

# AMERICAN LITERATURE

Dr. M. ARUNACHALAM

Assistant Professor of English

Jamal Mohamed College (Autonomous)

Tiruchirappalli – 20.

# Introduction

American literature, the body of written works produced in the English language in the United States.

Like other national literatures, American literature was shaped by the history of the country that produced it.

For almost a century and a half, America was merely a group of colonies scattered along the eastern seaboard of the North American continent—colonies from which a few hardy souls tentatively ventured westward.

# Periods of American Literature

The Colonial and Early National Period (17th century to 1830)

The Romantic Period (1830 to 1870)

Realism and Naturalism (1870 to 1910)

The Modernist Period (1910 to 1945)

The Contemporary Period (1945 to present)

# EARLY CULTURAL CONTEXT

The cultural trauma of the [Civil War](#) produced a permanently altered sense of national consciousness among Americans who lived through it and beyond it. But the war between the states was only one of many phenomena of the late nineteenth century that transformed the [United States](#) from a country fundamentally sectional in attitude (e.g., [New England](#), South, Midwest, Far West) into a unified nation of the world that would come to consider its regional diversity a vital if mostly secondary trait.

The technological advances that followed the Civil War, particularly in the areas of American transportation and communication, also contributed mightily to the emergence of this new, more unified cultural awareness. In 1860, for example, fewer than thirty thousand miles of railroad existed in the [United States](#), and major sections of the country remained essentially unconnected to each other.

# Timeline of American Literary Movements

- ❑ The following timeline shows the period of each American literary movement and its duration.
- ❑ Pre-colonial: [Native American Literature](#)
- ❑ 1620-1750: [Puritan Literature](#)
- ❑ 1607-1775: Colonial Literature
- ❑ 1775-1783: Revolutionary Age
- ❑ 1775-1830: Early National Literature
- ❑ 1830-1865: [American Romanticism](#)
- ❑ 1865-1914: [Naturalism](#)
- ❑ 1914-1940: Modernism and Experimentation
- ❑ 1945- Present: Postmodernism

**Thank You**