

# UNIT 4



Included in this unit: TEKS 2, 2A, 2C, 3, 5A, 5B, 7, 9B–D, 10A, 10B, 11B, 12B, 12C, 13A–E, 14B, 15A, 15C, 15D, 1E, 18, 24A, 24B, RC-12(A).

## Preview Unit Goals

### LITERARY ANALYSIS

- Identify and analyze characteristics of romanticism
- Understand the relationship between form and meaning in poetry
- Identify and analyze rhythmic patterns and stanza structure in poetry
- Identify and analyze sound devices in poetry
- Identify and analyze figurative language in poetry
- Identify and interpret imagery
- Identify graphic elements in poetry

### READING

- Visualize imagery in poetry
- Paraphrase complex structures to enhance comprehension
- Analyze literary criticism, including an author's position and support
- Compare and contrast literary and expository texts
- Understand historical context

### WRITING AND GRAMMAR

- Write poetry
- Write an analytical essay
- Add emphasis using repetition and punctuation
- Use personification to create effective imagery

### LISTENING AND SPEAKING

- Use active listening techniques

### VOCABULARY

- Understand the historical development of the English language

### MEDIA AND VIEWING

- Evaluate the influence of audience, bias, and purpose on the representation of one issue or event across various media
- Evaluate the interactions of different techniques used in multilayered media

### Find It Online!

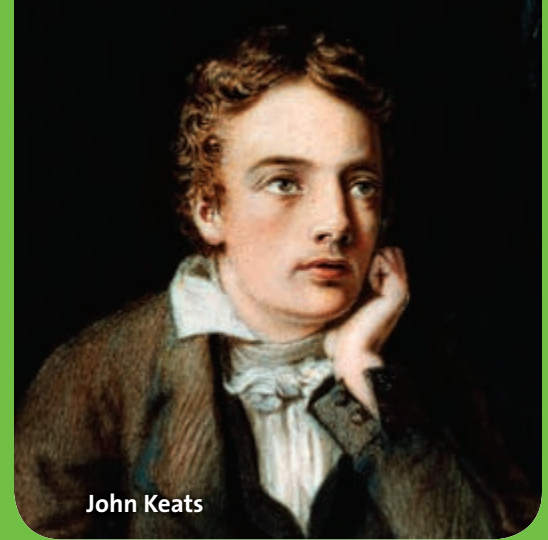


Go to [thinkcentral.com](http://thinkcentral.com) for the interactive version of this unit.



# The Flowering of Romanticism

1798–1832



John Keats



## EMOTION AND EXPERIMENTATION

- Revolt Against Neoclassicism
- The Lake Poets
- The Late Romantics

**MediaSmart** DVD-ROM

### The Art of William Blake

Examine art elements and techniques that have fueled the visions of artists for generations.

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## UNIT 4

### Questions of the Times

**DISCUSS** In small groups or as a class, discuss the following questions. Then read on to learn how British writers grappled with these issues during the romantic period.

#### *What can people learn from NATURE?*

Romantic writers idealized nature and promoted the idea that human beings could learn a great deal from nature's simple truths. What do you think people can learn from interacting with the natural world? Can nature be a source of comfort? of inspiration? What might people learn from the harsher aspects of nature?

#### *Is EMOTION stronger than reason?*

In contrast to the writers of the Age of Reason, romantic writers saw emotions as the core of human experience and viewed literature as a means of expressing those emotions. Do you think that emotions trump reason when it comes to behavior? Do you think the best writing focuses on personal feelings, or do you prefer writing that examines less personal concerns?







**READING 2** Analyze, make inferences, and draw conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts.

## *When is the ORDINARY extraordinary?*

In their work, romantic writers celebrated the charm of everyday objects and experiences and the glory of commonplace people. They felt that even the most unnoticed of persons was deserving of respect and that ordinary interactions with nature were subjects worthy of poetry. What can you find that is special in the everyday?

## *How does WAR change our values?*

Romantic writers lived in a time when Britain was growing more conservative because of the threat from revolutionary France and Napoleon. Most British romantics supported social reform, but reform faced an uphill battle in an era of government restrictions. Do freedom and social justice always suffer in a time of war? What is the proper balance between liberty and security?

