Women* (1927) or *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) or “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” (1936) or *Across the River and into the Trees* (1950) or *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952).

Langston Hughes, “I, Too, Sing America” (1925) or *The Ways of White Folks* (1934) or “Dream Deferred (Harlem)” (1951).


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


Sinclair Lewis, *Main Street* (1921) or *Babbitt* (1922) or *Arrowsmith* (1926).


H.P. Lovecraft, “The Rats in the Walls” (1924) or *At the Mountains of Madness* (1936).

Claude McKay, “The White House” (1922) or *Home to Harlem* (1928).

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


Anais Nin, one of the stories from *Delta of Venus* (1977).

Ezra Pound, “In a Station of the Metro” (1913) or excerpts from *Cantos* (1917-69).

Katherine Anne Porter, “He” (1930) or “Rope” (1930) or another short story from *The Collected Short Stories of Katherine Anne Porter* (1965).


Edna St. Vincent Millay, one text from *A Few Figs from Thistles: Poems and Sonnets* (1921).


John Steinbeck, *Tortilla Flat* (1935) or *Of Mice and Men* (1937) or *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) or *The Pearl* (1947) or *East of Eden* (1952).

Wallace Stevens, “The Idea of Order at Key West” (1934).


Jean Toomer, *Cane* (1923).


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

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

William Carlos Williams, “The Red Wheelbarrow” (1923) or another poem from *Spring and All* (1923), or “This Is Just to Say” (1934).


Richard Wright, *Uncle Tom’s Children* (1938) or *Native Son* (1940).


---

Pick only one (!) representative story from any collection of short fiction in this list (Hemingway, Porter, Welty, etc.).
**POSTWAR LITERATURE, ETHNIC AND BEAT WRITING (1940s – 1970s)**

Genres: African American Literature, Anti-Detective Fiction, Beat Literature, Black Literature, Confessional Poetry, Experimental Urban Writing, Feminist Literature, Jazz Poetry, Native American Renaissance, New Journalism, Queer Literature, Quest Narratives, Neo-Slave Narratives.

A) **Required reading (Read all texts mentioned below):**

Saul Bellow, excerpts from *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953)*.
Ralph Ellison, excerpts from *Invisible Man* (1952)*.
Allen Ginsberg, “Howl” (1956)*.
Jack Kerouac, excerpts from *On the Road* (1957).
J.D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951)*.

B) **Optional reading (Please choose at least three texts by different authors)**:

Isaac Asimov, one story from *I, Robot* (1950).
James Baldwin, *Go Tell it on the Mountain* (1953) or “Notes of a Native Son” (1955) or *Giovanni’s Room* (1956) or *Another Country* (1962) or *Blues for Mister Charlie* (1964) or “Going to Meet the Man” (1965).
Saul Bellow, “Looking for Mr. Green” (1951) or *Henderson the Rain King* (1959) or *Herzog* (1964).
Ray Bradbury, “A Sound of Thunder” (1952) or *Fahrenheit 451* (1953).
Truman Capote, *Other Voices, Other Rooms* (1948) or “A Tree of Night” (1949) or *The Grass Harp* (1951) or *Breakfast at Tiffany’s* (1958) or *In Cold Blood* (1966).
Lawrence Ferlinghetti, “I Am Waiting” or another poem from *A Coney Island of the Mind* (1958).

7 Students of “Lehramt” have to read two optional texts from this section.


J.D. Salinger, “A Perfect Day for Bananafish” (1948) or “Pretty Mouth and Green My Eyes” (1951) or *Franny and Zooey* (1961).

Dr. Seuss [Theodore Seuss Geisel], *Green Eggs and Ham* (1960).


Eudora Welty, “Petrified Man” or another story from *A Curtain of Green* (1941) or *The Ponder Heart* (1954) or *The Optimist’s Daughter* (1972).


**POSTMODERNISM AND NEO-REALISM (1960s – TODAY)**

Genres: Anti-Detective Fiction, Confessional Poetry, Ethnic Writing (African American, Asian, Chicano/a), Experimental Urban Writing, Feminist Literature, Magical Realism, Native American Renaissance, New Journalism, Queer Literature, Neo-Slave Narratives.

A) **Required reading (Read all texts mentioned below):**


John Barth, “Lost in the Funhouse” (1968)*.

Jonathan S. Foer, excerpts from *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* (2005)*.


B) **Optional reading (Please choose at least five texts by different authors)²:**


Woody Allen, a short story from one of the following collections: *Without Feathers* (1975) or *Side Effects* (1980) or *Mere Anarchy* (2007).


Donald Barthelme, *The Dead Father* (1975).


² Students of “Lehramt” have to read four optional texts from this section.
Lawson Fusao Inada, one of the poems from *Legends from Camp* (1993).


Miranda July, one of the stories from: *No One Belongs Here More Than You: Stories* (2007).


Simon J. Ortiz, *From Sand Creek: Rising In This Heart Which Is Our America* (1981).


Matt de la Pena, *We Were Here* (2009).

Aimee Phan, a story from *We Should Never Meet* (2005).


Lionel Shriver, We Need to Talk About Kevin (2003).


Gary Shteyngart, Super Sad True Love Story (2010).


Patti Smith, Just Kids (2010).

Art Spiegelman, Maus (1980) or In the Shadow of No Towers (2004).


John Kennedy Toole, A Confederacy of Dunces (1980 [1963]).


Kurt Vonnegut, Cat’s Cradle (1963) or Slaughterhouse-Five (1969) or Breakfast of Champions (1973).

Alice Walker, “Everyday Use” (1973) or Meridian (1976) or The Color Purple (1982).


Jesmyn Ward, Salvage the Bones (2010).


