Masters Reading List
retyped 2006

British Literature

Beginnings to 1500

- “Beowulf”
- “The Battle of Maldon”
- “Deor’s Lament”
- “The Wanderer”
- “The Seafarer”
- “Pearl”
- Piers Plowman
- “Sir Gawain and the Green Knight”
- Chaucer: Troilus and Criseyde; The Canterbury Tales
- Malory: Morte D’Arthur
- Henryson: Testament of Cresseid
- The Second Shepherd’s Play
- Cain and Abel
- Everyman
- Widsith
- The Dream of the Rood
- The Romance of the Rose

Sixteenth Century

Poetry:

- Skelton: “Philip Sparrow,” “Colin Clout.”
- Surrey: “Complaint of A Lover that Defied Love and Was By Love After the More Tormented”; “Description of a spring”; “Description and Praise of His Love Geraldine”; “Complaint of a Lover Rebuked.”
- Wyatt: “The Lover for Shamefastedness Hideth His Desire Within his Faithful Heart”; “The Lover Compareth his State to a Ship In a Perilous Storm Tossed On the Sea”; “To a Lady to Answer Directly with Yea or Nay”; “Of the Mean and Sure Estate.”
- Sackville: “Induction to The Mirror for Magistrates.”
- Sir John Davies: “Orchestra”; Nosce Teipsum.
- Spenser: “The Shephers Calendar” (April, June, October); Sonnets 1-10 in the Amoretti; “An Hymne in Honor of Love”; “Prothalamion”; Sonnets “Epithalamion”; “The Faerie Queene” (Books I and III).
- Sidney: Astrophil and Stella: Sonnets 1-10.
- Shakespeare: Sonnets 2, 28, 29, 55, 73, 116, 129, 130, 144, and 146.
• Drayton: *Idea*, Sonnets 1, 6, 61.
• Chapman: “The Shadow of the Night.”
• Marlowe: “Hero and Leander.”
• Hall: from “Virgidemiarum” Book 1, “the prologue,” “the postscript,” and “satire VII.”

**Prose:**

• More: *Utopia*.
• Elyot: *The Book Named the Governor*, Book 1, Chapter XIII.
• Lyly: *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit*; read the preface to the “Gentleman Readers,” and the first five pages in any anthology for style.
• Nashe: *The Unfortunate Traveler*.
• Hooker: *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, the first ten pages of any standard anthology.

**Prose Criticism:**

• Sidney: *The Defense of Poesy*.
• Campion: *Observation in the Art of English Poesy*.
• Daniel: “A Defense of Rhyme.”

**Drama:**

• Sackville and Norton: *Gorboduc*.
• Lyly: *Endymion*.
• Kyd: *The Spanish Tragedy*.
• Marlowe: *Tamburlaine* part I; *Dr. Faustus*.
• Shakespeare: The Second Historical Tetralogy (Richard II-Henry IV); *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*; *The Merchant of Venice*; *As You Like It*; *Twelfth Night*; *Measure for Measure*; *The Winter’s Tale*; *The Tempest*; *Julius Caesar*; *Hamlet*; *Othello*; *King Lear*; *Macbeth*; *Antony and Cleopatra*.

**Seventeenth Century**

**Poetry:**


Crashaw: “Music’s Duel”; “St. Mary Magdalene, or The Weeper”; “The Flaming Heart.”

Marvell: “To His Coy Mistress”; “Upon Appleton House”; “To My Lord Fairfax”; “The Definition of Love”; “A Horatian Ode upon Cromwell’s Return from Ireland.”

Suckling: “Out Upon It! I Have Loved…”; “Song (Why so pale and wan, fond Lover)”; “A Ballad Upon A Wedding.”

Carew: “An Elegy Upon the Death of Dr. Donne, Dean of Paul’s”; “A Song (Ask Me No More Where Jove Bestows)”; “To A Lady that Desired I Would Love Her.”

Vaughan: from Silex Scintillans: “Regeneration,” “The Retreat,” “Corruption,” “They Are All Gone Into a World of Light,” “Cock-Crowing.”

Milton: “L’Allegro”; “Il Penseroso”; “Comus”; “Lycidas”; Paradise Lost; Samson Agonistes; Sonnet VII; Sonnet VIII.

Phineas Fletcher: The Locusts or Apollyonists, Canto I.

Giles Fletcher: Christ’s Triumph After Death, Canto IV.

Prose:


Bible: A selection from the gospel of St. Matthew in at least two different translations.


Browne: Religio Medici: read up to the statement “Nature hath made one world, and art another. In brief, all things artificial; for nature is the art of….”


Bunyan: Pilgrim’s Progress.

Pepys: Entry in his diary for 2 September 1665/1666 (The London Fire).

