

American Literature in Transition

1920-1930: The Transition into Modernity



Figure I.1 Edith Wharton



Figure I.2 Edna St. Vincent Millay

Forløbsbeskrivelse til studieplanen:

Forløbet har fokus på 1920'erne som skelsættende litterær periode mellem de to verdenskrige og inden børskrakket i 1929. Der er fokus på Modernism, Harlem Renaissance, Female Voices og The Jazz Age. Fokus er på litterær analyse og perspektivering.

Nøglebegreber:

consumerism, gender roles, gender bending, flapper culture, machine age, alcohol and prohibition, minimalism, fragmentation,

Metode: Litterær analyse, filmanalyse, formidling

Kernestof:



Alain Locke, [The New Negro](#), 1925 (excerpt)
Countee Cullen, "Incident", (1925)
Langston Hughes, "The Weary Blues", 1925
Claude McKay, "If We Must Die", (1919)
Zora Neale Hurston, [How It Feels to Be Colored Me](#), 1928
Zelda Fitzgerald, "Eulogy On The Flapper", 1922

[Edna St. Vincent Millay. texts](#)

Exiled, 1921
The Betrothal, 1923
What lips my lips have kissed, 1923
I, being born a woman and distressed, 1923
The Ballad of the Harp Weaver, 1923

Dorothy Parker, "From the Diary of a New York Lady", (1925?)
Ernest Hemingway, "Hills Like White Elephants" (1927)
John Dos Passos, *Manhattan Transfer*, 1925 (chapter 1)
F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*, 1925 (excerpt [Gatsby](#))

Supplerende stof:

[Crash course:](#)
[The Roaring 20's: Crash Course US History #32](#)

[Who was Alain Locke?](#) (2 min) (Jeffrey C. Stewart)

[Megan Hall](#) on Countee Cullen

[Zora Neale Hurston: Crash Course Black American History #30](#)

Slang in the 1920s

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uv_iOaWz-gl

Baz Lurhman, *The Great Gatsby*, 2013

[Junes artikel](#)

5-minute presentations of authors:

- Can be done individually or by two students together
- Focus: What are their literary achievements - how does their work fit the course description? A bit of background information is nice, but don't let the biographical details take up too much time - choose what is relevant.

Date		Students	Date		Students
Aug. 27	Langston Hughes	Matilda	Sept. 3	Edna St. Vincent Millay	Frida, Vincent
Aug. 27	Claude McKay	Eske, Bertram	Sept. 5	Dorothy Parker	Eske, Bertram
Aug. 27	Countee Cullen	Megan Hall from 4:00	Sept. 10	John Dos Passos	Jon, Casper
Aug. 28	Zora Neale Hurston	Zora Neale Hurston: Crash Course Black American History #30	Sept. 12	Ernest Hemingway	August, Kamille
Sept. 3	Zelda Fitzgerald	Liva, Zöe	Sept. 13	F. Scott Fitzgerald	Mathilde

Modul 1: ti 27/8 4. modul - 3u EN • Ho • FT3-4

Focus: The Harlem Renaissance: Black Voices and Jazz Poetry

Alain Locke, Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen and Claude McKay

[Texts for session 1](#)

Warm-up with partner: 5 minutes

What did I learn from the video crash course?

Watch this video [intro](#) about the Harlem Renaissance (3 min)

Alain Locke:

[Who was Alain Locke?](#) (2 min) (Jeffrey C. Stewart)

Excerpt from The New Negro:

Ordbogen.com: Look up these words from the text (and write them down)

Paragraph 1	shortcomings	scorns	craven	precarious	ward
	nostrums	Panaceas	ardently	peculiarly	

Paragraph 2	contributor	beneficiary	arid	controversy	precede
	headway	abundant	initiation	warrant	attainment

Understanding: We read the text together and puzzle together the meaning

Analysis:

Modes of appeal: Ethos - logos - pathos?

Antitheses: fill out the table

The Negro in the past	The Negro today (new Negro)
a social ward	

3 poets: Student presentations and poetry readings

Claude McKay: If We Must Die [reading](#)

Countee Cullen, introduction by [Megan Hall](#) from 4:00. Incident

Langston Hughes: The Weary Blues [reading](#)

Student work: Individual work

Work on your assigned poem.

Study questions:

- Give a short summary of the poem - what is it about? Feelings or action?
- Make a short analysis of the poetic form (Hughes: Jazz poetry, Cullen: Literary ballad, McKay, Sonnet)
- How does the language of the poem fit the form?
- How does the poem reflect what you know about the Harlem Renaissance?

Sum up together!

[Kevin Young Discusses "If We Must Die" by Claude McKay](#), 4-minute analysis

Modul 2: to 29/8 3. modul - 3u EN • Ho • 11

OBS: Fotografering

[Zora Neale Hurston, How it feels to be colored me](#)

[Worksheet](#)

- Individual writing: 10 minutes
- Groups of 3: 15 minutes
- Class sum-up: 10 minutes

Homework:

Watch this video - pick one the expressions and bring it to class

Slang in the 1920s

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uv_iOaWz-gl

Modul 3 + 4: ti 3/9 1. + 2. modul - 3u EN • Ho • FT3-2

From last week: 15 min.

