

# Creative Writing

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## Reading List for the Comprehensive Examination

### Master of Arts in English, Pittsburg State University

You must read all 35 items on this list, making whatever choices are available in consultation with your faculty mentors\*. The comprehensive exam will cover those 35 items. The Graduate Advisor, your two faculty mentors, and you should each keep a photocopy of the list.

\*If something is covered on this list *and* the American List, you must make an alternate selection on the American list (where choice is still available).

## Primary Works in Poetry and Fiction

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1. Robert Frost *Robert Frost's Poems* (St. Martin's 2002) and "The Figure a Poem Makes."
2. Langston Hughes: "Afro-American Fragment," "The Negro Speaks of Rivers," "Aunt Sue's Stories," "Negro," "Dream Variations," "Feet o' Jesus," "The Weary Blues," "Sylvester's Dying Bed," "Morning After," "Genius Child," "Homecoming," "Song for a Dark Girl," "Mother to Son," "Dream Boogie," "Green Memory," "Ballad of the Landlord," "Theme for English B," "Nightmare Boogie," "Harlem," "I, Too," "Georgia Dusk," "Consider Me," and the essay, "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain."
3. Anne Sexton *Selected Poems of Anne Sexton*.
4. William Carlos Williams *Selected Poems* and "A New Measure" and "Projective Verse and The Practice" along with Olson's "Projective Verse."
5. Elizabeth Bishop *The Complete Poems: 1927-1979*.
6. Lucille Clifton *Blessing the Boats: New and Selected Poems 1988-2000*.
7. Poetry Since 1945, Group B, whole list (see Am. List 30-32).
8. Choice: a single volume by one of these poets: Theodore Roethke, Robert Hayden, Randall Jarrell, Allen Ginsberg, William Stafford, Gwendolyn Brooks  
Author and title: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Flannery O'Connor *Everything That Rises Must Converge* and *Mystery and Manners* (through p. 118, Parts I, II, and III).
10. 20<sup>th</sup> C Short Story, whole list (see Am. List 26-27).
11. J.D. Salinger *Nine Stories*.
12. Jhumpa Lahiri *Interpreter of Maladies*.
13. Anne Tyler *The Accidental Tourist* and "Still Just Writing."
14. Alice Walker *The Color Purple*.
15. Raymond Carver *Where I'm Calling From* and "On Writing."
16. Jeffrey Eugenides *Middlesex*.
17. Eudora Welty *Thirteen Stories*, "On Writing" in *The Eye of the Story*, and "An Interview."
18. Gabriel Garcia Marquez *Collected Short Stories*.
19. Sherwood Anderson *Winesburg, Ohio*.
20. One book in your primary genre written and published in the last 12 years:  
Author and title: \_\_\_\_\_.

## Theory

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1. Ezra Pound "A Retrospect" and "Affirmations," Wallace Stevens "The Noble Rider and the Sound of Words," and Marianne Moore "Idiosyncrasy and Technique."
2. Denise Levertov "Some Notes on Organic Form" and "On the Function of the Line" and Frank O'Hara "Personism: A Manifesto."
3. W. D. Snodgrass "Tact and the Poet's Force" and A. R. Ammons "A Poem Is a Walk."
4. Donald Hall "Goatfoot, Milk tongue, Twinbird: The Psychic Origins of Poetic Form" and Robert Bly "What the Image Can Do."
5. Donald Justice "Meters and Memory" and Alice Fulton "Of Formal, Free, and Fractal Verse: Singing the Body Eclectic" and "Fractal Amplifications."
6. William Stafford "Some Arguments Against Good Diction," and "A Way of Writing."
7. Charles Simic "Negative Capability and Its Children," and Audre Lorde "Poems are Not Luxuries."
8. Alicia Ostriker "The Nerves of a Midwife: Contemporary American Women's Poetry" and Adrienne Rich "When We Dead Awaken: Writing as Re-Vision."
9. Richard Hugo's *The Triggering Town* and "Assumptions."
10. Two essays in your primary genre written and published within the past 18 years:  
Author and title: \_\_\_\_\_.  
Author and title: \_\_\_\_\_.
11. John Gardner *The Art of Fiction*.
12. Wayne Booth "Distance and Point of View."
13. Gail Godwin "Becoming a Writer."
14. . Ralph Ellison "An Interview" and William Faulkner "An Interview".
15. Bharati Mukherjee "A Four Hundred-Year-Old Woman," Alice Munro "What is Real," and Margaret Atwood "Nine Beginnings."

### Look for theory and interviews in these volumes:

- *Twentieth-Century American Poetics: Poets on the Art of Poetry*, Eds. Gioia, Mason, Schoerke, McGraw Hill, 2004.
- *Claims for Poetry*, Ed. Donald Hall, U of Michigan Pr, 1998.
- *The Writer on Her Work, Vols I and II*, Ed. Janet Sternburg.
- *The Story and Its Writer* Ann Charters, Bedford/St. Martin's 7<sup>th</sup> edition, 2007
- *The Norton Anthology of Short Fiction*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed., Ed. Bausch, Cassill.
- The Wayne Booth article is in *Essentials of the Theory of Fiction* Michael Hoffman and Patrick Murphy, eds, Duke UP, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 2005

**Creative Writing students must test in Creative Writing, American Literature, and a revised shorter (@ 20 item) British Literature list (see below) created with the advisement of the student's faculty mentors.** The lead mentor on the American and Creative Writing Comprehensives Committee must be a Creative Writing faculty member.

# British Literature: The Short Core

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## British Literature Before 1789

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1. **Beowulf.**
2. **Chaucer:** *The Canterbury Tales*: "General Prologue," "The Knight's Tale," "The Miller's Prologue and Tale," "The Reeve's Prologue and Tale," "The Cook's Prologue and Tale," and "The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale."
3. **Shakespeare:** *King Lear*
4. **Milton:** *Paradise Lost* (Books I, II, IV, IX, X)
5. **Austen:** *Pride and Prejudice*.

## British Literature After 1789

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6. **Wordsworth:** "Ode: Intimations of Immortality," "Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey" "Sonnet Composed Upon Westminster Bridge 1802," "The World is Too Much With Us, Late and Soon," "Lucy Gray," "Three years she grew," "Nutting," "We Are Seven," "Resolution and Independence," "I wandered lonely as a cloud," "London, 1802," "It is a beautiful evening," "The Ruined Cottage," "The Solitary Reaper," "Surprised by joy," "Strange fits of passion have I known," "She dwelt among untrodden ways," "Expostulation and Reply"; *The Prelude* (Books I & II); Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*
7. **Brontë:** *Wuthering Heights*
8. **Joyce:** *Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man*
9. **Yeats:** "The Wild Swans at Coole," "The Second Coming," "Sailing to Byzantium," "Byzantium," "Among School Children," "Lapis Lazuli," "Easter 1916," "Crazy Jane Talks with the Bishop" "The Stolen Child," "Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen," "Leda and the Swan," "The Lake Isle of Innisfree," "An Irish Airman Foresees His Death," "Under Ben Bulbin," "Adam's Curse," "No Second Troy," "A Prayer for My Daughter"
10. **Beckett:** *Waiting for Godot*

## Items 11-20:

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These items are to be selected from both the British Literature Before 1789 and the British Literature After 1789 lists in consultation with a mentor specializing in British literature.