

**FIELD VII:  
BRITISH LITERATURE SINCE 1900  
Revised: December 2018  
Effective: January 2020**

**STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS**

Because this field is so broad and various, you cannot be expected to have comprehensive knowledge of it--even if, working within the constraints of a single exam, you could demonstrate that.

What can reasonably be expected is a clear sense of some of the pertinent historical circumstances in addition to knowledge of an appropriate (see below) selection of literary productions.

This knowledge should not be thin, as if derived solely from reference works, but thick, being based on close acquaintance with (and reflection on) secondary as well as primary sources.

In addition to ideas about a number of works and authors, you should have ideas about the development of literary genres, the impact of literary or cultural movements, and the course of critical or cultural debates (say, at minimum, two of each).

In order to demonstrate proficiency, you should show evidence of the breadth, depth, analytical ability, awareness of critical issues, and argumentative skill that are expected in the scholarly writing of our field. Your essays should include responses to each part of the exam questions and should demonstrate the following qualities:

- Clear and logical organization (introduction with thesis statement[s], presentation of argument and evidence, conclusion)
- Clear and grammatical prose
- Accurate information about primary texts, relevant literary criticism and theory, and historical contexts
- Logical and persuasive argumentation
- Engagement with and response to current issues in literary criticism

## READING LIST

### PART I: PRIMARY TEXTS

#### a. Primary Texts:

- Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*  
W. H. Auden, selected poems  
Samuel Beckett, two of the following: *Waiting for Godot*, *Murphy*, *Watt*  
Eavan Boland, *New Collected Poems* (2008)  
Elizabeth Bowen, *The Death of the Heart*  
Caryl Churchill, *Top Girls*  
Joseph Conrad, two of the following: *Heart of Darkness*, *Lord Jim*, “The Secret Sharer”  
J. M. Coetzee, *Waiting for the Barbarians*  
Tsitsi Dangarembga, *Nervous Conditions*  
T. S. Eliot, selected poems (including *The Waste Land* and *Four Quartets*)  
Buchi Emecheta, *The Joys of Motherhood*  
E. M. Forster, *A Passage to India* OR *Howards End*  
John Fowles, *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*  
Nadine Gordimer, *The Conservationist*  
H.D., selected poems  
Thomas Hardy, selected poems  
Seamus Heaney, selected poems  
G. M. Hopkins, selected poems  
A.E. Housman, selected poems  
Ted Hughes, selected poems  
Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*  
James Joyce, two of the following: *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Dubliners*,  
*Ulysses*  
Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*  
Philip Larkin, selected poems  
D. H. Lawrence, two of the following: selected poems (including *Birds*, *Beasts*, and  
*Flowers*), *The Rainbow*, selected stories, *Women in Love*  
Doris Lessing, *The Golden Notebook*  
Katherine Mansfield, *Collected Stories*  
Ian McEwan, *Atonement*  
V. S. Naipaul, *A Bend in the River*  
Sean O’Casey, *Juno and the Paycock*  
George Orwell, *1984* OR *Animal Farm*  
John Osborne, *Look Back in Anger*  
Harold Pinter, *The Birthday Party* OR *The Homecoming*  
Ezra Pound, selected poems (including “Hugh Selwyn Mauberley”)  
Jean Rhys, *Wide Sargasso Sea*  
Salman Rushdie, *Midnight’s Children*  
George Bernard Shaw, *Major Barbara* OR *Man and Superman*  
Stevie Smith, selected poems

Zadie Smith, *White Teeth*  
Wole Soyinka, *Death and the King's Horseman*  
Tom Stoppard, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*  
J. M. Synge, *The Playboy of the Western World*  
Dylan Thomas, selected poems  
Derek Walcott, *Omeros*  
Evelyn Waugh, *Brideshead Revisited*  
H. G. Wells, *Tono Bungay* OR *The Time Machine*  
Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* OR *The Importance of Being Earnest*  
Jeanette Winterson, *Written on the Body*  
Virginia Woolf, two of the following: *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse*, *Orlando*, *The Waves*  
W. B. Yeats, selected poems (including the volume *The Tower*)

\*Poetry of The Great War (selections from the poetry of Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen, Herbert Read, Isaac Rosenberg, et al., such as may be found in *The Penguin Book of First World War Poetry*, ed. John Silkin)

