

Historical time line

1900

around 1950

Modernism

AUTHORS & TEXTS

Novels and short stories: Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (1899)

Franz Kafka (Czech Republic), 'The Metamorphosis' (1915)

James Joyce (Ireland), *Ulysses* (1922)

F Scott Fitzgerald (US), *The Great Gatsby* (1925)

Virginia Woolf, *Mrs Dalloway* (1925)

Marcel Proust (France), *In Search of Lost Time* (1913–27)

DH Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928)

Poetry: TS Eliot (US/UK), *The Waste Land* (1922)

WB Yeats (Ireland)

WH Auden (UK/US)

Amy Lowell (US)

HD (Hilda Doolittle, US)

Marianne Moore (US)

Ezra Pound (US/UK/Italy)

Wallace Stevens (US)

William Carlos Williams (US)

Drama: Luigi Pirandello (Italy), *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (1921)

Bertolt Brecht (Germany), *Mother Courage* (1939), *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (1944)

LITERARY FORMS

Much experimentation with form and a breaking down of older ideas and conventions

World War I had a major impact on writers, undermining confidence in authority figures and in traditional social structures and institutions

Novels used 'stream of consciousness', unreliable narrators; addressed 'taboo' subjects such as sexuality

Poetry used free verse (no systematic rhyming or rhythmic scheme)

Drama broke down conventions for representing people in a realistic fashion

EVENTS & SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

World War I 1914–18

Spanish Civil War 1936–39

World War II 1939–45

Suffragettes campaigned for women to have the right to vote:

- achieved in Australia in 1902
- achieved in England for women over 30 in 1918

Expressionism: artistic movement; advocated the strong expression of emotion in distorted or grotesque forms

Surrealism: artistic movement; combined objects in unlikely ways and contexts

Postmodernism

Novels and short stories: Vladimir Nabokov (Russia/US), *Lolita* (1955)

Jorge Luis Borges (Argentina), *Ficciones* (1962)

Doris Lessing, *The Golden Notebook* (1962)

Gabriel García Márquez (Colombia), *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967)

Kurt Vonnegut (US), *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969)

Italo Calvino (Italy), *If on a Winter's Night a Traveller* (1979)

Poetry: 'Beat' poets (US):

Allen Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac

John Ashbery (US)

Frank O'Hara (US)

Elizabeth Bishop (US)

Robert Lowell (US)

Carol Ann Duffy

Jennifer Maiden (Australia)

John Forbes (Australia)

Drama: Arthur Miller (US), *Death of a Salesman* (1949)

Samuel Beckett (Ireland), *Waiting for Godot* (1953)

John Osborne, *Look Back in Anger* (1956)

Eugène Ionesco (Romania/France), *Rhinoceros* (1959)

Caryl Churchill, *Serious Money* (1987)

AUTHORS & TEXTS

Continued experimentation with form, often in a more playful way than in modernist writing

Novels: use of multiple narrators, fragmented forms, ambiguity and lack of closure

Poetry: much experimentation with form, style and content, including free verse; the playful arrangement of words (and sometimes punctuation) on the page; informal and colloquial language; allusions to popular culture; and more overtly political content

Drama: Beckett and absurdist theatre abandoned traditional plot and character conventions
More interest in working-class identities and concerns
Use of colloquial language

LITERARY FORMS

Vietnam War 1959–75

Cold War from 1945: massive build-up of nuclear weapons by US and USSR followed by the collapse of the USSR in 1991

Electronic media (radio, television) became much more prominent compared to print media

Internet developed during the 1970s with rapid expansion throughout 1990s

In Australia:

- immigration from Europe (esp. in 1950s and 1960s) and Southeast Asia (esp. in 1970s)
- Whitlam government (1972–75) improved women's rights; recognised Aboriginal land rights; funded the arts and education
- Australia Council for the Arts founded in 1967; Australian Film Commission in 1975

EVENTS & SOCIAL MOVEMENTS