

Section Introductions

Again – all have likely encountered, read, and/or taught their fair share of commercial literature anthologies, so contributors probably recognize and understand how “periodizing” literary history should intersect with topical and geographical concerns, as well. At the moment, we are working with six placeholder section titles, as follows:

- Pre-contact, Contact, Colonization (“1491”- 1600s)
- New England/Puritanism (1600s-1760s)
- Revolution and Nation (1760s-1830s)
- American Renaissance/Romanticism (1830s-1890s)
- Abolitionism and the Civil War (1840s-1860s)
- Reconstruction and Realism (1860s-19++)

The most important element of the section introduction, to my mind, is to pitch it the right audience. In my experience, students find organizing categories incredibly useful – heck, I’ll be honest, so do I! Grouping material tends to make it more teachable. Surely, we should remain wary of “grand narratives” that obscure differences, and it’s not a bad idea to gesture towards those complexities in your introductions.

So, what are the requirements for section introductions? First of all, we are looking for a 3-5 paragraph introduction to a specific period in American literary history and you are not just allowed but *should* rename the section as you see fit. Below I’ve posted the authors grouped under each heading. Some advice as to what should be included in each section introduction.

- A brief entry on the historical background of the period
- A super-brief survey of some of the section’s major authors/texts
- A nod to large patterns in literary development, genre, movements, and breakthroughs

Finally, the purpose of this anthology is in its very title: Open! “Open” means more than a resource made free and online. In its best iteration, “open pedagogy” entails the spread of access to knowledge with an invitation to participate in the re-creation of new knowledge. Our introductions are just that: invitations to future students, scholars, and teachers to engage, sample, revise, and remix in the open and collaborative production of knowledge. How you signal “openness” in your writing—or if you choose to do so—is

totally up to you. I have unceasing faith in your good judgment and dedication to the project.

— Tim Robbins

Word count

Aim for around 750-1000 words.

Format & Submission

Please share your introduction in an editable Word or Google document. Files can be sent to zoe@rebus.community or apurva@rebus.community.

Working Section Titles

The working section titles with authors are:

Pre-contact, Contact, Colonization (“1491”- 1600s)

- "Creation Stories" Introduction
- The Book of Genesis (KJV) excerpts
- Winnebago Trickster Cycle
- The Popul Vuh Excerpts
- Iroquois Seneca Creation Myth
- Seneca Creation Myth
- Origin Myth of the Acoma
- Mayan Chilam Balam
- Other Native American & Ethnographic Texts
- Christopher Columbus
- Bartolome De Las Casas
- Hernan Cortes
- Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca
- The Requerimiento
- Samuel de Champlain
- Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala
- Sor Juana Ines De La Cruz

- Louis Hennepin
- The Pueblo Revolt of 1680

New England/Puritanism (1600s-1760s)

- John Smith
- William Bradford
- John Winthrop
- Roger Williams
- Thomas Morton
- Anne Bradstreet
- Edward Taylor
- Mary Rowlandson
- Cotton Mather
- Elizabeth Ashbridge
- Jonathan Edwards

Revolution and Nation (1760s-1830s)

- The Narraganset people, "Act of Submission"
- Pontiac
- Samson Occom
- Tecumseh
- Benjamin Franklin
- Lucy Terry
- J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur
- Thomas Paine
- Sarah Kemble Knight
- The Federalist (Hamilton and Madison)
- Thomas Jefferson
- Olaudah Equiano
- Toussaint L'Ouverture
- Briton Hammon
- Prince Hall
- Hugh Henry Brackenridge
- Phillis Wheatley
- Judith Sargent Murray
- Philip Freneau

- Susanna Rowson
- Charles Brockden Brown
- William Apess

American Renaissance/Romanticism (1830s-1890s)

- Washington Irving
- James Fenimore Cooper
- William Cullen Bryant
- Edgar Allan Poe
- Ralph Waldo Emerson
- Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
- John Greenleaf Whittier
- Margaret Fuller
- Nathaniel Hawthorne
- Henry David Thoreau
- Herman Melville
- Walt Whitman
- Emily Dickinson

Abolitionism and the Civil War (1840s-1860s)

- Harriet Beecher Stowe
- Abraham Lincoln
- Frederick Douglass
- David Walker
- Sojourner Truth
- Frances Ellen Watkins Harper
- Harriet Jacobs
- Lydia Maria Child
- Louisa May Alcott

Reconstruction and Realism (1860s-19++)

- Rebecca Harding Davis
- Mark Twain

- Bret Harte
- Sarah Winnemucca
- William Dean Howells
- S. Alice Callahan
- Ambrose Bierce
- Sarah Orne Jewett
- Henry James
- Kate Chopin
- Emma Lazarus
- Sui Sin Far (Edith Maude Eaton)
- Charles Chesnutt
- W.E.B. Du Bois
- Edith Wharton
- Charlotte Perkins Gilman
- Theodore Dreiser
- Edward Bellamy
- Stephen Crane
- Paul Laurence Dunbar
- John Muir
- Willa Cather
- Jack London