

A SLIGHTLY WHIMSICAL TOUR OF WORLD LITERATURE -TERM 2, 2024

The program provides a journey through time looking at stories and literature from all around the world. Some sessions will seriously look at literature, and sometimes poke a bit of fun at the literature being reviewed.

As an example, who could resist poking a bit of fun at Sophocles (c. 497/496 – winter 406/405 BC) who writes about a character Oedipus who murders his father and marries his mother!

We will roughly follow a chronological time scale, commencing with an overview, followed by ancient literature and moving forward in time and space. We will look at early English Literature, with some bawdy tales from Chaucer, Some Viking literature with the Sagas, Early French Amor de Courtier and King Arthur, moving into Elizabethan and Jacobean literature with the great poets John Donne and Ben Jonson. Oh, and William Shakespeare fits in there as well! Moving right along to Milton, Bunyan, Swift, Defoe, Fielding et al. We may sample the great Irish writers, James Joyce and their wonderful poets. Across to Italy to abandon hope with Dante and friends. How could we not have fun with Jane Austen and the Bronte sisters (Catherine!!! Heathcliffe!! Heathcliffe, Catherine!!!) We leave the UK for a trip to Spain (Don Quixote) and Germany (Baron Von Munchhausen). The how about a transatlantic trip to the USA for early American writers, a broad sweep with Rip Van Winkle, then some sighing with Laura Ingalls Wilder and up to Canada to weep with Anne of Green Gables. Back to France for some solid French literature with Victor Hugo, Alexander Dumas Balzac and more. Scotland comes next with Sir Walter Scott and Robert Louis Stephenson. We then draw breath for some common sense and come to good old Oz, enjoying the Henry Handel Richardson, rollicking Banjo and serious Henry Lawson. A credibility stretch come next with Hardy and Dickens and maybe some of the daring women in Virginia Woolfe and Sylvia Plath. To Russia for a bit of War and Peace and Brothers Karamazov. Back to France for Simone de Beauvoir then to Germany and Austria for a look at Franz Kafka and mates being turned into insects and an axolotl!! Then a look at DH Lawrence and sex sex sex! We can follow up with some Dylan Thomas.

We will also look at TS Eliot and his twin masterpieces of Murder in The Cathedral and The Four Quartets. Albert Camus with the Outsider and the Fall.

Finally we experience sadness with Cry the Beloved Country in South Africa, JD Salinger's Catcher in the Rye, and Argentina's Georg Luiz Borge