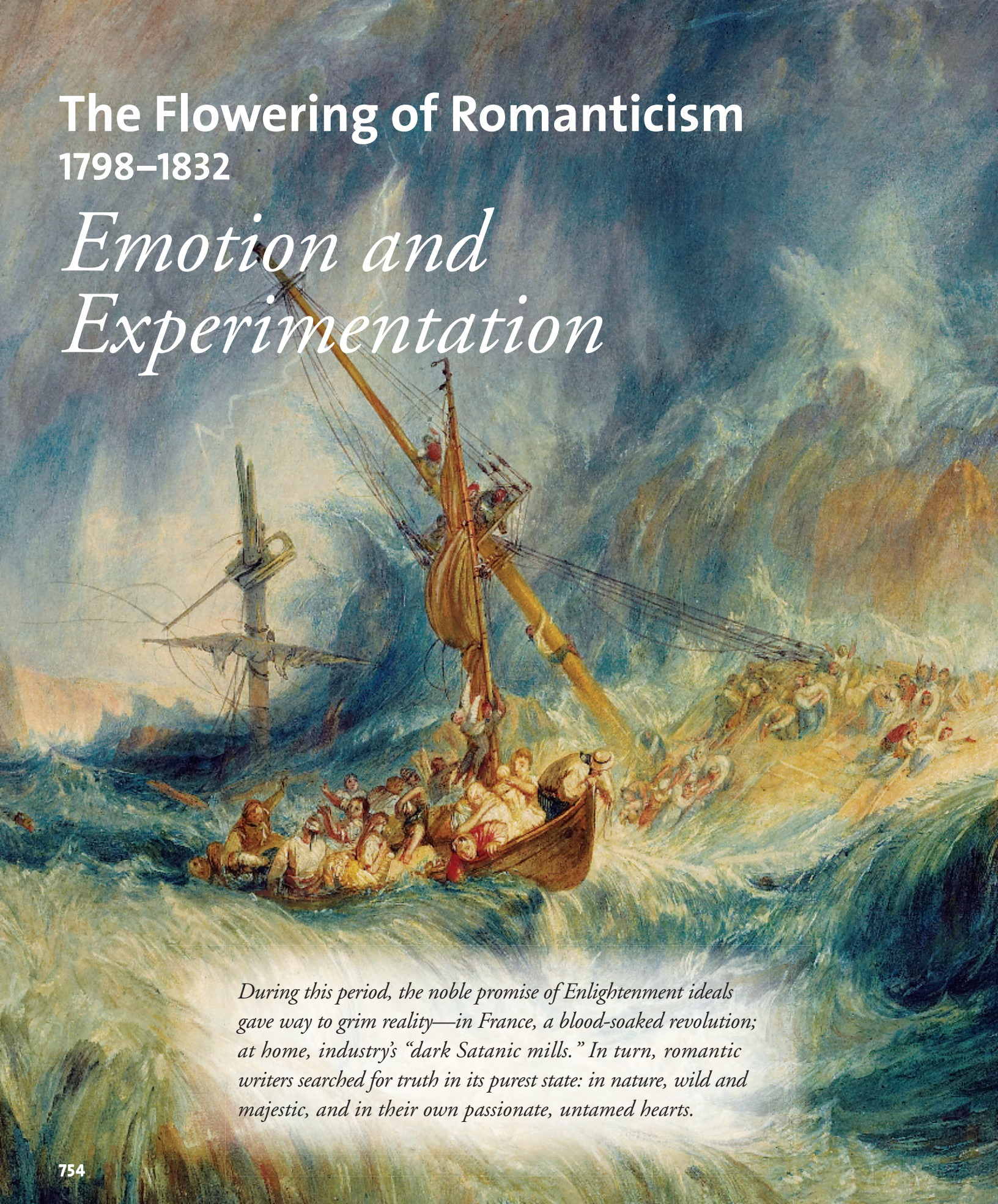




# The Flowering of Romanticism

1798–1832

## *Emotion and Experimentation*



*During this period, the noble promise of Enlightenment ideals gave way to grim reality—in France, a blood-soaked revolution; at home, industry’s “dark Satanic mills.” In turn, romantic writers searched for truth in its purest state: in nature, wild and majestic, and in their own passionate, untamed hearts.*



# Romanticism: Historical Context

The literary movement known as romanticism developed as a reaction to many social influences: the unrest of the French Revolution, the excesses of the Industrial Revolution, and the widespread poverty and oppression of workers.

## A Time of Revolution

“Liberty, equality, brotherhood”—the ideals that spurred the **French Revolution** found an answering echo in the hearts of many of England’s finest romantic poets and novelists. In the heady early years of France’s revolution, writers such as **William Wordsworth**, **Samuel Taylor Coleridge**, and **William Blake** saw it as a turning point in the history of humankind, a move toward a more ideal and civilized society. William Blake summed up his hopes for those struggling under oppression in these lines from his poem “The French Revolution”:

Then the valleys of France shall cry to the soldier,  
‘Throw down thy sword and musket,  
And run and embrace the meek peasant.’  
Her Nobles shall hear and shall weep, and put off  
The red robe of terror, the crown of oppression,  
the shoes of contempt, and unbuckle  
The girdle of war from the desolate earth.

