

WORLD LITERATURE CRITICISM

1500 to the Present

*A Selection of
Major Authors from
Gale's Literary
Criticism Series*



Achebe-Cather

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藏书章

Achebe-Cather

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Introduction

A Comprehensive Information Source on World Literature

World Literature Criticism, 1500 to the Present (*WLC*) presents a broad selection of the best criticism of works by major writers of the past five hundred years. Among the authors included in *WLC* are sixteenth-century Spanish novelist Miguel de Cervantes and English dramatist William Shakespeare; seventeenth-century English poet John Milton and dramatist Aphra Behn; eighteenth-century Anglo-Irish novelist Jonathan Swift, English essayist Samuel Johnson, and French Enlightenment masters Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Voltaire; acclaimed nineteenth-century writers Jane Austen, William Blake, Emily Brontë, Lewis Carroll, Charles Dickens, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Frederick Douglass, Gustave Flaubert, Edgar Allan Poe, Mary Shelley, Robert Louis Stevenson, William Wordsworth, and Emile Zola; and major twentieth-century authors W. H. Auden, James Baldwin, Albert Camus, Arthur Conan Doyle, Ralph Ellison, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, James Joyce, Franz Kafka, Toni Morrison, Sylvia Plath, J. D. Salinger, Gertrude Stein, John Steinbeck, Virginia Woolf, and Richard Wright. The scope of *WLC* is wide: more than 225 writers representing dozens of nations, cultures, and time periods.

Coverage

This six-volume set is designed for high school, college, and university students, as well as for the general reader who wants to learn more about literature. *WLC* was developed in response to strong demand by students, librarians, and other readers for a one-stop, authoritative guide to the whole spectrum of world literature. No other compendium like it exists in the marketplace. About 95% of the entries in *WLC* were selected from Gale's acclaimed Literary Criticism Series and completely updated for publication here. Typically, the revisions are extensive, ranging from new author introductions to wide changes in the selection of criticism. A few entries—about 5%—were prepared especially for *WLC* in order to furnish the most comprehensive coverage possible.

Inclusion Criteria

Authors were selected for inclusion in *WLC* based on the advice of leading experts on world literature as well as on the recommendation of a specially formed advisory panel made up of high school teachers and high school and public librarians from throughout the United States. Additionally, the most recent major curriculum studies were closely examined, notably Arthur N. Applebee, *A Study of Book-Length Works Taught in High School English Courses* (1989); Arthur N. Applebee, *A Study of High School Literature Anthologies* (1991); and Doug Estel, Michele L. Satchwell, and Patricia S. Wright, *Reading Lists for College-Bound Students* (1990). All of these resources were collated and compared to produce a reference product that is strongly curriculum driven. To ensure that *WLC* will continue to meet

the needs of students and general readers alike, an effort was made to identify a group of important new writers in addition to the most studied authors.

Scope

Each author entry in *WLC* presents a historical survey of critical response to the author's works. Typically, early criticism is offered to indicate initial responses, later selections document any rise or decline in literary reputations, and retrospective analyses provide modern views. Every endeavor has been made to include seminal essays on each author's work along with commentary providing current perspectives. Interviews and author statements are also included in many entries. Thus, *WLC* is both timely and comprehensive.

Organization of Author Entries

Information about authors and their works is presented through ten key access points:

- The **Descriptive Table of Contents** guides readers through the range of world literature, offering summary sketches of authors' careers and achievements.
- In each author entry, the **Author Heading** cites the name under which the author most commonly wrote, followed by birth and, where appropriate, death dates. Uncertain birth or death dates are indicated by question marks. Name variations, including full birth names when available, are given in parentheses in the caption below the **Author Portrait**.
- The **Biographical and Critical Introduction** contains background information about the life and works of the author. Emphasis is given to four main areas: 1) biographical details that help reveal the life, character, and personality of the author; 2) overviews of the major literary interests of the author—for example, novel writing, autobiography, poetry, social reform, documentary, etc.; 3) descriptions and summaries of the author's best-known works; and 4) critical commentary about the author's achievement, stature, and importance. The concluding paragraph of the **Biographical and Critical Introduction** directs readers to other Gale series containing information about the author.
- Every *WLC* entry includes an **Author Portrait**. Many entries also contain **Illustrations**—including holographs, title pages of works, letters, or pictures of important people, places, and events in the author's life—that document the author's career.
- The **List of Principal Works** is chronological by date of first book publication and identifies the genre of each work. For non-English-language authors whose works have been translated into English, the title and date of the first English-language edition are given in brackets beneath the foreign-language listing. Unless otherwise indicated, dramas are dated by first performance rather than first publication.
- **Criticism** is arranged chronologically in each author entry to provide a useful perspective on changes in critical evaluation over the years. Most entries contain a detailed, comprehensive study of the author's career as well as book reviews, studies of individual works, and comparative examinations. To ensure timeliness, current views are most often

