

~ APUSH Exam Prep ~  
**Key Works of Literature, Art, and Music**

**The following is a list of some of the more commonly referenced works on the APUSH Exam. Please note that there is no way to identify all works that may appear on the exam but this list should help!**

**TEST TIP:** APUSH test writers rarely ask you to match a novel with its author. The authors are included here for easy reference. Instead, focus your studies on why the work of literature is important and what it illustrates.

“A Model of Christian Charity,” 1630

- Sermon by **Gov. John Winthrop** delivered on board the *Arabella*
- Called for cooperation in order to build a colony according to God’s plan
- “A City Upon a Hill.”

*Poor Richard’s Almanac*, (began publishing in 1732)

- **Benjamin Franklin**
- Collection of anecdotes and moral stories

“Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,” 1741

- **Jonathan Edwards**
- One of the most important and influential sermons of the Great Awakening.

*The Last of the Mohicans*, 1757

- The novel was written by James Fenimore Cooper.
- It was part of a series of novels as the *Leatherstocking Tales*.
- Cooper was the first American writer to feature uniquely American characters.
- Cooper created the first genuine Western heroes in American literature.
- Cooper’s novels gave expression to the concept of the “noble savage.”

“Common Sense” 1776

- This was a pamphlet written by **Thomas Paine**.
- It was a strongly worded call for independence from Great Britain.
- Paine opposed monarchy (he called King George a Pharaoh!) and strongly favored republican government.
- Paine offered a vigorous defense of republican principles.
- Paine helped overcome the loyalty many still felt for the monarchy and mother country
- Paine used biblical analogies and references to illustrate his argument

The Federalist Papers (*The Federalist*) 1787

- The Federalist Papers were written by **Hamilton, Madison, and Jay** to support ratification of the Constitution of 1787.
- They challenged the conventional political wisdom of the eighteenth century when they asserted that a large republic offered the best protection of minority rights.

*Knickerbocker’s History of New York* 1809

- Author **Washington Irving**
- Fables and stories set in the Hudson River Valley

“The Star Spangled Banner,” (National anthem) 1814

- Written by **Francis Scott Key**
- Written while Key was detained on a British ship during the battle of Ft. McHenry
- Words were later set to the tune of a popular drinking song

*The Liberator* 1831

- This newspaper was written and published by **William Lloyd Garrison**.
- It called for the “immediate and uncompensated emancipation of the of the slaves.”

~ APUSH Exam Prep ~  
**Key Works of Literature, Art, and Music**

*The Liberator (Continued)*

- Here is a famous quote from *The Liberator*: “Let Southern oppressors tremble... I will be as harsh as Truth and as uncompromising as Justice... I am in earnest- I will not retreat a single inch- and I WILL BE HEARD!”

*Democracy in America, 1835*

- **Alexis de Tocqueville** was the author.
- He argued that American individualism arose as a result of the absence of an aristocracy.

The Hudson River School (mid-1800's)

- The Hudson River School was a group of artists led by Thomas Cole, who painted landscapes emphasizing America's natural beauty.
- The Hudson River School was America's first coherent school of art.

McGuffey Readers, 1836

- **William Holmes McGuffey** was the compiler and editor.
- Also known as Eclectic Reader.
- The best known and most widely used reading instruction books in the nineteenth century. It is estimated that during this time four-fifths of all American school children used McGuffey readers.

“Civil Disobedience: On the Duty of Civil Disobedience” 1849

- **Henry David Thoreau** was the author of this essay.
- He expressed opposition to the Mexican War.
- Thoreau argued that individuals have a moral responsibility to oppose unjust laws and unjust actions by governments.
- Thoreau's essay influenced Dr. King's philosophy of non-violent civil disobedience.

*The Scarlet Letter, 1850*

- **Nathaniel Hawthorne** was the author.
- The novel dealt with the legacy of Puritanism.

*Leaves of Grass, 1855*

- **Walt Whitman** was the author.
- Whitman's poems featured the Romantic movement's revolt against reason and embrace of nature

*Uncle Tom's Cabin, 1852*

- **Harriet Beecher Stowe** was the author.
- The novel strengthened Northern opposition to slavery.
- Bitterly hated by southerners.
- It was second only to the Bible in sales.

*Walden, 1854*

- **Henry David Thoreau** was the author.
- The novel espoused transcendentalism--- that is, truth through inner reflection and exposure to nature.
- It recorded Thoreau's thoughts concerning the value of a life of simplicity and contemplation.

Horatio Alger Jr. Stories (1867-1899)

- **Horatio Alger Jr.** was the author.

~ APUSH Exam Prep ~  
**Key Works of Literature, Art, and Music**

- This is a collection of approximately 270 dime novels.
- Alger's novels feature rags-to-riches stories describing how down-and-out boys became rich and successful through hard work, honesty, and a little luck.