**ENGLAND’S TIES TO REVOLUTION** George III, later called by the poet **Percy Bysshe Shelley** “an old, mad, blind, despised, and dying king,” ruled England during the years of the American and French revolutions. Many blamed the loss of the American colonies chiefly on George’s inflexible and unsympathetic attitude toward the colonists.

George III was not a particularly capable king, and he was bewildered by the unprecedented political events taking place in America and France. In 1788, the year before the French Revolution began, he suffered a major attack of mental illness, and in 1811 he was declared permanently insane. His son George ruled as prince regent until the king’s death in 1820.

Initially, many English citizens felt sympathy for the French Revolution. William Wordsworth, who had traveled to revolutionary France as a young man, recalled those exciting times: “Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, / But to be young was very heaven!” However, when the moderate revolutionary party lost power to a radical and violent faction, English sympathy began to dissipate, and romantic writers turned elsewhere for inspiration. During the **Reign of Terror**, radicals massacred and persecuted thousands of French aristocrats and middle-class citizens, to the horror of the English people who were all too aware of the restless laboring masses in their own country and the social ills afflicting their own lower class.



**READING 2** Analyze, make inferences, and draw conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts. **2C** Relate the characters, setting, and theme of a literary work to the historical, social, and economic ideas of its time.

### ▶ TAKING NOTES

**Outlining** As you read this introduction, use an outline like the one started here to record the main ideas about the history and literature of the period. You can use headings, boldfaced terms, and the information in these boxes as starting points. (See page R49 in the **Research Handbook** for more help with outlining.)

#### I. Historical Context

##### A. A Time of Revolution

1. England’s ties to revolution

2. Resisting reform

##### B. War with France



**RESISTING REFORM** At this time in England, there were indeed many social ills afflicting society. The new industrial centers in the north and west had no representation in Parliament, and archaic laws denied rights to many religious groups. The nation's growing cities suffered from crime and poor sanitation, among other problems. The criminal justice system offered harsh penalties—for example, people were hanged for theft and thrown into prison for debt. In addition, Britain's overseas empire faced a host of troubles, from corruption in India to the evils of the slave trade.

Yet for nearly 25 years, all efforts at reform were suppressed because of the fear that reform would lead to anarchy, as it had in France. Wary of revolution or a French invasion, Britain grew increasingly conservative, passing laws restricting the right to public assembly and outlawing writing or speech that was critical of the government.

## War with France

**FEAR OF INVASION** When France invaded the Netherlands in 1793, Britain entered into a war with France that would ultimately last for more than 25 years. To complicate matters, near the end of the century rebellious Irishmen, encouraged by the promise of French assistance, rose up against their British-controlled rulers. Though this rebellion was quelled after poor weather prevented a major French landing, the threat of a French invasion of Britain by way of Ireland remained. Hoping to ease the situation, the Tory prime minister **William Pitt** (son of the William Pitt who had led Britain in the Seven Years' War) persuaded Parliament to pass the **Act of Union** in 1800. Ireland would be represented in the British Parliament, and all the British Isles would be joined as the **United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland**.

**THE NAPOLEONIC WARS** Meanwhile, the brilliant general **Napoleon Bonaparte** had taken over France's government. Abandoning democratic principles, he made himself emperor and, through clever military and political maneuvers, established control over much of continental Europe. Britain was continually threatened with invasion until the British fleet, under **Horatio Nelson**, destroyed the French navy at the **Battle of Trafalgar** in 1805. After that, Britain gradually liberated the Iberian peninsula (Portugal and Spain) from Napoleon's grip. In 1812, Napoleon overextended himself by invading Russia, where he lost many troops to the cold. Meanwhile, British forces were closing in on France from the south. After two more years of battles, Napoleon was finally captured and exiled to the island of Elba, and victorious diplomats met to decide Europe's fate at the **Congress of Vienna**. Napoleon escaped and returned to power, but shortly thereafter met final defeat at the **Battle of Waterloo** in 1815.

*Napoleon on Horseback on the St. Bernard Pass (1801), Jacques-Louis David. © Archivo Iconografico, S.A./Corbis.*







*Nat-Y-Glo Ironworks, Wales (1788)*, George Robertson. The Granger Collection, New York.