**b. Choose ten or more of the following (~30) titles.**

J. G. Ballard, *Crash*  
Pat Barker, *Regeneration*  
Julian Barnes, *England, England*  
Anthony Burgess, *A Clockwork Orange*  
Arnold Bennett, *Anna of the Five Towns*  
A.S. Byatt, *Possession*  
Angela Carter, *The Bloody Chamber*  
Michael Field, selected poems  
William Golding, *Lord of the Flies*  
Robert Graves, *Goodbye to All That*  
Graham Greene, *The Quiet American*  
Geoffrey Hill, selected poems  
Kazuo Ishiguro, *The Remains of the Day*  
Rudyard Kipling, selected poems  
Penelope Lively, *Moon Tiger*  
David Lodge, *Thinks*  
Malcolm Lowry, *Under the Volcano*  
Mina Loy, *Lunar Baedeker*  
Derek Mahon, selected poems  
Medbh McGuckian, *Marconi's Cottage*  
Paul Muldoon, selected poems  
Daljit Naga, *Look We Have Coming to Dover*  
Flann O'Brien [Brian O'Nolan], *At Swim-Two-Birds*  
Craig Raine, History: *The Home Movie*  
Peter Shaffer, *Equus*  
D. M. Thomas, *The White Hotel*  
Edward Thomas, selected poems

N. B. Candidates should also show familiarity with documentary works relating to the major figures, such as biographies, journals, or correspondence.

## **PART II: CRITICAL TEXTS**

### **a. Important critical writings by major authors of the long 20<sup>th</sup> century\***

- T. S. Eliot, *Selected Essays* (especially “Ulysses, Order, and Myth,” “The Metaphysical Poets,” “Hamlet and his Problems,” and “Tradition and the Individual Talent”)
- E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (especially ch. 4, “People [Continued]”)
- T. E. Hulme, “Romanticism and Classicism” (essay)
- D. H. Lawrence, “Morality and the Novel,” “Why the Novel Matters,” “Poetry of the Present,” and “Pornography and Obscenity” (essays)
- George Orwell, *Selected Essays* (especially “England Your England,” “Politics and the English Language,” “The Prevention of Literature,” and “Inside the Whale”)
- Salman Rushdie, “Outside the Whale” (essay)
- Virginia Woolf, *Collected Essays* (especially “Modern Fiction” and “Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown”)
- , *A Room of One's Own*
- W. B. Yeats, *Essays and Introductions* (especially “The Symbolism of Poetry”)

\**Modernism*, ed. Malcolm Bradbury and James McFarlane, contains several of the above titles as well as many other crucial critical writings by major authors of the period.

### **b. Choose five (5) titles from the following list of more general literary histories**

- Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis* (ch. 20, “The Brown Stocking”)
- Tim Armstrong, *Modernism: A Cultural History*
- Christopher Butler, *Early Modernism*
- Astradur Eysteinnsson, *The Concept of Modernism*
- Michael Levenson, *Modernism*
- , *The Cambridge Companion to Modernism*
- Josephine Miles, *Eras and Modes in British Poetry*
- David Perkins, *A History of Modern Poetry* (selected chapters)
- Tracy J. Prince, *Culture Wars in British Literature: Multiculturalism and National Identity*
- Austin Quigley, *The Modern Stage and Other Worlds*
- Brian Shaffer, *Reading the Novel in English, 1950-2000*
- J. L. Styan, *Modern Drama in Theory and Practice 2: Symbolism, Surrealism and the Absurd*
- John J. Su, *Imagination and the Contemporary Novel*
- Michael H. Whitworth, *Modernism*

### **c. Choose ten (10) or more titles from the following list of more particular studies of the long century**

- Daniel Albright, *Quantum Poetics*
- Walter Allen, *Tradition and the Dream*
- Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*

