VICTORIAN LITERATURE, 1832-1900
READING LIST

Please note that there are two lists below. The first is the full list with the core readings in bold; the second is the core list separated out. You are responsible for all core readings and may incorporate readings from the full list into your tailored list.

INTRODUCTION
The following list was designed to guide your study of the Victorian period, its literature, history, and culture. I suggest that you begin by reading one or two of the histories noted at the end of the list. The recommended secondary sources will introduce you to the vast number of critical and theoretical studies of the Victorians; begin with these texts but then feel free to seek out the commentaries that you personally find most helpful. Consult anthologies (e.g., Norton’s or Longman’s) for an overview. It is essential, however, that you read the poetry in critical editions (so you are in a position to evaluate the anthologies from which you will likely one day be teaching) and find good, carefully edited editions of the novel because footnotes and introductory material will enrich your understanding, particularly of the novel’s historical, cultural, and philosophical contexts.

PRIMARY TEXTS


John Henry Newman, Apologia pro Vita Sua


Emily Bronte, Wuthering Heights (1847), major poems,

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Aurora Leigh (1856), OR Augusta Webster, "A Castaway" (1870)


John Ruskin, Stones of Venice (1851-53), Modern Painters, Praeterita
Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) AND poems (including, for example)
  

Dante G. Rossetti, major poems

Christina Rossetti, *Goblin Market* (1862) AND poems

Augusta Webster, "A Castaway," "By the Looking-Glass," "Faded," "Circe"

William Morris, major poems, *News from Nowhere*

Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species* (1859), *The Descent of Man*

Edward Fitzgerald, *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*

Algeron C. Swinburne, major poems, including "A Ballad of Life," "Laus Veneris,"
  

  
  "Rossetti"

  
  "Felix Randal," "Spring and Fall," "As Kingfishers Catch Fire," "Not, I'll Not, Carrion Comfort," "No Worst, There is None," "Thou Art Indeed Just, Lord," "Author's Preface to MS. Poems (1876-1889)"

Rudyard Kipling, major poems

Amy Levy, "Xantippe," "A Minor Poet," "Magdalen"

Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) OR *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895);

  "The Decay of Lying," "The Critic as Artist"; poems

Edmund Gosse, *Father and Son* (1907)

W. M. Thackeray, *Vanity Fair* (1847)

Elizabeth Gaskell, *North and South* (1855), *Cranford*

Charles Dickens, *Bleak House* (1853) AND *Hard Times* (1854), *David Copperfield, Great Expectations, Our Mutual Friend*

Wilkie Collins, *The Moonstone, The Woman in White*

Anthony Trollope, *Barchester Towers*

Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre* (1847) AND *Villette* (1853), *Shirley*


Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891) AND *Jude the Obscure* (1895), *The Return of the Native, The Mayor of Casterbridge, The Woodlanders*

George Gissing, *New Grub Street, The Odd Women*

Olive Schreiner, *The Story of an African Farm* (1883)

Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (1899)
SECONDARY WORKS

Richard D. Altick, *Victorian People and Ideas*


Jerome H. Buckley *The Victorian Temper*


G. Kitson Clark, *The Making of Victorian England*

Deirdre David, *Intellectual Women and Victorian Patriarchy*


Linda Dowling, *Language and Decadence in the Victorian fin de siecle*


John Holloway, *The Victorian Sage*

Graham Hough *The Last Romantics*

Robert Langbaum, *The Poetry of Experience*

Robert Langbaum, ed., *The Victorian Age: Essays in History and In Social and Literary Criticism*, 2nd ed. rev.

Angela Leighton, *Victorian Women Poets: Writing Against the Heart* (1992)


George Levine, ed., *Realism and Representation*


J. Hillis Miller, *The Disappearance of God*

E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*


Martha Vicinus, ed., *Suffer and Be Still: Women in the Victorian Age*

G. M. Young, *Victorian England: Portrait of an Age*

Core List: Primary Sources

Emily Bronte, *Wuthering Heights* (1847)

William Thackeray, *Vanity Fair* (1847)

Novels by Charlotte Bronte (*Jane Eyre* [1847] and *Villette* [1853])

Alfred Lord Tennyson, *In Memoriam* (1850)

John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice* (1851-53)

Novels by Charles Dickens (*Bleak House* [1853] and *Hard Times* [1854])
Elizabeth Gaskell, *North and South* (1855)
Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh* (1856), or Augusta Webster, “A Castaway” (1870)
Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species* (1859)
John Stuart Mill, *The Subjection of Women* (1861)
Christina Rossetti, *Goblin Market* (1862) and poems
Robert Browning, dramatic monologues
Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) and poems
Novels by George Eliot (*The Mill on the Floss* [1860] and *Middlemarch* [1874])
Olive Schreiner, *The Story of an African Farm* (1883)
Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) or *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895)
Novels by Thomas Hardy (*Tess of the d’Urbervilles* [1891] and *Jude the Obscure* [1895])
Walter Pater, *The Renaissance* (1893)
Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (1899)
Edmund Gosse, *Father and Son* (1907)

**Core List: Secondary Sources**

Angela Leighton, *Victorian Women Poets: Writing Against the Heart* (1992)