## Cultural Influences

Romantic writers reacted to the negative effects of industrialization—the poverty, appalling working conditions, and oppression of workers—by turning to nature for truth and beauty.

### The Down Side of Industry

During this period, England was an industrial as well as an agricultural land. The **Industrial Revolution** and improvements in farming had brought increased prosperity to the middle and upper classes but degrading poverty to the families employed in the factories and mills. Living and working conditions for industrial laborers were generally appalling. Britain operated under the doctrine of **laissez faire** (lăs'ā fār'; French for “allow to do”), which argued that an economy works best without government intervention. No laws were passed to regulate factory safety, workers' hours, low wages, or child labor. The government also made no effort to control the economy's boom-and-bust fluctuations, which resulted in worker layoffs during frequent economic downturns.

**THE LUDDITE RIOTS** At the start of the Regency (the period in which George III's son ruled England in his father's place), an economic depression

#### A Voice from the Times

*Men of England, wherefore plough  
For the lords who lay ye low?  
Wherefore weave with toil and care  
The rich robes your tyrants wear?*

—Percy Bysshe Shelley



brought the loss of many factory jobs. New equipment in textile mills added to the problem, as fewer workers were needed to perform certain tasks. In the ensuing **Luddite riots**, unemployed factory workers rioted in several counties, smashing the machinery they blamed for taking their jobs away. The violence was frightening to so many that Parliament passed a law making the breaking of factory machines an offense punishable by death. Yet those who understood the workers' grievances wondered why the government did nothing to try to solve the problem instead. In his first speech to the House of Lords (in which he was entitled by birth to belong), the poet **Lord Byron** spoke in sympathy with the Luddite rebels. However, he was only one of three members who voted against the new law.

**POSTWAR PROBLEMS** After the Battle of Waterloo, unemployment swelled as war veterans returned home. In addition, to keep cheap foreign grain from glutting the market, the Tory government passed a **Corn Law**, which taxed imported grain (in Britain, *corn* refers to any grain). These taxes protected the income of large landowners and small farmers, but they also devastated the poor and unemployed by keeping food prices high.

Given the trying times, factory workers wanted to join together to pool resources and fight for better work conditions. Labor unions were illegal, however, and when workers assembled in defiance of the law, government troops were called in to suppress their meetings. In one incident, 11 people were killed when troops were sent to break up a workers' gathering in St. Peter's Fields, Manchester. The incident was called the **Peterloo Massacre**, a bitter pun on the Battle of Waterloo.

## ▼ Analyze Visuals

Examine the cartoon on this page. Why might the artist have titled this work *Manchester Heroes*? What criticism is implied with the words, "None but the brave deserve the Fair"? Notice the scale in the upper-left corner that shows "Peculators" winning the balance over "Reformers." A peculator is a person who embezzles funds. Why might peculators have been against those trying to improve conditions for workers?

*Manchester Heroes* (1819). From *The Peterloo Massacre of 1819*, published by S.W. Forbes, London. British Museum, London. Photo © Bridgeman Art Library.





# Romantic Literature

Romantic writers emphasized emotion over reason, nature over industry, and the individual over society.

## The Revolt Against Neoclassicism

The word *romantic* was first used in Germany in 1798 by the critics Friedrich and August von Schlegel. In many ways romanticism as a literary style began in Germany, among such Sturm und Drang (“storm and stress”) writers as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller.

**A REVOLUTIONARY STYLE** In England, the romantics were writers who revolted against the order, propriety, and traditionalism of the Age of Reason. Neoclassical writers had venerated the literary achievements of the ancient Greek and Roman writers; they had a great respect for rules, both in literature and in society, and they wrote about the human being as an integral part of an organized society, rather than as an individual.

The romantics, in contrast, were influenced by the same forces that gave rise to the American and French revolutions and by the agitation for political, social, and economic change taking place in their own country. As a result, they searched for freer artistic forms, outside the classical tradition. Romantic poets abandoned the measured, witty heroic couplet for the musical rhythms and richly evocative language of medieval and Renaissance poetry.

To the romantics, emotion became more important than reason, and the individual’s relationship to nature was of primary concern. They found delight in the commonplace, celebrating ordinary things—a bird’s song, a field of flowers—in their verse. Poetry became, in the words of William Wordsworth, “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.” The lyric poem, with its emphasis on subjective experiences, thoughts, feelings, and desires, was the most popular literary form among the romantic poets.

