American Literature Time Periods:
Group Research and Peer Teaching Project

Although we are taking a chronological approach to American Literature through our assigned readings, sometimes it is difficult to understand how a piece of literature fits into a specific time period and why it is relevant to the larger picture. To overcome this problem, you have been assigned to a small group that, working collaboratively and using sound research, will serve as the “expert” on one period of American Literature. It is through your teaching that your peers will come to understand the role of your assigned time period, so be thorough, accurate, and engaging as you conduct your peer teaching.

SEVERAL WEEKS PRIOR TO YOUR PRESENTATION:  
(DATE: __________________________)

1. **Conduct research** on your assigned period of American Literature using a variety (more than three) of reliable sources. Based on your research, you will be expected to do all of the following:
   a. Describe the historical context of the time period. What “big” events/people define that period in our history? What ideas of the time shaped the writing? How did the writing influence the people?
   b. Identify the unique features of the literature of the time period (main ideas, themes, questions, etc.)
   c. Describe and explain the prevalent genres/styles/literary techniques (be sure to discuss key literary terms found in the reading)
   d. Provide a short list of important authors/works from that particular time period
   e. Discuss the importance of this period of American Literature within the context of the larger development of American Literature as a whole

2. **Create** all required assignments listed below (they MUST be turned in for review one week prior to your presentation).

ONE WEEK PRIOR TO YOUR GROUP PRESENTATION:  
(DATE: __________________________)

1. **Email** me a digital copy of a two-page (typed, single-space) **handout** you will give to the class. I will make sure you have copies to pass out on the day of your presentation.
   a. **CAUTION:**
      i. If your handout is unacceptable, I will instruct you to redo it, and I reserve the right to make changes.
      ii. You will be responsible for presenting your research to the class without reading directly from the sheet; and
      iii. Your information should not be directly copied and pasted from the Internet! I want you to summarize and put the information into your own words. If you do need to directly quote anything, you will need to put the text in quotation marks.

2. **Email** me a digital copy of a **Works Cited** page listing your research sources in proper MLA format.

3. **Email** me a digital copy of a **quiz** for your peers with questions covering your presentation and the assigned readings for your time period. The quiz must have no less than 50 questions formatted like any of the AP question stems provided. If your quiz is unacceptable, I will instruct you to redo it, and I reserve the right to make changes to the quiz prior to the date it’s given. Remember, you are competing for grades against your fellow AP students, so do not give them an unfair advantage by sharing your quiz with them!

THE DAY OF YOUR GROUP PRESENTATION:  
(DATE: __________________________)

1. Your group is the teacher for the day. Cover the material and engage the class in discussion. Make sure you have prepared some discussion questions in advance. You should supplement your teaching with visual or audio materials, hands-on-activities, etc. whenever possible. Remember, you are responsible for preparing your classmates for the quiz!
Your American Literature Time Period (Notice the time periods DO overlap):

Group 1: Puritan/Colonial (1600-1760)
Group 2: Revolutionary/Age of Reason (1750-1810)
Group 3: Romanticism (Renaissance and Transcendentalism) (1800-1860)
Group 4: Realism, Naturalism, and Regionalism/Local Color (1860-1914)
Group 5: Diversity - Women's voices (1890-1930)
Group 6: Diversity – Black voices and The Harlem Renaissance (1890-1930)
Group 7: Modernism (1900-1945)
Group 8: Post-Modernism/Contemporary (1945-present)

Your Presentation Date: ____________________________________________________________

Your Group Members:

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### AP Question Stems

**Level 1: Content Questions (Easy) WHO? WHAT?**  
(Tests reading comprehension, recall, identification)

1. Which of the following is the primary meaning of the word ______ as it is used in the passage?  
2. Which of the following best paraphrases lines __________?  
3. The speaker’s view of __________ might best be described as…  
4. In line ____, “_________” refers to…  
5. In line ____, “_________” is best understood to mean…  
6. In lines ______, the speaker asserts that…  
7. From the passage, we can infer that all of the following would be true EXCEPT…  
8. The central opposition in the work is between…  
9. The speaker views __________ as…  
10. Throughout the passage ____________ is addressing…  
11. Lines ______ chiefly serve to show that…  
12. Which of the following best summarized the main point?  
13. Which of the following best defines the phrase…  
14. What is the function of ______ in lines _______?  

**Level 2: Style Questions (Medium) WHAT & HOW?**  
(Tests ability to analyze the author’s use of diction, syntax, figurative language, mode, structure/organization, etc.)

1. In lines _____, the speaker makes use of all of the following EXCEPT…  
2. The primary rhetorical function of lines ______ is…  
3. The comedy of the passage derives chiefly from…  
4. In line ____, __________ most probably refers metaphorically to…  
5. In line ____, “_________” is a metaphorical way of saying…  
6. Grammatically, the word “____________” functions as…  
7. The most conventional, least idiosyncratic aspect of the work is…  
8. In the simile in line ____, “________” is used to stand for…  
9. Lines ______ are based on which of the following?  
10. Which of the following is used most extensively in the passage?  
11. Which of the following best describes the diction and style of the passage?  
12. The prose is best described as…  
13. The imagery of the prose is characterized by…  
14. Which of the following best describes ________’s speech?  
15. The style of the passage is best characterized as…  
16. The structure of the ____ (number, i.e. third) sentence is best described as…  
17. The shift in point of view from ________ to ________ has the effect of…  
18. The syntax of the sentence in lines ________ serves to…  
19. The pattern of exposition exemplified in the passage is best described as…  
20. The type of argument employed by the speaker is best described as…

**Level 3: Effect Questions (Hard) WHAT & WHY?**  
(Tests ability to infer the effect(s) created by the author’s manipulation of content and style)

1. The tone of the passage is…  
2. The theme of the passage is…  
3. One effect of “___________” is to emphasize the speaker’s feeling of…  
4. The sentiments expressed in the work are closest to those expressed in which of the following quotations from other poets / writers?  
5. Which of the following adjectives best describes ________’s speech?  
6. Lines _____ most strongly convey the speaker’s…  
7. What does the speaker convey in lines ________?  
8. The chief effect of the imagery and figures of speech in lines ______ is to…  
9. The excerpt is chiefly concerned with…  
10. What is the author’s attitude toward the subject?  
11. In the work the author is asserting that…  
12. The speaker assumes that the audience’s attitude will be that of…  
13. The theme of the second paragraph involves which of the following?  
14. The major purpose of the statement ___________ is to…  
15. The author believes that we should…