Hurston, questions 2 and 3 - sum up together.

Use of irony, ironic ambiguities - what is the effect?

Perspectives:

Cf. Alain Locke: The patient is well

Cf. Jazz music and Black identity and pride - the scene at the jazz club

Focus: Flapper Culture and Female Voices

Edna St. Vincent Millay and Zelda Fitzgerald

Homework:

Watch this video - pick one the expressions and bring it to class

Slang in the 1920s

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uv_iOaWz-gl

Warm-up with partner: 10 minutes

Which expressions did you pick? What do they mean? Make a sentence with each and write it down

Vamp	Sheik	And how!	Putting on the Ritz	Ragamuffin	Tomato	Bob
Wet blanket	Making whoopie	Bump off	Fried, bumped	Heebie jeebies		
Cheaters	Petting	Hot	Dough	You have it!		

Zelda Fitzgerald: Liva, Zöe

Read the text:

[Eulogy On The Flapper, by Zelda Fitzgerald.](#)

Example of how to use AI

Together, define the genre!

[Non-fiction analysis](#)

In random groups of 3 - 20 minutes

Analyse the text:

- ☐ Start with the pentagram and the rhetorical situation
- ☐ Choose what to focus on next: language? devices? modes of persuasion? Argumentation?
- ☐ Get as far as you can and be ready to share your work

Sharing: Find a new partner - 20 minutes

Take turns sharing your analytical observations.

Finalise your analysis by writing a conclusion together - post it under student feedback.

BREAK

Edna St. Vincent Millay: Frida, Vincent

[Edna St. Vincent Millay. texts](#)

Exiled, 1921

The Betrothal, 1923

What lips my lips have kissed, 1923

I, being born a woman and distressed, 1923

The Ballad of the Harp Weaver, 1923

All: A class reading of Exiled, brief discussion

All: A class reading of The Betrothal - pair work with questions

Pair work with the sonnets (both, if time, else split up)

- sum up

[Millay The Guardian](#) - can you connect the main points of the article to today's readings?

The Ballad of the Harp Weaver - [reading by Millay](#)

- record a reading. Practise in class, record at home, upload to your AFL-folder and post a link on lectio.

HUSK at slutte 5 min før tid

Modul 5: to 5/9 2. modul - 3u EN • Ho • 9

Focus: Flapper Culture and Female Voices

Good job with the conclusion to "Eulogy on the Flapper".

Dorothy Parker: Eske, Bertram

[Dorothy Parker](#), From the Diary of a New York Lay in days of Horror

In groups of 3: Read the story aloud - 20 minutes

[Worksheet](#)

Modul 6: ti 10/9 2. modul - 3u EN • Ho • SC1Ø

Focus: Modernism and the Fragmentation of City Life: John Dos Passos

The Lost Generation - [video](#), 3 min.

John Dos Passos: Jon og Casper

[Manhattan Transfer, excerpt](#)

[Dansk oversættelse](#)

Class:

Read aloud June's short analysis as an introduction - take notes.

Analysis of style and language in the opening paragraph - read the Danish translation first

Group work - [worksheet](#)

1a	Emil Frida Ena	2a	Viktor Theresa Emilla
1b	Bertram Marie Anna	2b	Casper Liva Karla My Sara
3a	Liv August Kamille	4a	Mille Eske Freja

3b	Zöe Mathilde Jon	4b	Clara Matilda Vincent
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Modul 7: to 12/9 3. modul - 3u EN • Ho • BT

Divided class: 2 x 20 min.

- Roundtable discussion of Dos Passos
- Read Hemingway, [Hills like white elephants](#) twice. Focus: Text and subtext!

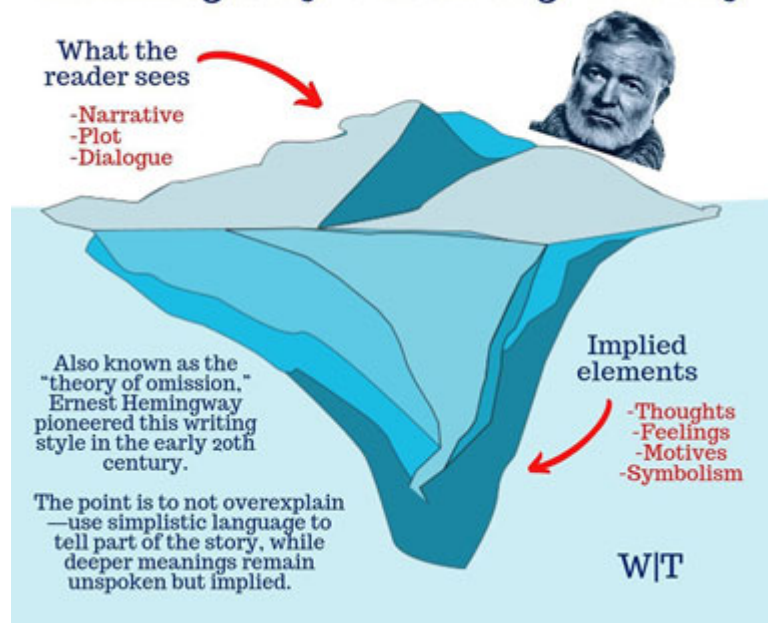
Focus: The Lost Generation and Modernism: Hemingway