presented, but not to the exclusion of important early pieces. For the purpose of easy identification, the critic's name and the date of the critical work are given at the beginning of each piece of criticism. Unsigned criticism is preceded by the title of the source in which it appeared. Within the criticism, titles of works by the author are printed in boldface type. Publication information (such as publisher names and book prices) and certain numerical references (such as footnotes or page and line references to specific editions of works) have been deleted at the editor's discretion to provide smoother reading of the text.

- Critical essays are prefaced by **Explanatory Notes** as an additional aid to readers of *WLC*. These notes may provide several types of valuable information, including: 1) the reputation of the critic; 2) the importance of the work of criticism; 3) the commentator's approach to the author's work; 4) the purpose of the criticism; and 5) changes in critical trends regarding the author. In some cases, **Explanatory Notes** cross-reference the work of critics within an entry who agree or disagree with each other.

- A complete **Bibliographical Citation** of the original essay or book follows each piece of criticism.

- An annotated list of **Sources for Further Study** appears at the end of each entry and suggests resources for additional study. These lists were specially compiled to meet the needs of high school and college students. Additionally, most of the sources cited are available in typical small and medium-size libraries.

- Many entries contain a **Major Media Adaptations** section listing important non-print treatments and adaptations of the author's works, including feature films, TV mini-series, and radio broadcasts. This feature was specially conceived for *WLC* to meet strong demand from students for this type of information.

Other Features

WLC contains three distinct indexes to help readers find information quickly and easily:

- The **Author Index** lists all the authors appearing in *WLC*. To ensure easy access, name variations and changes are fully cross-indexed.

- The **Nationality Index** lists all authors featured in *WLC* by nationality. For expatriate authors and authors identified with more than one nation, multiple listings are offered.

- The **Title Index** lists in alphabetical order all individual works by the authors appearing in *WLC*. English-language translations of original foreign-language titles are cross-referenced to the foreign titles so that all references to a work are combined in one listing.

Citing *World Literature Criticism*

When writing papers, students who quote directly from *WLC* may use the following general forms to footnote reprinted criticism. The first example is for material drawn from periodicals, the second for material reprinted from books:

Gary Smith, "Gwendolyn Brooks's 'A Street in Bronzeville,' the Harlem Renaissance and the Mythologies of Black Women," *MELUS*, Vol. 10, No. 3 (Fall 1983), 33-46; excerpted and reprinted in *World Literature Criticism, 1500 to the Present*, ed. James P. Draper (Detroit: Gale Research, 1992), pp. 459-61.

Frederick R. Karl, *American Fictions, 1940/1980: A Comprehensive History and Critical Evaluation* (Harper & Row, 1983); excerpted and reprinted in *World Literature Criticism, 1500 to the Present*, ed. James P. Draper (Detroit: Gale Research, 1992), pp. 541-46.

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Comments Are Welcome

The editor hopes that readers will find *WLC* to be a useful reference tool and welcomes comments about the work. Send comments and suggestions to: Editor, *World Literature Criticism, 1500 to the Present*, Gale Research Inc., Penobscot Building, Detroit, MI 48226-4094.

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Upon their publication, Eliot's early novels received high praise. When it was revealed that George Eliot was the pseudonym of a woman, Mary Ann Evans, the works were duly condemned, as were *The Mill on the Floss* and *Silas Marner*. Today, however, the latter books are regarded as classics, and Eliot is revered as the most learned and respected novelist of the later Victorian period..... 2:1115

T. S. Eliot 1888-1965

Throughout his career, Eliot strongly advocated the development of a "historical sense," which he stated was "nearly indispensable to anyone who would continue to be a poet beyond his twenty-fifth year." Consequently, awareness and affirmation of his literary and cultural heritage is one of the most prominent features of such epic poems as *The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets*, as well as Eliot's shorter verse, including "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock." The last-named work contains the famous lines: "In the room the women come and go / talking of Michaelangelo." 2:1133

Ralph Ellison 1914-

One of the most influential and accomplished American authors of the twentieth century, Ellison is best known for his masterpiece *Invisible Man*, the story of an unnamed black youth's quest for identity in a hostile world..... 2:1152