*A Century of Dishonor*, 1881

- **Helen Hunt Jackson** was the author.
- The book aroused public awareness of the federal government's long record of betraying and cheating Native Americans.

*The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, 1890

- **Captain Alfred Mahan** was the author.
- He argued that control of the sea was the key to world dominance.
- The book was very influential in promoting the growth of US naval power during the late nineteenth century.

*How the Other Half Lives*, 1890

- **Jacob Riis** was the author.
- Jacob Riis was a journalist and photographer working primarily in New York City.
- Riis's book How the Other Half Lives provided poignant pictures that gave a human face to the poverty and despair experienced by immigrants living in New York City's Lower East Side.

"The Significance of the Frontier in American History"

- **Frederick Jackson Turner** wrote this paper. (His "Frontier Thesis")
- He argued that the development of American individualism and democracy was shaped by the frontier experience.
- Turner's "frontier thesis" focused on the importance of the absence of a feudal aristocracy. In other words, America did not have a hereditary landed nobility.
- Here is a famous excerpt: "From the beginning of the settlement of America, the frontier regions have exercised a steady influence toward democracy...American democracy is fundamental the outcome of the experience of the American people in dealing with the West..."

*The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, 1900

- **L. Frank Baum** was the author.
- The wonderful Wizard of Oz was originally written as a political commentary on free silver and the plight of American farmers.

The Ashcan School of Art, early 1900's

- This was a group of eight American artists, led by John Sloan.
- Ashcan artists focused on depicting urban scenes such as crowded tenements and boisterous barrooms.

"Muckraking" Journalists

- Henry Demarest Lloyd, *Wealth Against the Commonwealth* (about Standard Oil)
- Lincoln Steffens, "The Shame of the Cities" (in *McClure's Magazine*)
- Ida Tarbell, "Mother of Trusts" (Expose' on Standard Oil in *McClure's*)
- David Phillips, "The Treason of the Senate" (in *Cosmopolitan*)
- others . . .

*The Jungle*, 1906

- **Upton Sinclair** was the author.
- The novel exposed appalling conditions in the Chicago meatpacking industry.
- It was a classic example of a muckraking novel.

~ APUSH Exam Prep ~  
**Key Works of Literature, Art, and Music**

- The novel helped bring about passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act of 1906.

*Pragmatism, 1907*

- **William James** was the author.
- His concept of pragmatism held that truth was to be tested, above all, by the practical consequences of an idea, by action rather than theories.
- Beliefs should be tested by experience. The ultimate test of truth is experience, not logic.
- It is important to remember that William James and other pragmatists do not believe in the existence of absolute truth.

Lost Generation of the 1920s

- Key writers included **Sinclair Lewis** and **F. Scott Fitzgerald** (*Great Gatsby*)
- This was called the Lost Generation because they were disillusioned with the American society during the 1920s.
- They criticized middle-class conformity and materialism. For example, Sinclair Lewis criticized middle-class life in Novels such as *Babbitt* and *Main Street*.

Harlem Renaissance, 1920s

- Key writers included **Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Claude McKay, Josephine Baker, and James Weldon Johnson.**
- They created distinctive African American literature & expressed pride in their African American culture.

Jazz

- Black musicians such as Joseph (“Joe”) King Oliver, W.C. Handy, and “Jelly Roll” Morton helped create jazz.
- Jazz was especially popular among the youth because it symbolized a desire to break with tradition.

*The Grapes of Wrath, 1939*

- **John Steinbeck** was the author.
- Describes the plight of the “Okies” forced to leave the Dust Bowl-stricken Oklahoma in a futile attempt to find work in California.

*The Organization Man, 1956*

- **W.H. Whyte** was the author.
- The novel criticizes the homogenous culture of the 1950s.
- It criticizes American conformity and the belief that economic growth would solve all problems.

*On the Road, 1957*

- **Jack Kerouac** was the author.
- The novel expressed the alienation and disillusionment of the Beat Generation.
- Like other Beat Generation writers, Kerouac rejected middle-class conformity and materialism.

Rock and Roll, 1950’s

- Key musicians included Little Richard, Chuck Berry, and Elvis Presley.
- Rock and Roll first emerged during the 1950s.

~ APUSH Exam Prep ~

## Key Works of Literature, Art, and Music

- Rock and Roll was inspired and strongly influenced by Black musical traditions, especially rhythm and blues.

### *Silent Spring (1962)\**

- **Rachel Carson** was the author
- Her work protested the contamination of the air, land, and water with chemical insecticides such as DDT.
- The novel played a key role in sparking the environmental movement in the United States.

### *The Other America, 1962*

- Author, **Michael Harrington**
- Poignant and influential report on poverty in America
- The book played an important role in awakening JFK's interest in the poor and showed the way for LBJ's War on Poverty

### "Letter from Birmingham Jail," 1963

- by **Martin Luther King Jr.**
- Dr. King argued that citizens have "a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws." Civil disobedience is thus a justified response to unjust laws.