**EARLY ROMANTIC POETRY** Although the beginning of Britain’s romantic period is traditionally assigned to the year 1798, aspects of romanticism are evident in earlier British literature. Poet **William Blake**, who began publishing in the 1780s, produced mystical verse expressing his own personal philosophy and illustrated it with his own engravings. A Londoner of humble origins, Blake saw poverty and suffering all around him and was an ardent supporter of the French Revolution in its early days. He could not accept the neoclassical idea of a stable, orderly hierarchy in the universe but instead viewed existence as a blending of opposite poles—goodness and evil, innocence and experience, heaven and hell. In his landmark *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*, Blake included paired poems, one “innocent” and one “experienced,” on similar topics.

### ► For Your Outline

#### THE REVOLT AGAINST NEOCLASSICISM

- English romantics revolted against the order and traditionalism of neoclassicism.
- They were influenced by revolutionary ideals and agitation for change.
- They valued emotion, nature, and the commonplace.
- They popularized lyric poems.
- William Blake and Robert Burns wrote poetry with romantic elements.
- Sir Walter Scott pioneered the historical novel.

### A Voice from the Times

*I must create a system, or be enslaved  
by another man’s.  
I will not reason and compare: my  
business is to create.*

—William Blake

**SCOTTISH PRIDE** Robert Burns, who also published poetry in the 1780s, exercised his own brand of romanticism by drawing on earlier traditions, particularly the oral poetry of his native Scotland. The son of a farmer, Burns had great sympathy for the democratic vision of the American and French revolutions and tried to convey in his poetry the experiences of simple, everyday Scottish rural life. Hailed as **the Ploughman Poet**, he often wrote in the Lowland Scots dialect, using vocabulary and pronunciations unlike those of standard English. Burns did not break completely with neoclassical traditions; his witty mock epic *Tam o' Shanter*, for example, is reminiscent of Pope and Swift, but with a Scottish flavor. More in keeping with romantic attitudes are his well-known sentimental songs, such as “Flow Gently Sweet Afton,” “My Love Is Like a Red, Red Rose,” and the New Year’s Eve favorite “Auld Lang Syne.”

Another Scotsman who drew heavily on his heritage was **Sir Walter Scott**. Scott gathered traditional ballads and folk tales of his native land, collecting them in *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* and incorporating them into long narrative poems such as *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* and *The Lady of the Lake*. During the Regency, Scott became even more famous as a pioneer of the **historical novel**, reaching into Scotland’s and England’s legendary past for the plots and characters of *Waverley*, *Rob Roy*, *Ivanhoe*, and a string of other popular novels. In *Waverley*, for example, he focused on the romantic themes of revolution and rebellion but set the story in the early 1700s, the time of Britain’s Jacobite rebellion.

### A Voice from the Times

*The Poetic Genius of my country  
... bade me sing the loves, the  
joys, the rural scenes and rural  
pleasures of my native soil, in my  
native tongue; I tuned my wild,  
artless notes, as she inspired.*

—Robert Burns

### ► For Your Outline

#### ROMANTICISM EVOLVES

- *Lyrical Ballads* launched the romantic period.
- Romanticism valued the individual, emotion, nature, the commonplace, and the imagination.
- The Lake poets and personal essayists were romantics; Jane Austen wrote novels of manners.

*The Queen of the Tournament* (1800s), Frank William Warwick Topham. Illustration for *Ivanhoe*. © Christie’s Images/Corbis.





## Romanticism Evolves

In 1798, **William Wordsworth** and **Samuel Taylor Coleridge** published their landmark poetry collaboration, *Lyrical Ballads, with a Few Other Poems*. It was with this publication that the **romantic period** is traditionally said to have begun.

The two poets, who had first met in 1795, were united by their shared desire to explore new modes of literary expression. Wordsworth had traveled extensively in both Germany and France, where he had become committed to the revolutionary cause. He developed into a poet of the common man, writing to capture everyday experiences in simple language, without concern for artificial rules or conventions. For both Wordsworth and Coleridge, nature and meditation were linked, with insight into the human experience flowing freely from communion with nature.

**THE LAKE POETS** Coleridge explained that the poems in *Lyrical Ballads* focused on two aspects of human experience, the natural and the supernatural. Wordsworth's nature poetry gave "the charm of novelty to things of every day," while Coleridge himself explored supernatural events that nevertheless had a "human interest" and "semblance of truth." In a preface to the work, Wordsworth would essentially define the features of English romanticism: an emphasis on the individual, a rejection of artificiality in favor of passion and emotion, a love of nature, a respect for the commonplace, and a freeing of the imagination (see page 796).

