

**19<sup>TH</sup>-CENTURY AMERICAN LITERATURE**  
**GRADUATE COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION READING LIST**  
**SELECTED BY THE GRADUATE FACULTY<sup>1</sup>**

William Cullen Bryant	Selected Poems <sup>2</sup>
Charles Chesnutt	<i>The Conjure Woman</i>
Kate Chopin	<i>The Awakening</i>
James Fenimore Cooper	Any of the Leatherstocking Tales
Stephen Crane	<i>The Red Badge of Courage</i> “The Blue Hotel” “The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky” “The Open Boat”
Rebecca Harding Davis	<i>Life in the Iron Mills</i>
Emily Dickinson	“After great pain a formal feeling comes” “Because I could not stop for death” “A bird came down the walk” “He ate and drank the precious words” “I died for beauty” “I felt a funeral in my brain” “I heard a fly buzz when I died” “I never saw a moor” “I taste a liquor never brewed” “My life closed twice before its close” “The mushroom is the elf of plants” “A narrow fellow in the grass” “A route of evanescence” “Safe in their alabaster chambers” “The soul selects her own society” “Tell all the truth but tell it slant” “There’s a certain slant of light” “This was a Poet—it is that” “To hear an oriole sing” “What mystery pervades a well”
Frederick Douglass	<i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave</i>
Theodore Dreiser	<i>Sister Carrie</i>

Ralph Waldo Emerson	“The American Scholar” “The Divinity School Address “ “Nature” “The Over-Soul” “The Poet” “Self-Reliance”
Charlotte Perkins Gilman	“The Yellow Wallpaper”
Nathaniel Hawthorne	<i>The Scarlet Letter</i> “The Birthmark” “The May-Pole of Merry Mount” “The Minister’s Black Veil” “My Kinsman, Major Molineux” Preface to <i>The House of the Seven Gables</i> “Young Goodman Brown”
Oliver Wendell Holmes	“The Chambered Nautilus” “The Deacon’s Masterpiece”
William Dean Howells	<i>The Rise of Silas Lapham</i>
Washington Irving	“Rip Van Winkle” “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow”
Harriet Jacobs	Selections from <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i>
Henry James	<i>Daisy Miller</i> <i>The Turn of the Screw</i> “The Beast in the Jungle” One Other Novel
Sarah Orne Jewett	Selected Stories
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	Selected Poems
James Russell Lowell	“A Fable for Critics”
Herman Melville	<i>Moby Dick</i> or both <i>Billy Budd</i> and “Bartleby, the Scrivener”
Edgar Allan Poe	“The Philosophy of Composition” “Annabel Lee” “The Bells”

“Israfel”  
 “Lenore”  
 “The Raven”  
 “The Sleeper”  
 “The Cask of Amontillado”  
 “The Fall of the House of Usher”  
 “Ligeia”  
 “The Masque of the Red Death”  
 “The Purloined Letter”  
 “A Review: *Twice-Told Tales* by Nathaniel Hawthorne”

Harriet Beecher Stowe

*Uncle Tom’s Cabin*

Henry David Thoreau

“Resistance to Civil Government” [“Civil Disobedience”]  
*Walden*

Mark Twain

*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

John Greenleaf Whittier

“Ichabod”

Walt Whitman

“Song of Myself” (1882 edition)  
 Selections from *Drum-Taps*

At Least One Selection from an African-American Novelist (for example, F.E.W. Harper’s *Iola Leroy*, Harriet Wilson’s *Our Nig*, William Wells Brown’s *Clotel*)

A candidate may also submit to the Graduate Studies Committee for review a list of readings to supplement, but not replace, the readings from the core list above. The supplementary list should be submitted for approval with the declaration of intent to take the comprehensive examination form.

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. 18 May 2004

<sup>2</sup> For suggestions about an author’s selected poetry, essays, or letters, consult a standard work like *The Norton Anthology of American Literature*.