

Literary Time Windows

Trace themes and style across three literary periods.

11.T.PM.1.b "Identify and discuss major authors and works of three periods of English and American literary history, including key themes and stylistic features. (I)"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each author and work title, circle each literary period, and number three examples of style in each paragraph. Use your marks to connect each work to its period's themes and style.

Three Periods, Three Lenses

- ① During the English Renaissance, commonly dated about 1500–1660, writers drew on classical learning while exploring human choice and political power. William Shakespeare's tragedy *Hamlet* follows a prince struggling with grief, revenge, and uncertainty after his father's death. The play's soliloquies let audiences hear Hamlet's private debate, while blank verse gives much of the dialogue a flexible, elevated rhythm. Shakespeare also uses recurring images of disease and decay. These features make a public court conflict feel intensely personal. Renaissance drama often asks whether thought can guide action when moral duties collide.
- ② In the mid-nineteenth century, American Romantic writers emphasized emotion, imagination, and the individual mind. Edgar Allan Poe's 1845 poem *The Raven* places a grieving speaker in a dark room as a mysterious bird repeats 'Nevermore.' The speaker's questions become more desperate, so the refrain turns grief into obsession. Poe builds a Gothic mood through a midnight setting, a possibly supernatural raven, and sound patterns that include internal rhyme and alliteration. Rather than offering a calm lesson, the poem traps readers inside an unsettled mind. Romantic writing often treats powerful feeling as both revealing and dangerous.

- ③ Modernism emerged in the early twentieth century as many writers responded to war, rapid city life, and shattered confidence in inherited beliefs. T. S. Eliot's 1922 poem *The Waste Land* moves among broken scenes, speakers, and quotations from many cultures. Its fragmented structure and shifting voices mirror a world that feels disconnected. Eliot also layers literary and mythic allusions, expecting readers to notice echoes rather than receive one simple explanation. The poem explores cultural fragmentation, spiritual emptiness, and isolation. Unlike the more unified stories of earlier traditions, modernist works often make readers assemble meaning from uncertainty and interruption.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- ① Which literary period does *Hamlet* represent? Name its author and one theme connected to the work in the passage.

- ② List the three stylistic features named in the *Hamlet* paragraph.

- ③ How does the repeated word 'Nevermore' support a theme in *The Raven*?

- ④ Identify the period, author, and work in the third paragraph. Then name two stylistic features and one concern associated with that work.

3

YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly four sentences. In the first three sentences, discuss one work from each period in the passage by naming its period, author, work, one theme, and one stylistic feature. In the fourth sentence, compare how the style of two periods shapes meaning.

Compare the three periods

Write four complete sentences as directed. Make the final comparison explain an effect of style.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each author and work title, circle each literary period, and number three examples of style in each paragraph. Use your marks to connect each work to its period's themes and style. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which literary period does Hamlet represent? Name its author and one theme connected to the work in the passage.	The English Renaissance; William Shakespeare; themes include human choice, political power, grief, revenge, uncertainty, or moral duties in conflict.
2	List the three stylistic features named in the Hamlet paragraph.	Soliloquies, blank verse, and recurring images of disease and decay.
3	How does the repeated word 'Nevermore' support a theme in The Raven?	As the speaker becomes more desperate, the refrain turns his grief into obsession.
4	Identify the period, author, and work in the third paragraph. Then name two stylistic features and one concern associated with that work.	Modernism; T. S. Eliot; The Waste Land; features include fragmented structure, shifting voices, and literary and mythic allusions; concerns include cultural fragmentation, spiritual emptiness, or isolation.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

In the English Renaissance, William Shakespeare uses Hamlet's soliloquies to show how moral conflict can make action difficult. In American Romanticism, Edgar Allan Poe uses the refrain 'Nevermore' in The Raven to turn grief into obsession. In Modernism, T. S. Eliot uses fragmented structure in The Waste Land to express cultural fragmentation and isolation. Unlike Poe's repeated sound, Eliot's broken structure creates disorder, yet both styles make inner pain feel inescapable.

Accept equivalent descriptions of themes and stylistic features when they are supported by the passage. For Part 3, check that all three periods are included, each sentence connects a theme to a feature, and the final sentence makes a valid comparison. The period dates are approximate; Shakespeare's career occupies only part of the English Renaissance. In the Poe paragraph, accept refrain, internal rhyme and alliteration, or a supported grouping that includes Gothic mood. These are literary-history summaries; the task discusses the works rather than asking for quotations from absent extracts. Dating reference: Cambridge, Studying English Literature in Context, Part II: The Renaissance, 1485–1660.