

Literature Institute

Study Guide

LIT 413 **Renaissance**

Bedford Anthology of World Literature, Books 1-6. Boston: Bedford-St. Martins, 2004.

UNIT	WEEKS	TOPICS	READINGS
I		Overview	
	1	The Early Modern World Africa Europe: Renaissance and Reformation The Americas China India	Book 3, 1-16 Book 3, 17-20 Book 3, 49-66 Book 3, 695-707 Book 3, 821-831 Book 3, 913-920
II		Renaissance and Reformation	
	2-3	Francesco Petrarch (1304-1374)	Book 3, 67-84
	Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
	Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary term: sonnet	
	Essay Topics	E1. Discuss "The Ascent of Mount Ventoux." Describe Petrarch's experience of climbing the mountain. What ideas does he have during the climb? E2. Please answer the following questions for each of the poems in this chapter: Who is the narrator? What is the poet describing? Discuss the narrator's experience in terms of perceptions and emotions. Can you see any ideas and themes in the poems? Please list specific elements of the poem to support your argument.	
		RENAISSANCE LOVE LYRICS	Book 3, pp 85-101
		E3: Discuss Renaissance, Baroque and Metaphysical poetry. E4: Discuss the life and poetry of the poets in this chapter. E5: Please answer the following questions for each of the poems in this chapter: Who is the narrator? What is the poet describing? Discuss the narrator's experience in terms of perceptions and emotions. Can you see any ideas and themes in the poems? Please list specific elements of the poem to support your argument.	
	Note	It is very useful to recognize the way that technology and world exploration affected the way that people saw themselves and their world. The printing press (developed in 1454) along with paper (adopted from the Chinese in the 14 th century) made it possible to disseminate ideas and information (including maps of discovered territories, records of ships' cargoes, copies of joint stock agreements) very easily and quickly, especially when compared with the medieval techniques of using parchment and hand-lettered script for documents.	
	4-5	Machiavelli Fashioning The Prince	Book 3, pp 120-139 Book 3, pp 140-179
	Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
	Essay	E1: Discuss the life and works and ideas of Machiavelli	

Topics	presented in the readings. What are Machiavelli's core ideas? E2: Discuss the life, works, and ideas presented in this chapter.	
6	Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592) Essais	Book 3, 209-213 Book 3, 214-224
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of the main ideas found in the Montaigne's essays.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: essay, travel narrative, noble savage	
Essay Topics	E1: Discuss Montaigne's Essays, and describe their significance and method. E2: What does Montaigne discuss in "Of Cannibals"?	
Note	Montaigne's essay, "On Cannibals," is a reflection upon European expansion in the Americas and other parts of the world. As he looks at the reports of savagery and barbarism that were supposedly exhibited by the inhabitants of the other continents, he compares their behavior to the supposedly refined and civilized ways of the Europeans. Montaigne concludes that the truly barbaric are the Europeans because their aggression and warfare is motivated by greed and colonial expansion. He questions the idea that one culture could be superior over another, and examines the values that a society holds. Montaigne's essays are an example of rational inquiry, and represent excellence in the French Renaissance.	
7	Marguerite de Navarre (1492-1549) The Heptameron	Book 3, 180-184 Book 3, 185-208
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of the plot of Florida and Amador and include any ideas, themes, and the main conflict. Please provide a character analysis of Florida and Amador.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: story, chivalric romance, romance	
Essay Topics	E1: How does chivalry and a chivalric code influence the way that men and women relate to each other in the Heptameron? E2. Discuss the theme of love. Compare and contrast medieval chivalric love and worldly love. E3. How do the concepts of love and honor differ between Florida and Amador?	
8	Discovery and Confrontation	Book 3, 225-256
Essay Topics	Discuss the life, works, and ideas of the authors presented in this chapter.	
9	Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616) Don Quixote	Book 3, 257-261 Book 3, 262-383
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary	Please provide a brief description of plot, themes, character	

Analysis	analysis of Don Quixote and Sancho, critical scene.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: melodrama, tragedy	
Essay Topics	E1. Discuss the themes of idealism vs. realism in the case of Don Quixote and Sancho. Note: Satire was widely popular during the Renaissance because it allowed authors to criticize society and to do so in the vernacular (the national language rather than Latin). Satires were popular (Erasmus and Rabelais wrote very influential satires). One long, complex satire, which was one of the first novels in a European language, was Cervantes' Don Quixote, which pokes fun at the threadbare values of the Middle Ages such as chivalry and romance.	
10	Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593) Dr. Faustus	Book 3, 384-388 Book 3, 389-451
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of plot, themes, main characters, character analysis of Dr. Faustus, critical scene.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: blank verse, tragedy	
Essay Topics	E1. Discuss Faustus' insatiable hunger for knowledge. Please compare him to the Renaissance ideals of Education. How far does Faust go to obtain more knowledge?	
11	Humanism, Learning, and Education	Book 3, 452-488
Essay Topics	E1. Discuss the life, works, and ideas of the authors presented in this chapter.	
12	William Shakespeare (1564-1616) The Tempest	Book 3, 489-494 Book 3, 495-564
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description of plot, themes, character analysis of Prospero, critical scene, conflict.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: comedy	
Essay Topics	E1. Discuss the theme of Power in the case of Prospero. How does he use his power? E2. Discuss the theme of reconciliation, forgiveness, and repentance in the case of Prospero.	
Note	The Tempest contains echoes of other works: Dr. Faustus (the danger of obsession with books; the dark magic that books possess); Montaigne – "Of Cannibals" (the idea of people in nature, vs. in civilization – the ones who are "civilized" often prove to be the truly barbaric); Bartolome de las Cases (the "noble savage") and incidents of encounter with other cultures. The encounters with the powerful speech of the primitives (cursing) that can, in some ways, trump or defuse the magic, spells, and promises of power contained in books. (One might question why books might be dangerous. Perhaps to fall under their spell is what is dangerous?)	

Why is Shakespeare considered a genius? Let's review his work. He wrote 37 plays, most of which are considered to be of the highest possible order of literary excellence. His poetry is superb. His coining of words and phrases also led to an evolutionary leap in the development of the English language. Shakespeare was aided by the fact that Queen Elizabeth loved the theatre, and supported it wholeheartedly. Drama hit hard times after Elizabeth I, and during the time of the Commonwealth, when the theatre was closed.

13	John Milton (1608-1674) Paradise Lost	Book 3, 565-574 Book 3, 575-660
Author	Please write a brief author biography.	
Literary Analysis	Please provide a brief description for the plot, main characters, key scenes, and conflict.	
Literary Terms	Please briefly define the following literary terms: allegory	
Essay Topics	E1. Discuss the theme of free will and taking responsibility for actions vs predestination. E2. Discuss the theme of crime and punishment in this narration. What were the reasons for Adam and Eve to disobey God?	
14	Challenging Orthodoxy	Book 3, 661-694
Essay Topics	Discuss the life, works, and ideas of the authors presented in this chapter.	
15	Ancient Mexicans Europe Meets America	Book 3, 708-766 Book 3, 767-820
Essay Topics	E1. Discuss the life, works, and ideas of the authors presented in this chapter. E2. Discuss the concepts in this chapter.	

III **Finals**

16 Review, Essay, Exam