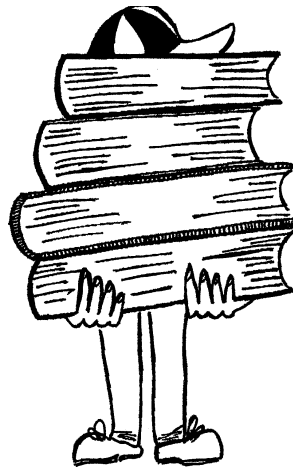
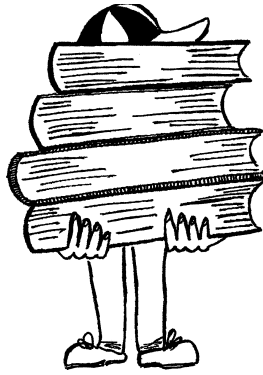


# Literary Criticism Concepts Volume 1: History



Jennifer Bussey





Congratulations! We salute you!  
You are traveling down the road that will clarify some of the complexities of  
the multitude of literary terms competitors should know!

For students seeking expertise in Literary Criticism, this edition of our Literary Concepts makes getting the "big picture" a breeze with easy-to-understand lists, tables, and charts. Volume 1, Literary History, gives context with at-a-glance overviews of periods and major writers in each period. Volume 2, Literary Terms, is organized by genre, with chapters on poetry, fiction, non-fiction, drama and more. Volume 3, Essay Skills, makes "sizing up" selections less daunting and can help turn shaky writers into concise, creative ones. This volume also helps students understand what judges are expecting and includes how-to's for pulling an essay together from beginning to end. Our newest edition, Volume 4, Nobel and Pulitzer Prizes tackles the endless lists of literary prizes covered on the test. Prize lists are broken out by decade, geography, ethnicity, and anomalies to bring meaning to the lists, which results in better recall. And by cross-referencing all winners with entries in the Handbook, we have done the work so you have everything you need at a glance.

The author, Jennifer Bussey, is the author of all our Literary Criticism products for UIL as well as our Ready Writing products. She completed her undergraduate degree in English and has a Master's Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies. Bussey is currently an independent writer specializing in literature; her work appears in reference books released nationally by major educational publishers, including *Contemporary Authors*, *Poetry for Students*, *Novels for Students*, *Epics for Students*, *Encyclopedia of American Poetry: The Twentieth Century*, and *Literature of Developing Nations*. Her work also appeared on the Web and in national magazines, and she recently completed her second anthology for *Events that Shaped History*. A skilled writer, Bussey takes our study materials and tests to a new and challenging level.

We are a small company that listens; we encourage comments. If there is an area that you would like fully explored, let us hear from you! Our best products have been developed from your suggestions, and we encourage your interchange with us.

LitCrit Concepts - Volume 1  
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## **Preface: What This Guide Is and Isn't**

Welcome to Lit Crit Concepts, Volume 1: Literary History. I was once in your shoes (many, many, many, many years ago), and now, as a writer for Hexco, I am in the trenches with you every year, studying the reading selections and *The Handbook* to prepare for the year of UIL Literary Criticism. I study so I can create materials to help you in the contest and in your understanding of literature. I mean, you could have signed up for Number Sense or Kazoo Acrobatics, but you chose Literary Criticism, so I have to assume you are interested in literature!

Here's the rub, as Hamlet says. It can be difficult to tackle *The Handbook*. It is a whole lot of information, and while it is great—and it *is* great; I use it all the time in my career as a writer for educational publishers—it is hard to navigate. The alphabetical format is super-simple if you know exactly what you need to study, but what if you don't? What if you don't know what is basic knowledge, and what is advanced? Or how to group information and fit it together so it makes sense, and so you can actually remember it for the test? The last thing I want is to have your youthful spirit crushed by something as fun as literature. So, I put together guides to *The Handbook*, sort of like study notes to give you a better way to structure all that information. If you're an über-nerd, let me put it this way: Let's play *The Divine Comedy*! You be Dante, and I'll be Beatrice, your guide and commentator through Heaven (*The Handbook*). We won't have anyone be Virgil because he is the guide through Purgatory and the Inferno, and *The Handbook* certainly isn't either of those.

This volume covers literary history, as it is presented in *The Handbook* and only in *The Handbook*. That's where your test questions are drawn, so why muddle things by adding other sources? Where I have found discrepancies or areas of confusion in *The Handbook*, I have told you so. That way, you shouldn't run into any surprises on any tests. As it is in *The Handbook*, most of the literary history is European (primarily English) and American. So, don't yell at me because you feel Asian poetry or Sicilian verse novels are under-represented. Keep in mind that this volume is *not* meant to be comprehensive, and it should definitely not replace your study of *The Handbook* itself. There are sections or topics that are merely summarized here, but you know where to go find more. I have used the same terminology and names, so looking something up in *The Handbook* will be easy. In summarizing topics like, say, Realism, I have been intentionally concise. If you can start by learning the very basic information (dates, point of view, major authors and works), you have a solid foundation to go read more about what was going on during that time. Also, in the interest of your time and your school's budget, I had to make some hard choices about what to include and what to omit. Sorry, young padawan.

A word on notation. As you read, if you see something in SMALL CAPS, that means there is an entry on that topic either in this volume or in the Literary Terms volume. If you see something that is Capitalized in the Middle of a Sentence, that means there is an entry on that topic in *The Handbook*. The simple notation is to point you to more information if you need it.

That's it! I really hope you find this helpful and encouraging as you study this year. We would love your feedback, so please feel completely free to email us at Hexco and let us know what you like and don't like. And, hey--Good luck in the contest!

–Jennifer Bussey

## English Literary History and Periods: Overview

**DECADENCE** –At the end of a great period, there is usually a time of decadence, a decline accompanied by such things as self-consciousness, rebellion, unsettled feelings, genre confusion, eccentricity, and perversity. The term is also applied to works of art deemed purposeless and lacking in subject matter that is presented with great skill and technique.

**PERIODS**

<b>Name</b>	<b>When (start and end events)</b>	<b>Characteristics/ Point of View</b>	<b>Major Figures and Major Works</b>	<b>What else?</b>
Old English	428 (invasion of England by Teutonic tribes)-1100 (post-Norman Conquest)		<i>Beowulf</i> ; Caedmon's "Song"; Boethius' <i>Consolation of Philosophy</i>	Christianity won over pagan culture
Anglo-Norman (a.k.a., Early Middle English Period)	1100-1350	Norman-French culture	<i>Poema Morale</i> (poem in fourteeners), <i>King Horn</i> (metrical romance), <i>The Play of St. Catherine</i> (first known miracle play), <i>Cursor Mundi</i> , <i>The Pricke of Conscience</i>	Historical events include the 1215 Magna Carta, establishment of feudalism, origin of Parliament
Middle English	1350 (replacement of French by Middle English in the court) - 1500 (appearance of Modern English writings)	Literature with religious themes; romances	Wycliffe (sermons, translation of Bible); Malory (Arthurian); first major English poet, Chaucer	Age of Chaucer (1340-1400); Black Death/Plague (1348-1350); Peasants' Revolt (1381); Wars of the Roses (15 <sup>th</sup> century); growing nationalism
Renaissance	1500-1660	Transition from medieval to modern; age of compromise; Humanism; individualism; more global view	Spenser, Sidney, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Milton (poetry)	Printing; rise of democracy; increased commercialism; England rises as world power