5-minute presentation of Hemingway: August & Kamille - [ppt](#)

Text: [Hills like white elephants](#)

The theory of omission:

Hemingway's Iceberg Theory



Modernism:

- minimalism and fragmentation - a sense of incompleteness or ambiguity
- subjectivity - reality is complex and elusive, no universal truths
- immediacy and direct experience - fleeting and fragmented lives and experiences, a new realism

- the influence of psychoanalysis - Freud - and the theory of the subconscious/what lies beneath the surface
- the role of the reader - has to play an active part in connecting the dots, uncovering the subtext and reading between the lines to reach an interpretation - very far from the classic use of an omniscient narrator who made sure that the reader understood the text correctly.

Modul 8: fr 13/9 3. modul - 3u EN • Ho • 11

Hemingway continued....

Close reading of the opening paragraph

- First sentence: The hills across the valley of the Ebro were long and white.
- The setting: "On this side [...]" DRAW IT
-
- Narrator - point of view?
- The characters: Who are they - how are they introduced?
- Important words: hills, valley, station, rails, curtain, junction
- The title: Hills Like White Elephants - what do you make of it now?

What is a white elephant?

I

SHOWING VS. TELLING

Showing	Telling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To demonstrate (vivid examples) • To get to see the characters' behaviour and judge for ourselves. • The reader is left to figure out what's going on. We can only imagine because the author does not come right out and tell us. • <i>show</i> smoke, and let the reader <i>infer</i> fire. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assert – simply forcefully saying that it is so • Stating something that happens or spelling out exactly what effect it has on the characters. E.g. simply naming (telling) the feelings that the characters experience • Expect the reader to believe the narrator

Pair work:

Focus on showing vs. telling and find 3 points of interest on the story.

Sum up

Read some of the dialogue on p. 2 aloud:

What seems to be the problem in this story? Where do you spot it clearly for the first time?
Where do you spot it in a 2nd reading?

When you have spotted the problem, can you make a characterization of the man and the girl, fill in the empty spaces?

Can you tell whose side the narrator is on? Whose side are you on?

Free writing : Choose 1 or 2 points and write a paragraph about the text: 20 minutes
Hand-in under student feedback

1. What's the purpose of the trip the two travellers are taking?
2. Why are the speakers only identified as "a man" and "girl"? How do these designations affect your reading of the story? What nickname does the man use for the girl?
3. How do the descriptions of the landscape relate to the conversation between the two travellers? What about the discussion of drink orders?
4. Note each sentence or paragraph that is not enclosed in quotation marks, and explain how each brief commentary affects your understanding of the characters and the lives they lead.
5. Why does the girl repeat the word "please" seven times? Anger? Hysteria? Fear? Frustration?
Why does the man leave her at the table?
6. The railroad station setting is important to the progress--the plot--of the story. How does this physical setting parallel the thematic concerns of the story as well?
7. How does the title relate to the story?
8. Identify and discuss distinguishing features of Hemingway's prose. What stands out?

Focus: The Jazz Age and Modernism: The Great Gatsby

Film night Monday at 7 pm - bring your dinner

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Mathilde

Study time:

Together, go through the list of characters in the excerpt and read the introduction

Individual study time: The excerpts are part of next week's group work, so make sure to highlight and take down notes to the 6 topics.

[Excerpts from The Great Gatsby](#)

Modul 9 + 10: ti 17/9 1. + 2. modul - 3u EN • Ho • 6

Focus: The Jazz Age and Modernism: The Great Gatsby

The Great Gatsby: analysis of film and novel excerpts

***The Great Gatsby* analysis: Prepare a 15-minute presentation**

Preparation time: 90 minutes

- Focus your analysis on the topic assigned to you.
- Give examples of scenes from the film and include characters and their function/development.
- Also, include the excerpts from the novel when possible.
- Finally, draw a parallel to 1 or 2 other texts from the course.

1. [Flapper culture, the new woman, art deco](#)
2. [Machine age: automobile culture, new technology](#)
3. [Prosperity and consumer culture, inequality](#)
4. [The Jazz Age, black music](#)
5. [Alcohol and prohibition, excessive consumption](#)
6. [Modernism: urbanism, alienation, isolation, loss of shared morals](#)

1.	2	3
Vincent Anna Zöe Karla My Bertram	Casper Kamille Sara Liv	Frida Mille Viktor Liva
4	5	6
Clara Matilda Theresa Emil	Freja Eske Emilla Jon	August Marie Ena Mathilde

The groups present their topics.

Modul 11: fr 20/9 3. modul - 3u EN • Ho • 11

Resten af oplæggene

Forløbevaluering på lectio

The House on Mango Street