

**Teacher's Guide For  
Great American Authors Since 1650  
Program 2 1846 - 1855**

**For grade 7 - College**

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**LINKS TO CURRICULUM STANDARDS**

The design for this program was guided by the National Center for History in the Schools, United States History curriculum Era 3: Revolution and the New Nation-Standards 1 and 3 for grades 5-12, Era 9 Postwar United States -Standard 4 for grades 5-12, and the California Public School Standards for Historical Content, Grade 8 - Standards 8.1, 8.2 and 8.3 (#4 - #7), Standard 8.8 (#1) and Grade 11, Standards 11.1 (#2, #3), 11.3 (#5), 11.5 - (#3, #4) and 11.10 (#2, #3) and Grade 12, Standards 12.1, 12.4 and 12.5; and the California State Board of Education English Language Arts Grade 8, Section 3.0 – 3.5 Literary Response and Analysis; Grades 9 and 10, Section 3.0 – 3.5 Literary Response and Analysis; and Grades 11 and 12, Section 3.0 – 3.5 Literary Response and Analysis.

**MATERIALS IN THE PROGRAM**

**Teacher's Guide** -This Teacher's Guide has been prepared to aid the teacher in utilizing materials contained

within this program. In addition to this introductory material, the guide contains the following:

- *Suggested Instructional Notes*
- *Student Learning Goals*
- *Test Questions on Blackline Masters Quizzes for duplication and handout to students.*
- *Gallery of Great American Authors*

## **INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES**

It is suggested that you preview the program and read the related Student Goals and Teacher Points. By doing so, you will become familiar with the materials and be better prepared to adapt the program to the needs of your class. Please note that this show is set up to be played continuously and you will probably find it best to follow the program in the order in which it is presented, but this is not necessary. The program can be divided into chapters accessed through the DVD's Menu Screen under Chapter Selects. It is also suggested that the program presentation take place before the entire class and under your direction. As you review the instructional program outlined in the Teacher's Guide, you may find it necessary to make some changes, deletions, or additions to fit the specific needs of your students. After viewing the program you may wish to copy the **Test Questions on Blackline Masters 2A** and distribute them to your class to measure their comprehension of the events.

## **INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF PROGRAM**

*A DVD of Great American Authors Since 1650 Program Two: 1846 - 1855* is a new approach to presenting in an exciting way the great literary tradition of the United States. The program is designed to present American authors and literature in a way that promotes successful student learning. The program follows the growth of American literature as the new nation's authors developed a distinctive American voice in the country's first wave of classical literature from 1846 to 1855.

The program is laid out so it can be viewed in their entirety, or by individual chapters accessed through the DVD's Menu Screen under Chapter Selects. Each chapter presents a complete story of a exceptional American literary figure, as well as themes of American literature, including the unique and innovative American voice, New England authors, women authors, and poets. The chapters show how American authors told the story of America as its chroniclers and interpreters. Most importantly, historical themes and figures are clearly presented using state of the art visuals.

Below is a list of the program and its chapters. Using this program, teachers can create a lesson plan to cover the specific issues, themes and historical figures mentioned, or use the lesson plans provided.

### **Great American Writers Since 1650 Program 2: 1846 - 1855**

1. 1849 - Henry David Thoreau Originates America's Proud History of Civil Disobedience
2. 1850 – Nathaniel Hawthorne Writes *The Scarlet Letter*
3. 1851 – Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* is Published
4. 1852 - Emily Dickinson Publishes First Poem
5. 1852 - Harriet Beecher Stowe Writes *Uncle Tom's Cabin*
6. 1855 - Frederick Douglass Publishes *My Bondage and My Freedom*
7. 1855 - Walt Whitman Publishes *Leaves of Grass*
8. 1855 - Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Writes *The Song of Hiawatha*

## SUMMARY OF PROGRAM 2

### **Program 2: 1846 – 1855**

Program 2 examines how a small group of intellectual New England writers created the American literary voice, and with it, the first great wave of American literature.

Chapter one looks at the life and works of Henry David Thoreau, who put American Transcendentalism into the political arena.

Chapters two and three showcase the darker aspect of the American literary voice with Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville.

Another American original, Emily Dickinson, America's greatest 19<sup>th</sup> century woman poet, is discussed in chapter four.

Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is examined in chapter five.

Chapter six looks at the life of one of America's leading abolitionists, Frederick Douglass, and his moving autobiography, *My Bondage and My Freedom*.