Ralph Waldo Emerson 1803-1882

A founder of the Transcendental movement, which embodied a distinctly American philosophy based on optimism, individuality, and mysticism, essayist and poet Emerson was one of the most influential literary figures of the nineteenth century 2:1168

William Faulkner 1897-1962

Faulkner's work often explores exploitation and corruption in the American South. Such novels as *The Sound and the Fury*, *Light in August*, *Absalom, Absalom!*, and *As I Lay Dying* are regarded as classics of American literature and earned the author a Nobel Prize. In his acceptance speech for the award, Faulkner stated that the fundamental theme of his fiction is "the human heart in conflict with itself" 2:1185

Henry Fielding 1707-1754

Instrumental in the development of the English novel, Fielding sought to depict the natural world in such a way that would "laugh mankind out of their favourite follies and vices." 2:1201

F. Scott Fitzgerald 1896-1940

Fitzgerald's best-known stories of the Jazz Age, including *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*, examine an entire generation's search for the elusive American dream of wealth and happiness 2:1219

Gustave Flaubert 1821-1880

The most influential French novelist of the nineteenth century, Flaubert is remembered primarily for the stylistic precision and dispassionate rendering of psychological detail found in his masterpiece, *Madame Bovary* 2:1237

E. M. Forster 1879-1970

Forster is best remembered as the author of *Howards End*, *A Passage to India*, and other novels of manners depicting Edwardian society and British morality. His works are highly esteemed for their realistic renderings of conservative English culture 2:1256

Anne Frank 1929-1945

Frank is known throughout the world for the diary she did not live to see published. *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* documents Frank's adolescence, most of which was spent in the tiny upper quarters of a house in Amsterdam where she and her Jewish family hid from Nazi troops during World War II 2:1272

Robert Frost 1874-1963

Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Frost commented on social and political issues and described scenes of natural beauty in his explorations of humanity's constant struggle against chaos and bewilderment 2:1286

Carlos Fuentes 1928-

A novelist who is chiefly concerned with establishing a viable Mexican identity in his work, Fuentes uses the past thematically and symbolically to comment on contemporary concerns and to project his own vision of Mexico's future 2:1307

John Galsworthy 1867-1933

Galsworthy's relatives provided him with the basis for the characters in his "Forsyte Chronicles," a well-known series of stories centering on upper middle-class English life 2:1325

Federico García Lorca 1898-1936

Hailed as one of Spain's most important poets, García Lorca drew upon all elements of Spanish life and culture to create poetry at once traditional, modern, personal, and universal. He sought to liberate language from its structural constraints and bring out the musicality inherent in the Spanish language 2:1337

Gabriel García Márquez 1928-

García Márquez's stories feature an imaginative blend of history, politics, social realism, fantasy, magic, and surrealism. Using these techniques, García Márquez obscures the customary distinctions between illusion and reality 3:1355

André Gide 1869-1951

All of Gide's works in some way reflect his emotional struggles, and critics agree that one aspect of his genius was his ability to translate the contradictions and complexities of his nature into art 3:1373

Allen Ginsberg 1926-

The opening lines of Ginsberg's "Howl" are among the most well-known in American poetry: "I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving / hysterical naked, / dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for an / angry fix." 3:1390

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe 1749-1832

In addition to his career as a highly distinguished writer, Goethe was an established scientist, artist, musician, and philosopher. He is considered Germany's greatest writer and a genius of the highest order 3:1408

Nikolai Gogol 1809-1852

Progenitor of the Russian Naturalist movement, novelist Gogol explored many aspects of Russian life in the epic novel *Dead Souls* and is often cited as a major inspiration to such prominent authors as Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Franz Kafka 3:1426

William Golding 1911-1991

The winner of the Nobel Prize in 1983, Golding is among the most popular and influential post-World War II British authors. He is best known for his novel *Lord of the Flies* 3:1443

Oliver Goldsmith 1728?-1774

The author of *The Vicar of Wakefield* and *She Stoops to Conquer*, novelist and dramatist Goldsmith neglected his studies at Dublin's Trinity College and was frequently reprimanded for infractions of regulations, such as his participation in a riot, growing from a protest of another student's arrest, during which several people were killed 3:1461

Maxim Gorky 1868-1936

Gorky's brutal yet romantic portraits of Russian life and sympathetic depictions of the working class had an inspirational effect on the oppressed people of his native land..... 3:1480