Jeremy Taylor: The Rules and Exercise of Holy Dying, Chapter 1, sections 1 and 2.

John Earle: from Microcosmography, or A Piece of the World Discovered In Essays and Characters: “A Plodding Student”; “A Young Gentleman of the University”; “A Plain Country Fellow.”
Drama:

- Jonson: Every Man in His Humor; Volpone; The Alchemist; Bartholomew Fair; Cynthia’s Revels.
- Webster: The White Devil; The Duchess of Malfi.
- Beaumont and Fletcher: The Knight of the Burning Pestle; Philaster.
- Middleton and Rowley: The Changeling.

Restoration and Eighteenth Century

Poetry:

- Dryden: “Mac Flecknoe”; “Absalom and Achitophel”; “Religio Laici”; “To the Pious Memory of the Accomplish’d Young Lady Mrs Anne Killigrew.”; “St. Cecilia’s Day”; “A Song for Alexander’s Feast.”
- Wilmot: “Satire Against Mankind.”
- Swift: “Description of the Morning”; “Verse on the Death of Dr. Swift.”
- Pope: “An Essay on Criticism”; An Essay on Man (I, III); “Epistle to the Earl of Buckingham”; “The Rape of the Lock”; “Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot.”
- Thomson: “Winter.”
- Johnson: “The Vanity of Human Wishes.”
- Butler: Hudibras (I, i).

Prose:

- Addison and Steele: Spectator #2, 10, 62, 81, 112, 249, 409, 519.
- Johnson: Rasselas; Rambler #4, 60, 208; Idler #16, 60, 61; Preface to “Lives of Dryden, Pope, Milton, Cowley.”
- Boswell: Life of Johnson (in a modern abridgment, such as Dell or Random House).

Drama:

- Dryden: The Conquest of Granada; All for Love.
- Etherege: The Man of Mode.
- Wycherley: The Country Wife; The Plain Dealer.
- Farquhar: Beaux’s Stratagem.
- Steele: The Conscious Lovers.
- Gay: The Beggar’s Opera.
- Goldsmith: She Stoops to Conquer.
• Sheriden: The Rivals; The School for Scandal.
• Buckingham: The Rehearsal.
• Otway: Venice Preserved.
• Lillo: The London Merchant.

Novels:

• Defoe: Moll Flanders.
• Richardson: Clarissa.
• Fielding: Tom Jones.
• Sterne: Tristram Shandy.

Nineteenth Century

Poetry:

(Selections may be found in Perkins, English Romantic Writers, and in The Norton Anthology of English Literature.)

• Blake: Songs of Innocence and Experience; “America: A Prophecy.”
• Byron: Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage (Cantos III, IV); Don Juan (Dedication, Cantos I-IV); “Darkness”; “Prometheus”; “Stanzas for Music” (“There’s not a joy the world can give”).
• Percy Bysshe Shelley: Prometheus Unbound; “Adonais”; “Hymn to Intellectual Beauty”; “Ode to the West Wind”; “To a Sky-Lark.”
• Keats: “Ode to a Nightingale”; “Ode on a Grecian Urn”; “The Eve of St. Agnes”; “To Autumn”; “On First Looking into Chapman’s Homer”; “On sitting down to read King Lear once again”; “When I have fears”; “Bright Star.”
• D. G. Rossetti: “The Blessed Damozel”; “Sister Helen”; selected sonnets from The House of Life.
FitzGerald: *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*.
Elizabeth Barrett Browning: Selections from *Sonnets from the Portuguese*.
Christina Rossetti: “Goblin Market.”
George Meredith: *Modern Love*; “Lucifer in Starlight.”
Wilde: “The Harlot’s House”; “The Ballad of Reading Gaol.”
Hardy: “Hap”; “Channel Firing”; “The Convergence of the Twain.”

**Prose:**

Wordsworth: “Preface” to 1800 edition of *Lyrical Ballads*.
Coleridge: *Biographia Literaria* (chapters I, IV, XIV, XX, XXII).
Shelley: *A Defence of Poetry*.
Newman: “The Idea of a University” (Discourse VI); “Apologia.”
Macaulay: “Samuel Johnson.”
Ruskin: *Modern Painters* (a few pages of description from part II of vol. I); from *The Stones of Venice* (“The Nature of Gothic”); from *Unto This Last* (“Roots of Honor”).
Arnold: *Culture and Anarchy* (Chapters 1-4); “Literature and Science”; “Literature and Dogma” (Chapter 12).
Huxley: “Liberal Education”; “Science and Culture.”

**Novel:**

Austen: *Pride and Prejudice*.
Dickens: *David Copperfield*; *Great Expectations*.
Thackeray: *Vanity Fair*.
Charlotte Bronte: *Jane Eyre*.
Emily Bronte: *Wuthering Heights*.
Trollope: *Barchester Towers*.
George Eliot: *Middlemarch*.
Hardy: *Tess of the D’Urbervilles*; *The Mayor of Casterbridge*.