The last great poets of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Walt Whitman extolled America's greatness in their poetry. They are discussed in chapters seven and eight.

### **1849 - Henry David Thoreau Originates America's Proud History of Civil Disobedience**

**Student Goals - In this chapter of Great American Authors, students will learn:**

- Henry David Thoreau is known for his condemnation of American social institutions he thought immoral and for his faith in the sanctity of nature
- His book *Walden* influenced a generation of Americans in the 1960's
  - Living alone at Walden Pond for two years, he wrote of his observations on being in harmony with nature
- His most enduring work, a short essay *Civil Disobedience*, changed the fates of nations
  - Thoreau's *Civil Disobedience* challenged the country's prejudices and social institutions, especially slavery
  - *Civil Disobedience* would become a clarion call for such reformers as Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

### **1850 – Nathaniel Hawthorne Writes *The Scarlet Letter***

**Student Goals - In this chapter of Great American Authors, students will learn:**

- Nathaniel Hawthorne was of the first American writers to use America's own history as setting
- He wrote what he named romances that explored morality, sin and redemption, to show what he called "the depths of our common nature."
- Set in Puritan Boston, *The Scarlet Letter* examines the suffering caused by the sin of adultery through the adulteress Hester Prynne, her lover the minister Arthur Dimmesdale, and her husband, Roger Chillingworth

### **1851 – Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* is Published**

**Student Goals - In this chapter of Great American Authors, students will learn:**

- Herman Melville was one of 19<sup>th</sup> century America's most popular authors
- His sailing experiences would give him the material he needed for his novels
- His many booksmade Melville a famous author, but his modern day reputation rests on his allegorical masterpiece, *Moby Dick*
- In this book he brilliantly weaves the dangerous and often violent life aboard a whaling ship and an in depth knowledge of whales around a symbolic tale of man's striving to understand the forces of nature

**1852 - Emily Dickinson Publishes First Poem**

**Student Goals - In this chapter of Great American Authors, students will learn:**

- Emily Dickinson's poetic style was experimental and stretched the limits of traditional verse
- Dickinson's life and poetry were a study in contrasts
- She wrote more than 1700 poems yet published only 7 of them in her lifetime
- Famous in later life for her solitude, her poetry is vivid and worldly
- She never experienced physical love and yet her verse fills the senses and expands the heart
- Since her death, Dickinson has inspired generations of American poets

**1852 - Harriet Beecher Stowe Writes *Uncle Tom's Cabin***

**Student Goals - In this chapter of Great American Authors, students will learn:**

- The book chronicles the story of Eliza Harris, a slave mother whose child is about to be sold
- Stowe put slavery in a human form and converted many people to the Abolitionists' cause
- Stowe's style established the American tradition of realistic writing

**1855 - Frederick Douglass Publishes *My Bondage and My Freedom***

**Student Goals - In this chapter of Great American Authors, students will learn:**

- That white and black abolitionists spoke out against slavery
- Douglass's personal account galvanized his readers to demand an end to enslavement
- Douglass's greatest legacy was his writing, which opened a new world of black literary expression

**1855 - Walt Whitman Publishes *Leaves of Grass***

**Student Goals - In this chapter of Great American Authors, students will learn:**

- Walt Whitman's poetry endorsed America
- Whitman also embraced Emerson's Transcendentalism and its reverence for nature and the spiritual life
- As a young man, Whitman underwent a spontaneous experience that transformed him so thoroughly he would be called a mystic
- Whitman's poetry was so great that he influenced the nation through the sheer force of his lyric commentary

**1855 - Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Writes *The Song of Hiawatha***

**Student Goals - In this chapter of Great American Authors, students will learn:**

- Growing up during the fledgling years of the United States, Longfellow would draw upon his experiences and the American experience for the straightforward American themes in his narrative poetry
- In Longfellow's poems, life in 19<sup>th</sup> century America comes alive
- He is known for his long narrative poems
- *The Song of Hiawath*, is Longfellow's best known, long narrative poem
- Longfellow enjoyed immense popularity in Europe, as he did in the United States
  - Longfellow was the first American writer to be honored in the Poets' Corner of Westminster Abbey in London

**Answers to Blackline Master Quiz 2A, Great American Authors Since 1650, Program 2 1846 – 1855**  
1-b; 2-c; 3-a; 4-b; 5-d; 6-a; 7-d; 8-c; 9-b; 10-a; 11-d; 12-c; 13-a