Günter Grass 1927-

Grass's Danzig trilogy graphically captures the reactions of many German citizens to the rise of Nazism and the horrors of war. Inspired by Surrealism and German Expressionism, Grass utilizes black humor, satire, and wordplay in his fiction, prompting comparisons to James Joyce, Laurence Sterne, and François Rabelais..... 3:1499

Thomas Gray 1716-1771

English poet Gray achieved immediate critical and popular acclaim with his "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard," a poem admired for, in the words of Alfred, Lord Tennyson, its "divine truisms that make us weep." 3:1517

Graham Greene 1904-1991

A popular and prolific novelist, Greene engaged his readers with his terse style and vivid descriptive passages, as in his most famous novel *The Power and the Glory*, in which a priest is jailed overnight for drunkenness in a Mexican province that has outlawed Catholicism..... 3:1535

Thomas Hardy 1840-1928

Although it is regarded as a classic, Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* was denounced upon publication as immoral, anti-Christian, and unduly pessimistic. When his following novel, *Jude the Obscure*, garnered a similar response, Hardy ceased writing fiction and turned instead to poetry and drama 3:1556

Bret Harte 1836?-1902

American short story writer Harte achieved immense popularity for his nostalgic portrayals of the mining camps and ethnic groups of California during the Gold Rush of 1849 3:1574

Nathaniel Hawthorne 1804-1864

Along with Edgar Allan Poe, Hawthorne is viewed as one of the principal architects of the modern American short story. In addition, his best-known novel, *The Scarlet Letter*, is acknowledged as a classic of American literature 3:1592

H. D. (Hilda Doolittle) 1886-1961

H. D.'s early free verse poetry was the inspiration for Ezra Pound's formulation of Imagism. Although her later poetry transcended the principles of Imagist verse to include mythological, occult, and religious themes as well as psychoanalytic concepts and symbolism, she is often called "the perfect Imagist." 3:1610

Joseph Heller 1923-

Heller's works combine a comic vision of modern society with serious moral overtones. His best-known novel, *Catch-22*, is regarded as a post-World War II classic 3:1628

Ernest Hemingway 1899-1961

Despite his tendency to generate controversy at every turn, Hemingway is regarded as one of the greatest writers of the twentieth century. He is remembered as much for his extravagant lifestyle as for such acclaimed novels as *The Sun Also Rises*, *A Farewell to Arms*, and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* 3:1646

O. Henry (William Sydney Porter) 1862-1910

One of the most popular short story writers of the twentieth century, O. Henry began his literary career after serving five years in prison on embezzlement charges 3:1664

Hermann Hesse 1877-1962

Best known as the author *Siddhartha*, *Demian*, and *Steppenwolf*, Hesse attained a huge, cult-like readership among the youth of the 1960s, who readily identified with his rebellious, passionately spiritual heroes and their struggle to transcend the materialism of society through art, mysticism, and love 3:1683

Gerard Manley Hopkins 1844-1889

Hopkins, a crafter of both poetry and poetic theory, is known for religious poetry cast in a meter he termed "sprung rhythm." 3:1701

Langston Hughes 1902-1967

Called "the Poet Laureate of Harlem," Hughes articulated the frustrations of African-Americans in the poem "A Dream Deferred": "What happens to a dream deferred?/ Does it dry up/ like a raisin in the sun?/ Or fester like a sore—/ And then run?/ Does it stink like rotten meat?/ Or crust and sugar over—/ like a syrupy sweet?/ Maybe it just sags/ like a heavy load./ Or *does it explode?*" 3:1718

Victor Hugo 1802-1885

French novelist and poet Hugo completed his best-known work, the novel *Les misérables*, while in exile due to his uncompromising opposition to Louis Napoleon's dictatorial ambitions..... 3:1738

Aldous Huxley 1894-1963

English novelist Huxley is best known for *Brave New World*, in which he forecasts a horrific world civilization resulting from new technologies and political manipulation..... 3:1756

Henrik Ibsen 1828-1906

A pioneer of modern theater, Ibsen left his native Norway in 1864. He believed that only by distancing himself from his homeland could he obtain the perspective necessary to write truly Norwegian drama 3:1774

Eugène Ionesco 1912-

A prominent dramatist associated with the Theater of the Absurd, Rumanian-born Ionesco explores the human condition in such darkly comic dramas as *Rhinoceros*..... 3:1796

Washington Irving 1783-1859

The author of such famous and well-loved stories as "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," Irving is considered the first professional writer in the United States 3:1814

Shirley Jackson 1919-1965

In works that often contain elements of conventional gothic horror, Jackson chronicled the evil underlying human nature. Her classic short story "The Lottery" portrays a village gathering for an annual drawing that ends with a ritual sacrifice..... 3:1833

