

4

The Romantic Age

(1760-1837)



AUDIO



VIDEO



KEYTOPICS Across the ages

Romanticism is both a movement of the soul and a window open on Nature with all its contrasts and on humanity's journey towards democracy.

GRASP the ESSENCE

The end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century were marked by deep **CONTRASTS** and conflicts that radically changed the order of things. Thanks to the French Revolution and the American Revolution, this was one of the periods in which humanity's journey towards **DEMOCRACY** moved forward at very high speed, building the foundations of democratic governments and states that would play a very important role in modern history. Britain and Europe were also pervaded by an important and multi-layered cultural phenomenon called Romanticism. In this period, artists and intellectuals delved deep into the hidden recesses of the human soul, making it visible in totally unprecedented ways. One of the primary sources of artistic inspiration for Romantic artists was **NATURE**, considered both a spiritual force pervading the whole Universe and a divine gift to be protected from the devastating effects of the Industrial Revolution. Driven by strong ideals of freedom and tolerance, Romantic artists often found themselves in conflict with their environment, perceived as limited, closed-minded, and intolerant. They gave voice to their desire to gain freedom for themselves and everyone.

VOCABULARY Lab

1 Match the adjectives (1-8) with the nouns (a-h) as in the text above. Write a letter in the boxes.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> artistic | 4. <input type="checkbox"/> spiritual | 7. <input type="checkbox"/> democratic |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> hidden | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> divine | 8. <input type="checkbox"/> cultural |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> human | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> industrial | |
| a. revolution | d. gift | g. inspiration |
| b. phenomenon | e. recesses | h. force |
| c. government | f. soul | |

VIDEO HISTORY AND CULTURE



LINES OF ENQUIRY



NATURE

Nature is both a **1** and a spiritual force. Nature is a powerful source of artistic inspiration, life, and nourishment, but humans have the **2** to protect it.



CONTRAST

Contrast can be defined as a state of opposition between two **3** or conditions. It produces friction and tension, but it also creates opportunities for growth, **4**, and renovation.



DEMOCRACY

Democracy is a form of government in which individuals actively **5** in politics, are treated equally and have the right to **6** their representatives.

- Is Nature benign or is it wild and fierce?
- What universal truths can Nature teach us? Can Nature teach us how to be 'human'?
- Is there a division between Nature and urban environments?
- What happens if we destroy the order of Nature?
- Does Nature inspire humans to take action?
- What is Nature symbol of?
- What happens if we change the order of Nature?

- Are humans purely innocent or are they evil?
- How does the Industrial Revolution affect the environment?
- In what ways does the Byronic hero express himself?
- Do opposites attract?
- Are humans more innocent or more evil?

- Can people choose their form of government?
- What do revolutions bring about? What do citizens do when undemocratic governments use violence?
- How can artists defend and fight for democracy?

2 Complete the definition of the **KEYTOPICS** of Chapter 4 with the following words.
change | elect | forces | participate | physical | responsibility



1760-1820
The reign of George III



1783
First steam-powered cotton mill

1783-1801
William Pitt the Younger, Prime Minister



1800
Act of Union with Ireland

1805
Nelson's victory at the battle of Trafalgar



1807
Abolition of the slave trade in Britain

HISTORY TIMELINE

1750

1776
American Declaration of Independence



1789
The Storming of the Bastille
George Washington first President of the USA

1793
Execution of Louis XVI of France

1800

1804
First steam locomotive
Napoleon Emperor of France



LITERARY WORKS

- W. Blake, *The Lamb* → p. 303 - W. Blake, *The Tyger* → p. 305
- W. Wordsworth, *Preface to the Lyrical Ballads* → p. 320
W. Wordsworth, *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud* → p. 322
- W. Wordsworth, *Composed upon Westminster Bridge* → p. 324
- S.T. Coleridge, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* → p. 334
→ p. 337
- P.B. Shelley, *Ode to the West Wind* → p. 352
- J. Keats, *Ode to a Nightingale* → p. 367
- M. Shelley, *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus* → p. 387

TEXTUAL DEVELOPMENTS

- Nature is pervaded by purity and innocence but also by wild forces.
- Nature can teach us about joy, beauty, eternity and spiritual truths. The poet also contemplates Nature to better understand himself.
- Beauty and harmony can also be found in urban settings.
- When humans threaten Nature and its order, Nature's reaction may be devastating.
- Nature is a source of inspiration for transformative actions in the real world.
- Nature symbolises perfection, immortal beauty, and truth.
- When humans change the order of Nature, they cause chaos.

- W. Blake, *The Lamb* → p. 303 - W. Blake, *The Tyger* → p. 305
- W. Wordsworth, *Composed upon Westminster Bridge* → p. 324
- George Gordon Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* → p. 346
- J. Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* → p. 381
- M. Shelley, *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus* → p. 387

- The Lamb* describes the pure and humble side of humanity, whereas *The Tyger* highlights the strength, brutality, and fierce nature of human beings.
- The effects of the Industrial Revolution contrast the triumph of Nature.
- The poet feels a sense of rebellion towards a hypocritical society.
- Darcy and Elizabeth represent a couple in which opposites attract.
- When humans are in contact with Nature, they preserve their purity, which civilisation destroys.

Declaration of American Independence → p. 286

- P.B. Shelley, *Ode to the West Wind* → p. 352
- P.B. Shelley, *The Mask of Anarchy* → p. 358

G.G. Byron, *Don Juan* → p. 348

The American colonies free themselves from their dependence on Britain and become a new, independent political entity.

Shelley defends the revolutionary power to replace the old with a new order. He also warns that undemocratic governments repress freedom, use violence, and block reforms.

Byron is the prototype of the intellectual who takes action and uses his art to promote democracy.

1815

Napoleon defeated at the battle of Waterloo

Congress of Vienna (1814-15)



1824

Foundation of first Trade Unions and second Corn Law

1830

Accession of King William IV

1834

The Poor Law and creation of Workhouses



1816

Corn Law

1819

The 'Peterloo Massacre' in Manchester

1821

Napoleon dies on St Helena

1832

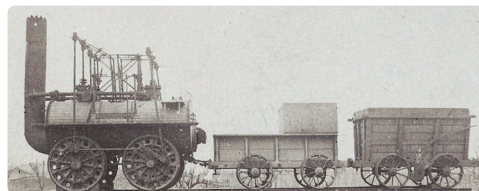
Reform Bill

1833

Abolition of slavery and Factory Act

1837

The reign of Queen Victoria begins



1850

1825

World's first railway line – Stockton to Darlington

