

## 2011-2012 WHRO VideoClassroom Preview

<b>Series Title:</b>	<b>Great American Authors</b>
<b>Curriculum Area:</b>	<b>English/Language Arts</b>
<b>Grades:</b>	<b>7-12</b>
<b># of Programs/Length:</b>	<b>8/30:00 minute programs</b>

Presented by Jane Kaczmarek, *Great American Authors: 1650 to Present* presents the rich, literary tradition of American storytelling...No country has produced a more impressive group of writers in a shorter period of time than America. It has been an incredible journey of finding the nation's voice, beginning with the first colonists in the 17th century to a small cadre of brilliant, 19th century, New England writers who defined the unique American experience and soul, to the whole country speaking out in the 20th Century against war, poverty, racism and alienation. Featuring such greats as Poe...Dickenson...Twain...Alcott...Hemingway..Wolfe...Steinbeck...Vonnegut and Morrison, this eight part series presents the lives and literary output of over 60 of America's most read authors. Authors are presented in 60 stand-alone clips, in chronological order.

### 1.) 1650 – 1845

The awe-inspiring saga of America's greatest authors comes alive in *Great American Authors since 1650*. As the American colonies moved toward becoming an independent nation, a unique and distinctive voice poured forth from the pens of its authors. Once the nation was founded, America's first literary giants - Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Edgar Allan Poe - told stories and wrote poems that could have only come from the heart and soul of this fledgling country.

#### Chapters:

- 1650 - Anne Bradstreet, America's First Poet
- 1702 - Cotton Mather Publishes *The Ecclesiastical History Of New England*
- 1773 - Phillis Wheatley Becomes America's First Black Woman Poet
- 1819 - Washington Irving Publishes *Rip Van Winkle*
- 1826 - James Fenimore Cooper Publishes *Last Of The Mohicans*
- 1836 - Ralph Waldo Emerson Initiates American Transcendentalism With *Nature*

### 2.) 1846 – 1855

Between the War of 1812 and the Mexican American War that ended in 1848, America experienced an exuberant economic period of growth. And, it was during this time that American authors produced the nation's first great wave of classic literature. In this program, such literary giants as Herman Melville, Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow make their mark on the American psyche.

#### Chapters:

- 1849 - Henry David Thoreau Originates America's Proud History Of Civil Disobedience
- 1850 - Nathaniel Hawthorne Writes *The Scarlet Letter*
- 1851 - Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* Is Published
- 1852 - Emily Dickinson Publishes First Poem
- 1852 - Harriet Beecher Stowe Writes *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
- 1855 - Frederick Douglass Publishes *My Bondage And My Freedom*
- 1855 - Walt Whitman Publishes *Leaves Of Grass*
- 1855 - Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Writes *The Song Of Hiawatha*

### 3.) 1856 – 1906

After the Civil War the modern American novel took shape ... It was led by Louisa May Alcott, Mark Twain and Henry James. It was also the time that the American literary voice came from everyone and from everywhere.

#### Chapters:

- 1868 - Louisa May Alcott Writes *Little Women*
- 1878 - Henry James Writes *Daisy Miller*
- 1885 - Mark Twain Publishes *The Adventures Of Huckleberry Finn*
- 1906 - *The Whole Country Speaks*
- 1906 - Upton Sinclair's Novel *The Jungle* Is Published

### 4.) 1907 -1925

During this time frame America lost its innocence. Its writers now began to struggle with the problems that accompanied modernization and industrialization. It was also the beginning of the lost generation of American authors.

Chapters:

- 1913 - Poet William Carlos Williams Publishes His First Book Of Poems, *The Tempers*
- 1914 - Carl Sandburg Publishes His Poem *Chicago*
- 1920 - Edith Wharton Wins A Pulitzer Prize For *The Age Of Innocence*
- 1922 - *The Innovators*: E. E. Cummings, Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot And Henry Miller
- 1923 - Robert Frost Publishes *Stopping By Woods On A Snowy Evening*
- 1925 - F. Scott Fitzgerald Writes *The Great Gatsby*

### 5.) 1926 – 1939

This was the most turbulent period in American history. It encompassed the Roaring Twenties and the Great Depression. It gave rise to America's greatest writers, known collectively as *the lost generation*.

Chapters:

- 1929 - Thomas Wolfe Writes *Look Homeward Angel*
- 1929 - William Faulkner Showcases The South With *The Sound And The Fury*
- 1930 - Sinclair Lewis Becomes The First American To Win The Nobel Prize For Literature
- 1931 - Pearl Buck Writes *The Good Earth*
- 1936 - Playwright Eugene O'Neill Wins Nobel Prize For Literature
- 1939 - Steinbeck Writes *The Grapes Of Wrath*

### 6.) 1940 – 1949 (14:00 Preview Segment)

America entered the technological age through the darkness of WWII and its aftermath. American authors were now becoming legends in their own time through mass media and popular culture. Their response was as diverse as the nation's response to living in the nuclear age.

Chapters:

- 1940 - Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom The Bell Tolls* Is Published
- 1941 - James Thurber Writes *The Secret Life Of Walter Mitty*
- 1947-1953 - Robert Heinlein, Ray Bradbury And Isaac Asimov Usher In The Era Of Popular Science Fiction
- 1948 - Tennessee Williams Wins His First Pulitzer Prize For *A Street Car Named Desire*
- 1949 - Arthur Miller Produces *Death Of A Salesman*

### 7.) 1950 – 1957

If the lost generation authors were searching for identity and meaning, the group of authors in this program rejected everything about mainstream America. Ultimately they would speak to the baby boomer generation.

Chapters:

- 1950 - Gwendolyn Brooks Wins The Pulitzer Prize
- 1951 - Salinger And Plath Set The Stage For The Baby Boomer Generation
- 1952 - Ralph Ellison And James Baldwin Speak For The American Black Male
- 1957 - Jack Kerouac Begins The Beat Generation In American Literature
- 1957 - Dr. Seuss Writes *The Cat In The Hat*

### 8.) 1958 to Present

This generation of writer witnessed and participated in WWII ... Korea ... The Cold War ... The Civil Rights movement ... And Vietnam. These experiences shaped the intellectually, spiritually and emotionally in ways that were translated into their writing.

Chapters:

- 1959 - Lorraine Hansberry's Play *A Raisin In The Sun* Is Produced
- 1961 - Joseph Heller Writes *Catch-22*
- 1966 - Truman Capote Writes *In Cold Blood*
- 1969 - Kurt Vonnegut Writes *Slaughterhouse Five*
- 1982 - John Updike's *Rabbit Is Rich* Wins Pulitzer Prize For Literature
- 1989 - Asian American Amy Tan Publishes *The Joy Luck Club*
- 1993 - Toni Morrison, Alice Walker And August Wilson Redefine The Black Experience
- 2007 - Cormac McCarthy Wins The Pulitzer Prize For *The Road*