Henry James 1843-1916

One of the greatest novelists to write in the English language, James was a leading advocate of Realism in American literature 3:1853

Robinson Jeffers 1887-1962

An American poet whose prophetic admonitions against modern civilization and human introversion have attracted both critical censure and widespread admiration, Jeffers is best known for writing long narrative poems in which he contrasted the strength and enduring beauty of nature with a tragic vision of human suffering and inconsequence 3:1871

Samuel Johnson 1709-1784

Johnson ranks as the major literary figure of the late eighteenth century and is perhaps the most often-quoted writer in the English language after Shakespeare 3:1886

Ben Jonson 1572?-1637

One of the greatest writers and theorists of English literature, Jonson is remembered for his poetry as well as his satirical comedies 3:1905

James Joyce 1882-1941

One of the most important literary figures of the twentieth century, Irish novelist Joyce redefined the limits of language and recreated the form of the modern novel in such seminal works as *Ulysses* and *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 3:1923

Franz Kafka 1883-1924

Kafka's fiction has been variously described as autobiographical, psychoanalytic, Marxist, religious, Existentialist, Expressionist, and Naturalist. In his works, Kafka

- gave literary form to the disorder of the modern world, turning his private nightmares into universal myths..... 3:1939
- John Keats 1795-1821**
A key figure of the English Romantic movement, Keats wrote such poetic standards as "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" and his collection of odes. The final lines of "Ode on a Grecian Urn" are among literature's best-known: "'Beauty is truth, truth beauty,'—that is all / Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know." 3:1953
- Jack Kerouac 1922-1969**
The chief literary figure and spokesman of the 1950s cultural phenomenon known as the Beat Movement, Kerouac depicted the world-weary yet optimistic attitude of his generation in the novel *On the Road*, a loosely-structured, fictionalized account of the wanderings and reckless adventures of Kerouac and his friends 3:1971
- Ken Kesey 1935-**
As a member of the "Merry Pranksters," Kesey traveled around the United States during the 1960s promoting experimental drug use and social revolt. His best-known novel, *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, focuses on alienated and non-conformist individuals confined in a mental institution who attempt, through love, hope, rebellion, and humor, to overcome their limitations and to retain their sanity and self-respect..... 3:1990
- Rudyard Kipling 1865-1936**
Creator of many of the world's best-loved short stories, Kipling also wrote poetry and novels. He is best known for *The Jungle Books*, which depict the adventures of Mowgli, a boy abandoned by his parents and raised by wolves 3:2006
- Charles Lamb 1775-1834**
A well-known literary figure in nineteenth-century England, Lamb is chiefly remembered today for his "Elia" essays, a sequence renowned for its witty, idiosyncratic treatment of everyday subjects 3:2024
- D. H. Lawrence 1885-1930**
One of the most original English writers of the twentieth century, Lawrence explored human nature through frank discussions of sex, psychology, and religion. His work defied not only the conventional artistic norms of his day but also the political, social, and moral values. Lawrence's last major novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, was subjected to an obscenity trial in England before it was vindicated as a work of literature..... 3:2041
- Harper Lee 1926-**
Novelist Lee's story of racial prejudice in the American South, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, achieved immediate popularity and acclaim, winning a Pulitzer Prize and prompting a film adaptation that received an Academy Award..... 4:2059
- C. S. Lewis 1898-1963**
An accomplished and influential literary scholar, logician, Christian polemicist, and writer of fantasy literature, Lewis attributed his Christian conversion to a conversation in which novelist J. R. R. Tolkien convinced him that to believe in the God of Christianity was to enter the enjoyment of a myth grounded in reality... 4:2075
- Sinclair Lewis 1885-1951**
A brilliant satirist, Lewis wrote fiction that vengefully attacked what he saw as the dullness and smug provincialism of much of American life 4:2096
- Vachel Lindsay 1879-1931**
Poet Lindsay often found that critics ignored his concern for beauty and democracy, focusing instead on his spirited public readings. The strong rhythmic quality of much of his poetry nearly requires that it be chanted aloud 4:2115
- Jack London 1876-1916**
The author of *The Call of the Wild*, London incorporated socialism, mysticism, Darwinian determinism, and Nietzschean theories of race into his many stories of adventure 4:2133
- Robert Lowell 1917-1977**
One of the most influential and widely acclaimed American poets of the mid-twentieth century, Lowell experimented with a wide range of verse forms and