Richard Begam and Michael Moses, Eds., *Modernism and Colonialism*  
 Shari Benstock, *Women of the Left Bank*  
 Terry Eagleton, et al., *Nationalism, Colonialism, and Literature*  
 James English, *Comic Transactions: Literature, Humor, and the Politics of Community in Twentieth-Century Britain*  
 Martin Esslin, *The Theatre of the Absurd*  
 Jed Esty, *A Shrinking Island: Modernism and National Culture in England*  
 Rita Felski, *The Gender of Modernity*  
 Joseph Frank, *The Widening Gyre: Crisis and Mastery in Modern Literature*  
 Christine Froula, *Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Avant-Garde: War, Civilization, Modernity*  
 Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*  
 Peter Gay, *Modernism: The Lure of Heresy*  
 Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *No Man's Land*  
 Richard Gilman, *The Making of Modern Drama*  
 Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*  
 Stuart Hall, *Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*  
 Barbara Hardy, *The Advantage of Lyric*  
 Gabriel Josipovici, *What Ever Happened to Modernism?*  
 Hugh Kenner, *The Pound Era*  
 Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending*  
 Justyna Kostkowska, *Ecocriticism and Women Writers: Environmentalist Poetics of Virginia Woolf, Jeanette Winterson, and Ali Smith*  
 Robert Langbaum, *The Mysteries of Identity: A Theme in Modern Literature*  
 F. R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition*  
 Michael Levenson, *Modernism and the Fate of Individuality*  
 Timothy Materer, *Modernist Alchemy: Poetry and the Occult*  
 Perry Meisel, *The Myth of the Modern*  
 Margot Norris, *Beasts of the Modern Imagination*  
 Michael North, *The Dialect of Modernism*  
 Marjorie Perloff, *The Dance of the Intellect*  
 ---, *Wittgenstein's Ladder*  
 Lawrence Rainey, *Institutions of Modernism: Literary Elites and Public Culture*  
 Jahan Ramazani, *The Hybrid Muse: Postcolonial Poetry in English*  
 Kathleen Renk, *Magic, Science, and Empire in Postcolonial Literature*  
 Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*  
 Daniel R. Schwarz, *Reconfiguring Modernism*  
 Bonnie Kime Scott, *Gender in Modernism: New Geographies, Complex Intersections*  
 Kelly Sultzbach, *Ecocriticism in the Modernist Imagination: Forster, Woolf, and Auden*  
 John Russell Taylor, *Anger and After*  
 Raymond Williams, *The Politics of Modernism: Against the New Conformists*  
 W. B. Worthen, *Modern Drama and the Rhetoric of Theatre*

**d. Choose five (5) or more titles from the following list of studies devoted to particular authors**

Daniel Albright, *Personality and Impersonality: Lawrence, Woolf, Mann*  
 Keith Alldritt, *The Making of George Orwell*  
 Derek Attridge, *J. M. Coetzee and the Ethics of Reading*  
 William Baker, *Harold Pinter*  
 Ann Banfield, *The Phantom Table: Woolf, Fry, Russell and the Epistemology of Modernism*  
 Richard Begam, *Samuel Beckett and the End of Modernity*  
 Harold Bloom, *Yeats*  
 Enoch Brater, *Beyond Minimalism*  
 Pamela Caughie, *Virginia Woolf in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*  
 Frederick Crews, *E. M. Forster: the Perils of Humanism*  
 W. E. Demastes, *British Playwrights, 1956-1995*  
 Maria DiBattista, *The Fables of Anon: Virginia Woolf's Major Fictions*  
 Dubino, Jeanne, et al, editors, *Virginia Woolf: Twenty-First-Century Approaches*  
 Robert Eaglestone and Martin McQuillan, *Salman Rushdie: Contemporary Critical Perspectives*  
 Richard Ellman, *Eminent Domain: Yeats among Wilde, Joyce, Pound, Eliot, and Auden*  
 ---, *W. B. Yeats, The Man and the Masks*  
 Stephen Greenblatt, *Three Modern Satirists: Waugh, Orwell, and Huxley*  
 Clive Hart and David Hayman, *James Joyce's Ulysses: Critical Essays*  
 Cheryl Herr, *Joyce's Anatomy of Culture*  
 Graham Hough, *The Dark Sun: A Study of D. H. Lawrence*  
 Hugh Kenner, *T. S. Eliot: The Invisible Poet*  
 ---, *Dublin's Joyce*  
 James Longenbach, *Stone Cottage: Pound, Yeats, and Modernism*  
 Jerome Meckier, *Critical Essays on Aldous Huxley*  
 Rob Nixon, *London Calling: V. S. Naipaul, Postcolonial Mandarin*  
 Michael North, *The Political Aesthetic of Yeats, Eliot, and Pound*  
 Jeffrey M. Perl, *Skepticism and Modern Enmity: Before and After Eliot*  
 John Rodden, *The Politics of Literary Reputation: The Making and Claiming of 'St George' Orwell*  
 Roberta Rubenstein, *The Novelistic Vision of Doris Lessing*  
 Wilfred Stone, *The Cave and the Mountain*  
 Helen Vendler, *Yeats's Vision and the Later Plays*  
 Thomas Whitaker, *Swan and Shadow: Yeats's Dialogue with History*