*Lyrical Ballads* was so different from the usual 18th-century neoclassical fare that romantic essayist **William Hazlitt** likened it to the French Revolution itself. Soon after its publication, Wordsworth, who had grown up in the beautiful Lake District of northwestern England, resettled there in the town of Grasmere, with Coleridge moving nearby. Along with their friend and fellow poet **Robert Southey**, they became known as the **Lake poets**. Also part of their circle was **Dorothy Wordsworth**, who lived with her brother in Grasmere and kept a keenly observed journal of their life.

**ROMANTIC ESSAYISTS** Another friend of Coleridge's, **Charles Lamb**, remained in London and won fame writing personal essays. Such essays—also called **familiar essays**—often appeared in leading journals of the day. They were a popular Romantic Age form because of their emphasis on personal experiences and feelings. Other romantic essayists of note were William Hazlitt and **Thomas De Quincey**.

## THE ARTISTS' GALLERY



### Romanticism in British Art

During the romantic age, many artists turned to landscape painting, trying to capture the beauty and wonders of the natural world. Two of Britain's finest painters, **J. M. W. Turner** and **John Constable**, were products of this period.

**The Painter of Light** Joseph Mallord William Turner, whose work *Lake of Wyndermere* (1826) is shown here, was only 14 when he was accepted to study at Britain's prestigious Royal Academy of Art. Known for landscapes and seascapes in watercolors as well as oils (see page 754), Turner helped establish the use of watercolors as a popular medium. By using watercolor technique with oil paints, he achieved a new sense of light in his works, anticipating the experimentation with light that characterized impressionist art of the later 19th century.

**A Late Bloomer** Unlike Turner, John Constable was not made a member of the Royal Academy until he was more than 50 years old. A thoughtful observer of nature, he became famous for landscapes that focus on changes in light and weather. Constable generally based his final paintings on careful sketches he had made, sometimes years before. He painted many landscapes of the rural area in Suffolk, England, where he grew up—an area now known as Constable country.

**AN ENGLISH ORIGINAL** One talented prose writer of the era seems largely untouched by the romantic movement. Instead, **Jane Austen** remained in many ways a neoclassical writer. She confined her novels to the experiences of the intimate world she knew, the genteel society of England's rural villages. Her novels, often called **novels of manners**, include *Pride and Prejudice*, *Emma*, and *Sense and Sensibility*.

Austen's work does contain romantic elements, however: a focus on the details of daily life and a preoccupation with character and personality. Also, certain characters, such as the passionate Marianne of *Sense and Sensibility*, are imbued with the romantic spirit. However, Austen typically causes such characters to see the error of their ways and become more reserved by novel's end.

## The Late Romantics

**A NEW GENERATION** During the Regency, a second generation of romantic poets came on the literary scene, the most prominent of whom was **George Gordon, Lord Byron**. The handsome aristocrat won instant fame with the 1812 publication of the first part of his long poem *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, whose darkly brooding romantic hero became associated with the poet himself.

For a time, Byron was the darling of fashionable London, but his radical politics and personal escapades soon made him the subject of scandal. In 1816 he abandoned Britain for a self-imposed exile on the European continent, where he died of a fever while helping the Greeks fight for independence. Throughout the 19th century, he remained the most famous of the romantic poets, known as much for his romantic life as his poetic talent. The **Byronic hero**—dark, handsome, restless, and a bit diabolical—became a staple of literary fiction that many younger poets and other artists tried to imitate.

Byron's friend **Percy Bysshe Shelley's** dismay at social injustice made him even more radical than Byron. An admirer of the philosopher **William Godwin**, Shelley scandalized London when he eloped to the continent with Godwin's 16-year-old daughter, Mary. He spent most of his remaining years abroad, writing the verse dramas *The Cenci* and *Prometheus Unbound* as well as beautiful lyric poetry that celebrates nature, freedom, artistic expression, and other values the romantics held dear. After Shelley died in a boating accident at age 29, his wife **Mary Shelley** returned to England, where she helped edit her husband's works for publication.

Mary Shelley was a talented writer who won fame in her own right for her gothic horror tale *Frankenstein*. Mary moved in intellectual circles and was familiar with the scientific theories

## A CHANGING LANGUAGE

### Late Modern English

The Industrial Revolution and Britain's overseas involvement added many new words to English—so many, in fact, that scholars call the language after 1800 **Late Modern English** to distinguish it from the modern English of Shakespeare's day.

**Scientific Coinages** Many of the new words were scientific terms coined from Greek or Roman word parts; for instance, when Edward Jenner developed a method of preventing smallpox by injecting people with cowpox, he named that method *vaccination* by using the Latin root for “cow.” Other scientific coinages were simply old words used in new ways; *locomotive*, for example, existed as an adjective meaning “self-powered” long before it was applied to the steam-powered engine developed in the early 19th century.

