

Anthology

Definition of Anthology

The term anthology originates from a Greek word, *anthologia*, meaning a “collection of flowers.” An anthology is a compilation of literary works such as poems, plays, short stories, excerpts, including television programs, dramas, movies and songs. There are different [categories](#) of anthologies such as comic anthologies, [essay](#) collections, [fiction](#) anthologies, poetry anthologies, anthologies of films, and of television programs. Its most common category is literary one, which editors compile from different sources and publish in book forms.

Examples of Anthologies in Literature

Example #1: *The Garden Party and Other Stories* (by Katherine Mansfield)

Mansfield published her collection, “The Garden Party and Other Stories,” in 1922, just a year prior to her death due to tuberculosis. She was a pioneer modernist writer, who was brought up in New Zealand, then moved to England, where she befriended Virginia Woolf and D.H. Lawrence. The title story is one of Mansfield’s well-known works, which she wrote in the modernist [style](#), using a simple backdrop of a family making preparations for a beautiful garden party. Mansfield, against this [setting](#), has brilliantly interwoven meditations on life, class, [illusion](#), reality, and death. This is perhaps the first short story collection published by an English female writer, which included herself in her own anthology.

Example #2: *The Collected Stories* (by Lorrie Moore)

“The Collected Stories,” by Lorrie Moore, is a beautiful collection of tales that allows readers to plunge in and out of the writer’s experience

observing of human behavior. Ms. Moore is famous for her sharp [humor](#) and ironic tone. Moore writes about family dynamics, infidelity, and terminal illness. However, the way she shifts smoothly from one [theme](#) to another, makes this anthology a popular one. The most popular story from this volume is, “How to Be an Other Woman.” The book is counted as an excellent anthology of its time.

Example #3: *The Faerie Queens* (by David Rankine)

“The Faerie Queens” is another noted anthology of essays exploring magic, myths, and mythology in ancient times. This collection is mysterious, otherworldly, and powerful, which has spread its magic across the entirety of Europe for centuries, captivating those who have read the essays. In fact, Rankine has given his readers critical reviews of myths, mythologies, legends, and epic figures.

Example #4: *100 Best Love Poems* (by Philip Smith)

“100 Best Love Poems” is a popular collection of poems in the English language. The works are compiled together, not only for their popularity, but also for their literary quality. From the middle ages, to the twentieth century, these poems remain all-time favorites, and have the ability to captivate and engage the minds of readers, and keep their spirits fresh.

Example #5: *Renaissance Drama: An Anthology of Plays and Entertainments* (by Arthur F. Kinney)

“An Anthology of Plays and Entertainments” is a ground-breaking collection of non-Shakespearean Renaissance [drama](#). It covers a full sweep of dramatic performances, such as court masques, and state balls. This second edition anthology includes pageants and plays that are not anthologized anywhere else, including plays about the coronation of Queen Anne and Elizabeth I, as well as “A Woman Killed with Kindness” by Thomas Heywood. Mr. Kinney has added more material, including “The Second Shepherd’s Play,” “Noah,” “The [Tragedy](#) of Antony,” “The Malcontent,” and “The Masque of Queen.”

Perhaps the greatest function of an anthology is to give readers a look into places, experiences, and people they would not otherwise experience. This is done by linking together stories, poems, and plays, by their themes, characters, and places. The successful editor puts pieces together to make sense – not merely as individual works, but as a whole unit with [coherence](#), that otherwise might be overlooked. Readers can just pull an anthology from the shelf, and get lost in a story or poem that reflects their feelings.

Another important function of an anthology is to prevent readers from getting bored, or being tied to one particular theme or element. Rather, they explore different types of worlds and feelings, in a variety of stories and poems – all of which are linked by a single theme. Another function of anthologies is to enable students to easily find the best pieces, put together according to times, reviews, critical theories, settings and plots.