

Romanticism

A Movement Across the
Arts

Definition

- ❖ Romanticism refers to a movement in art, literature, and music during the 19th century.
- ❖ Romanticism is characterized by the 5 “I”s
 - ❖ Imagination
 - ❖ Intuition
 - ❖ Idealism
 - ❖ Inspiration
 - ❖ Individuality



Imagination

- ❖ Imagination was emphasized over “reason.”
- ❖ This was a backlash against the rationalism characterized by the Neoclassical period or “Age of Reason.”
- ❖ Imagination was considered necessary for creating all art.
- ❖ British writer Samuel Taylor Coleridge called it “intellectual intuition.”



Intuition

- ❖ Romantics placed value on “intuition,” or feeling and instincts, over reason.
- ❖ Emotions were important in Romantic art.
- ❖ British Romantic William Wordsworth described poetry as “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.”



Idealism

- ❖ Idealism is the concept that we can make the world a better place.
- ❖ Idealism refers to any theory that emphasizes the spirit, the mind, or language over matter – thought has a crucial role in making the world the way it is.
- ❖ Immanuel Kant, a German philosopher, held that the mind forces the world we perceive to take the shape of space-and-time.



Inspiration

- ❖ The Romantic artist, musician, or writer, is an “inspired creator” rather than a “technical master.”
- ❖ What this means is “going with the moment” or being spontaneous, rather than “getting it precise.”



Individuality

- ❖ Romantics celebrated the individual.
- ❖ During this time period, Women's Rights and Abolitionism were taking root as major movements.
- ❖ Walt Whitman, a later Romantic writer, would write a poem entitled "Song of Myself": it begins, "I celebrate myself..."



Origins

- ❖ Romanticism began to take root as a movement following the French Revolution.
- ❖ The publication of *Lyrical Ballads* by William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge in 1792 is considered the beginning of literary Romanticism.

The Arts

- ❖ Romanticism was a movement across all the arts: visual art, music, and literature.
- ❖ All of the arts embraced themes prevalent in the Middle Ages: chivalry, courtly love. Literature and art from this time depicted these themes. Music (ballets and operas) illustrated these themes.
- ❖ Shakespeare came back into vogue.

Visual Arts

❖ Neoclassical art was rigid, severe, and unemotional; it hearkened back to ancient Greece and Rome

❖ Romantic art was emotional, deeply-felt, individualistic, and exotic. It has been described as a reaction to Neoclassicism, or “anti-Classicism.”

Visual Arts: Examples



Neoclassical Art



Romantic Art

Music

❖ “Classical” musicians included composers like Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Franz Josef Haydn.

❖ Romantic musicians included composers like Frederic Chopin, Franz Lizst, Pyotr Il’yich Tchaikovsky

Music: Components

❖ 1730-1820.

❖ Classical music emphasized internal order and balance.

❖ 1800-1910.

❖ Romantic music emphasized expression of feelings.

Literature

- ❖ In America, Romanticism most strongly impacted literature.
- ❖ Writers explored supernatural and gothic themes.
- ❖ Writers wrote about nature –
Transcendentalists believed God was in nature, unlike “Age of Reason” writers like Franklin and Jefferson, who saw God as a “divine watchmaker,” who created the universe and left it to run itself.

Included in the American Romantic Movement...

- Fireside poetry (See power point.)
- Transcendentalism (See power point.)
- Anti-transcendentalism (See power point.)
- Emily Dickinson (whose poetry can easily be described as Romantic, Transcendental, Anti-transcendental, or Fireside.)