**Foreign Borrowings** British interaction with nations and colonies overseas was the second source of vocabulary expansion. From the fight against Napoleon on the Iberian Peninsula came *guerrilla*—originally a Spanish word meaning “little war.” From Britain's growing colonization of the Indian subcontinent came a number of words, including *pajamas*, *bangle*, *jungle*, and *shampoo*.

**Romanticism and Language** The democratic attitudes of the romantic movement helped broaden the concept of “acceptable” English and narrow the gap between the language of scholars and aristocrats and the language of the common people. In their efforts to create literature based on natural speech, romantic writers sometimes employed regional dialects, colloquial language, and even slang. Those trying to capture the flavor of the legendary past also used archaic, or outdated, words and spellings—*stoppeth* for *stop*, for example, and *rime* for *rhyme*.





Actor Robert DeNiro as The Creature in the 1994 film *Frankenstein*

of her day. In her introduction to *Frankenstein*, she describes listening to conversations about “Dr. Darwin, . . . who preserved a piece of vermicelli in a glass case till by some extraordinary means it began to move with voluntary motion. Not thus, after all, would life be given. Perhaps a corpse would be reanimated; galvanism had given token of such things. . . .” Thus, Shelley’s dark tale of a monster who destroys its maker can be read not only as a horror story, or a romantic meditation on passion versus reason, but as a warning against the dangers of science. Indeed, Frankenstein’s monster can be seen as the embodiment and expression of Shelley’s society’s fears—fears of unchecked progress and of science and industry’s negative effects on humanity.

Poet **John Keats** came from humbler origins than Byron and Shelley. He was acquainted with Shelley, however, through his friend **Leigh Hunt**, the publisher who encouraged his career and introduced him to leading artists of the day. Orphaned at 14, Keats spent much of his short life fighting the tuberculosis that killed his mother and brother and eventually claimed him as well. He produced most of his finest poetry in a feverish eight-month span—**sonnets, odes, ballads**, and other poetic forms, all handled with remarkable dexterity. Many of his poems use vivid images from nature as a starting point for philosophical meditation about joy, sorrow, love, death, art, and beauty. After Keats died, Shelley eulogized him in his famous elegy *Adonais*: “His fate and fame shall be / An echo and a light unto eternity!”

#### ► For Your Outline

##### THE LATE ROMANTICS

- A new generation of romantic poets flourished during the Regency.
- The Byronic hero (dark, brooding, diabolical) became a literary staple.
- Percy B. Shelley wrote verse dramas and lyric poetry celebrating nature, freedom, and artistic expression.
- Mary Shelley’s gothic tale *Frankenstein* expressed society’s fears.
- John Keats wrote sonnets, odes, and ballads that used nature as a starting point for philosophical meditations.



# Connecting Literature, History, and Culture

Use this timeline and the questions on the next page to gain insight into how Britain’s romantic period reflected what was happening in other parts of the world.

## BRITISH LITERARY MILESTONES

1790

- 1794** Robert Burns writes “An Ode to Liberty” and the song “My Love Is Like a Red, Red Rose”; William Blake publishes *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*. ▶
- 1798** William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge publish the first edition of *Lyrical Ballads*.



1800

- 1800** Dorothy Wordsworth begins keeping her *Grasmere Journal*.
- 1802** The influential literary magazine the *Edinburgh Review* begins publication.
- 1805** Sir Walter Scott wins fame with *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, a long narrative poem based on a Scottish legend. ▶



## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

1790

- 1792** Britain issues a proclamation against all seditious writings.
- 1793** War breaks out between Britain and revolutionary France.
- 1796** J. M. W. Turner exhibits his first oil painting; Edward Jenner develops a vaccine against smallpox.
- 1798** Rebellion fails to win Irish independence and is harshly suppressed.

1800

- 1800** The Act of Union creates the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.
- 1803** Richard Trevithick develops the first railway steam locomotive.
- 1805** The British fleet, under Horatio Nelson, defeats Napoleon’s navy at the Battle of Trafalgar. ▶
- 1807** Britain abolishes the slave trade.



## WORLD CULTURE AND EVENTS

1790

- 1793** The French Revolution moves into the Reign of Terror, in which many are killed.
- 1799** The Rosetta stone, which makes it possible to decipher Egyptian hieroglyphics, is discovered by Napoleon’s army in Egypt; Napoleon takes the reins of power in France. ▶



1800

- 1803** The United States purchases the Louisiana Territory from Napoleonic France; German composer Ludwig van Beethoven composes his third symphony, known as the *Eroica*.
- 1804** Napoleon crowns himself emperor.
- 1808** German romantic author Johann Wolfgang von Goethe publishes the first part of his verse drama *Faust*.



