



HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Words of Ages - Witnessing U.S. History Through Literature: From Thomas Paine and Washington Irving to Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Martin Luther King, *Words of Ages* culls the experience of American history from the nation's greatest writers, providing primary source accounts of critical moments in history. In this framework, personal viewpoints, accompanied by contextual information, provide a fuller understanding of historic events and provoke thoughtful analysis beyond the facts. Below is the full list of units.

UNIT 1: A "NEW WORLD," A NEW NATION

THEME 1: EXPLORERS AND EARLY SETTLERS

John Smith

The General History of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles

Robert Beverley

The History and Present State of Virginia

William Bradford

Of Plymouth Plantation

John Winthrop

"A Model of Christian Charity"

Anne Bradstreet

"In Memory of My Dear Grandchild Anne Bradstreet..."

Nathaniel Hawthorne

"The Minister's Black Veil"

THEME 2: VOICES OF A REVOLUTION

Jonathan Edwards

"Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"

Benjamin Franklin

"The Way to Wealth"

John Woolman

"Considerations on Keeping Negroes"

James Fenimore Cooper

The Last of the Mohicans: A Narrative of 1757

Thomas Paine

Common Sense

Thomas Jefferson

Declaration of Independence

John Adams & Abigail Adams

Personal Letters

THEME 3: THE SEARCH FOR A NATIONAL IDENTITY

Philip Freneau

"On the Emigration to America and Peopling the Western Country"

John Jay

"Federalist No. 2"

Olaudah Equiano

The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano

Meriwether Lewis & William Clark

The History of the Lewis and Clark Expedition

Washington Irving

A Tour on the Prairies

Tecumseh

"Tecumseh's Plea to the Choctaws and the Chickasaws"

John Dos Passos

The Shackles of Power: Three Jeffersonian Decades

UNIT 2: NATIONALISM AND SECTIONALISM

THEME 1: A CONFIDENT NATION

Ralph Waldo Emerson
“The Young American”

Henry David Thoreau
“Resistance to Civil Government”

Margaret Fuller
Woman in the Nineteenth Century

Walt Whitman
“Great Are the Myths”

John L. O’Sullivan
“Annexation”

Juan Nepomuceno Seguin
Personal Memoirs

THEME 2: SLAVERY AND THE ABOLITION MOVEMENT

Frederick Douglass
Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

Harriet Jacobs
Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl

Harriet Beecher Stowe
Uncle Tom’s Cabin

George Fitzhugh
Sociology for the South

Angelina Grimke Weld
“Appeal to the Christian Women of the South”

John Greenleaf Whittier
“The Hunters of Men”

THEME 3: CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

Herman Melville
“The Portent”

Stephen Crane
The Red Badge of Courage: An Episode of the American Civil War

Louisa May Alcott
“Hospital Sketches”

John Esten Cooke
Mohun

Walt Whitman
“O Captain! My Captain!”

Booker T. Washington
“Up from Slavery”

W.E.B. DuBois
The Souls of Black Folk

UNIT 3: INDUSTRIALIZING AMERICA

THEME 1: THE CLOSING OF THE FRONTIER

Willa Cather
O Pioneers!

Bret Harte
“Chiquita”

Nat Love
The Life and Adventures of Nat Love, Better Known in the Cattle Country as Deadwood Dick

A Mexican Folk Ballad
“Kansas I”

Hamlin Garland
“The Passing of the Buffalo”

Black Elk
Black Elk Speaks

THEME 2: ARTISTS RENDER INDUSTRIALIZATION AND URBANIZATION

Bret Harte
“What the Engines Said”

Rebecca Harding Davis
“Life in the Iron Mills”

Edith Wharton
The Age of Innocence

Hart Crane
“Proem: To Brooklyn Bridge”

Abraham Cahan
Yekl: A Tale of the New York Ghetto

Carl Sandburg
“Chicago”

THEME 3: SOCIAL CRITICS AND REFORMERS

Francis E. Watkins Harper
“We Are All Bound Up Together”

Elizabeth Cady Stanton
Eighty Years and More: Reminiscences 1815-1897

Mary Wilkins Freeman
“A Church Mouse”

Samuel L. Clemens
Huckleberry Finn

Lincoln Steffens
The Shame of the Cities

Upton Sinclair
The Jungle

UNIT 4: DEMOCRACY AND ADVERSITY

THEME 1: THE JAZZ AGE

E. Scott Fitzgerald
The Great Gatsby

Dorothy Parker
“Song of Perfect Propriety”

Upton Sinclair
The Flivver King

Toni Morrison
Jazz

Langston Hughes
“The Weary Blues”

Zora Neale Hurston
Their Eyes Were Watching God

THEME 2: GREAT DEPRESSION AND THE NEW DEAL

John Dos Passos
The Big Money

Clifford Odets
Waiting for Lefty

Meridel LeSueur
“Women on the Breadlines”

John Steinbeck
The Grapes of Wrath

Ralph Ellison
“Colonial Park”

Genevieve Taggard
“Proud Day”

THEME 3: WORLD WAR II

E.B. White
“Freedom”

Leon Uris
Battle Cry

Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston
& James D. Houston
Farewell to Manzanar

Countee Cullen
“Apostrophe to the Land”

Martha Gellhorn
The Face of War

Elie Wiesel
Night

John Hersey
Hiroshima

UNIT 5: THE CHALLENGES OF POWER

THEME 1: PROSPERITY AND ANXIETY

Annie Dillard
An American Childhood

Sloan Wilson
The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit

Jack Kerouac
On the Road

Anne Moody
Coming of Age in Mississippi

Arthur Miller
The Crucible

Tom Wolfe
The Right Stuff

THEME 2: RIGHTS AND REVOLUTIONS

Martin Luther King Jr.
“Letter from Birmingham Jail”

Malcolm X
“Message to the Grass Roots”

Judy Brady
“Why I Want a Wife”

Sandra Cisneros
The House on Mango Street

Mary Crow Dog
Lakota Woman

Bob Dylan
“Blowin’ in the Wind”

THEME 3: THE VIETNAM YEARS

David Halberstam
one very hot day

Tim O’Brien
Going after Cacciato

Denise Levertov
“Life at War”

Philip Roth
American Pastoral

Robert Olen Butler
“Letters from My Father”

For more information, please contact us at classroom@closeup.org or 703-706-3665.
To purchase the *Historical Perspectives* library, please click [here](#).