VICTORIAN LITERATURE, 1832-1900
QUALIFYING EXAMINATION READING LIST

Note: 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 texts from the full list into your specialty list or read from this longer list for a broader foundation.

INTRODUCTION
The following list was designed to guide your study of the Victorian period, its literature, history, and culture. 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 novels 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
the Crannied Wall," "The Higher Pantheism," *Idylls of the King*, "Merlin and the Gleam," "Crossing the Bar"

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

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

**Anne Bronte, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848)**

**Elizabeth Barrett Browning, *Aurora Leigh* (1856); poems**

**Robert Browning, dramatic monologues,** major poems, including "My Last Duchess,"
"Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister,"
"Porphyria's Lover," "Pictor Ignotus," "The Lost Leader,"
"How It Strikes a Contemporary," "Bishop Blougram's Apology,"
"House," "Why I am a Liberal"

Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) AND poems (including, for example)


Dante Gabriel Rossetti, major poems
Christina Rossetti, *Goblin Market* (1862) and poems

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

William Morris, poems, *News from Nowhere*

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

Edward Fitzgerald, *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*

Algernon C. Swinburne, poems

"Author's Preface to MS. Poems (1876-1889)"

Rudyard Kipling, major poems
Amy Levy, “Xantippe,” “A Minor Poet,” “Magdalen”

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

Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*

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

Charles Dickens, *Bleak House* (1853); *Hard Times, David Copperfield, Great Expectations, Our
Mutual Friend
Wilkie Collins, The Moonstone, The Woman in White
Mary Elizabeth Braddon, Lady Audley’s Secret
Anthony Trollope, Barchester Towers, Eustace Diamonds (1872)
George Eliot, Mill on the Floss, Middlemarch (1874),
Adam Bede, Silas Marner, Daniel Deronda
Thomas Hardy, Tess of the d’Urbervilles (1891),
Jude the Obscure, The Return of the Native,
The Mayor of Casterbridge, The Woodlanders; poems
George Gissing, New Grub Street, The Odd Women
Olive Schreiner, The Story of an African Farm (1883)
Robert Louis Stevenson, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (1886)
"Coleridge," "Rossetti"
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)
H.G. Wells, The Time Machine, The Island of Doctor Moreau
Bram Stoker, Dracula
Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness (1899)
SECONDARY WORKS

Richard D. Altick, *Victorian People and Ideas*
Gillian Beer, *Darwin’s Plots* (1983; 2009)
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, *Darwin and the Novelists* (1988) OR
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*
Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society*
G. M. Young, *Victorian England: Portrait of an Age*

**Core List: Primary Sources**

1) Emily Bronte, *Wuthering Heights* (1847)
2) William Thackeray, *Vanity Fair* (1847)
3) Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre* (1847)
4) Alfred Lord Tennyson, *In Memoriam* (1850) and poems
5) Anne Bronte, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* (1848)
6) Charles Dickens, *Bleak House* (1853)
7) Elizabeth Gaskell, *North and South* (1855)
8) Poems (your choice) by Elizabeth Barrett Browning, the Brontes, Christina Rossetti, D. G. Rossetti, Mary Elizabeth Coleridge, Augusta Webster, Michael Field, Gerard Manley Hopkins, and Thomas Hardy
9) Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species* (1859)
10) John Stuart Mill, *The Subjection of Women* (1861)
11) Robert Browning, dramatic monologues
12) Matthew Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy* (1869) and poems
13) Anthony Trollope, *The Eustace Diamonds* (1872)
14) George Eliot, *Middlemarch* (1874)
15) Olive Schreiner, *The Story of an African Farm* (1883)
16) Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886)
17) Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) or *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895)
18) Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* (1891)
20) Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness* (1899)

**Core List: Secondary Sources**

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

   or *Darwin Loves You: Natural Selection and the Re-enchantment of the World* (2006) or
   Gillian Beer, *Darwin’s Plots* (1983; 2009)


10) **Your choice of essays from the following:**