

English Literature

The Bare Minimum for BCS

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Preface

What follows are my own notes on English Literature for BCS. There probably are plenty of mistakes, and I apologise if anyone reading this has found any. These notes have been made, first and foremost, for personal use, so verify anything that seems off (or better, even anything that doesn't). Let me know of the errors.

Use at your own peril.

Susmit Islam

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Periods of English Literature

Periods of English Literature

- Mnemonic: অমি রান্না নিয়ে রুমি ভাই এর মন পেল
 - Old age / Anglo-Saxon period
 - Middle age
 - Renaissance
 - Neoclassical
 - Romantic
 - Victorian
 - Edwardian
 - Modern
 - Postmodern / contemporary

Old English (450-1066)

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- Most famous work: **Beowulf**
 - Epic poem
 - Author was anonymous
 - \approx 3200 lines
- Famous author: **Caedmon**
 - Earliest known English poet
 - Sole surviving work: **Caedmon's Hymn** (poem)

Middle English (1066-1500)

Middle English (1066-1500)

- **Geoffrey Chaucer** aka *father of English poetry*
- Thomas Malory
- Robert Henryson

Renaissance (1500-1660)

Renaissance (1500-1660)

- 4 subperiods:

- Mnemonic: লিজা যাবে car-এ করে

- Elizabethan (1558-1603)

- Replete with lyrics and songs
- Golden age of English drama/literature
- Famous authors:
 - Christopher Marlowe
 - Shakespeare
 - Francis Bacon
 - Edmund Spenser

Renaissance (1500-1660)

- John Lyly

■ Jacobean (1603-1625)

- Reign of James I → Jacobean era
- Famous authors:
 - John Donne
 - Michael Drayton
 - Ben Johnson
 - Elizabeth Cary

■ Caroline (1625-1649)

- Reign of Charles I (“Carolus”) → Caroline era
- Famous authors:

Renaissance (1500-1660)

- John Milton
- Robert Burton
- George Herbert

■ Commonwealth (1650-1660)

- John Milton
- Thomas Hobbes
- Thomas Fuller
- Abraham Cowley
- Andrew Marvell

Neoclassical (1660-1785)

Neoclassical (1660-1785)

- 3 subperiods
- Restoration (1660-1700)
 - William Congreve
 - John Dryden (Congreve and Dryden known for *restoration comedies*)
 - Samuel Butler (*satire*)
 - John Bunyan
 - John Locke
- Augustan (1700-1745)
 - Alexander Pope

Neoclassical (1660-1785)

- Jonathan Swift
- **Sensibility / Johnson** (1745-1785)
 - Henry Fielding
 - Edmund Burke
 - Edward Gibbon
 - Samuel Johnson
 - Samuel Richardson
 - Hester Lynch Thrale
 - James Boswell
 - Tobias Smollett
 - Laurence Sterne

Neoclassical (1660-1785)

- William Cowper
- Thomas Perry

Romantic (1800-1832)

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- Wordsworth
- Coleridge
- Keats
- Blake
- Shelley (Percy Bysshe and Mary)
- Byron
- Jane Austen
- Charles Lamb

Victorian (1832-1901)

Victorian (1832-1901)

Poets:

- Alfred Tennyson
- Matthew Arnold
- Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Essayists:

- Thomas Carlyle
- John Ruskin
- Walter Pater

Victorian (1832-1901)

IDKs:

- Dickens
- Bronte Sisters
- Elizabeth Gaskell
- George Eliot (penname of Mary Ann Evans)
- Anthony Trollope
- Thomas Hardy
- William Makepeace Thackeray
- Samuel Butler