

(Neoclassical) Age

- Neoclassical term: *(New Roman and Greek Follow) old classics*
- Movement flourished between 1660 and 1798.
- Enlightenment Period *Reason or Logic*
- Tremendous change in (social order.)

Neoclassicism was a movement interested in reviving Greco-Roman literature, art, architecture, philosophy, and theatre in the 18th century.

Neoclassical literature was written between 1660 and 1798. Writers of the Neoclassical period tried to imitate the style of the Romans and Greeks. Thus the combination of the terms 'neo,' which means 'new,' and 'classical,' as in the day of the Roman and Greek classics. This was also the era of The Enlightenment, which emphasized logic and reason.

Periods of Neoclassicism

This time period is broken down into three parts: the Restoration period, the Augustan period, and the Age of Johnson.

- **Restoration period:** the period after King Charles I was beheaded and the monarchy was restored to order. The style of the period was concise and made use of short sentences. John Milton, John Bunyan, and John Dryden were the primary influences.

Neoclassical Age

The Restoration Period

Charles II (1660-1700)

- Religious and Political Quarrels
- The Revolution (1688) Whigs and Tories
Protestants and Catholics
- Rise of Neo-Classicism Rules and principles
- Imitation of the Ancients
- Realism and Formalism

Periods of Neoclassicism

- **Augustan Period:** writers of this period believed in imitating the forms of Greco-Roman writers and adopting similar genres, such as epic or pastoral. The writings of Alexander Pope fall into this period. His long poem, '*An Essay on Criticism*,' published in 1711 is a great example.
- **Age of Johnson:** also known as the "age of transition." It was dominated by Samuel Johnson and is named for his influence. He died in 1784, only a few years before the publication of *Lyrical Ballads* and the end of neoclassicism in literature.

Neoclassical Age

The Age of Johnson

(1740-1790)

- **Age of Samuel Johnson** A Dictionary of the English Language
- **Age of transition** Reason+Feelings
- **Decline of the Party Feud**

The "age of Johnson" is a term coined by Virginia Woolf

Characteristics

Neoclassical literature is characterized by order, accuracy, and structure. In direct opposition to Renaissance attitudes, where man was seen as basically good, the Neoclassical writers portrayed man as inherently flawed. They emphasized restraint, self-control, and common sense. This was a time when **conservatism** flourished in both politics and literature.

Characteristics

1. Valued common sense and clarity.
2. Structures are well ordered.
3. Content is accurate and believable.
4. Characters are portrayed realistically.
5. Showed humankind to be flawed.
6. Characters are conservative and controlled.
7. Influenced by Greco-Roman writing and philosophy.

Neoclassical Age ✓

(Famous forms of Literature) ✓

Order, accuracy and structure

Parody

Satire

Essays

Letters

Fables

Melodrama

Neoclassical Age

Famous Writers

Daniel Defoe ✓

Alexander Pope ✓

Jonathan Swift ✓

Joseph Addison ✓

John Dryden ✓

Samuel Johnson ✓