**Drama:**

Wilde: *The Importance of Being Earnest*. 
Twentieth Century

Poetry:

- Dylan Thomas: “I see the boys of summer”; “The force that through the green fuse drives the flower”; “If I were tickled by the rub of love”; “And death shall have no dominion”; “When all my five and country senses see”; “After the funeral (In memory of Ann Jones)”; “A Refusal to Mourn the Death by Fire of a Child in London”; “Do not go gentle into that good night”; “Fern Hill”; “Lament.”

Criticism:

- Richards: Principles of Literary Criticism; Practical Criticism.

Drama:

- Shaw: Pygmalion; Major Barbara; Man and Superman; St. Joan; Heartbreak House.
- Synge: The Playboy of the Western World; Riders to the Sea.
- O’Casey: Juno and the Paycock.
- Eliot: Murder in the Cathedral.
- Yeats: The Hour Glass; Purgatory.
- Beckett: Waiting for Godot.
- Osbourne: Look Back in Anger.
- Pinter: The Homecoming; No Man’s Land.
- Stoppard: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead.
- Storey: The Contractor.

Novel:

- Conrad: Heart of Darkness; Lord Jim.
- Lawrence: The Rainbow; Sons and Lovers.
- Forster: A Passage to India.
- Joyce: A Portrait of the Artist; Ulysses.
- Greene: The Heart of the Matter.
- Woolf: To the Lighthouse.
American Literature

Nineteenth Century

Poetry:

- Whitman: “Song of Myself”; “When Lilacs Last in the Door-yard Bloom’d “Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking”; “Passage to India.”
- Dickinson: “I heard a Fly buzz - when I died-”; “Because I could not stop for Death-”; “My life closed twice before its close”; “A Bird came down the Walk”; “I started Early - Took my Dog”; ”The last Night that She lived-”; “There's a certain Slant of light”; “I never saw a Moor”; “I know that He exists”; “I could not live with You.”

Prose:

- Emerson: Nature.
- Thoreau: Walden.

Novel:

- Cooper: The Deerslayer; The Pioneers.
- Melville: Moby Dick; ‘Bartleby the Scrivener”.
- Twain: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.
- Henry James: Portrait of a Lady; The Sacred Fount; The Ambassadors.
- Crane: The Red Badge of Courage.
- Norris: The Octopus.

Twentieth Century

Poetry:

- Pound: Cantos I-IV, XLV: Hugh Selwyn Mauberley.
- Stevens: “Peter Quince at the Clavier”; “Le Monocle de Mon Oncle”; “Anecdote of the Jar”; “Fabliau of Florida”; “The Man Whose Pharynx Was Bad”; “The Snow
“Man”; “The Comedian as the Letter C”; “The Emperor of Ice Cream”; “Sailing After Lunch”; “Of Mere Being.”


**Novel:**

- Hemingway: The Sun Also Rises; A Farewell to Arms.
- Faulkner: The Sound and the Fury.
- Fitzgerald: The Great Gatsby.
- Dreiser: An American Tragedy; Sister Carrie.
- Bellow: Seize the Day.
- Nabokov: Lolita.

**Drama:**

- Odets: Waiting for Lefty.
- Hellman: The Little Foxes.
- O’Neill: The Emperor Jones; Mourning Becomes Electra; The Iceman Cometh; Long Day’s Journey Into Night.
- Wilder: Our Town.
- Miller: Death of a Salesman.
- Jones: A Texas Trilogy.
- Rabe: Streamers.

**Literary Theory and Criticism:**

While this grouping should not be considered as a category in the same sense as those above, the following should be minimally required in addition to those included in the various historical periods.

1. Aristotle: Poetics.
4. Herbert Read: “Psychoanalysis & Criticism” from Twentieth-Century Criticism (Handy and Westbrook, etc.).
7. Wimsatt and Brooks: Literary Criticism: A Short History, Chapters 7, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 18 through 21, and 26.


10. Sartre: “Why Write?” from *What is Literature?*
St. John's College provides seminar and tutorial reading lists for graduate students pursuing a Master of Liberal Arts (MALA) degree on the Annapolis or the Santa Fe campus. Great Books Curriculum. St. John’s College was founded in 1696 and is best known for the Great Books curriculum that was adopted in 1937. While the list of books has evolved over the last century, the tradition of having all students read foundational texts of Western civilization remains. Reading List. Master Resource is proud to share a list of books that can help policy makers, journalists, and students become more informed about the energy issues facing America today. Julian Lincoln Simon argues that the “ultimate resource” is not any particular physical object but, the capacity for humans to invent and adapt.