## MAKING CONNECTIONS

- What authors outside Britain were writing during the romantic period?
- Which incidents show Napoleon's influence on world events?
- Which developments show positive and negative effects of the Industrial Revolution?
- Which details suggest oppression in Britain, and which show eventual reform?



**READING 11B** Evaluate the structures of text for their clarity and organizational coherence and for the effectiveness of their graphic representations.

### 1810

- 1812** Lord Byron wins fame with his long poem *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*.
- 1813** Jane Austen anonymously publishes her novel of manners *Pride and Prejudice*.
- 1818** Mary Shelley anonymously publishes her gothic novel *Frankenstein*.
- 1819** Percy Bysshe Shelley writes "Ode to the West Wind"; John Keats writes most of his greatest poems.

### 1820

- 1821** John Keats, age 25, dies of tuberculosis.
- 1822** Percy Bysshe Shelley, age 29, drowns off the coast of Italy.
- 1823** Lord Byron joins the Greek war of liberation from the Turks.
- 1824** Lord Byron, age 36, dies of a fever. ►



### 1810

- 1811** George III is declared insane; his son George is named regent, marking the start of the Regency; unemployed workers smash new machinery in the Luddite riots.
- 1815** The Duke of Wellington leads the final defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo.
- 1819** Eleven die in the Peterloo Massacre, in which troops break up a large workers' gathering. ►



### 1820

- 1820** The Regency ends when George III dies and his son becomes George IV.
- 1821** John Constable paints *The Hay Wain*, considered one of his masterpieces.
- 1829** The Catholic Emancipation Act frees Catholics from many restrictions.
- 1832** The first Reform Bill extends voting rights to middle-class men but affects only 5 percent of the population.

### 1810

- 1810** Latin American nations begin declaring independence from Napoleonic Spain.
- 1812** Napoleon invades Russia; the brothers Grimm publish their first collection of German fairy tales. ►
- 1819** The first steamship crosses the Atlantic Ocean.



### 1820

- 1820** Russian romantic poet Aleksandr Pushkin publishes the verse poem *Ruslan and Ludmila*.
- 1821** German Romantic poet Heinrich Heine publishes his first volume of poetry.
- 1826** Joseph-Nicéphore Niépce produces the first successful photograph.
- 1831** France's Victor Hugo publishes *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. ►





## UNIT 4

# The Legacy of Romanticism

## Fantasy, Horror, and Science Fiction

The romantic fascination with the supernatural is still thriving in today's books and movies. The laboratory-created monster in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*—sometimes called the world's first work of science fiction—is not so very different from the laboratory creations in the film *The Matrix*, and the eerie ghost-driven ship of Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is remarkably similar to the ship in *Pirates of the Caribbean*.

**QUICKWRITE** Jot down your own list of books, films, and TV shows in which the supernatural or paranormal is a strong element of the plot. Then consider the appeal of this kind of fiction and the reasons you think it remains so popular.

Scene from *Pirates of the Caribbean*:  
*Dead Man's Chest* (2006)





## Jane Austen Forever

They say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. If that's true, then Jane Austen would certainly be flattered by the many books and movies inspired by her work. Examples include *Bridget Jones's Diary*, a book and a movie about a modern Londoner looking for love that's based on *Pride and Prejudice*; the movie *Clueless*, about a high-school matchmaker who happens to be a lot like Austen's *Emma*; and several novels that imagine what happens to Austen's characters after her books have ended. And of course there are countless movie and TV adaptations of her original works.

**CREATE** With a small group, discuss any Austen-inspired books, TV shows, and movies that you know. Do a search on the Internet to find book covers and movie images, and create a collage or poster illustrating the breadth of Austen's influence.



Scene from *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason* (2004)

## Respect for the Environment

A respect for nature, so evident in the poetry of Wordsworth, Keats, and Shelley, is evident in the environmental movement we know today. Like the romantic poets, today's environmentalists condemn the harm that urbanization and industrialization bring to the natural landscape. They educate people about environmental dangers and campaign to clean up pollution, save endangered species, and preserve natural wonders.

**RESEARCH & DISCUSS** As a class, consider recent issues involving the environment. You might bring in newspaper or magazine articles and summarize them for classmates. Then consider the degree to which love of nature motivates environmentalists. What are some of the other motives they may have for their efforts?



Volunteers rescuing birds harmed by an oil spill