

## 1 Marks of the Era

- Many new things happen in the “modern” era. Faced with a world war followed by deep economic instability, there comes a cynical view and a question as to whether ideals can survive catastrophe.
- People begin to examine human behavior through psychology.
- “Modernism,” for lack of a better definition, was a term for the new, bold, experimental styles and forms that swept through the arts throughout the first part of the 20th century.

## 2 Historical Events

- 1901, Queen Victoria dies
- 1905, Theory of Relativity proposed
- 1909, Freud lectures on psychoanalysis
- 1914, WW1
- 1932, FDR
- 1941, Bombing of Pearl Harbor
- 1944, June 6th, D-Day

## 3 Events in Literature

- The concept of the “American Dream,” an interesting falsehood, is comprised of the admiration of America as a land of beauty, bounty, and unlimited promise, optimism, and the idea of self-reliance and the individual.
- WW1 was a very influential force on writers in the early 20th Century. Hemingway writes A Farewell to Arms
- The Jazz Age also happens here. People looked for an escape in the pleasures of entertainment and good times. The Roaring Twenties, with its booming economy, results.
- Womens’ lives changed in the twenties, and flappers happened. Flappers were cool.
- Prohibition happens, Then the depression happens.
- Psychoanalysis and Marxism have an effect on literature. Freud and stuff. As a result of these two forces, literature finds stream-of-consciousness writing.

- The Octopus, by Frank Norris. The Souls of Black Folk by W.E.B. Dubois, a collection of poems by William Carlos Williams, and O Pioneers! by Willa Cather. Main Street, by Sinclair Lewis. The Waste Land by T.S. Eliot. The Great Gatsby.
- The Weary Blues, Sam Spade, and Their Eyes were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston. Our Town, a play. Native Son, a novel. The Glass Menagerie, another playwright. 1949 Arthur Miller writes Death of a Salesman. 2014, Jacob Erney stars in the Little Theatre's performance, which was a stressful play but turned out decently.
- **The Harlem Renaissance takes place, and African-american culture finds expression in poetry in two ways: Conventional poetry (Dunbar) and poetry focusing more on the unique contributions of African-American culture to America (Hughes, Cullen)**