Modernism
~1900-1945

Expatriates; Gertrude Stein’s “Lost Generation”

Ernest Hemingway
F. Scott Fitzgerald
Sherwood Anderson
Katherine Anne Porter
John Steinbeck
Irwin Shaw
James Thurber
Eudora Welty
Flannery O’Connor
William Faulkner

Southern Gothic Authors
Modernist Art

Dora Maar Au Chat
Pablo Picasso

Woman with a Hat
Henri Matisse
Modernism
Stylistic Characteristics

► Discontinuous narrative; flashbacks
► Juxtaposition of images or characters
► Unconventional use of metaphor
► Intertextuality: crossover characters, repeated characters or situations, recurring or constant themes
► Stream of consciousness is common
Modernism

Thematic Characteristics

► Value of the despairing individual in the face of an unmanageable future
► Challenging social norms, cultural ideals, stereotypes, etc.
► Disillusionment; self-doubt; fitting in
Southern Gothic

- Explores and critiques stereotypes of Southern culture
- Uses supernatural, ironic, even grotesque events to reveal the eccentricities and inequities of Southern society
- Sometimes referred to as “Dark Romanticism”
Southern Gothic Topics

- Race relations
- Gender roles
- Poverty/crime
- Religious fervor/hypocrisy
- Class warfare
Southern Gothic

Characters:

► Have a mixture of good and bad

► Author creates a sense of empathy in the reader, so that no matter how badly a character behaves, there will still be some level of understanding for the character
Titles & Questions on Short-answer Quiz

► Modernism & Southern Gothic
► “A Clean, Well-lighted Place”
► “Jemina, the Mountain Girl”
► “I’m a Fool”
► “Girls in Their Summer Dresses”
► “Greatest Man in the World”
► “Good Country People”
► “Noon Wine”
► “A Worn Path”
► “Shingles for the Lord”

Extended writing piece:
Describe an element from one of the stories we read during the Modernism Unit that shows originality, or a non-conformist quality that wasn’t prevalent in literature that has come before. Examples of elements are:

• Character
• Plotline
• Theme
• Symbol
The Harlem Renaissance

How does this artist use symbolism to describe the Renaissance?
Where is Harlem?

- Frederick Douglass - former slave, orator, writer, statesman
- Marcus Garvey - leader of the African Diaspora movement
- Malcolm X - author, orator, leader of Organization of Afro-American Unity
- Adam Clayton Powell - 1st African American NY Congressman

Can you see any evidence from the street map that this is predominately an African American community?
Genesis of the Renaissance

Great Migration: the movement of hundreds of thousands of African Americans from rural areas in the South to urban areas in both the North and South.

What push factors led to the migration? Racism, unemployment, poverty

What pull factors led to the migration? Jobs, economic opportunity, equality
Growing African American Middle Class: developed as a result of improved educational and employment opportunities for African Americans.

The Harlem section of New York became the center of this new African American class.
Impact

Before

After
As Modern Artists look to “make it new” they turn to the “New Negro” arts movement.
Josephine Baker
Harlem Renaissance Themes

• Pride
• Self-determination
• Prejudice
• Faith
• Social Justice
Differences in Artistic Vision

- “Thus all art is propaganda and ever must be despite the wailing of the purists.”
- “The great social gain in this is the releasing of our talented group from the arid fields of controversy and debate to the productive fields of creative expression.”

“We younger Negro artists who create now intend to express our individual dark-skinned selves without fear or shame. If white people are pleased we are glad. If they are not, it doesn’t matter. We know we are beautiful. And ugly too.”

Alain LeRoy Locke & W.E.B. DuBois

Langston Hughes & Zora Neale Hurston
POST MODERNISM

POST-WWII-1960S
Modernism: Quest for meaning in a chaotic world

Postmodernism: rejection, often satirically, of any notion of “meaning”
Modernism: uses satire and parody as devices **within** the narrative

Postmodernism: satire and parody are the **central focus** of the narrative
Metafiction

Authorial presence within the narrative

Many times the subject of fiction, narration, and the writing process itself are topics within the narrative.
Notable “Post-postmodern” authors of fiction:

Chuck Palahniuk (*Fight Club*)
Cormac McCarthy (*The Road*)