

Paper VII – American Literature

1. To initiate the student into a study of American life and culture against the background of American history.
2. To give the student an outline knowledge of not only those aspects of American literature but also its vital links with British literature; the stimulus and inspiration it has received from the literature it has inherited from the past literatures of England and Europe.
3. To help the student understand the great influence the American world of letters has been exercising on both the creative writing and critical trends in other countries.

Course Description :

The birth of the American nation – Colonial America and its emancipation from the control of the Government of England. The uniqueness of the American experience which accounts for the uniqueness of its writing – The controversy about American Literature – being separate literature different from British literature – America's historical and cultural links with Europe – its mixed population and heritage.

The double consciousness of old modes and world possibilities. The preminences of critical, historical and polemic writing in the earlier phase of the emergence of American literature – The Calvinism of colonial New England.

The American belief in self-Reliance – Almost a national idea. The American belief in democracy, in liberty and equality – The American didacticism, particularly in the nineteenth century literature – The American psyche – The conflicts and tensions faced by the average American.

American citizen and the dilemmas faced by writers – The growth of the American theatre – The American Black literature and Jewish literature.

The Authors and Texts Prescribed for Study :

Texts prescribed for detailed study :

Walt Whitman	: When lilacs last in the Dooryard Bloom'd
Emily Dickinson	: I Taste a liquor never brew'd, Because I could not stop for Death
Robert Frost	: Mending Wall, Birches
Emerson	: The American scholar
Eugene O' Neill	: The Hairy Ape

Tests prescribed for Non-detailed study

Adgar Allen Poe : Helen
Hawchrone : The Raven
Malville : Moby Dick
Henry James : The Ambassadors
Bernard Malamud : The Asistant
Aarthur Miller : All my sons
Edward Albee : Who is afraid of virginia woolf?
Ernest Heingway : Farewell to Arms
Lorraine Hansberry : A Raisin in the sun
Wallace Stevens : The Emperor of Ice cream

Background Readings:

Marcus Cunliffe : The literature of the United States
F.G.Marthissen : The American Renaissance
Richard Chase : The American Novel and its tradition
Leslie Fiedler : Love and death in the American novel
Howard Jones : The theory of American, Literature
R.W.B.Lewis : The American Adam: Innocence, Tragedy, and
Tradition in the Nineteenth Century
Robert Spiller : Modern American Literature (1961)
Howard Nemerov : Contemporary American Poetry (1965)
Henning Cohan : Landmarks of American writing (1978)
Richard Kostelanetz : American writing today (1982) 2 vols.